SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES
(SOC302)

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Lesson 01

THEORY AND THEORIZING
(TOPIC 01-06)

Topic 001: What is Theory?

Try to understand and explain the realities. Why is it there? How realities are related?
Process of theorizing --- outcome is theory

Theory
A set of logical propositions which attempts to explain the relationships between the phenomena. Why and how the realities (events) occur?

- Our focus on social beings → interaction.
- Explain why and how they interact and with what possible outcomes.

Social theory

- Subject matter of theory.
- Could relate to physical environment and/or social environment.
- Description and explanations related to social environment fall within the purview of social theory.

Three fundamental meanings of social theory
1. An attempt to understand and explain the nature and working of society. Explain social phenomenon. Social theory is descriptive as well as explanatory
2. Theory is normative and prescriptive. Establishing strategies to create a better world.
View contested → theories should be value free. Positivistic approach.
3. Social theory is necessarily bound up with actual social movements and social classes. Society/social environment understood and explained by different subject specialist's such as economists, psychologists, anthropologists, educationists, demographers, sociologists.

Topic 002: Components of Theory

Mental activity → process of developing ideas that explain how and why events occur. Formulation of explicit propositions that explain recurrent patterns that can be observed in the social world. These can also be called as basic elements:

- Concepts
- Variables
- Statements/propositions

Concepts
Concepts are images of reality. Focus is on observable reality or phenomenon (physical/non-physical). For purposes of identification, reality is given a name (label, sign, and symbol). The name/label is abstracted from the reality. Concept is abstract reality may be physical or created by people → social construct. These are means of communication. Therefore Should have consensus on the meanigs. Better define: develop as clear and precise a definition as possible.

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Definitions: theoretical and operational. Theories are built by using concepts. There has to be a narrative. Concepts are connected/related meaningfully and statements made.

Topic 003: Component of Theory (Cont.…)

Variables

Refer to realities that vary/differ in degree/type. Concepts translated into variables. Make categories of variation. Label each category. For understanding the world, visualize how variation in one reality is related to another. Reasoning for the visualized relationship. Interpretation of how and why this relationship. The resultant proposition.

Propositions

Number of connected realities around an issue results in the:

- Formulation of number of propositions.
- Proposition is a theoretical statement.

Logical connection between and among the propositions. To make them meaningful for explaining the reality/phenomenon. Hence arrange propositions in some order.

Theory

Arrangement proposition in some order. Axiomatic format: from highly abstract to less abstract to empirical.

- Axioms: propositions that are assumed to be true in and of themselves. Truth self-evident.
- Theorems: proved by chain of reasoning.
- Propositions can be derived from axioms.
- Orderly arrangement. Axiomatic format
- Sequential arrangement of propositions makes a chain → set of linked propositions.
- Interrelated set of propositions is theory.
- If the realities are empirical, then you can test the propositions. In that case propositions become hypothesis.
- Testing the theory or part thereof i.e. hypothesis. Empirical regularity.

Topic 004: Theorizing

A set of propositions that are logically related and that interpret, explain, or predict a phenomenon (reality) of interest. Propositions are theoretical statements. Propositions are constructed. Construction/creation of propositions is a process. Theorization can be deductive or inductive.

Scientific theories

- Explain and predict the phenomenon in question.
- Produce testable propositions/hypotheses.
- Focus on measurable variables through sensory experiences. Since the focus is on social life, hence it has limitations in predictions due to the nature of its subject matter.

Steps in Theorizing

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1. Selecting the phenomenon

- The phenomenon/reality of interest.
- The reality to be identified by the concept. Is it a variable?
- What is this reality? Its image. The description of what it appears to be including its profile.
- Basis of interest: basic research, applied research

2. Explaining the phenomenon

- Why of this reality? Explanation of the reality. Why this happening?
- Identification of other concepts/variables supposedly related to the selected reality.
- Rationale (logic) for the relationships.

3. Defining the concept

- No ambiguity in the meanings of concepts.
- Same concept but different meaning.
- Specify what is your meaning of the relevant concepts.

4. Formulate propositions

- Number of variables result in a number of propositions.
- Provide logic for each proposed relationship between the variables.

5. Sequentially arrange propositions

- Orderly arrangement of propositions is theory.
- This is the narrative of the theory.
- Can we verify it to make it a scientific theory?

Topic 005: Theorizing (Cont.…)

6. Draw hypothesis

- Are variables observable realities?
- Operationalize the variables for measurement, so that hypothesis could be tested.

7. Collect data and test

- Interpret the collected data and draw inferences.
- Do data support the hypothesis/ hypotheses?

8. Resultant scientific theory

- Theory based on empirical grounds.

Theory open to Challenge

Aim to produce a universal theory. Creations of human beings are open to challenge. More so what is related with human beings. New findings could reinforce, modify, or completely reject a beautiful theory. This is what research does with theory.

Deductive Inductive Approach

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- The process outlined was based on deductive (quantitative) approach.
- Similarly theory is developed by following inductive (qualitative) approach. Grounded theory.

Topic 006: Social Context of Theorizing

Social Context

Theorizing takes place in some social situation i.e. social universe/society. Societies are in some historical period at any point in time. Societies are governed by ideological and intellectual approaches. Theorists subscribe to certain ideological and intellectual orientations. Which in turn: Affect individual's conceptualization of reality.

Social context may be looked at from three angles:

1. Societal conditions
2. Intellectual conditions
3. Biographical conditions

Social Conditions

Theories reflect the society's conditions. Explanation of what is happening in society. Social development -- industrialization, bureaucratization, welfare needs, population explosion – all need explanation. Theories developed as a reaction to societal changes. Academics and intellectuals interpret the changing realities and explain in the form of theories. Theory may be viewed as the function of specific societal conditions.

Intellectual Conditions

Intellectual norms with respect to explaining the realities in society. Intellectual models of thought prevalent at the time. Metaphysical approach, empirical approach, rationalism. With industrialization shift from purely philosophical to scientific approach.

Biographical Conditions

Theorist's life influences his/her perspective. SES, academic training, intellectual peers, ideological views, personal life. Upper class background → conservatism, functionalism. Others → radical approach. Personal experience → sufferings. Academic community → peers – institutional subculture. Provided feedback.

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Lesson 02

THEORY AND RESEARCH
(Topic 07-09)

Topic 007: Knowledge, Theory and Research

Theory building is the means by which basic researchers hope to achieve this purpose.

Knowledge

- Knowledge is a familiarity, awareness, or understanding of someone or something. It is about reality/phenomenon. Knowledge may include: facts, information, skills. Knowledge acquired through experience or education. Knowledge can refer to: a theoretical or practical understanding of a subject/reality.
- Theoretical body of knowledge
- Empirical body of knowledge

Theorists often focus on ideas about reality and create knowledge Empiricists/researchers contribute to empirical/scientific knowledge by devoting themselves to the collection and analysis of empirical data. The division is just for academic purposes. Followers of each may have more emphasis on one (theory) than the other (research). Hence some kind of fragmentation, though artificial. Let us look at each:

Theory and Research

Theory viewed as abstract, soft mental images of reality. Domain of intellectuals' research as empirical world of hard, settled, and observable things. Theory and research (fact) contribute to each other. Theory is an intimate part of facts (practical part of reality). Theory without empirical work is empty but empirical data without theory are blind. It is implicit foundation of all bodies of knowledge.

Topic 008: Linking Theory and Research

Role of theory

The logical explanations could be verified through empirical work. Theory plays important role in research. Researches are often grounded in theoretical framework. Five possible roles are:

1. Theory as orientation

- Theory specifies the factors that the researcher should be able to measure before inquiry. A theoretical framework.
- A phenomenon (football) may be studied in many different ways. Broad area.
- Focus on something manageable.
- What aspects to be studies? Which kinds of facts are relevant?

2. Theory as conceptualization & classification

- Theory helps to build an edifice of concepts as part of explanations to understand reality. Hence special vocabulary.
- Concepts as building blocks of theory.

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- Concept, definitions, systems of knowledge classified. Again a concept given.
- Develop abstract models.

3. Summarizing role

- Summarize what is already known.
- Call them empirical generalizations (child rearing practices, demographic trends)
- Integrate the empirical generalizations.

4. Theory predict facts

- Outcome of summarizing role.
- Extrapolation from known to unknown. What is expected in the given the scenario.
- Western technology and decline in D. Rate.
- Population explosion.

5. Theory point gaps in knowledge

- While summarizing the known facts and predicting the unknown, gap could be identified.
- Lot of material about criminal behavior but not much on white collar crime.
- Theory may suggest the deficiency in knowledge.

Topic 009: Linking Theory and Research: Role of Research

Role of Research

Constant interaction between theory and research. Continuous stimulation of research by theory and theory by research. Outcome of research is hard facts. Hence in place of research let us use "facts" and instead say "role of facts."

1. Facts initiate theory

- During research some new facts may be discovered accidently.
- Discovered facts need to be explained.
- Requires logical argumentation for the "why" and "how" (the operation) of the discovered reality. It leads to the initiation of a new theory.

2. Facts lead to rejection and reformulation of existing theory

- Facts may be in a variety of ways→ more than one resultant theory.
- New facts may lead to the rejection or reformulation of the existing theory.
- Traditional theories about the determinant of human behavior. Genes/blood. Suicide. Durkheim's findings.

3. Facts redefine and clarify theory

- New facts may redefine and clarify the existing theory.
- Urban fertility lower than rural fertility.
- Rural migrants to cities show decline in their fertility. Why? Clarifies the existing theory.
- Do the new migrants in cities have lower fertility than the old residents? If yes, it may lead to redefining the theory. Does not reject the old theory
- May lead to new hypotheses.

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Lesson 03

SOCIAL THOUGHT AND SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY
(Topic 10-12)

Topic 010: What is Sociological Theory?

Start with social theory it is an attempt to understand and explain the nature and working of society. Social theory is descriptive as well as explanatory. Why is it done? May be for improving the situation. Hence goal may be normative.
Sociological theory represents a set of assumptions concerning society and social phenomena (not based on theology, mysticism). Sociological theory is subset of social theory. Sociologists try to understand and explain society from sociological perspective. Sociologists develop theories related to social environment or social phenomena. Sociological theorizing involves the creation of abstract models of observable realities of the world of humans. Sociological theory is the understanding and explaining the world of humans. Therefore, Sociologists develop theories related to social environment or social phenomenon or social world → call them as sociological theories. S. T. represents a set of propositions couched in sociological terms.

Topic 011: What is Social Thought?

People are curious about the realities of life. Would like to know the mysteries of life. Finding answers to what, why, and how? Social thought is abstract thinking about the realities of life. Existence of world/life. It is the reasoning to grasp the deeper meanings of reality, and to penetrate the mysteries of life. Think in many ways of myths. Variety of cultural myths. Good to think and understand the myths. Myths are theories. Many as unproven. All theories are good to think. Theories do not always explain perfectly the social world (contemporary one especially). Abstract thinking may be different from practical thinking. Social thought seeks out the truth about the reality/phenomenon. Looks for causal explanations for the existence of realties. It encompasses the thinking about the realities or phenomena. The reality could be anything from a desirable to an undesirable situation (social problem). Therefore literally social thought is thinking together. Thinking about problems of society.

Aim is:

- to analyze the underlying social processes and laws of the existing reality.
- goals of such analyses may be: the advancement of human groups;
- the manipulation of humans; or
- the advancement of knowledge i.e. finding general laws/principles governing society.

Topic 012: Social Thought and Sociological Theory Connection

Social Thought

Social thought provides a holistic view of society. Totality of human thought about human relationships. Provides general theories: explanations about the complexities of life. Social thought is as old as human existence. Scientific ST emerged only after great scientific achievements in 16th and 17th centuries.

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Objective

- To explain actions and behaviors of society as a whole.
- Explanations based on logic, imagination, intuition, and capacity of creative thinking.
- Knowledge based on not only social but also on spiritual, moral, political, economic, psychological, philosophical aspects.

Thinking about Society with varied Perspectives

- Varied perspectives: social, economic, political, religious.
- Sociologists try to understand and explain society from sociological perspective.

Sociological Theory

Sociologists develop abstract thinking about social environment or social phenomena. Call these as sociological theories. Sociological theorizing involves the creation of abstract models of observable realities of the world of humans.

Social Thought and Sociological Theory: Linkage

- Both are abstract thinking about reality i.e. the human society.
- Part – whole linkage.
- Sociological theory is the understanding and explaining the world of humans within a particular perspective. Therefore:
- S. T. represents a set of propositions couched in sociological terms.
- Every sociological theory can be a social thought but every social thought may not be sociological. Social thought is very old whereas sociological theory is very short.

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Lesson 04

ORIGINS OF SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY
(Topic 13-15)

Topics 013: Early Origins of Sociological Theory: Different Forces

With Reference to the Beginning of Sociological Theory difficult to establish the precise date. People have been thinking about, and developing theories of social life since early in history. Ritzer claims only in 1800s we find thinkers who could be clearly identified as sociologists. Call them as classical sociological thinkers.

Settings Shape the Ideas

All intellectual fields are profoundly shaped by their social settings. True of sociology. In fact it takes the social setting as its basic subject matter. Look at few of the most important social conditions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These conditions were of the utmost significance in the development of sociology. Sociology emerged during a period of change. Change in the nature of social order. Intellectual discourse analyzing the changes in social order. Social settings reflect the social and intellectual forces. These forces shape the ideas. We shall examine the main social and intellectual forces that shaped the ideas of thinkers.

Topics 014: The Social Forces: Political Revolution

Political Revolutions

The long series of political revolutions that were ushered in by the French Revolution in 1789 and carried over through the nineteenth century was the most immediate factor in the rise of sociological theorizing. The impact of these revolutions on many societies was enormous, and many positive changes resulted. However, what attracted the attention of many early theorists was not the positive consequences but the negative effects of such changes. These writers were particularly disturbed by the resulting chaos and disorder, especially in France. They were united in a desire to restore order to society. Some of the more extreme thinkers of this period literally wanted a return to the peaceful and relatively orderly days of the Middle Ages. The more sophisticated thinkers recognized that social change had made such a return impossible. Thus they sought instead to find new bases of order in societies that had been overturned by the political revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This interest in the issue of social order was one of the major concerns of classical sociological theorists, especially Comte, Durkheim, and Parsons.

Revolutions

- Far reaching social and political upheavals in France.
- End of monarchy and beginning of republics.
- Conservative republic.
- Rebellion by workers.
- Fighting for the rights.
- Economic revolution.
- Decline of feudal system.

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- Wave of revolutions in Europe.
- Rise to notions of democracy

Topics 015: Industrial Revolution: Rise of Capitalism

At least as important as political revolution in shaping sociological theory was the Industrial Revolution, which swept through many Western societies, mainly in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Industrial Revolution was not a single event but many interrelated developments that culminated in the transformation of the Western world from a largely agricultural to an overwhelmingly industrial system.

Large numbers of people left farms and agricultural work for the industrial occupations offered in the burgeoning factories. The factories themselves were transformed by a long series of technological improvements. Large economic bureaucracies arose to provide the many services needed by industry and the emerging capitalist economic system. In this economy, the ideal was a free marketplace where the many products of an industrial system could be exchanged. Within this system, a few profited greatly while the majority worked long hours for low wages. A reaction against the industrial system and against capitalism in general followed and led to the labor movement as well as to various radical movements aimed at overthrowing the capitalist system.

The Industrial Revolution, capitalism, and the reaction against them all involved an enormous upheaval in Western society, an upheaval that affected sociologists greatly. Four major figures in the early history of sociological theory—Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, and Georg Simmel—were preoccupied, as were many lesser thinkers, with these changes and the problems they created for society as a whole. They spent their lives studying these problems, and in many cases they endeavored to develop programs that would help solve them.

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Lesson 05

RATIONAL SOCIETY
(Topic 16-19)

Topic 016: Social and Intellectual Background: Rational Society

The growth of the scientific mentality was a major stimulus for the birth of sociology. By the dawn of the nineteenth century, the scientific method had already made great advances in the physical sciences. In physics and astronomy it had been established that uniformities in the movements of physical objects, such as planets and falling rocks, could be explained by natural laws that could be discovered through scientific investigation. In biology much attention was given to classifying different species but a major breakthrough occurred with the 1859 publication of Charles Darwin's theory of biological evolution. By this time the notion of a long-term evolutionary process had already been used by numerous social theorists to try to explain the development of modern societies. Many of the new scientific discoveries led to conflict with traditional religious teachings, however, and many early social theorists believed that the influence of traditional religious teachings and practices would decline as scientific knowledge advanced.

The technological developments stimulated by the growth in scientific knowledge helped reinforce the validity of the scientific method. The employment of new production technologies in the emerging factory system and widespread migrations from rural to urban areas represented social changes leading to new kinds of socioeconomic class relations, new forms of exploitation, and numerous social problems. The goal of developing sociology as a scientific discipline resulted in large part from various efforts to understand these long-range and pervasive social transformations.

Topic 017: Societal Development: An Evolutionary Approach

Most of the early sociologists dealt with the process of social evolution in various ways. One of the most notable was the British social theorist Herbert Spencer. He developed an elaborate theory of how societies had evolved over the centuries from simple, small-scale systems to complex, large-scale systems as a result of people's ongoing efforts to improve their overall well-being. This perspective has typically been regarded as highly individualistic. However, Spencer also noted that advances in moral sentiments accompanied the increased size and complexity of social systems. Given the importance of this evolutionary process in insuring social progress, it was important not to interfere with it, such as through excessive government regulation and control, for example. Of course, he regarded Great Britain (or modern European societies in general) as the most advanced in this long evolutionary process. This belief in evolutionary progress became highly influential in both England and America and influenced greatly the early development of American sociology.

Topic 018: Confronting the Non-Rational Aspect of Society

The establishment of sociology may perhaps be seen in part as a result of a struggle to understand, within a rational scientific perspective, the nonrational (or irrational) aspects of

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human behavior and of society itself. Auguste Comte's "positivist" approach to understanding society reveals this dilemma between reason and the nonrational. His pioneering theoretical perspective (which reflected the ideas of his one-time mentor, Henri St. Simon) involved the argument that the entire scope of human beings' intellectual history, and each of the various sciences in particular (physical and biological as well as social), had gone through three great stages—the "theological, the metaphysical, and the positive." Each stage had made an important contribution to progress, but was destined to be replaced by the next stage over the long course of human evolution. Since sociology was the last of the various sciences to reach the final "positive" stage, its "data" would include the advanced knowledge already acquired in all of the other sciences. This means that sociology would be able to provide the most comprehensive explanation of the scientific laws governing intellectual and social progress.
This "positive" approach would enable us to understand social order as well as the stages of progress in society. Social reform efforts must always work within the constraints of the currently existing beliefs and traditions as discovered through empirical investigation. Otherwise, these efforts run the risk of undermining social order instead of promoting progress. Despite his emphasis on systematic empirical research, Comte's own analysis was quite general and highly speculative and would not conform to contemporary standards of rigorous empirical research.

Topic 019:Non-Rational Constraints in Positivistic Environment

Comte's skepticism regarding the power of rational analysis to shape people's motivations, or to serve as the basis for a more enlightened social order, was widespread among nineteenth century intellectuals and is revealed in several of the classical stage. This consideration suggests that a scientific understanding of society must confront the non-rational foundations of people's behavior and society's traditions and the role these play in supporting the moral ideals underlying the social order.
"Positive" approach would enable us to understand social order as well as the stages of progress in society. Not easy to accept the scientific explanations. Work within the constraints of the currently existing beliefs and traditions. Can undermine the scientific progress of society. Each evolutionary stage has worked as a foundation for the next stage. Religious beliefs play the role of unity and social solidarity. There is always a need to conform to the requirements of the social order. Limitations of reason have been recognized by sociologists. Moral values need to be reinforced collectively. Underlying sentiments are more important in motivating human behavior than the intellectual justifications. Scientific understanding of society must confront the non-rational foundations of people's behavior and society's traditions and the role these play in supporting the moral ideals underlying the social order.

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Lesson 06

SOCIAL FORCES AND GROWTH OF SCIENCE
(Topic 20-22)

Topic 020: Urbanization as a Social Force

Partly as a result of the Industrial Revolution, large numbers of people in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were uprooted from their rural homes and moved to urban settings. This massive migration was caused, in large part, by the jobs created by the industrial system in the urban areas. But it presented many difficulties for those people who had to adjust to urban life. In addition, the expansion of the cities produced a seemingly endless list of urban problems overcrowding, pollution, noise, traffic, and so forth. The nature of urban life and its problems attracted the attention of many early sociologists, especially Max Weber and Georg Simmel. In fact, the first major school of American sociology, the Chicago school, was in large part defined by its concern for the city and its interest in using Chicago as a laboratory in which to study urbanization and its problems.

Topic 021: Religious Change as a Social Force

Social changes brought on by political revolutions, the Industrial Revolution, and urbanization had a profound effect on religiosity. Many early sociologists came from religious backgrounds and were actively, and in some cases professionally, involved in religion. They brought to sociology the same objectives they espoused in their religious lives. They wished to improve people's lives. For some (such as Comte), sociology was transformed into a religion. For others, their sociological theories bore an unmistakable religious imprint. Durkheim wrote one of his major works on religion. Morality played a key role not only in Durkheim's sociology but also in the work of Talcott Parsons. A large portion of Weber's work also was devoted to the religions of the world. Marx, too, had an interest in religiosity, but his orientation was far more critical.

Topic 022: Growth of Science

As sociological theory was being developed, there was an increasing emphasis on science, not only in colleges and universities but in society as a whole. The technological products of science were permeating every sector of life, and science was acquiring enormous prestige. Those associated with the most successful sciences (physics, biology, and chemistry) were accorded honored places in society. Sociologists from the beginning were preoccupied with science, and many wanted to model sociology after the successful physical and biological sciences. However, a debate soon developed between those who wholeheartedly accepted the scientific model and those (such as Weber) who thought that distinctive characteristics of social life made a wholesale adoption of a scientific model difficult and unwise. The issue of the relationship between sociology and science is debated to this day, although even a glance at the major journals in the field, at least in the United States, indicates the predominance of those who favor sociology as a science.

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Lesson 07

ENLIGHTENMENT
(Topic 23-26)

Topic 023: Intellectual Forces: Enlightenment

Although social factors are important, the primary focus of this chapter is the intellectual forces that played a central role in shaping sociological theory. In the real world, of course, intellectual factors cannot be separated from social forces. For example, in the discussion of the Enlightenment that follows, we will find that that movement was intimately related to, and in many cases provided the intellectual basis for, the social changes discussed above.
The many intellectual forces that shaped the development of social theories are discussed within the national context where their influence was primarily felt. We begin with the Enlightenment and its influences on the development of sociological theory in France.

The Enlightenment

It is the view of many observers that the Enlightenment constitutes a critical development in terms of the later evolution of sociology. The Enlightenment was a period of remarkable intellectual development and change in philosophical thought. A number of long-standing ideas and beliefs—many of which related to social life—were overthrown and replaced during the Enlightenment. "Early sociology developed as a reaction to the Enlightenment".
The thinkers associated with the Enlightenment were influenced, above all, by two intellectual currents— seventeenth-century philosophy and science. Seventeenth-century philosophy was associated with the work of thinkers such as René Descartes, Thomas Hobbes, and John Locke. The emphasis was on producing grand, general, and very abstract systems of ideas that made rational sense. The later thinkers associated with the Enlightenment did not reject the idea that systems of ideas should be general and should make rational sense, but they did make greater efforts to derive their ideas from the real world and to test them there. In other words, they wanted to combine empirical research with reason. The model for this was science, especially Newtonian physics.
Overall, the Enlightenment was characterized by the belief that people could comprehend and control the universe by means of reason and empirical research. The view was that because the physical world was dominated by natural laws, it was likely that the social world was too. Thus it was up to the philosopher, using reason and research, to discover these social laws. Once they understood how the social world worked, the Enlightenment thinkers had a practical goal—the creation of a "better," more rational world.

Topic 024: Reaction to Enlightenment

On the surface, we might think that French classical sociological theory, like Marx's theory, was directly and positively influenced by the Enlightenment. French sociology became rational, empirical, scientific, and change-oriented, but not before it was also shaped by a set of ideas that developed in reaction to the Enlightenment. In Seidman's view, "The ideology of the counter-Enlightenment represented a virtual inversion of Enlightenment liberalism. In place of modernist premises, we can detect in the Enlightenment critics a strong anti-modernist sentiment."

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The most extreme form of opposition to Enlightenment ideas was French Catholic counterrevolutionary philosophy, as represented by the ideas of Louis de Bonald (1754–1840) and Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821). These men were reacting against not only the Enlightenment but also the French Revolution, which they saw partly as a product of the kind of thinking characteristic of the Enlightenment. Bonald, for example, was disturbed by the revolutionary changes and yearned for a return to the peace and harmony of the Middle Ages. In this view, God was the source of society; therefore, reason, which was so important to the Enlightenment philosophers, was seen as inferior to traditional religious beliefs. Furthermore, it was believed that because God had created society, people should not tamper with it and should not try to change a holy creation. By extension, Bonald opposed anything that undermined such traditional institutions as patriarchy, the monogamous family, the monarchy, and the Catholic Church.

Topic 025-026: Outcome of Reaction to Enlightenment

The conservatives turned away from what they considered the "naive" rationalism of the Enlightenment. They not only recognized the irrational aspects of social life but also assigned them positive value. Thus they regarded such phenomena as tradition, imagination, emotionalism, and religion as useful and necessary components of social life. In that they disliked upheaval and sought to retain the existing order, they deplored developments such as the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, which they saw as disruptive forces. The conservatives tended to emphasize social order, an emphasis that became one of the central themes of the work of several sociological theorists.
Emphasis on social order in society became one of the central themes of the work of several sociological theorists. Reactionaries focused on individual whereas sociologists focused on whole entities like society in itself. Reaction by conservatives provided the basis for the development of classical French sociological theory. Focus started on:

1. Emphasis on society rather than an individual. Society not simply an aggregation of individuals.
2. Society was the most important unit of analysis; Society produced individual through socialization.
3. A society has component parts such as: roles, positions, relationships, structures, and institutions. Individuals were seen as doing little more than filling these units within society.
4. The parts of society were seen as interrelated and interdependent. Tempering with one part will affect the whole. Positive/negative outcomes of change.
5. Change was seen as a threat not only to society and its components but also to the individuals in society. Due to disruption of Institutions people are likely to suffer.
6. The general tendency was to see the various large-scale components of society as useful for both society and the individuals in it.
7. Small units, such as the family, the neighborhood, and religious and occupational groups, also were seen as essential to individuals and society. Primary group relations needed to survive in modern societies.
8. There was a tendency to see various modern social changes, such as industrialization, urbanization, and bureaucratization) as having disorganizing effects. Such changes were viewed

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with fear and anxiety. There was an emphasis on developing ways of dealing with their disruptive effects.

9. While most of the feared changes were leading to a more rational society, the conservative reaction led to an emphasis on the importance of non-rational factors (ritual, ceremony, and worship, for example) in social life.

10. The conservatives supported the existence of a hierarchical system in society. It was seen as important to society that there be a differential system of status and reward.

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Lesson 08

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRENCH SOCIOLOGY
(Topic 27-31)

The actual founding of sociology as a distinctive discipline— specifically, to the work of four French thinkers: Alexis de Tocqueville, Claude Saint- Simon, Auguste Comte, and especially Emile Durkheim.

Topic 027: The Development of French Sociology: Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859)

- His work is product of the Enlightenment.
- Often seen as a political scientist, not as a sociologist.
- Many have not perceived the existence of a social theory in his work.
- Three interrelated issues lie at the heart of Tocqueville's theory.

Three interrelated issues lie at the heart of Tocqueville's theory. As a product of the Enlightenment, he is first and foremost a great supporter of, and advocate for, *freedom* . However, he is much more critical of *equality*, which he sees as tending to produce mediocrity in comparison to the higher-quality outcomes associated with the aristocrats (he himself was an aristocrat) of a prior, more in egalitarian, era. More important, equality and mediocrity are also linked to what most concerns him, and that is the growth of *centralization*, especially in the government, and the threat centralized government poses to freedom. In his view, it was the inequality of the prior age, the power of the aristocrats that acted to keep government centralization in check. However, with the demise of aristocrats, and the rise of greater equality, there are no groups capable of countering the ever-present tendency toward centralization. The mass of largely equal people are too "servile" to oppose this trend. Furthermore, Tocqueville links equality to "individualism" (an important concept that he claimed to "invent" and for which he is credited), and the resulting individualists are far less interested in the well-being of the larger "community" than were the aristocrats who preceded them.

Equality leads to individualism

- "Individualists" are far less interested in the well-being of the larger "community" than were the aristocrats who preceded them.
- Critical of democracy and especially socialism.

Democracy's commitment to freedom was ultimately threatened by its parallel commitment to equality and its tendency toward centralized government. In socialism far greater commitment to equality, greater likelihood of government centralization, that poses a far greater threat to freedom. Country run by centralized government through bureaucracy.

Topic 028: The Development of French Sociology: Claude Henri Saint Simon

The most interesting aspect of Saint-Simon was his significance to the development of *both* conservative (like Comte's) and radical Marxian theory. On the conservative side, Saint-Simon wanted to preserve society as it was, but he did not seek a return to life as it had been in the

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Middle Ages, as did Bonald and Maistre. In addition, he was a *positivist*, which meant that he believed that the study of social phenomena should employ the same scientific techniques that were used in the natural sciences. On the radical side, Saint-Simon saw the need for socialist reforms, especially the centralized planning of the economic system. But Saint-Simon did not go nearly as far as Marx did later. Although he, like Marx, saw the capitalists superseding the feudal nobility, he felt it inconceivable that the working class would come to replace the capitalists. Many of Saint-Simon's ideas are found in Comte's work, but Comte developed them in a more systematic fashion.

Topic 029-030: The Development of French Sociology: Auguste Comte (1798-1857)

Comte was the first to use the term *sociology*. He believed that the study of sociology should be scientific, just as many classical theorists did and most contemporary sociologists do.

Comte was greatly disturbed by the anarchy that pervaded French society and was critical of those thinkers who had spawned both the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. He developed his scientific view, "positivism," or "positive philosophy," to combat what he considered to be the negative and destructive philosophy of the Enlightenment. Comte was in line with, and influenced by, the French counterrevolutionary Catholics (especially Bonald and Maistre). However, his work can be set apart from theirs on at least two grounds. First, he did not think it possible to return to the Middle Ages; advances in science and industry made that impossible. Second, he developed a much more sophisticated theoretical system than his predecessors, one that was adequate to shape a good portion of early sociology.

Comte developed *social physics*, or what in 1839 he called *sociology* (Pickering, 2000). The use of the term *social physics* made it clear that Comte sought to model sociology after the "hard sciences." This new science, which in his view would ultimately become *the* dominant science, was to be concerned with both social statics (existing social structures) and social dynamics (social change). Although both involved the search for laws of social life, he felt that social dynamics was more important than social statics. This focus on change reflected his interest in social reform, particularly reform of the ills created by the French Revolution and the Enlightenment. Comte did not urge evolutionary change, because he felt the natural evolution of society would make things better. Reforms were needed only to assist the process a bit.

This leads us to the cornerstone of Comte's approach—his evolutionary theory, or the *law of the three stages.* The theory proposes that there are three intellectual stages through which the world has gone throughout its history. According to Comte, not only does the world go through this process, but groups, societies, sciences, individuals, and even minds go through the same three stages. The *theological stage* is the first, and it characterized the world prior to 1300. During this period, the major idea system emphasized the belief that supernatural powers and religious figures, modeled after humankind, are at the root of everything. In particular, the social and physical world is seen as produced by God. The second stage is the *metaphysical* stage, which occurred roughly between 1300 and 1800. This era was characterized by the belief that abstract forces like "nature," rather than personalized gods, explain virtually everything. Finally, in 1800 the world entered the *positivistic* stage, characterized by belief in science. People now tended to give up the search for absolute causes (God or nature) and concentrated instead on observation of

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the social and physical world in the search for the laws governing them. Comte was in the forefront of the development of positivistic sociology. To Jonathan Turner, Comte's positivism emphasized that "the social universe is amenable to the development of abstract laws that can be tested through the careful collection of data," and "these abstract laws will denote the basic and generic properties of the social universe and they will specify their 'natural relations' ". As we will see, a number of classical theorists (especially Spencer and Durkheim) shared Comte's interest in the discovery of the laws of social life. While positivism remains important in contemporary sociology, it has come under attack from a number of quarters.

Topic 031: The Development of French Sociology: Emile Durkheim 1858-1917

Durkheim – an academician
Developed an increasingly solid academic base for himself and for sociology. His work ultimately became a dominant force in the development of sociology in general and of sociological theory in particular.

Social order necessary
French revolution, industrial revolution, enlightenment disrupted the social order. Devoted to the study of social order. Problems not inherent. Reduce the disorder through social reforms. No revolutions.

Social facts
Durkheim developed a distinctive conception of the subject matter of sociology and then tested it in an empirical study. In *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895/1982), Durkheim argued that it is the special task of sociology to study what he called *social facts* (Nielsen, 2005a, 2007a). He conceived of social facts as forces (Takla and Pope, 1985) and structures that are external to, and coercive of, the individual. The study of these large-scale structures and forces—for example, institutionalized law and shared moral beliefs—and their impact on people became the concern of many later sociological theorists (Parsons, for example). In *Suicide* (1897/1951), Durkheim reasoned that if he could link such an individual behavior as suicide to social causes (social facts), he would have made a persuasive case for the importance of the discipline of sociology. But Durkheim did not examine why individual *A* or *B* committed suicide; rather, he was interested in the causes of differences in suicide rates among groups, regions, countries, and different categories of people (for example, married and single).

His basic argument was that it was the nature of, and changes in, social facts that led to differences in suicide rates. For example, a war or an economic depression would create a collective mood of depression that would in turn lead to increases in suicide rates. More will be said on this subject in Chapter 3, but the key point is that Durkheim developed a distinctive view of sociology and sought to demonstrate its usefulness in a scientific study of suicide.

Explaining behavior scientifically
A distinctive view of sociology emerged with the scientific explanation of behavior. Demonstrated its usefulness in scientific study human actions. Established sociology as an academic discipline in France.

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Lesson 09

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GERMAN SOCIOLOGY
(Topic 32-35)

Topic 032: The Development of German Sociology: Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Marx was not a sociologist and did not consider himself one. Although his work is too broad to be encompassed by the term *sociology*, there is a sociological theory to be found in Marx's work. From the beginning, there were those who were heavily influenced by Marx, and there has been a continuous strand of Marxian sociology, primarily in Europe. But for the majority of early sociologists, his work was a negative force, something against which to shape their sociology. Until very recently, sociological theory, especially in America, has been characterized by either hostility to or ignorance of Marxian theory.

Marx offered a theory of capitalist society based on his image of the basic nature of human beings. Marx believed that people are basically productive; that is, in order to survive, people need to work in, and with, nature. In so doing, they produce the food, clothing, tools, shelter, and other necessities that permit them to live. Their productivity is a perfectly natural way by which they express basic creative impulses. Furthermore, these impulses are expressed in concert with other people; in other words, people are inherently social. They need to work together to produce what they need to survive.

Capitalism is a structure (or, more accurately, a series of structures) that erects barriers between an individual and the production process, the products of that process, and other people; ultimately, it even divides the individual himself or herself. This is the basic meaning of the concept of *alienation*: it is the breakdown of the natural interconnection among people and what they produce. Alienation occurs because capitalism has evolved into a two-class system in which a few capitalists own the production process, the products, and the labor time of those who work for them. Instead of naturally producing for themselves, people produce unnaturally in capitalist society for a small group of capitalists. Intellectually, Marx was very concerned with the structures of capitalism and their oppressive impact on actors. Politically, he was led to an interest in emancipating people from the oppressive structures of capitalism.

Marx actually spent very little time dreaming about what a utopian socialist state would look like. He was more concerned with helping to bring about the demise of capitalism. He believed that the contradictions and conflicts within capitalism would lead dialectically to its ultimate collapse, but he did not think that the process was inevitable. People had to act at the appropriate times and in the appropriate ways for socialism to come into being. The capitalists had great resources at their disposal to forestall the coming of socialism, but they could be overcome by the concerted action of a class-conscious proletariat. What would the proletariat create in the process? What is socialism? Most basically, it is a society in which, for the first time, people could approach Marx's ideal image of productivity. With the aid of modern technology, people could interact harmoniously with nature and other people to create what they needed to survive.

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Topic 033: The Development of German Sociology: Max Weber (1884-1920)

Weber's work was fundamentally a theory of the process of rationalization. Weber was interested in the general issue of why institutions in the Western world had grown progressively more rational while powerful barriers seemed to prevent a similar development in the rest of the world.

Although rationality is used in many different ways in Weber's work, what interests us here is a process involving one of four types identified by Kalberg (1980, 1990, 1994; see also Brubaker, 1984; D. Levine, 1981a), *formal rationality*. Formal rationality involves, as was usually the case with Weber, a concern for the actor making choices of means and ends. However, in this case, that choice is made in reference to universally applied rules, regulations, and laws. These, in turn, are derived from various large-scale structures, especially bureaucracies and the economy. Weber developed his theories in the context of a large number of comparative historical studies of the West, China, India, and many other regions of the world. In those studies, he sought to delineate the factors that helped bring about or impede the development of rationalization. Weber saw the bureaucracy (and the historical process of bureaucratization) as the classic example of rationalization, but rationalization is perhaps best illustrated today by the fast-food restaurant. The fast-food restaurant is a formally rational system in which people (both workers and customers) are led to seek the most rational means to ends. The drive-through window, for example, is a rational means by which workers can dispense, and customers can obtain, food quickly and efficiently. Speed and efficiency are dictated by the fast-food restaurants and the rules and regulations by which they operate.

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism:

- Predestination. Ascetic life.
- Break the 'feudal spirit' i.e. luxurious life.
- Combining the two led to development of capitalism.
- Knowledge rationalized capitalist action i.e. ascetic and world oriented.
- Capitalism another system of ideas.

Debating positivism:

- Debated positivism.
- Application of natural science methods questioned.
- Special method to study human beings and culture.
- Objectivity in the study of society is not possible.

Topic 034-035: The Development of German Sociology: George Simmel (1858-1918)

Society as forms of interaction:

One of the founding fathers of Sociology. Sociology as subject or profession did not exist. Interaction was a central concept of his discussion. He said that society as product of interaction. Description of interaction is description of society. There are different forms of interaction.

Forms of groups

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The **Dyad** is social group with two members.
The **Triad** is a social group with three members. It is more stable than the dyad.

Different forms of interaction

- Different interaction settings.
- Analyze/understand these different interaction units.
- Forms: Cooperation, division of labor, party. Dyads, triads.
- Why these groups? Motives.
- Who are the interactants?
- Sociology to study these forms of interaction.

Sociology is the science of forms of social interaction. Society is dynamic: constantly emerges in forms of interaction. No interaction, no society.

Social differentiation: The division of labor

- Social differentiation: Social phenomenon is separated into various parts. Theme.
- Parts are either similar or different in type and function.
- Spencer considered society as super organism.
- Integration and differentiation in organism.
- Society progresses through differentiation.

Division of Labor

- Differentiation leads to division of labor. Economical.
- Society as an organism.
- Time and energy saved can be invested elsewhere.
- Division of labor leads to specialization.
- Increasing differentiation.
- Division of labor and differentiation qualities of progress. Modern society.

Individuality: A product of social differentiation

- Growth of society leads to differentiation, division of labor, and specialization.
- Specialty provides new identity – individuality to persons, groups, and societies.
- Two individualities: Two identities.
- Different but similar. Paradoxical identity.

Individuality and modernity

- Individual freedom.
- Issues: capitalist economy, modern urban society (conflicts, loneliness, alienation)

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Lesson 10

THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRITISH SOCIOLOGY AND ITALIAN SCHOLARS (Topic 36-39)

This lecture focuses on development of sociology in England. Continental European ideas had their impact on early British sociology, but more important were native influences.

Topic 036-037: Herbert Spencer (1820-1930)

It is possible to identify at least two major evolutionary perspectives in Spencer's work. The first of these theories relates primarily to the increasing size of society. Society grows through both the multiplication of individuals and the union of groups (compounding). The increasing size of society brings with it larger and more differentiated social structures, as well as the increasing differentiation of the functions they perform. In addition to their growth in size, societies evolve through compounding, that is, by unifying more and more adjoining groups. Thus, Spencer talks of the evolutionary movement from simple to compound, doubly-compound, and trebly-compound societies.

Spencer also offers a theory of evolution from *militant* to *industrial* societies. Earlier, militant societies are defined by being structured for offensive and defensive warfare. While Spencer was critical of warfare, he felt that in an earlier stage it was functional in bringing societies together (for example, through military conquest) and in creating the larger aggregates of people necessary for the development of industrial society. However, with the emergence of industrial society, warfare ceases to be functional and serves to impede further evolution. Industrial society is based on friendship, altruism, elaborate specialization, recognition for achievements rather than the characteristics one is born with, and voluntary cooperation among highly disciplined individuals. Such a society is held together by voluntary contractual relations and, more important, by a strong common morality. The government's role is restricted and focuses only on what people ought not to do. Obviously, modern industrial societies are less warlike than their militant predecessors. Although Spencer sees a general evolution in the direction of industrial societies, he also recognizes that it is possible that there will be periodic regressions to warfare and more militant societies.

In his ethical and political writings, Spencer offered other ideas on the evolution of society. For one thing, he saw society as progressing toward an ideal, or perfect, moral state. For another, he argued that the fittest societies survive and that unfit societies should be permitted to die off. The result of this process is adaptive upgrading for the world as a whole. Thus Spencer offered a rich and complicated set of ideas on social evolution. His ideas first enjoyed great success, then were rejected for many years, and more recently have been revived with the rise of neo evolutionary sociological theories.

Society as an organism

- Analogy between society and biological organism.
- Comparing organic (bodily) and super-organic (societal) organization.
- Both are systems of organization.. Components.

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- Society has structure, function, and transformation.
- Society must be studied as a thing – entity existing in itself.

Explaining the evolution of society

- Both grow and develop.
- Both increase in size.
- Progressive differentiation in structure and functions.
- In both, part and whole are interdependent.
- Each part is micro-society or organism in itself.
- Life of the whole can be destroyed, parts may live for a while.

Analysis of super-organic dynamics

- Dynamic properties of super-organic systems.
- System growth, differentiation, and integration.
- Adaptation to environment.
- Whole system is dynamically functional.

Topic 038-039: The Italian Scholar: Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923)

We close this sketch of early, primarily conservative, European sociological theory with a brief mention of one Italian sociologist, Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923). Pareto was influential in his time, but his contemporary relevance is minimal (for one exception, see Powers, 1986). There was a brief outburst of interest in Pareto's (1935) work in the 1930s, when the major American theorist, Talcott Parsons, devoted as much attention to him as he gave to Weber and Durkheim. However, in recent years, except for a few of his major concepts, Pareto also has receded in importance and contemporary relevance (Femia, 1995).

Pareto developed his "major ideas as a refutation of Marx". In fact, Pareto was rejecting not only Marx but also a good portion of Enlightenment philosophy. For example, whereas the Enlightenment philosophers emphasized rationality, Pareto emphasized the role of nonrational factors such as human instincts. This emphasis also was tied to his rejection of Marxian theory. That is, because nonrational, instinctual factors were so important and so unchanging, it was unrealistic to hope to achieve dramatic social changes with an economic revolution.

Pareto also developed a theory of social change that stood in stark contrast to Marxian theory. Whereas Marx's theory focused on the role of the masses, Pareto offered an elite theory of social change, which held that society inevitably is dominated by a small elite that operates on the basis of enlightened self-interest. It rules over the masses of people, who are dominated by non-rational forces. Because they lack rational capacities, the masses, in Pareto's system, are unlikely to be a revolutionary force. Social change occurs when the elite begins to degenerate and is replaced by a new elite derived from the non-governing elite or higher elements of the masses. Once the new elite is in power, the process begins anew. Thus, we have a cyclical theory of social change instead of the directional theories offered by Marx, Comte, Spencer, and others. In addition, Pareto's theory of change largely ignores the plight of the masses. Elites come and go, but the lot of the masses remains the same.

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This theory, however, was not Pareto's lasting contribution to sociology. That lay in his scientific conception of sociology and the social world: "My wish is to construct a system of sociology on the model of celestial mechanics [astronomy], physics, chemistry" (cited in Hook, 1965:57). Briefly, Pareto conceived of society as a system in equilibrium, a whole consisting of interdependent parts. A change in one part was seen as leading to changes in other parts of the system. Pareto's systemic conception of society was the most important reason Parsons devoted so much attention to Pareto's work in his 1937 book, *The Structure of Social Action,* and it was Pareto's most important influence on Parsons's thinking. Fused with similar views held by those who had an organic image of society (Comte, Durkheim, and Spencer, for example), Pareto's theory played a central role in the development of Parsons's theory and, more generally, in structural functionalism. Although few modern sociologists now read Pareto's work, it can be seen as a rejection of the Enlightenment and of Marxism and as offering an elite theory of social change that stands in opposition to the Marxian perspective.

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Lesson 11

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY-I
(Topic 40-44)

Topic 040: George Herbert Mead (1862-1931)

Sociology in USA

During the 1880s, sociology courses began to appear. First department of sociology was founded at the University of Kansas in 1889. In 1892, the University of Chicago set up the new department of sociology. Chicago department became the first important center of American sociology. Early American sociologists described as political liberals. Belief in the freedom and welfare of the individual. Many sociologists adopted an evolutionary view of social progress.

George Herbert Mead (1863-1931)

G. H. Mead (1863-1931) developed a theory of social behaviorism to explain how social experience creates individual personality. There is the power of environment to shape behavior. Mead's central concept is self that part of an individual's personality composed of self-awareness and self-image.

Interactionism

- The social whole precedes the individual mind both logically and temporally.
- The part is explained in terms of the whole, not the whole in terms of the part or parts.
- A thinking, self-conscious individual is logically impossible without a prior social group. Interaction
- Society → thinking individual→ self-image.
- Self as generalized other.

Thinking consists of the conversations we carry on in our minds with ourselves about all sorts of things, especially about ourselves. As a child, you eventually developed cognitively to the point at which you were able to use one symbol (a doll, for example) to represent a parent and another symbol (another doll, for example) that represent you. Only then you could engage in **role taking –** imagining being someone else and looking from that person's perspective back at yourself as a social object. That is the imitation of the role of others. Out of the early social interactions we develop our ability to communicate, our ability to think, and our social self-emerge.

Topic 041: Talcott Parsons (1902-1979)

A pivotal figure of contemporary sociology

After getting degree from Germany, Parsons started his career at Harvard. He wrote 17 books and 200+ papers. He is also known as structural functionalist.

Society as a social system

- Social system exists *sui generis* i.e. on its own.
- Society, a system, exists independent of individuals.

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- Society has structure, composed of subsystems.
- Subsystems perform functions.
- Contribute to the integration of the whole.

Subsystems perform functions

- Integrative: norms that bind the individuals to society.
- Pattern maintenance: cultural system of values.
- Goal attainment: personality system – the basis of differentiation.
- Adaptation: humans adapt.

Society as a living system

- Biological analogy.
- System is not static. Adaptive. Differentiation or division of labor as needed.
- Tendency towards equilibrium. Homeostasis.

Topic 042-044: Robert K. Merton (1910-2003)

Functionalist

Functionalist yet different from Parsons. Same system of functionalism inapplicable to all systems. Universal functionalism questioned. All functions may not benefit the society as a whole. Indispensability of function for the survival of social system questioned.

Manifest and latent functions

Manifest: Intended consequences/functions. Participants are aware.
Latent: Unintended consequences/functions.

Criteria: intentionality + awareness. Four types:

- Intended + recognized.
- Intended + unrecognized.
- Unintended + recognized.
- Unintended + unrecognized.

Dysfunctions

- Beneficial and harmful functions (dysfunctions).
- Rejection of the priori assumption i.e. universal functionality.
- Out of four, find out empirically the type of function.
- Conceptual guideline for empirical research. Not a theory.

Middle-range theory

Abandon the idea of all-encompassing theory. Focus on practical problems. Develop special theories applicable to limited ranges. Like theories of deviant behavior.

Consolidate MR theories: General theory

- MR theories are limited to set of assumptions.
- Deduce hypotheses. Test.

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- MR views can be consolidated into more general theory.
- Fill in the blanks" between raw empiricism. Develop grand theory.

Empiricism to theory

- Merton quoted the examples of MR theories given by Durkheim (Suicide) and Weber (Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism).
- His own theories like reference group theory, deviance, bureaucratic personality.

Cultural goals (CGs) and institutionalized means (Ims)

- CGs and IMs: The two concepts in functionalism.
- Used anomie as a major X variable.
- Anomie usually means normlessness. But
- Merton used it as a discontinuity between the cultural goals and the available legitimate mean to reach them.

Theory of deviance

- Monetary success – a cultural goal in USA.
- Non availability of means to reach.
- The resulting anomie is dysfunctional for American society as well as for the groups who lack means.
- Source of strain for the system.
- Resultant deviance. Use some mode of adaptation.

Modes of Adoption

X (Anomie) → Y (Deviance)

Cultural Goals	Institutionalized Means	Modes of Adaptation
+	+	Conformity
+	−	Innovation
−	+	Ritualism
−	−	Retreatism
±	±	Rebellion

Goals, Means, and Adaptations: Merton on Deviance

R. K. Merton (1968) pointed out that the people who experience strain are likely to feel *anomie*, a sense of norm-less-ness. Because the dominant norms (for example work, education) don't seem to be getting them anywhere, they have difficult time identifying with them. They may even feel wronged by the system, and its rules may seem illegitimate. Matching culturally approved goals to culturally approved means creates strain and people deviate from the norms.

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So access to the approved means to achieve the material success varies by the social class structure. It creates stress especially for the lower class youth.
As part of the survival youth will look for success in getting work through legitimate or illegitimate means because "success (goal) is more important than how (means) success is achieved." For this purpose they could adopt different ways, and Merton called these as modes of adaptation.

- *Innovation:* Robbery, burglary, drugs
- *Ritualism:* Lack of interest in success but supports the means
- *Retreatism:* Escapism, narcotic addiction
- *Rebellion:* Vandalism, senseless violent crimes (counter culture)

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Lesson 12

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY-II
(Topic 45-49)

Topic 045-047: Charles H. Cooley (1964-1929)

Charles Horton Cooley (1864–1929) was born in Michigan and was associated with the University of Michigan for all of his professional life. Like Mead, his ideas also contributed to the development of symbolic interaction theory. His perspective on the relation between a person's self-concept and face-to-face interaction within primary groups is expressed in his frequently cited concept of the "looking glass self" (Cooley ([1902] 1964). This metaphor refers to the way one's identity is formed from the reflections one sees of oneself in the reactions of others. This concept is clearly parallel to Mead's insights regarding the social origins of one's Self-concept. More than Mead, however, Cooley stressed the importance of our emotional reactions to these responses. When we perceive the reactions of others as indicating either approval or disapproval, we feel pride or shame as a result.

Cooley ([1902] 1964) also pointed out that our identity may extend beyond ourselves to include our family, friends, and primary group relationships. To speak of "*my* family" or "*my* group" is to expand our sense of self to include these relationships. The groups with which we identify most strongly in this way are likely to be primary groups. Such groups differ from secondary groups in that they are characterized by intimate face-to-face relationships. It is through primary groups (especially the family) that individuals are bound together with a sense of unity and cohesiveness that finds expression in the mutual regard (or sympathy) they have for one another in their common life.

Interaction

- Interaction – the cementing link between groups.
- Through interaction groups share common ideas and conceptions.
- Need language (gestures, symbols) for communication.
- May be called symbolic interaction.

Language

- Humans develop language (signs, symbols, gestures).
- Out of reading/understanding each other's gestures, people read each other's mind.
- Interpret each other's dispositions (inclinations).
- Society is an interweaving and interworking of mental selves.
- Out of communication establish social relations.

Self-consciousness

- Humans have the capacity for self-consciousness.
- Capacity emerges through interaction with others in groups.
- Identify what one is.
- Once it exists, it allows people to organize themselves in society.

The looking glass self

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Self as one's ability to see and recognize oneself as an object. It needs a critical insight. Using gestures of others to see themselves.
Self-image: like one's reflection in a looking glass. Reactions of others provide a reflection of one's image. Reading the gestures of others. Humans see themselves as an object. In imagination we perceive in another's mind some thought of our appearance. This imagination affects us. Others peoples' gestures as looking glass. People:

1. Imagine their appearance in the eyes of others.
2. Sense the judgment of others.
3. Have self-feeling about themselves.

Through the process of interaction self-consciousness and self-feeling develops.

The emergence of Self: Process
For Cooley the life history of an individual is evolutionary. Individual grows. From physical being one grows into social being. It is a process. Socialization process helps in interaction with others.

- Communication and reading others' gestures.
- Roles played in the presence of others.
- Others represent a mirror.
- What we think of ourselves depends on what we think others think of us.
- Our perception of how we look to others.
- Our perception in their judgment of how we look.
- Our feelings about these judgments.
- *Self-feelings, self-concept, self-image, self-identity*
- Learn to play different roles

Topic 048-049: C. Wright Mills (1916-1962)

Sociological imagination
It is Critical of functionalism. The "sociological imagination" should uncover the connections between individuals' personal troubles and the overall structure of society. Use critical thinking. The troubles individuals experience are rooted in the way society is organized. Distinction between *personal troubles* and *public issues.*

Analyze social structures critically

- Social structures (SS) look to be negatively functional.
- SS prevent people, as human beings, from:
- Meeting their basic needs, and
- Developing their full potential.
- Do the critical analysis.

Large scale bureaucratic organizations rule

- Individuals work as part of big organizations.
- They adapt to the demands of these organizational structures.
- Adaptation leads to their limited awareness of how their freedom is restricted.
- Organizations are controlled by few elites who may not be property owners

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The power elite

- Central thesis: Country governed by power elite.
- Basically three types:
- The "corporate rich," the military "warlords," and the "political directorate."
- They represent economic, military and political institutions
- All of them form an integrated and unified power elite.
- Determine the basic structure and direction of the society

Elite group

- Large size and highly centralized structure
- No conscious conspiracy among these elites.
- Elites may disagree within and between groups.
- May not share exactly the same interests.
- Their decisions and actions have wide-ranging ramifications for one another as well as for the overall society.

Elite interests supreme

- Can be conflict between elite interests and the overall welfare of society.
- Society sharply divided horizontally between the powerful and powerless.

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Lesson 13

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY-III
(Topic 50-53)

George C. Homans (1910-1989)

Homans's basic view was that the heart of sociology lies in the study of individual behavior and interaction. He was little interested in consciousness or in the various kinds of large-scale structures and institutions that were of concern to most sociologists. His main interest was instead in the reinforcement patterns, the history of rewards and costs that lead people to do what they do. Basically, Homans argued that people continue to do what they have found to be rewarding in the past. Conversely, they cease doing what has proved to be costly in the past. To understand behavior, we need to understand an individual's history of rewards and costs. Thus, the focus of sociology should be not on consciousness or on social structures and institutions but rather on patterns of reinforcement.

- Market transactions and personal relations have similarities.
- Both governed by utilitarian perspective. Cost – benefit approach. Exchange.
- Avoid the pain, maximize the pleasure. Rational choice.
- Same principle governs social relations.

Operant conditioning

- Operant conditioning model drawn from behavioral psychology. Past experiences.
- Human beings provide positive or negative reinforcements of various types to one another as they interact. Hence:
- Process mutually shapes one another's behavior.
- Can also be for future rewards (Area of economics)
- Investment for future rewards.
- Expectations for future based on past experiences.

Basic exchange propositions

- Dynamics of exchange.
- Portrayed by three basic concepts: (1) activities, (2) interaction, and (3) sentiments.
- The three concepts are interrelated.
- Different components of social systems are linked through mutual interdependence.
- Functionalist approach.

Basic exchange propositions

- Individuals are more likely to perform an activity the more valuable they perceive the reward of that activity to be.
- The more often a particular action of a person is rewarded, the more likely the person is to perform that action.
- The more a situation approximates one in which activity has been rewarded in the past, the more likely a particular activity will be emitted.

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- The more often in the recent past a person has received a particular reward, the less valuable any further unit of that reward becomes for that person.
- When a person's action does not receive the reward expected or receive punishment that was not expected, he or she will be angry and become more likely to perform aggressive behavior.

Exchange in everyday life

- Exchange of greetings. Informal exchange.
- Social approval –expression of positive sentiments.
- One's social influence reflects his or her ability to reward another for compliance.
- Gratitude in exchange.
- Exchange at group level.
- Individuals in cooperative groups exchange social approval as they contribute to group goals.
- Individuals whose contributions are extremely valuable but are in scarce supply will be rewarded with esteem.
- Individuals interact with on the basis of rewards and punishments.
- Can be interaction without choice.
- Indirect exchange i.e. institutional exchange.

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Lesson 14

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY-IV
(Topic 54-59)

Peter M. Blau (1918-2002)

Social attraction

Social attraction is the force that induces human beings to establish social associations on their own. Association is expected to be rewarding. Rewarding intrinsically or extrinsically or both. Mutual attraction leads to exchange relations. This is social exchange at Micro level. Visible in simple society.

Exchange and Power in Social Life (1964)

Focused on the structure of the associations that result from people's exchange transactions. Basic exchange processes generate complex structures. A transition from the micro to the macro level. Complex structures are based on imbalanced exchanges.

Dialectical exchange

- Contradictions in exchange.
- Rationality with a different meaning. Utilitarianism.
- Imbalances in exchange transactions give rise to differences in status and power. Potential conflict.
- Such power structures provide the foundation for larger (macro) level structures.

Basic exchange principles

Rationality principle:

The profit people expect from one another in emitting a particular activity, the more likely they are to emit that activity.

Reciprocity principles:

A. The more people have exchanged rewards with one another, the more likely are reciprocal obligations to emerge and guide subsequent exchange among these people. May be called principle of social attraction.

B. The more the reciprocal obligations of an exchange relationships are violated, the more disposed the deprived parties are to sanction negatively those violating the norm of reciprocity.

Justice principles:

A. The more exchange relations have been established; the more likely they are to be governed by norms of *fair exchange*.

B. The less norms of fairness are realized in an exchange relationship, the more disposed deprived parties are to sanction negatively those violating the norms.

Marginal utility principle:

The more expected rewards have been forthcoming from the emission of a particular activity, the less valuable the activity is and the less likely its emission is.

Imbalance principle:

The more stabilized and balanced are one set of exchange relations among social units, the more likely are other exchange relations to become imbalanced and unstable.

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Mediating values and institutionalization

- People enter into exchange for deriving reward: An attraction.
- Some have more valuable resources to offer than others.
- Resources lead to differentiation of power.
- Those with resources, others need, can ask for any kind of compliance.

Conditions of differentiation of power

In case a person, who is in need of recurrent services from an associate, has nothing to offer in exchange, there are four alternatives for him:

1. He may force the other to give him help;
2. He may obtain the help he needs from other source;
3. He may find ways to get along without such help; and
4. He must subordinate himself to the other and comply with his wishes.

Fourth alternative has far reaching consequences i.e. the acceptance of subordination. Power is like a "credit card."

Social exchange and conflict

- Differences in power is potential for conflict.
- Group norms regulate SE.
- Norms of fair exchange – justice.
- Norms govern the subordinate- superordinate power relations.
- Relations become imbalanced when norms violated by the powerful.

Deprivation of fare rate of exchange

- Imbalance leads to conflict.
- Dialectical approach.
- Can be collective experience of imbalance – feeling of deprivation – potential for opposition – conflict.
- To oppose the powerful by the powerless may become a noble and worthy deed – an ideal – ideological opposition.

Solidarity among subordinates

The greater the sense of solidarity among subordinates, the more they can define their opposition as a noble and worthy cause, and the more likely they are to oppose those in power. The resultant conflict. The conflict may end in revolt – revolution. Dialectic.

Direct and indirect exchange

DE: reciprocal transactions between persons, groups, or collectivities, usually at micro level. Simple society.

IE: Complex pattern of exchanges among collectivities and between them and individual members, at macro level.

- Complex society (CS).
- CS has more collectivities. Structures. Interdependence of structures.

Mediating values and institutionalization

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- Common set of standards for conducting the complex chain of exchanges.
- Shared values are codified into laws and enforcement procedures.
- Such values provide effective mediation of complex exchanges.
- The process exchanges get institutionalized.

Institutionalization

- Formalization of standards.
- Develop formal procedures of social exchange through substructures.
- It is institutionalization.
- The more complex the exchange relations, the more the formalization of social values, and the subsequent institutionalization of substructures and their exchange relations.

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Lesson 15

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY-V
(Topic 60-63)

Dorthy E. Smith (1987-)

Dorothy E. Smith (1987) argues for a "woman-centered" sociological perspective (see also Smith, 1990, 1999). Her perspective, which can be characterized as a feminist "standpoint" theory, emphasizes that the social world is always experienced from the particular standpoints (or social positions) where individuals are located in the social structure. Her analysis leads to a critical orientation toward efforts to develop an "objective" sociology that is not grounded explicitly in the ongoing subjective experiences of people in their everyday lives.

According to Smith, the theories and research findings of (male) academic sociologists purport to provide authoritative accounts of the social world that takes precedence over the experiences and practical knowledge of the people who participate day after day in this world. When the results of such analyses are presented as universally valid knowledge grounded in "objective" facts, the validity of the knowledge based on personal experiences is discounted and dismissed as particularistic, nonrational, and merely subjective. In this way the voices of women and others without power or influence are silenced in favor of the voices of those (sociologists and others) who claim to base their knowledge on objective scientific facts rather than personal subjective experiences.

Sociological accounts of the social world that fail to correspond to the realities of people's lived experiences contribute to a "bifurcated consciousness," particularly for women (Smith, 1987:6–9). This is a type of consciousness that develops when the actual subjective experiences of everyday life are discounted in favor of professional academic modes of discourse and forms of knowledge that rest on authoritative claims to be objective and thus superior to subjective feelings and impressions. For both genders, this process can be illustrated in the classroom when students are cautioned not to rely on their own limited personal experiences for understanding the social world but to accept instead the authority of "objective" academic discourse for achieving "full" or "valid" or "less biased" understanding. The process is similar is some ways to what happens in marriage relations when a wife's efforts to contribute to discussions with her husband are dismissed as unworthy of consideration because she is being "too emotional," experiencing PMS, or not seeing the "larger picture" objectively.

The type of sociology Smith advocates begins with actual lived experiences and practical activities in which people engage as they adapt to the realities of their immediate social environment. For women, these realities involve fulfilling the expectations of their subordinate role as they attend to the needs of others (particularly males). These "behind the scenes" support roles are no less essential for the maintenance of institutional structures than the roles of those who are the official "agents" for these structures. Smith insists that by giving more explicit attention to people's lived experiences, sociologists would be better able to understand the everyday social pressures resulting from the impersonal and external "relations of ruling" that confront them daily. These ruling relations described by Smith are experienced by women (and

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other subordinates) at the micro level as they are confronted with the widespread expectations and demands of others who see their own interests and needs as having priority and as giving them the right to assume a position of dominance. Smith's argument is that, all else being equal, gender relations throughout society are governed by the implicitly understood cultural expectation that women will be deferential and compliant in their relations with men and that men will be dominant. All else is frequently not equal, however, especially for women employed in subordinate low-paying service jobs at the bottom of bureaucratic hierarchies. This means they are subordinated not only as women but also as subordinates in the organizational hierarchy at their place of employment.

Smith is highly critical of conventional sociological discourse because of the way it inevitably reflects the particular standpoints and implicit assumptions of those who create and utilize such discourse. This has traditionally been a male perspective. The alternative feminist perspective advocated by Smith emphasizes the way in which the standpoint (or social location) of women, and their experiences of the social world, differ from those of men. This results in large part from the fact that gender provides the foundation for male-dominated "relations of ruling" that pervade all aspects of social life. This concept of the "relations of ruling" refers to how the implicit cultural rules justifying male dominance are expressed in the actual relationships that develop between women and men. Smith argues that these widely accepted cultural understandings are virtually invisible to male sociologists simply because they are so deeply embedded in the taken-for-granted nature of the social world. In short, men don't have a clue as to how to theorize the experience of participating in the social world as a woman because they are on opposite sides of the fence, particularly in terms of the relations of ruling.

There are, of course, important differences among different feminist theorists. Some have expanded their focus to show how differences based on class and race, as well as sexual orientation, intersect with gender to give rise to important distinctions in the experiences of different categories of women. Thus different feminist theories can be compared and contrasted in terms of whether they focus primarily on the experiences shared by all women throughout society or the variations among women themselves in different racial/ethnic groups or socio-economic class positions.

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Lesson 16

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY-VI
(Topic 64-67)

Patricia Hill Collins (1948)

In her portrayal of black feminist thought, Patricia Hill Collins (2000) emphasized the interrelations of gender, race, and class as intersecting sources of domination, especially for black women. Since a great deal of feminist theory has been developed by white women in academic settings, their analyses may be seen as having limited relevance to the lived experiences of black women. Collins' primary goal is to portray the worlds of black women in their own terms (or from their own standpoints), as opposed to comparing or contrasting their experiences or worldviews with those of white women.

Drawing extensively on the writings and other cultural expressions of African American women, Collins describes their lives and worldviews in the areas of self-identity, "sexual politics," love relationships, motherhood, and community activism. With regard to self-identity, for example, she shows how the heroic struggles of black women within their own social networks enable them to maintain a sense of dignity and self-respect and to resist the negative images that underlie the dominant institutional practices of the wider society. In contrast to the degrading treatment black women receive from others in the wider environment, the loving and mutually supportive relationships they establish with one another in their extended families and communities serve as a source of positive self-esteem and empowerment in a generally hostile and oppressive world.

Collins points out the dilemmas black mothers have in teaching their daughters to resist the system of oppression in which they find themselves and to work for improvements in their life situation. At the same time, however, these mothers understand the need for their daughters to learn how to adapt to their subordinate and marginal position in the larger society in order to survive. In other words, even as black mothers encourage their daughters to try to improve their lives, they must also help them learn to deal with the often humiliating realities they face. Collins shows, too, that motherhood for black women includes an "other mother" role that often involves caring for extended family and other members of the community—a role that often leads to various forms of political activism in the community.

Overall, Collins portrays the world of African American women as involving multiple challenges resulting from their subordination in multiple systems of domination. This means that their struggles to maintain their dignity and to work for justice for themselves and their community must be waged on several different fronts simultaneously. She points out that black women tend to be subordinated to black men in terms of gender identity, but subordinated to white women in terms of racial identity. In other words, the intersecting hierarchies of gender and race result in a more pervasive form of subordination than that experienced by either black men or white women. In addition, the fact that many employed black women earn minimal incomes means that socioeconomic class position provides yet a third source of subordination affecting their identities and life chances that are independent of their gender and race. This notion of the

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effects of the intersection of gender, race, and class as multiple hierarchies of domination is one of Collins' distinctive contributions to sociological theory. Her work can be seen as applying Dorothy's Smith's "standpoint" theory to the experiences of black women, especially those near the bottom of the socioeconomic hierarchy.

In some cases, too, the higher level occupations of upwardly mobile black women involves supervising other black women or providing social services to black clients. The experiences of black women with supervisory or professional careers are qualitatively different from the experiences of black women who continue to be employed in domestic service or other "invisible" types of service jobs. These successful African American women may be seen in some contexts as having been coopted, even when their level of upward socioeconomic mobility is quite limited. In effect, their middle class occupational positions means they are participants in the "ruling relations" (or authority structure) whereby the multiple structures of domination are maintained, even though many of them have not moved very high in the occupational hierarchy. In addition, when upwardly mobile black women are able to move out of African American neighborhoods into integrated neighborhoods, their network ties with other black women are likely to deteriorate. This means that their opportunities to contribute to the multiple forms of self-help exchanged in these communities is diminished at the same time that their resources to do so may have increased.

Other hierarchical differences that Collins analyzed include those of sexual orientation and nationality. The privileged status of heterosexual relationships provides a potential basis for marginalizing black women who are lesbian. Similarly, for black women living in the United States or other wealthy or developed societies, their nationality provides a source of privilege that distinguishes them from black women living in Africa or other poor or less developed regions of the world. Collins' overall emphasis is on the way multiple structures of domination, particularly those based on race, gender, and social class, reinforce one another in perpetuating systematic forms of oppression. But the differences within categories are also important to analyze. Thus race divides black and white women, and gender divides black women and men. Within these broad categories, sexual orientation divides heterosexuals from gays and lesbians, and nationality divides those who are dominated and oppressed in the United States from those in poorer societies who are exploited.

The pervasiveness of gender stratification and its overlap with other forms of domination and subordination are clearly revealed when we look at how gender relations are expressed at both the micro and macro levels of the social world, as well as in the meso levels in between.

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Lesson 17

CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY (Topic 68-70)

Topic 068: Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory: How Distinguishable?

No clear demarcation between classical and contemporary theory. Parsons considered the works by Weber and Durkheim as classic. Now Parsons himself may be considered as classical.

Classical: Four meanings

1. It has stood the test of time; we are still interested in it. Parsons may fall in it.
2. Classical that resonates contemporary work, gives orientation.
3. Work as classical when there have been new developments since it was written. Does not mean that the classical work has been superseded. New perspectives and debates have been added. These were not attended to earlier. Functionalism to neo-functionalism
4. Understand social theory in historical context.

A classical theory is distinguished from contemporary theory with respect to context i.e. distant past or recent present. Identify certain theories as "contemporary" that share the same broad historical situation with their authors.

Shifting borderlines

- The distinction between classical and contemporary appears to be relative.
- Parsons might be considered as midwife of modern or contemporary sociology.
- Still debatable.

Topic 069: The Classical Foundation of Sociological Theory

Different forces laid the foundation

Prominent role of enlightenment during late 17th and late 18th centuries. Planted the seed of sociology in Europe. Ibne-Khaldun, North African scholar, laid the foundation in 14th century. Variety of explanations about social realities, the forces that bring changes, and the consequences of changes. Social thought is already there. Prominent among the classical founders that gave sociological touch were Marx, Durkheim, and Weber. In early 20th centuries, Period when sociology emerged as a discipline and then institutionalized in Universities. Mid 19th and early 20th centuries. Classical founders' works sre not to be taken as whole truth. They helped define the discipline of sociology. The contemporary sociologists refine, rework and challenge the founders' ideas.

Topic 070: The Contemporary Sociological Theory

Priodized roughly with Parsons: 1930s

- Classics mostly focused on the challenges of social order and social change.
- Period when sociology first emerged as a discipline and was institutionalized in universities.

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- Still continuing with the dynamics of society with diversified approaches.

Contemporary theory: Diverse

- Sociology has become a specialized field.
- Breaking discipline into sub-specialties.
- At the same time it has become very broad. New bridges with other disciplines.

Specializations

- Includes macroscopic studies of structures of power, production, and trade. International levels.
- Variety of levels of analysis.
- No single theory or perspective is dominant.
- Variety of contending and complementary perspectives.
- Draw on works in other disciplines.

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Lesson 18

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORISTS: EMILE DURKHEIM (1838-1917)-I
(Topic 71-75)

Introduction

There are two main themes in the work of Emile Durkheim. The first is the priority of the social over the individual, and the second is the idea that society can be studied scientifically. Because both of these themes continue to be controversial, Durkheim is still relevant today.

We live in a society that tends to see everything as attributable to individuals, even clearly social problems such as racism, pollution, and economic recessions. Durkheim approaches things from the opposite perspective, stressing the social dimension of all human phenomena. However, even some who recognize the importance of society tend to see it as an amorphous entity that can be intuitively understood but never scientifically studied. Here again, Durkheim provides the opposing approach. For Durkheim, society is made up of "social facts" which exceed our intuitive understanding and must be investigated through observations and measurements. These ideas are so central to sociology that Durkheim is often seen as the "father" of sociology. To found sociology as a discipline was indeed one of Durkheim's primary goals.

Durkheim (1900/1973b:3) believed that sociology, as an idea, was born in France in the nineteenth century. He wanted to turn this idea into a discipline, a well-defined field of study. He recognized the roots of sociology in the ancient philosophers—such as Plato and Aristotle—and more proximate sources in French philosophers such as Montesquieu and Condorcet. However, in Durkheim's (1900/1973b:6) view, previous philosophers did not go far enough because they did not try to create an entirely new discipline.

Although the term *sociology* had been coined some years earlier by Auguste Comte, there was no field of sociology per se in late-nineteenth-century universities. There were no schools, departments, or even professors of sociology. There were a few thinkers who were dealing with ideas that were in one way or another sociological, but there was as yet no disciplinary "home" for sociology. Indeed, there was strong opposition from existing disciplines to the founding of such a field. The most significant opposition came from psychology and philosophy, two fields that claimed already to cover the domain sought by sociology. The dilemma for Durkheim, given his aspirations for sociology, was how to create for it a separate and identifiable niche.

To separate it from philosophy, Durkheim argued that sociology should be oriented toward empirical research. This seems simple enough, but the situation was complicated by Durkheim's belief that sociology was also threatened by a philosophical school within sociology itself. In his view, the two other major figures of the epoch who thought of themselves as sociologists, Comte and Herbert Spencer, were far more interested in philosophizing, in abstract theorizing, than they were in studying the social world empirically. If the field continued in the direction set by Comte and Spencer, Durkheim felt, it would become nothing more than a branch of philosophy. As a result, he found it necessary to attack both Comte and Spencer for relying on preconceived ideas

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of social phenomena instead of actually studying the real world. Thus Comte was said to be guilty of assuming theoretically that the social world was evolving in the direction of an increasingly perfect society, rather than engaging in the hard, rigorous, and basic work of actually studying the changing nature of various societies. Similarly, Spencer was accused of assuming harmony in society rather than studying whether harmony actually existed.

Social Facts

In order to help sociology move away from philosophy and to give it a clear and separate identity, Durkheim (1895/1982) proposed that the distinctive subject matter of sociology should be the study of social facts. Briefly, *social facts* are the social structures and cultural norms and values that are external to, and coercive of, actors. Students, for example, are constrained by such social structures as the university bureaucracy as well as the norms and values of American society, which place great importance on a college education. Similar social facts constrain people in all areas of social life. Crucial in separating sociology from philosophy is the idea that social facts are to be treated as "things" and studied empirically. This means that we must study social facts by acquiring data from outside of our own minds through observation and experimentation. The empirical study of social facts as things sets Durkheim gave two ways of defining a social fact so that sociology is distinguished from psychology. First, a social fact is experienced as an external constraint rather than an internal drive; second, it is general throughout the society and is not attached to any particular individual. Durkheim argued that social facts cannot be reduced to individuals, but must be studied as their own reality. Durkheim referred to social facts with the Latin term *sui generis*, which means "unique." He used this term to claim that social facts have their own unique character that is not reducible to individual consciousness. To allow that social facts could be explained by reference to individuals would be to reduce sociology to psychology. Instead, social facts can be explained only by other social facts.

He also refers to language as a social fact, and it provides an easily understood example. First, language is a "thing" that must be studied empirically. One cannot simply philosophize about the logical rules of language. Certainly, all languages have some logical rules regarding grammar, pronunciation, spelling, and so forth; however, all languages also have important exceptions to these logical rules. What follows the rules and what are exceptions must be discovered empirically by studying actual language use, especially since language use changes over time in ways that are not completely predictable.

Second, language is external to the individual. Although individuals use a language, language is not defined or created by the individual. The fact that individuals adapt language to their own use indicates that language is first external to the individual and in need of adaptation for individual use. Indeed, some philosophers have argued that there cannot be such a thing as a private language. A collection of words with only private meanings would not qualify as a language because it could not perform the basic function of a language: communication. Language is, by definition, social and therefore external to any particular individual.

Third, language is coercive of the individual. The language that we use makes some things extremely difficult to say. For example, people in lifelong relationships with same-sex partners have a very difficult time referring to each other. Should they call each other "partners"—leading

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people into thinking they are in business together— "significant others," "lovers," "spouses," "special friends"? Each seems to have its disadvantages. Language is part of the system of social facts that makes life with a finally, changes in language can be explained only by other social facts and never by one individual's intentions. Even in those rare instances where a change in language can be traced to an individual, the actual explanation for the change is the social facts that have made society open to this change. For example, the most changeable part of language is slang, which almost always originates in a marginal social group. We may assume that an individual first originates a slang term, but which individual is irrelevant. It is the fact of the marginal social group that truly explains the history and function of the slang.

Some sociologists feel that Durkheim took an "extremist" position in limiting sociology to the study of social facts. This position has limited at least some branches of sociology to the present day. Furthermore, Durkheim seemed to artificially sever sociology from neighboring fields. As puts it, "Because he defined sociology so exclusively in relation to its own facts, Durkheim cut it off from the other sciences of man." Nevertheless, whatever its subsequent drawbacks, Durkheim's idea of social facts both established sociology as an independent field of study and provided one of the most convincing arguments for studying society as it is before we decide what it should be.

Material and Nonmaterial Social Facts

Durkheim differentiated between two broad types of social facts—material and nonmaterial.
Material social facts, such as styles of architecture, forms of technology, and legal codes, are the easier to understand of the two because they are directly observable. Clearly, such things as laws are external to individuals and coercive over them. More importantly, these material social facts often express a far larger and more powerful realm of moral forces that are at least equally external to individuals and coercive over them. These are nonmaterial social facts.

The bulk of Durkheim's studies, and the heart of his sociology, lies in the study of nonmaterial social facts. Durkheim said: "Not all social consciousness achieves externalization and materialization". What sociologists now call norms and values, or more generally culture (Alexander, 1988), are good examples of what Durkheim meant by *nonmaterial social facts.* But this idea creates a problem: How can nonmaterial social facts like norms and values be external to the actor? Where could they be found except in the minds of actors? And if they are in the minds of actors, are they not internal rather than external?

Durkheim recognized that nonmaterial social facts are, to a certain extent, found in the minds of individuals. However, it was his belief that when people begin to interact in complex ways, their interactions will "obey laws all their own". Individuals are still necessary as a kind of substrate for the nonmaterial social facts, but the particular form and content will be determined by the complex interactions and not by the individuals. Hence, Durkheim could write in the same work first that "Social things are actualized only through men; they are the product of human activity" (1895/1982:17) and second that "Society is not a mere sum of individuals". Despite the fact that society is made up only of human beings and contains no immaterial "spiritual" substance, it can be understood only through studying the interactions rather than the individuals. The interactions, even when nonmaterial, have their own levels of reality. This has been called "relational realism" (Alpert, 1939).

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Durkheim saw social facts along a continuum of materiality. The sociologist usually begins a study by focusing on material social facts, which are empirically accessible, in order to understand nonmaterial social facts, which are the real focus of his work. The most material are such things as population size and density, channels of communication, and housing arrangements (Andrews, 1993). Durkheim called these facts *morphological*, and they figure most importantly in his first book, *The Division of Labor in Society*. At another level are structural components (a bureaucracy, for example), which are a mixture of morphological components (the density of people in a building and their lines of communication) and nonmaterial social facts (such as the bureaucratic norms).

Types of non-material social facts

***Morality*:** Social fact. Hence empirical. External to individual. Hence coercive and explained by other facts. Individual not free to pursue his self-interests.
***Collective representation*:** Collective "idea." Collective beliefs, norms, and values. Motivate to conform to these collective claims. Connected to material symbols: flags, pictures, icons.
Collective conscience: Moral conscience. "The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average citizens." "Primitive" societies had a stronger collective conscience than modern societies.
***Social Currents*:** "the great waves of enthusiasm, indignation, and pity" that are produced in public gatherings. People are swept along by such social currents. People show their hidden feelings about fashions, desires. Have coercive power over us. Become part of political youth. Rulers might get scared.

Too much concern about nonmaterial social facts

- The idea of a set of independent social currents "coursing" through the social world as if they were somehow suspended in a social void.
- Criticize Durkheim -> He accorded nonmaterial social facts an autonomous existence, separate from actors.
- Cultural phenomena cannot float by themselves in a social void.

Consciousness of consciousness

- The collective mind is only a composite of individual minds.
- Not simply putting together.
- Perpetual interaction through the exchange of symbols.
- Interpenetrate one another.
- Form an entirely new psychological being.
- More intense, vaster, and more powerful than what is it composed of.
- Individuals certainly contribute to social facts, but by becoming social something new develops through their interactions.
- Social currents can only be explained inter-subjectively.
- They exist at the level of interactions, not at the level of individuals.
- Collective moods. New level of reality

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Social facts are powerful

- Durkheim had a very modern conception of nonmaterial social facts that encompasses norms, values, culture, and a variety of shared social-psychological phenomena.
- All creations of interaction. Also govern interactions.

The Division of Labor in Society

The Division of Labor in Society has been called sociology's first classic. In this work, Durkheim traced the development of the modern relation between individuals and society. In particular, Durkheim wanted to use his new science of sociology to examine what many at the time had come to see as the modern crisis of morality. The preface to the first edition begins, "This book is above all an attempt to treat the facts of moral life according to the methods of the positive sciences." In France in Durkheim's day, there was a widespread feeling of moral crisis.

The French Revolution had ushered in a focus on the rights of the individual that often expressed itself as an attack on traditional authority and religious beliefs. This trend continued even after the fall of the revolutionary government. By the mid nineteenth century, many people felt that social order was threatened because people thought only about themselves and not about society. In the less than 100 years between the French Revolution and Durkheim's maturity, France went through three monarchies, two empires, and three republics. These regimes produced fourteen constitutions. The feeling of moral crisis was brought to a head by Prussia's crushing defeat of France in 1870, which included the annexation of Durkheim's birthplace by Prussia. This was followed by the short-lived and violent revolution known as the Paris Commune. 2 Both the defeat and the subsequent revolt were blamed on the problem of rampant individualism.

August Comte argued that many of these events could be traced to the increasing division of labor. In simpler societies, people do basically the same thing, such as farming, and they share common experiences and consequently have common values. In modern society, in contrast, everyone has a different job. When different people are assigned various specialized tasks, they no longer share common experiences.

This diversity undermines the shared moral beliefs that are necessary for a society. Consequently, people will not sacrifice in times of social need. Comte proposed that sociology create a new pseudo-religion that would reinstate social cohesion. To a large degree, The Division of Labor in Society can be seen as a refutation of Comte's analysis. Durkheim argues that the division of labor does not represent the disappearance of social morality so much as a new kind of social morality.

The thesis of The Division of Labor is that modern society is not held together by the similarities between people who do basically similar things. Instead, it is the division of labor itself that pulls people together by forcing them to be dependent on each other. It may seem that the division of labor is an economic necessity that corrodes the feeling of solidarity, but Durkheim argued that "the economic services that it can render are insignificant compared with the moral effect that it produces and its true function is to create between two or more people a feeling of solidarity."

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Lesson 19

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORISTS: EMILE DURKHEIM (1838-1917)-II (Topic 76-80)

Mechanical and Organic Solidarity

The change in the division of labor has had enormous implications for the structure of society. Durkheim was most interested in the changed way in which social solidarity is produced, in other words, the changed way in which society is held together and how its members see themselves as part of a whole. To capture this difference, Durkheim referred to two types of solidarity—mechanical and organic. A society characterized by *mechanical* solidarity is unified because all people are generalists. The bond among people is that they are all engaged in similar activities and have similar responsibilities. In contrast, a society characterized by *organic* solidarity is held together by the differences among people, by the fact that all have different tasks and responsibilities.

Because people in modern society perform a relatively narrow range of tasks, they need many other people in order to survive. The primitive family headed by father-hunter and mother–food gatherer is practically self-sufficient, but the modern family needs the grocer, baker, butcher, auto mechanic, teacher, police officer, and so forth. These people, in turn, need the kinds of services that others provide in order to live in the modern world. Modern society, in Durkheim's view, is thus held together by the specialization of people and their need for the services of many others. This specialization includes not only that of individuals but also of groups, structures, and institutions.

Durkheim argued that primitive societies have a stronger collective conscience, that is, more shared understandings, norms, and beliefs. The increasing division of labor has caused a diminution of the collective conscience. The collective conscience is of much less significance in a society with organic solidarity than it is in a society with mechanical solidarity. People in modern society are more likely to be held together by the division of labor and the resulting need for the functions performed by others than they are by a shared and powerful collective conscience. Nevertheless, even organic societies have a collective consciousness, albeit in a weaker form that allows for more individual differences.

Anthony Giddens (1972) points out that the collective conscience in the two types of society can be differentiated on four dimensions—volume, intensity, rigidity, and content (see Table 3.1). *Volume* refers to the number of people enveloped by the collective conscience; *intensity,* to how deeply the individuals feel about it; *rigidity,* to how clearly it is defined; and *content,* to the form that the collective conscience takes in the two types of society. In a society characterized by mechanical solidarity, the collective conscience covers virtually the entire society and all its members; it is believed in with great intensity; it is extremely rigid; and its content is highly religious in character. In a society with organic solidarity, the collective conscience is limited to particular groups; it is adhered to with much less intensity; it is not very rigid; and its content is the elevation of the importance of the individual to a moral precept.

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Dynamic Density

The division of labor was a material social fact to Durkheim because it is a pattern of interactions in the social world. As indicated above, social facts must be explained by other social facts. Durkheim believed that the cause of the transition from mechanical to organic solidarity was dynamic density. This concept refers to the number of people in a society and the amount of interaction that occurs among them. More people means an increase in the competition for scarce resources, and more interaction means a more intense struggle for survival among the basically similar components of society.

The problems associated with dynamic density usually are resolved through differentiation and, ultimately, the emergence of new forms of social organization. The rise of the division of labor allows people to complement, rather than conflict with, one another. Furthermore, the increased division of labor makes for greater efficiency, with the result that resources increase, making the competition over them more peaceful.

This point to one final difference between mechanical and organic solidarity. In societies with organic solidarity, less competition and more differentiation allow people to cooperate more and to all be supported by the same resource base. Therefore, difference allows for even closer bonds between people than does similarity. Thus, in a society characterized by organic solidarity, there are both more solidarity and more individuality than there are in a society characterized by mechanical solidarity (Rueschemeyer, 1994). Individuality, then, is not the opposite of close social bonds but a requirement for them (Muller, 1994).

Durkheim argues in *The Division of Labor* that the form of moral solidarity has changed in modern society, not disappeared. We have a new form of solidarity that allows for more interdependence and closer, less competitive relations and that produces a new form of law based on restitution. However, this book was far from a celebration of modern society. Durkheim argued that this new form of solidarity is prone to certain kinds of social pathologies.

Justice

For the division of labor to function as a moral and socially solidifying force in modern society, anomie, the forced division of labor, and the improper coordination of specialization must be addressed. Modern societies are no longer held together by shared experiences and common beliefs. Instead, they are held together through their very differences, so long as those differences are allowed to develop in a way that promotes interdependence. Morality, social solidarity, justice—these were big themes for a first book in a fledgling field. Durkheim was to return to these ideas again in his work, but never again would he look at them in terms of society as a whole. He predicted in his second book, *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895/1982:184), that sociology itself would succumb to the division of labor and break down into a collection of specialties. Whether this has led to an increased interdependence and an organic solidarity in sociology is still an open question.

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Suicide

It has been suggested that Durkheim's study of suicide is the paradigmatic example of how a sociologist should connect theory and research (Merton, 1968). Indeed, Durkheim makes it clear in the "Preface" that he intended this study not only to contribute to the understanding of a particular social problem, but also to serve as an example of his new sociological method. (For a series of appraisals of *Suicide* nearly 100 years after its publication, see Lester, 1994.)

Durkheim chose to study suicide because it is a relatively concrete and specific phenomenon for which there were comparatively good data available. However, Durkheim's most important reason for studying suicide was to prove the power of the new science of sociology. Suicide is generally considered to be one of the most private and personal acts. Durkheim believed that if he could show that sociology had a role to play in explaining such a seemingly individualistic act as suicide, it would be relatively easy to extend sociology's domain to phenomena that are much more readily seen as open to sociological analysis.

As a sociologist, Durkheim was not concerned with studying why any specific individual committed suicide. That was to be left to the psychologists. Instead, Durkheim was interested in explaining differences in *suicide rates;* that is, he was interested in why one group had a higher rate of suicide than did another. Psychological or biological factors may explain why a particular individual in a group commits suicide, but Durkheim assumed that only social facts could explain why one group had a higher rate of suicide than did another.

Durkheim proposed two related ways of evaluating suicide rates. One way is to compare different societies or other types of collectivities. Another way is to look at the changes in the suicide rate in the same collectivity over time. In either case, cross culturally or historically, the logic of the argument is essentially the same. If there is variation in suicide rates from one group to another or from one time period to another, Durkheim believed that the difference would be the consequence of variations in sociological factors, in particular, social currents. Durkheim acknowledged that individuals may have reasons for committing suicide, but these reasons are not the real cause: "They may be said to indicate the individual's weak points, where the outside current bearing the impulse to self-destruction most easily finds introduction. But they are no part of this current itself, and consequently cannot help us to understand it".

Durkheim began *Suicide* by testing and rejecting a series of alternative ideas about the causes of suicide. Among these are individual psychopathology, alcoholism, race, heredity, and climate. Not all of Durkheim's arguments are convincing. However, what is important is his method of empirically dismissing what he considered extraneous factors so that he could get to what he thought of as the most important causal variables.

The Four Types of Suicide

Durkheim's theory of suicide can be seen more clearly if we examine the relation between the types of suicide and his two underlying social facts—integration and regulation (Pope, 1976). Integration refers to the strength of the attachment that we have to society. Regulation refers to the degree of external constraint on people. For Durkheim, the two social currents are continuous

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variables, and suicide rates go up when either of these currents is too low or too high. We therefore have four types of suicide (see Table 3.2). If integration is high, Durkheim calls that type of suicide altruistic. Low integration results in an increase in egoistic suicides. Fatalistic suicide is associated with high regulation, and anomic suicide with low regulation.

Egoistic Suicide

High rates of *egoistic suicide* (Berk, 2006) are likely to be found in societies or groups in which the individual is not well integrated into the larger social unit. This lack of integration leads to a feeling that the individual is not part of society, but this also means that society is not part of the individual. Durkheim believed that the best parts of a human being—our morality, values, and sense of purpose—come from society. An integrated society provides us with these things, as well as a general feeling of moral support to get us through the daily small indignities and trivial disappointments.

Without this, we are liable to commit suicide at the smallest frustration. The lack of social integration produces distinctive social currents, and these currents cause differences in suicide rates. For example, Durkheim talked of societal disintegration leading to "currents of depression and disillusionment". Politics is dominated by a sense of futility, morality is seen as an individual choice, and popular philosophies stress the meaninglessness of life. In contrast, strongly integrated groups discourage suicide. The protective, enveloping social currents produced by integrated societies prevent the widespread occurrence of egoistic suicide by, among other things, providing people with a sense of the broader meaning of their lives.

Altruistic Suicide

The second type of suicide discussed by Durkheim is altruistic suicide. Whereas egoistic suicide is more likely to occur when social integration is too weak, *altruistic suicide* is more likely to occur when "social integration is too strong". The individual is literally forced into committing suicide. One notorious example of altruistic suicide was the mass suicide of the followers of the Reverend Jim Jones in Jonestown, Guyana, in 1978. They knowingly took a poisoned drink and in some cases had their children drink it as well. They clearly were committing suicide because they were so tightly integrated into the society of Jones's fanatical followers. Durkheim notes that this is also the explanation for those who seek to be martyrs, as in the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001. More generally, those who commit altruistic suicide do so because they feel that it is their duty to do so. Durkheim argued that this is particularly likely in the military, where the degree of integration is so strong that an individual will feel that he or she has disgraced the entire group by the most trivial of failures.

Whereas higher rates of egoistic suicide stem from "incurable weariness and sad depression," the increased likelihood of altruistic suicide "springs from hope, for it depends on the belief in beautiful perspectives beyond this life". When integration is low, people will commit suicide because they have no greater good to sustain them. When integration is high, they commit suicide in the name of that greater good.

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Anomic Suicide

The third major form of suicide discussed by Durkheim is *anomic suicide*, which is more likely to occur when the regulative powers of society are disrupted. Such disruptions are likely to leave individuals dissatisfied because there is little control over their passions, which are free to run wild in an insatiable race for gratification. Rates of anomic suicide are likely to rise whether the nature of the disruption is positive (for example, an economic boom) or negative (an economic depression). Either type of disruption renders the collectivity temporarily incapable of exercising its authority over individuals. Such changes put people in new situations in which the old norms no longer apply but new ones have yet to develop. Periods of disruption unleash currents of anomie—moods of rootlessness and normlessness—and these currents lead to an increase in rates of anomic suicide. This is relatively easy to envisage in the case of an economic depression. The closing of a factory because of a depression may lead to the loss of a job, with the result that the individual is cut adrift from the regulative effect that both the company and the job may have had. Being cut off from these structures or others (for example, family, religion, and state) can leave an individual highly vulnerable to the effects of currents of anomie.

Fatalistic Suicide

There is a little-mentioned fourth type of suicide—fatalistic—that Durkheim discussed only in a footnote in *Suicide*. Whereas anomic suicide is more likely to occur in situations in which regulation is too weak, *fatalistic suicide* is more likely to occur when regulation is excessive. Durkheim (1897/1951:276) described those who are more likely to commit fatalistic suicide as "persons with futures pitilessly blocked and passions violently choked by oppressive discipline." The classic example is the slave who takes his own life because of the hopelessness associated with the oppressive regulation of his every action. Too much regulation—oppression—unleashes currents of melancholy that, in turn, cause a rise in the rate of fatalistic suicide.

Durkheim argued that social currents cause changes in the rates of suicides. Individual suicides are affected by these underlying currents of egoism, altruism, anomie, and fatalism. This proved, for Durkheim, that these currents are more than just the sum of individuals, but are *sui generis* forces, because they dominate the decisions of individuals. Without this assumption, the stability of the suicide rate for any particular society could not be explained.

Theory of Religion—The Sacred and the Profane

Raymond Aron (1965:45) said of The Elementary Forms of Religious Life that it was Durkheim's most important, most profound, and most original work. Randall Collins and Michael Makowsky (1998:107) call it "perhaps the greatest single book of the twentieth century." In this book, Durkheim put forward both sociology of religion and a theory of knowledge. His sociology of religion consisted of an attempt to identify the enduring essence of religion through an analysis of its most primitive forms. His theory of knowledge attempted to connect the fundamental categories of human thought to their social origins. It was Durkheim's great genius to propose a sociological connection between these two disparate puzzles. Put briefly, he found the enduring essence of religion in the setting apart of the sacred from all that is profane (Edwards, 2007). This sacred is created through rituals that transform the moral power of

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society into religious symbols that bind individuals to the group. Durkheim's most daring argument is that this moral bond becomes a cognitive bond because the categories for understanding, such as classification, time, space, and causation, are also derived from religious rituals.

Let us start with Durkheim's theory of religion. Society (through individuals) creates religion by defining certain phenomena as sacred and others as profane. Those aspects of social reality that are defined as sacred —that is, that are set apart from the everyday—form the essence of religion. The rest are defined as profane —the commonplace, the utilitarian, the mundane aspects of life. On the one hand, the sacred brings out an attitude of reverence, awe, and obligation. On the other hand, it is the attitude accorded to these phenomena that transforms them from profane to sacred. The question for Durkheim was, What is the source of this reverence, awe, and obligation?

He proposed to both retain the essential truth of religion while revealing its sociological reality. Durkheim refused to believe that all religion is nothing but an illusion. Such a pervasive social phenomenon must have some truth. However, that truth need not be precisely that which is believed by the participants. Indeed, as a strict agnostic, Durkheim could not believe that anything supernatural was the source of these religious feelings. There really is a superior moral power that inspires believers, but it is society and not God. Durkheim argued that religion symbolically embodies society itself. Religion is the system of symbols by means of which society becomes conscious of itself. This was the only way that he could explain why every society has had religious beliefs but each has had different beliefs.

Society is a power that is greater than we are. It transcends us, demands our sacrifices, suppresses our selfish tendencies, and fills us with energy. Society, according to Durkheim, exercises these powers through representations. In God, he sees "only society transfigured and symbolically expressed" (Durkheim, 1906/1974:52). Thus society is the source of the sacred.

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Lesson 20

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORISTS: EMILE DURKHEIM (1838-1917)-III (Topic 81-84)

Every society has religious beliefs though different. Society has the Superior moral power demanding its membres' sacrifices, suppresses their selfish tendencies, and fills them with energy. Religion symbolically embodies society itself. Religion can be means to consciousness through its symbols.

Beliefs, Rituals, and Church

The differentiation between the sacred and the profane and the elevation of some aspects of social life to the sacred level are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the development of religion. Three other conditions are needed. First, there must be the development of a set of religious beliefs. These beliefs are "the representations which express the nature of sacred things and the relations which they sustain, either with each other or with profane things". Second, a set of religious rituals is necessary. These are "the rules of conduct which prescribe how a man should comport himself in the presence of these sacred objects". Finally, a religion requires a church, or a single overarching moral community. The interrelationships among the sacred, beliefs, rituals, and church led Durkheim to the following definition of a religion: "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them".

Rituals and the church are important to Durkheim's theory of religion because they connect the representations of the social to individual practices. Durkheim often assumes that social currents are simply absorbed by individuals through some sort of contagion, but here he spells out how such a process might work. Individuals learn about the sacred and its associated beliefs through participating in rituals and in the community of the church. As we will see below, this is also how individuals learn the categories of understanding (Rawls, 1996). Furthermore, rituals and the church keep social representations from dissipating and losing their force by dramatically reenacting the collective memory of the group. Finally, they reconnect individuals to the social, a source of greater energy that inspires them when they return to their mundane pursuits.

Moral Education and Social Reform

Durkheim did not consider himself to be political and indeed avoided most partisan politics as not compatible with scientific objectivity. Nevertheless, as we've seen, most of his writings dealt with social issues, and, unlike some who see themselves as objective scientists today, he was not shy about suggesting specific social reforms, in particular regarding education and occupational associations.

In taking this position, he stood in opposition to both the conservatives and the radicals of his day. Conservatives saw no hope in modern society and sought instead the restoration of the monarchy or of the political power of the Roman Catholic Church. Radicals like the socialists of Durkheim's time agreed that the world could not be reformed, but they hoped that a revolution would bring into existence socialism or communism. Both Durkheim's programs for reform and his reformist approach were due to his belief that society is the source of any morality. His

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reform programs were dictated by the fact that society needs to be able to produce moral direction for the individual. To the extent that society is losing that capacity, it must be reformed. His reformist approach was dictated by the fact that the source for any reform has to be the actually existing society. It does no good to formulate reform programs from the viewpoint of an abstract morality. The program must be generated by that society's social forces and not from some philosopher's, or even sociologists, ethical system. "Ideals cannot be legislated into existence; they must be understood, loved and striven for by the body whose duty it is to realize them".

Morality

Durkheim offered courses and gave public lectures on moral education and the sociology of morals. And he intended, had he lived long enough, to culminate his oeuvre with a comprehensive presentation of his science of morals. The connection that Durkheim saw between sociology and morality has not until recently been appreciated by most sociologists Durkheim was centrally concerned with morality, but it is not easy to classify his theory of morality according to the typical categories. On the one hand, he was a moral relativist who believed that ethical rules do and should change in response to other social facts. On the other hand, he was a traditionalist because he did not believe that one could simply create a new morality. Any new morality could only grow out of our collective moral traditions. He insisted that one must "see in morality itself a fact the nature of which one must investigate attentively, I would even say respectfully, before daring to modify". Durkheim's sociological theory of morality cuts across most of the positions concerning morality today and offers the possibility of a fresh perspective on contemporary debates over such issues as traditional families and the moral content of popular culture. Morality, for Durkheim, has three components. First, morality involves discipline, that is, a sense of authority that resists idiosyncratic impulses. Second, morality involves attachment to society because society is the source of our morality. Third, it involves autonomy, a sense of individual responsibility for our actions.

Discipline

Durkheim usually discussed *discipline* in terms of constraint upon one's egoistic impulses. Such constraint is necessary because individual interests and group interests are not the same and may, at least in the short term, be in conflict. Discipline confronts one with one's moral duty, which, for Durkheim, is one's duty to society. As discussed above, this social discipline also makes the individual happier because it limits his or who otherwise would always want more.

Attachment

But Durkheim did not see morality as simply a matter of constraint. His second element in morality is *attachment* to social groups—the warm, voluntary, positive aspect of group commitment—not out of external duty but out of willing attachment. These two elements of morality—discipline and attachment—complement and support each other because they are both just different aspects of society. The former is society seen as making demands on us, and the latter is society seen as part of us.

Autonomy

The third element of morality is *autonomy*. Here Durkheim follows Kant's philosophical definition and sees it as a rationally grounded impulse of the will, with the sociological twist that

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the rational grounding is ultimately social. Durkheim's focus on society as the source of morality has led many to assume that his ideal actor is one who is almost wholly controlled from without—a total conformist. However, Durkheim did not subscribe to such an extreme view of the actor: "Conformity must not be pushed to the point where it completely subjugates the intellect. Thus it does not follow from a belief in the need for discipline that it must be blind and slavish" (cited in Giddens, 1972:113).

Autonomy comes to full force in modernity only with the decline of the myths and symbols that previous moral systems used to demand discipline and encourage attachment. Durkheim believed that now that these myths have passed away, only scientific understanding can provide the foundation for moral autonomy. In particular, modern morality should be based on the relation between individuals and society as revealed by Durkheim's new science of sociology. The only way for this sociological understanding to become a true morality is through education.

Moral Education

Durkheim's most consistent attempts to reform society in order to enable a modern morality were directed at education. *Education* was defined by Durkheim as the process by which the individual acquires the physical, intellectual, and, most important to Durkheim, moral tools needed to function in society. ADurkheim had always believed "that the relation of the science of sociology to education was that of theory to practice." In 1902, he was given the powerful position of head of the Sorbonne's education department. "It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that every young mind in Paris, in the decade prior to World War I, came directly or indirectly under his influence". Before Durkheim began to reform education there had been two approaches. One saw education as an extension of the church, and the other saw education as the unfolding of the natural individual. In contrast, Durkheim argued that education should help children develop a moral attitude toward society. He believed that the schools were practically the only existing institution that could provide a social foundation for modern morality. For Durkheim, the classroom is a small society, and he concluded that its collective effervescence could be made powerful enough to inculcate a moral attitude. The classroom could provide the rich collective milieu necessary for reproducing collective representations. This would allow education to present and reproduce all three elements of morality. First, it would provide individuals with the discipline they need to restrain the passions that threaten to engulf them. Second, education could develop in the students a sense of devotion to society and to its moral system. Most important is education's role in the development of autonomy, in which discipline is "freely desired," and the attachment to society is by virtue of "enlightened assent."

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Lesson 21

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORISTS: KARL MARX (1818-1883)-I (Topic 85-89)

For many, Marx has become more of an icon than a thinker deserving of serious study. The symbolism of his name tends to muddle understanding of his ideas. Marx is the only theorist we will study who has had political movements and social systems named after him. He is probably the only theorist your friends and family have strong opinions about. He is often criticized, as well as praised, by people who have never actually read his work. Even among his followers, Marx's ideas frequently are reduced to slogans such as "the opium of the people" and "the dictatorship of proletariat," but the role of these slogans in Marx's encompassing theory often is ignored. There are many reasons for this lack of understanding of Marx's social theory, the main one being that Marx never really completed his social theory. He planned, early in his career, to publish separate works on economics, law, morals, politics, and so forth, and then "in a special work, to present them once again as a connected whole, to show the relationship between the parts". He never did this final work and never even completed his separate work on economics. Instead, much of his time was taken up by study, journalism, political activity, and a series of minor intellectual and political arguments with friends and adversaries.

Despite differing interpretations, there is general agreement that Marx's main interest was in the historical basis of inequality, especially the unique form that it takes under capitalism. However, Marx's approach is different from many of the theories that we will examine. For Marx, a theory about how society works would be partial, because what he mainly sought was a theory about how to change society. Marx's theory, then, is an analysis of inequality under capitalism and how to change it. As capitalism has come to dominate the globe and the most significant communist alternatives have disappeared, some might argue that Marx's theories have lost their relevance. However, once we realize that Marx provides an analysis of capitalism, we can see that his theories are more relevant now than ever. Marx provides a diagnosis of capitalism that is able to reveal its tendencies to crises, point out its perennial inequalities, and, if nothing else, demand that capitalism live up to its own promises. The example of Marx makes an important point about theory. Even when their particular predictions are disproved—even though the proletariat revolution that Marx believed to be imminent did not come about—theories still hold a value as an alternative to our current society. Theories may not tell us what will happen, but they can argue for what should happen and help us develop a plan for carrying out the change that the theory envisions or for resisting the change that the theory predicts.

The Dialectic

The idea of a dialectical philosophy had been around for centuries. Its basic idea is the centrality of contradiction. While most philosophies, and indeed common sense, treat contradictions as mistakes, a dialectical philosophy believes that contradictions exist in reality and that the most appropriate way to understand reality is to study the development of those contradictions. Hegel used the idea of contradiction to understand historical change. According to Hegel, historical change has been driven by the contradictory understandings that are the essence of reality, by our attempts to resolve the contradictions, and by the new contradictions that develop.

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Marx also accepted the centrality of contradictions to historical change. We see this in such well-known formulations as the "contradictions of capitalism" and "class contradictions." However, unlike Hegel, Marx did not believe that these contradictions could be worked out in our understanding, that is, in our minds. Instead, for Marx these are real, existing contradictions. For Marx, such contradictions are resolved not by the philosopher sitting in an armchair but by a life-and-death struggle that changes the social world. This was a crucial transformation because it allowed Marx to move the dialectic out of the realm of philosophy and into the realm of a study of social relations grounded in the material world. It is this focus that makes Marx's work so relevant to sociology, even though the dialectical approach is very different from the mode of thinking used by most sociologists. The dialectic leads to an interest in the conflicts and contradictions among various levels of social reality, rather than to the more traditional sociological interest in the ways these various levels mesh neatly into a cohesive whole.

For example, one of the contradictions within capitalism is the relationship between the workers and the capitalists who own the factories and other means of production with which the work is done. The capitalist must exploit the workers in order to make a profit from the workers' labor. The workers, in contradiction to the capitalists, want to keep at least some of the profit for themselves. Marx believed that this contradiction was at the heart of capitalism, and that it would grow worse as capitalists drove more and more people to become workers by forcing small firms out of business and as competition between the capitalists forced them to further exploit the workers to make a profit. As capitalism expands, the number of workers exploited, as well as the degree of exploitation, increases. This contradiction can be resolved not through philosophy but only through social change. The tendency for the level of exploitation to escalate leads to more and more resistance by the workers. Resistance begets more exploitation and oppression, and the likely result is a confrontation between the two classes.

Dialectical Method

Marx's focus on real, existing contradictions led to a particular method for studying social phenomena that has also come to be called "dialectical."

Fact and Value

In dialectical analysis, social values are not separable from social facts. Many sociologists believe that their values can and must be separated from their study of facts about the social world. The dialectical thinker believes that it is not only impossible to keep values out of the study of the social world but also undesirable, because to do so would produce a dispassionate, inhuman sociology that has little to offer to people in search of answers to the problems they confront. Facts and values are inevitably intertwined, with the result that the study of social phenomena is value-laden. Thus to Marx it was impossible and, even if possible, undesirable to be dispassionate in his analysis of capitalist society. But Marx's emotional involvement in what he was studying did not mean that his observations were inaccurate. It could even be argued that Marx's passionate views on these issues gave him unparalleled insight into the nature of capitalist society. A less passionate student might have delved less deeply into the dynamics of the system. In fact, research into the work of scientists indicates that the idea of a dispassionate

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scientist is largely a myth and that the very best scientists are the ones who are most passionate about, and committed to, their ideas.

Reciprocal Relations

The dialectical method of analysis does not see a simple, one-way, cause-and-effect relationship among the various parts of the social world. For the dialectical thinker, social influences never simply flow in one direction as they often do for cause-and-effect thinkers. To the dialectician, one factor may have an effect on another, but it is just as likely that the latter will have a simultaneous effect on the former. For example, the increasing exploitation of the workers by the capitalist may cause the workers to become increasingly dissatisfied and more militant, but the increasing militancy of the proletariat may well cause the capitalists to react by becoming even more exploitative in order to crush the resistance of the workers. This kind of thinking does not mean that the dialectician never considers causal relationships in the social world. It does mean that when dialectical thinkers talk about causality, they are always attuned to reciprocal relationships among social factors as well as to the dialectical totality of social life in which they are embedded.

Past, Present, Future

Dialecticians are interested not only in the relationships of social phenomena in the contemporary world but also in the relationship of those contemporary realities to both past and future social phenomena. This has two distinct implications for a dialectical sociology. First, it means that dialectical sociologists are concerned with studying the historical roots of the contemporary world as Marx (1857–1858/1964) did in his study of the sources of modern capitalism. In fact, dialectical thinkers are very critical of modern sociology for its failure to do much historical research.

Second, many dialectical thinkers are attuned to current social trends in order to understand the possible future directions of society. This interest in future possibilities is one of the main reasons dialectical sociology is inherently political. It is interested in encouraging practical activities that would bring new possibilities into existence. However, dialecticians believe that the nature of this future world can be discerned only through a careful study of the contemporary world. It is their view that the sources of the future exist in the present.

No Inevitabilities

The dialectical view of the relationship between the present and the future need not imply that the future is determined by the present. Terence Ball (1991) describes Marx as a "political possibilist" rather than a "historical inevitabilist." Because social phenomena are constantly acting and reacting, the social world defies a simple, deterministic model. The future may be based on some contemporary model, but not inevitably. Marx's historical studies showed him that people make choices but that these choices are limited. For instance, Marx believed that society was engaged in a class struggle and that people could choose to participate either in "the revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes"

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(Marx and Engels 1848/1948). Marx hoped and believed that the future was to be found in communism, but he did not believe that the workers could simply wait passively for it to arrive. Communism would come only through their choices and struggles.

This disinclination to think deterministically is what makes the best-known model of the dialectic—thesis, antithesis, synthesis—inadequate for sociological use. This simple model implies that a social phenomenon will inevitably spawn an opposing form and that the clash between the two will inevitably lead to a new, synthetic social form. But in the real world, there are no inevitabilities. Furthermore, social phenomena are not easily divided into the simple thesis, antithesis, and synthesis categories adopted by some Marxists. The dialectician is interested in the study of real relationships rather than grand abstractions. It is this disinclination to deal in grand abstractions that led Marx away from Hegel and would lead him today to reject such a great oversimplification of the dialectic as thesis, antithesis and synthesis.

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Lesson 22

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORISTS: KARL MARX (1818-1883)-II (Topic 90-93)

Human Potential

Marx (1850/1964:64) wrote in an early work that human beings are an "ensemble of social relations." He indicates by this that our human potential is intertwined with our specific social relations and our institutional context. Therefore, human nature is not a static thing but varies historically and socially. To understand human potential, we need to understand social history, because human nature is shaped by the same dialectical contradictions that Marx believed shapes the history of society. For Marx, a conception of human potential that does not take social and historical factors into account is wrong, but to take them into account is not the same as being without a conception of human nature. It simply complicates this conception. For Marx, there is a human potential in general, but what is more important is the way it is "modified in each historical epoch". When speaking of our general human potential, Marx often used the term *species being.* By this he meant the potentials

Labor

For Marx, species being and human potential are intimately related to labor: Labour is, in the first place, a process in which both man and Nature participate, and in which man of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material reactions between himself and Nature.

We see of Marx's view of the relation between labor and human nature. First, what distinguishes us from other animals— our species being—is that our labor creates something in reality that previously existed only in our imagination. Our production reflects our purpose. Marx calls this process in which we create external objects out of our internal thoughts *objectification.* Second, this labor is material (Sayers, 2007). It works with the more material aspects of nature (e.g., raising fruits and vegetables, cutting down trees for wood) in order to satisfy our material needs. Finally, Marx believed that this labor does not just transform the material aspects of nature but also transforms us, including our needs, our consciousness, and our human nature. Labor is thus at the same time (1) the objectification of our purpose, (2) the establishment of an essential relation between human need and the material objects of our need, and (3) the transformation of our human nature.

Marx's use of the term *labor* is not restricted to economic activities; it encompasses all productive actions that transform the material aspects of nature in accordance with our purpose. Whatever is created through this free purposive activity is both an expression of our human nature and a transformation of it. As we will see below, the process of labor has been changed under capitalism, making it difficult for us to understand Marx's conception, but we get close to Marx's concept when we think of the creative activity of an artist. Artwork is a representation of the thought of the artist. In Marx's terms, artwork is an objectivation of the artist.

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However, it is also true that the process of creating the art changes the artist. Through the process of producing the art, the artist's ideas about the art change, or the artist may become aware of a new vision that needs objectivation. In addition, the completed artwork can take on a new meaning for the artist and transform the artist's conceptions of that particular work or of art in general.

Labor, even artistic labor, is in response to a need, and the transformation that labor entails also transforms our needs. The satisfaction of our needs can lead to the creation of new needs (Marx and Engels, 1845–1846/1970:43). For example, the production of cars to satisfy our need for long-distance transportation led to a new need for highways. Even more significantly, although few people thought they needed cars when cars were first invented, now most people feel that they need them. A similar change has occurred with the computer. Whereas a generation ago few thought they needed a personal computer, now many people need one, as well as all of the software and peripherals that go with it. We labor in response to our needs, but the labor itself transforms our needs, which can lead to new forms of productive activity.

According to Marx, this transformation of our needs through labor is the engine of human history. Labor, for Marx, is the development of our truly human powers and potentials. By transforming material reality to fit our purpose, we also transform ourselves. Furthermore, labor is a social activity. Work involves others, directly in joint productions, or because others provide us with the necessary tools or raw materials for our work, or because they enjoy the fruits of our labor. Labor does not transform only the individual human; it also transforms society. Indeed, for Marx, the emergence of a human as an individual depends on a society. Marx wrote, "Man is in the most literal sense of the word a *zoon politikon,* not only a social animal, but an animal which can develop into an individual only in society" (1857–1858/1964:84). In addition, Marx tells us that this transformation includes even our consciousness: "Consciousness is, therefore, from the very beginning a social product, and remains so as long as men exist at all" (Marx and Engels, 1845–1846/1970:51). Consequently, the transformation of the individual through labor and the transformation of society are not separable.

Alienation

Marx analyzed the peculiar form that our relation to our own labor has taken under capitalism. We no longer see our labor as an expression of our purpose. There is no objectivation. Instead, we labor in accordance with the purpose of the capitalist who hires and pays us. Rather than being an end in itself—an expression of human capabilities— labor in capitalism is reduced to being a means to an end: earning money (Marx, 1932/1964:173). Because our labor is not our own, it no longer transforms us. Instead we are alienated from our labor and therefore alienated from our true human nature. Although it is the individual who feels alienated in capitalist society, Marx's basic analytic concern was with the structures of capitalism that cause this alienation (Israel, 1971). Marx uses the concept of alienation to reveal the devastating effect of capitalist production on human beings and on society. Of crucial significance here is the two-class system in which capitalists employ workers (and thereby own workers' labor time) and capitalists own the means of production (tools and raw materials) as well as the ultimate products. To survive, workers are forced to sell their labor time to capitalists. These structures, especially the division of labor, are the sociological basis of alienation.

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1. Workers in capitalist society are alienated from their ***productive activity***. They do not produce objects according to their own ideas or to directly satisfy their own needs. Instead, workers work for capitalists, who pay them a subsistence wage in return for the right to use them in any way they see fit. Because productive activity belongs to the capitalists, and because they decide what is to be done with it, we can say that workers are alienated from that activity. Furthermore, many workers who perform highly specialized tasks have little sense of their role in the total production process. For example, automobile assembly-line workers who tighten a few bolts on an engine may have little feel for how their labor contributes to the production of the entire car. They do not objectivate their ideas, and they are not transformed by the labor in any meaningful way. Instead of being a process that is satisfying in and of itself, productive activity in capitalism is reduced, Marx argued, to an often boring and stultifying means to the fulfillment of the only end that really matters in capitalism: earning enough money to survive.

2. Workers in capitalist society are alienated not only from productive activities but also from the object of those activities—**the *product***. The product of their labor belongs not to the workers but to the capitalists, who may use it in any way they wish because it is the capitalists' private property. Marx (1932/1964:117) tells us, "Private property is thus the product, the result, the necessary consequence of alienated labour." The capitalist will use his or her ownership in order to sell the product for a profit.

3. Workers in capitalist society are alienated from their ***fellow workers***. Marx's assumption was that people basically need and want to work cooperatively in order to appropriate from nature what they require to survive. But in capitalism this cooperation is disrupted, and people, often strangers, are forced to work side by side for the capitalist. Even if the workers on the assembly line are close friends, the nature of the technology makes for a great deal of isolation.

4. Workers in capitalist society are alienated from their own ***human potential***. Instead of being a source of transformation and fulfillment of our human nature, the workplace is where we feel least human, least ourselves. Individuals perform less and less like human beings as they are reduced in their work to functioning like machines. Even smiles and greetings are programmed and scripted. Consciousness is numbed and, ultimately, destroyed as relations with other humans and with nature are progressively controlled. The result is a mass of people unable to express their essential human qualities, a mass of alienated workers.

Alienation is an example of the sort of contradiction that Marx's dialectical approach focused on. There is a real contradiction between human nature, which is defined and transformed by labor, and the actual social conditions of labor under capitalism. What Marx wanted to stress is that this contradiction cannot be resolved merely in thought. We are not any less alienated because we identify with our employer or with the things that our wages can purchase. Indeed, these things are a symptom of our alienation, which can be resolved only through real social change.

The Structures of Capitalist Society

In Europe in Marx's time, industrialization was increasing. People were being forced to leave agricultural and artisan trades and to work in factories where conditions were often harsh. By the

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1840s, when Marx was entering his most productive period, Europe was experiencing a widespread sense of social crisis (Seigel, 1978:106). In 1848 a series of revolts swept across Europe (soon after the publication of Marx and Engel's *Communist Manifesto*). The effects of industrialization and the political implications of industrialization were especially apparent in the mostly rural states collectively referred to as Germany.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, cheap manufactured goods from England and France began to force out of business the less efficient manufacturers in Germany. In response, the political leaders of the German states imposed capitalism on their still mainly feudal societies. The resulting poverty, dislocation, and alienation were particularly evident because of the rapidity of the change. Marx's analysis of alienation was a response to the economic, social, and political changes that Marx saw going on around him. He did not view alienation as a philosophical problem. He wanted to understand what changes would be needed to create a society in which human potential could be adequately expressed. Marx's important insight was that the capitalist economic system is the primary cause of alienation. Marx's work on human nature and alienation led him to a critique of capitalist society and to a political program oriented to overcoming the structures of capitalism so that people could express their essential humanity (Mészáros, 1970).

Capitalism is an economic system in which great numbers of workers who own little produce commodities for the profit of small numbers of capitalists who own all of the following: the commodities, the means of producing the commodities, and the labor time of the workers, which they purchase through wages (H. Wolf, 2005b). One of Marx's central insights is that capitalism is much more than an economic system. It is also a system of power. The secret of capitalism is that political powers have been transformed into economic relations (Wood, 1995). Capitalists seldom need to use brute force. Capitalists are able to coerce workers through their power to dismiss workers and close plants. Capitalism, therefore, is not simply an economic system; it is also a political system, a mode of exercising power, and a process for exploiting workers.

In a capitalist system, the economy seems to be a natural force. People are laid off, wages are reduced, and factories are closed because of "the economy." We do not see these events as the outcomes of social or political decisions. Links between human suffering and the economic structures are deemed irrelevant or trivial.

Capitalism a system of power

- Capitalism is more than an economic system – A system of power.
- Capitalists are able to coerce workers through their power to dismiss workers and close plants.
- Capitalists have the power – exploiting workers.
- Capitalists seldom need to use brute force.
- Capitalist approach produces certain type of relations between the proletariat and the capitalist.
- The capacity of capital to generate profit appears "as a power endowed by Nature— a productive power that is immanent in Capital."
- Power to treat workers unfairly in order to benefit from their work. Exploitation.
- For Marx, capitalism is a relation of power.

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- Powerful and the powerless.
- Seeds of exploitation.
- People are laid off, wages are reduced, and factories are closed because of "the economy."
- Natural force of capitalist system.
- Force the workers to accept the terms and conditions.

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Lesson 23

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORISTS: KARL MARX (1818-1883)-III
Topic 094-097

Topic 094: Capital, Capitalist and Proletariat

Marx found the heart of capitalist society within the commodity. A society dominated by objects whose main value is exchange produces certain categories of people. The two main types that concerned Marx were the proletariat and the capitalist. Let us start with the proletariat. Workers who sell their labor and do not own their own means of production are members of the proletariat. They do not own their own tools or their factories. Marx believed that proletarians would eventually lose their own skills as they increasingly serviced machines that had their skills built into them. Because members of the proletariat produce only for exchange, they are also consumers. Because they don't have the means to produce for their own needs, they must use their wages to buy what they need. Consequently, proletarians are completely dependent on their wages in order to live. This makes the proletariat dependent on those who pay the wages.

Those who pay the wages are the capitalists. Capitalists are those who own the means of production. Before we can fully understand capitalists, we must first understand capital itself (H. Wolf, 2005a). Capital is money that produces more money, capital is money that is invested rather than being used to satisfy human needs or desires. This distinction becomes clearer when we look at what Marx considered to be "the starting-point of capital": the *circulation of commodities.* Marx discussed two types of circulation of commodities. One type of circulation is characteristic of capital: Money → Commodities → (a larger sum of) Money (M 1 -C-M 2). The other type is not: Commodities → Money → Commodities (C 1 -M-C 2). In a non-capitalist circulation of commodities, the circuit C 1 -M-C 2 predominates. An example of C 1 -M-C 2 would be a fisherman who sells his catch (C 1) and then uses the money (M) to buy bread (C 2). The primary goal of exchange in non-capitalist circulation is a commodity that one can use and enjoy.

In a capitalist circulation of commodities (M 1 -C-M 2), the primary goal is to produce more money. Commodities are purchased in order to generate profit, not necessarily for use. In the capitalist circuit, referred to by Marx as "buying in order to sell", the individual actor buys a commodity with money and in turn exchanges the commodity for presumably more money. For example, a store owner would buy (M 1) the fish (C) in order to sell them for more money (M 2). To further increase profits, the store owner might buy the boat and fishing equipment and pay the fisherman a wage. The goal of this circuit is not the consumption of the use value, as it is in the simple circulation of commodities. The goal is more money. The particular properties of the commodity used to make money are irrelevant. The commodity can be fish or it can be labor. Also, the real needs and desires of human beings are irrelevant; all that matters is what will produce more money.

Capital is money that produces more money, but Marx tells us it is more than that: it is also a particular social relation. Money becomes capital only because of a social relation between, on

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the one hand, the proletariat, which does the work and must purchase the product, and, on the other hand, those who have invested the money.

The capacity of capital to generate profit appears "as a power endowed by Nature— a productive power that is immanent in Capital" but, according to Marx, it is a relation of power. Capital cannot increase except by exploiting those who actually do the work. The workers are exploited by a system, and the irony is that the system is produced through the workers' own labor. The capitalist system is the social structure that emerges from that exploitive relationship. Capitalists are those who live off the profit of capital. They are the beneficiaries of the proletariat's exploitation. Within the idea of capital is contained a social relation between those who own the means of production and those whose wage labor is exploited.

Topic 095: Exploitation

For Marx, exploitation and domination reflect more than an accidentally unequal distribution of wealth and power. *Exploitation* is a necessary part of the capitalist economy. All societies have exploitation, but what is peculiar in capitalism is that the exploitation is accomplished by the impersonal and "objective" economic system. It seems to be less a matter of power and more a matter of economists' charts and figures. Furthermore, the coercion is rarely naked force and is instead the worker's own needs, which can now be satisfied only through wage labor.

Workers appear to be "free laborers," entering into free contracts with capitalists. But Marx believed that the workers must accept the terms the capitalists offer them, because the workers can no longer produce for their own needs. This is especially true because capitalism usually creates what Marx referred to as a *reserve army* of the unemployed. If a worker does not want to do a job at the wage the capitalist offers, someone else in the reserve army of the unemployed will. The capitalists pay the workers less than the value that the workers produce and keep the rest for themselves. This *practice* leads us to Marx's central concept of *surplus value*, which is defined as the difference between the value of the product when it is sold and the value of the elements consumed in the formation of that product (including the worker's labor). The capitalists can use this profit for private consumption, but doing so would not lead to the expansion of capitalism. Rather, capitalists expand their enterprises by converting profit into a base for the creation of still more surplus value. It should be stressed that surplus value is not simply an economic concept. Surplus value, like capital, is a particular social relation and a form of domination, because labor is the real source of surplus value. "The rate of surplus-value is therefore an exact expression for the degree of exploitation of labor-power by capital, or of the laborer by the capitalist". This observation points to one of Marx's more colorful metaphors: "Capital is dead labor, that, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labor, and lives the more, the more labor it sucks". Marx makes one other important point about capital: "Capital exists and can only exist as many capitals." What he means is that capitalism is always driven by incessant competition. Capitalists may seem to be in control, but even they are driven by the constant competition between capitals. The capitalist is driven to make more profit in order to accumulate and invest more capital. The capitalist who does not do this will be outcompeted by others who do. "As such, he shares with the miser an absolute drive towards self-enrichment. But what appears in the miser as the mania of an individual is in the capitalist the effect of a social mechanism in which he is merely a cog".

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The desire for more profit and more surplus value for expansion pushes capitalism toward what Marx called the *general law of capitalist accumulation.* Capitalists seek to exploit workers as much as possible: "The constant tendency of capital is to force the cost of labor back towards . . . zero" (Marx, 1867/1967:600). Marx basically argued that the structure and the ethos of capitalism push capitalists in the direction of the accumulation of more and more capital. Given Marx's view that labor is the source of value, capitalists are led to intensify the exploitation of the proletariat, thereby driving class conflict.

Topic 096: Class Conflict

Marx often used the term *class* in his writings, but he never systematically defined what he meant. He usually is taken to have meant a group of people in similar situations with respect to their control of the means of production. This, however, is not a complete description of the way Marx used the term. *Class,* for Marx, was always defined in terms of its potential for conflict. Individuals form a class insofar as they are in a common conflict with others over the surplus value. In capitalism there is an inherent conflict of interest between those who hire wage laborers and those whose labor is turned into surplus value. It is this inherent conflict that produces classes.

Because class is defined by the potential for conflict, it is a theoretical and historically variant concept. A theory about where potential conflict exists in a society is required before identifying a class. Richard Miller tells us that "there is no rule that could, in principle, be used to sort out people in a society into classes without studying the actual interactions among economic processes on the one hand and between political and cultural processes on the other." For Marx, a class truly exists only when people become aware of their conflicting relation to other classes. Without this awareness, they only constitute what Marx called a class *in itself.* When they become aware of the conflict, they become a true class, a class *for itself.*

In capitalism, Marx's analysis discovered two primary classes: bourgeoisie and proletariat. 5 Bourgeoisie is Marx's name for capitalists in the modern economy. The bourgeoisie owns the means of production and employs wage labor. The conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is another example of a real material contradiction. This contradiction grows out of the previously mentioned contradiction between labor and capitalism. None of these contradictions can be resolved except by changing the capitalist structure. In fact, until that change occurs, the contradiction will only become worse. Society will be increasingly polarized into these two great opposing classes.

Competition with megastores and franchise chains will shut down many small, independent businesses; mechanization will replace skilled artisans; and even some capitalists will be squeezed out through attempts to establish monopolies, for example, by means of mergers. All these displaced people will be forced down into the ranks of the proletariat. Marx called this inevitable increase in the proletariat *proletarianization.* In addition, because capitalists have already reduced the workers to laboring machines performing a series of simple operations, mechanization becomes increasingly easy. As mechanization proceeds, more and more people are put out of work and fall from the proletariat into the industrial reserve army. In the end, Marx foresaw a situation in which society would be characterized by a tiny number of exploitative

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capitalists and a huge mass of proletarians and members of the industrial reserve army. By reducing so many people to this condition, capitalism creates the masses that will lead to its own overthrow. The increased centralization of factory work, as well as the shared suffering, increases the possibility of an organized resistance to capitalism. Furthermore, the international linking of factories and markets encourages workers to be aware of more than their own local interests. This awareness is likely to lead to revolution.

The capitalists, of course, seek to forestall this revolution. For example, they sponsor colonial adventures with the objective of shifting at least some of the burden of exploitation from the home front to the colonies. However, in Marx's view (1867/1967:10), these efforts are doomed to failure because the capitalist is as much controlled by the laws of the capitalist economy as are the workers. Capitalists are under competitive pressure from one another, forcing each to try to reduce labor costs and intensify exploitation—even though this intensified exploitation will increase the likelihood of revolution and therefore contribute to the capitalists' demise. Even goodhearted capitalists will be forced to further exploit their workers in order to compete: "The law of capitalist accumulation, metamorphosed by economists into pretended law of nature, in reality merely states that the very nature of accumulation excludes every diminution in the degree of exploitation".

Marx usually did not blame individual members of the bourgeoisie for their actions; he saw these actions as largely determined by the logic of the capitalist system. This is consistent with his view that actors in capitalism generally are devoid of creative independence. However, the developmental process inherent in capitalism provides the conditions necessary for the ultimate reemergence of such creative action and, with it, the overthrow of the capitalist system. The logic of the capitalist system is forcing the capitalists to produce more exploited proletarians, and these are the very people who will bring an end to capitalism through their revolt. "What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, is, above all, its own gravediggers" It is not only the ultimate proletariat revolution that Marx sees as caused by the underlying contradictions of capitalism, but also many of the various personal and social crises that beset modern society. On the personal side, we have already discussed some of the facets of the alienation that Marx believed was at the root of the feeling of meaninglessness in so many people's lives. At the economic level, Marx predicted a series of booms and depressions as capitalists overproduced or laid off workers in their attempts to increase their profits. At the political level, Marx predicted the increasing inability of a civil society to discuss and solve social problems. Instead we would see the growth of a state whose only purposes are the protection of the capitalists' private property and an occasional brutal intervention when economic coercion by the capitalists fails.

Topic 097: Is Capitalism as a Good Thing

Despite his focus on the inevitable crises of capitalism and his portrayal of it as a system of domination and exploitation, Marx saw capitalism as primarily a good thing. Certainly, Marx did not want to return to the traditional values of precapitalism. Past generations were just as exploited; the only difference is that the old exploitation was not veiled behind an economic system. The birth of capitalism opened up new possibilities for the freedom of the workers. Notwithstanding its exploitation, the capitalist system provides the possibility for freedom from the traditions that bound all previous societies. Even if the worker is not yet truly free, the

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promise is there. Similarly, as the most powerful economic system ever developed, capitalism holds the promise of freedom from hunger and from other forms of material deprivation. It was from the viewpoint of these promises that Marx criticized capitalism. Capitalism has been a truly revolutionary force. It has created a global society; it has introduced unrelenting technological change; it has overthrown the traditional world. But now, Marx believed, it must be overthrown. Capitalism's role is finished, and it is time for the new stage of communism to begin.

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Lesson 24

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORISTS: KARL MARX (1818-1883)-IV (Topic 98-102)

Topic 098: Forces of production

Marx's view of history was a dynamic one, and he therefore believed that the forces of production will change to better provide for material needs. For example, this is what happened with the advent of capitalism, when technological changes made factories possible. However, before capitalism could actually occur, there had to be changes in society, changes in the relations of production. Factories, capitalists, and wage laborers were not compatible with feudal relations. The feudal lords, who derived their wealth solely from the ownership of land and who felt a moral obligation to provide for their serfs, had to be replaced by capitalists who derived their wealth from capital and who felt no moral obligation to wage laborers. Similarly, the serf's feeling of personal loyalty to the lord had to be replaced by proletarians' willingness to sell their labor to whoever will pay. The old relations of production were in conflict with the new forces of production. A revolution is often required to change the relations of production. The main source of revolution is the material contradiction between the forces of production and the relations of production. However, revolution also results from another contradiction: between exploiters and the exploited. According to Marx, this contradiction, which has always existed, leads to evolutionary change when the exploited line up in support of a change in the relations of production that favors changes occurring in the forces of production. Marx did not believe that all workers' revolts could be effective, only those in support of a change in the forces of production. An effective revolution, according to Marx, will cause the supporting relations, institutions, and prevalent ideas to change so that they validate the new relations of production.

Topic 099: Cultural Aspects of Capitalist Society

In addition to his focus on the material structures of capitalism, Marx also theorized about its cultural aspects.

Ideology

Not only do the existing relations of production tend to prevent changes necessary for the development of the forces of production, but similarly, the supporting relations, institutions, and, in particular, prevalent ideas also tend to prevent these changes. Marx called prevalent ideas that perform these function ideologies. As with many terms, Marx is not always precise in his use of the word *ideology*. He seems to use it to indicate two related sorts of ideas. First, *ideology* refers to ideas that naturally emerge out of everyday life in capitalism but, because of the nature of capitalism, reflect reality in an inverted manner (. To explain this meaning of the term, Marx used the metaphor of a camera obscure, which employs an optical quirk to show a real image reflected upside down. This is the type of ideology represented by the fetishism of commodities or by money. Even though we know that money is nothing but a piece of paper that has value only because of underlying social relations, in our daily lives we treat money as though it had inherent value. Instead of our seeing that we give money its value, it often seems that money gives us our value. This first type of ideology is vulnerable to disruption because it is based on

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underlying material contradictions. Human value is not really dependent on money, and we often meet people who are living proof of that contradiction. In fact, it is at this level that we usually become aware of the material contradictions that Marx believed will drive capitalism to the next phase. We become aware, for example, that the economy is not an objective, independent system, but a political sphere. We become aware that our labor is not just another commodity and that its sale for wages produces alienation. Or if we don't become aware of the underlying truth, we at least become aware of the disruption because of a blatantly political move in the economic system or our own feeling of alienation. It is in addressing these disruptions that Marx's second use of *ideology* is relevant.

When disruptions occur and the underlying material contradictions are revealed, or are in danger of being revealed, the second type of ideology will emerge. Here Marx uses the term *ideology* to refer to systems of ruling ideas that attempt once again to hide the contradictions that are at the heart of the capitalist system. In most cases, they do this in one of three ways: (1) They lead to the creation of subsystems of ideas—a religion, a philosophy, a literature, a legal system—that makes the contradictions appear to be coherent. (2) They explain away those experiences that reveal the contradictions, usually as personal problems or individual idiosyncrasies. Or (3) they present the capitalist contradiction as really being a contradiction in human nature and therefore one that cannot be fixed by social change. In general, members of the ruling class create this second type of ideology. For example, Marx refers to bourgeois economists who present the commodity form as natural and universal. Or he criticizes bourgeois philosophers, such as Hegel, for pretending that material contradictions can be resolved by changing how we think. However, even the proletariat can create this type of ideology. People who have given up the hope of actually changing society need such ideologies. But no matter who creates them, these ideologies always benefit the ruling class by hiding the contradictions that would lead to social change.

Topic 100: Freedom, Equality and Ideology

For an example of ideology, we will look at Marx's ideas about the bourgeois conception of equality and freedom. According to Marx, our particular ideas of equality and freedom emerge out of capitalism. Although we take our belief in freedom and equality to be an obvious thing, any historical study will demonstrate that it is not. Most societies would have considered the idea that all people are essentially equal as absurd. For most cultures throughout history, slavery seemed quite natural. Now, under capitalism, we believe quite the opposite: inequality is absurd, and slavery is unnatural. Marx thought that this change in our ideas could be traced to the everyday practices of capitalism. The act of exchange, which is the basis of capitalism, presupposes the equality of the people in the exchange, just as it presupposes the equality of the commodities in the exchange. For the commodities, the particular qualitative differences of their use values are hidden by their exchange value. In other words, apples and oranges are made equal by reducing them to their monetary value. The same thing happens to the differences between the people involved in the exchange. Most exchanges in advanced capitalism involve people who never meet and don't know each other. We don't care who grew the apples and oranges we buy. This anonymity and indifference constitutes a kind of equality.

Furthermore, freedom is assumed in this exchange, since any of the partners to the exchange are presumed to be free to exchange or not as they see fit. The very idea of capitalist exchange

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means that commodities are not taken by force but are freely traded. This is also true of the exchange of labor time for wages. It is assumed that the worker or the employer is free to enter into the exchange and free to terminate it. Marx concludes that "equality and freedom are not only respected in exchange which is based on exchange values, but the exchange of exchange values is the real productive basis of all equality and freedom." Nevertheless, Marx believed that capitalist practices result in an inverted view of freedom. It seems that we are free; but in fact, it is capital that is free and we who are enslaved. According to Marx, freedom is the ability to have control over your own labor and its products. Although individuals may seem free under capitalism, they are not. Under previous social forms, people were directly dominated by others and so were aware of their unfreedom. Under capitalism, people are dominated by capitalist relations that seem objective and natural and therefore are not perceived as a form of domination. Marx decries "the insipidity of the view that free competition is the ultimate development of human freedom. . . . This kind of individual freedom is therefore at the same time the most complete suspension of all individual freedom, and the most complete subjugation of individuality under social conditions which assume the form of objective powers." Because the capitalist owns the means of production, the exchange of wages for labor time cannot be free. The proletariat must work in order to live, but the capitalist has the choice to hire others from the reserve army of labor, or to mechanize, or to let the factory sit idle until the workers become desperate enough to "freely" accept the capitalist's wages. The worker is neither free nor equal to the capitalist.

Hence, we see that the first level of the ideology of freedom and equality emerges from the practices of exchange in capitalism, but that our ideas are inverted and do not represent real freedom and equality. It is capital that is freely and equally exchanged; it is capital that is accepted without prejudice; it is capital that is able to do as it wishes, not us. This first type of ideology is easily disrupted, and our awareness of this disruption drives capitalism to the next phase. Despite the ideology of equality and freedom, few workers feel equal to their employers; few feel free in their jobs. This is why the second type of ideology is necessary. These disruptions somehow must be explained away or made to look inevitable. This is especially true with the ideology of equality and freedom, because these ideas are among the most threatening to capitalism. They are another example of how capitalism creates its own gravediggers. Older forms of unfreedom and inequality were clearly tied to people, and there was hope, therefore, of becoming free and equal by changing the hearts of the people who oppressed us. When we become aware of the source of unfreedom and inequality under capitalism, we begin to realize that capitalism itself must be changed. Ideologies therefore must be created to protect the capitalist system, and one way in which they do this is by portraying inequality as equality and unfreedom as freedom.

Marx believed that the capitalist system is inherently unequal. The capitalists automatically benefit more from the capitalist system, while the workers are automatically disadvantaged. Under capitalism, those who own the means of production, those with capital, make money from their money. Under capitalism, capital begets more capital— that is, investments give a return— and as we saw above, Marx believed that this was derived from the exploitation of the workers. Not only are the workers automatically exploited, they also bear the burden of unemployment due to technological changes, geographical shifts, and other economic dislocations, all of which benefit the capitalist. The rule of capitalism is reflected in the common saying that the rich get

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richer while the poor get poorer. Constantly increasing inequality is built into the capitalist system. Any attempt toward a more equal society must take into account this automatic propensity of the capitalist system to increased inequality. Nevertheless, attempts to make the capitalist system more equal often are portrayed as forms of inequality. From the Marxist viewpoint these attempts would be the second form of ideology. For example, ideologues promote a "flat tax" which taxes the rich and the poor at the same rate. They argue that because the rate is the same for rich and poor, it is equal. They ignore the fact that a graduated tax rate may be just compensation for the built-in inequality of capitalism. They create an ideology by portraying the obvious inequalities of the capitalist system as inevitable or as being due to the laziness of the poor. In this way, inequality is portrayed as equality, and the freedom of the rich to keep the fruits of exploitation trumps the freedom of the workers. We see in this example not only the two types of ideology but also another instance of how Marx thought that capitalism is a good thing. The ideas of freedom and equality emerge from capitalism itself, and it is these ideas that drive us toward the dissolution of capitalism, toward communism.

Topic 101: Religion

Marx also sees religion as an ideology. He famously refers to religion as the opiate of the people, but it is worthwhile to look at the entire quotation: Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and also the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the opium of the people. (Marx, 1843/1970) Marx believed that religion, like all ideology, reflects a truth but that this truth is inverted. Because people cannot see that their distress and oppression are produced by the capitalist system, their distress and oppression are given a religious form. Marx clearly says that he is not against religion per se, but against a system that requires the illusions of religion.

This religious form is vulnerable to disruption and therefore is always liable to become the basis of a revolutionary movement. We do indeed see that religious movements have often been in the forefront of opposition to capitalism (for example, liberation theology). Nevertheless, Marx felt that religion is especially amenable to becoming the second form of ideology by portraying the injustice of capitalism as a test for the faithful and pushing any revolutionary change off into the afterlife. In this way, the cry of the oppressed is used to further oppression.

Topic 102: Concluding Observations

- Marx presented a complex analysis of the historical basis of inequality in capitalism and its change.
- Based his theory on dialectical approach i.e. Society is structured around contradictions that can be resolved only through actual social change.
- Contradiction between human potential (nature/labor) and the conditions for labor in capitalism. Labor is sold as a commodity. Commodifying of labor leads to alienation.
- The exchange value of commodities tends to predominate over their actual usefulness. Commodities appear to have power over humans.
- Power leads to exploitation.
- Class conflict between the proletariat and bourgeoisie.

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- Proletarianization will swell the ranks of the proletariat
- Eventual revolution ending in communism.
- Nothing is inevitable.
- Some cultural aspects like religion and ideology block the revolution. Social change in inherent. Contradictions bring change.
- History of capitalist system provides direction to change. Exploitation by dominant class and the resultant class conflict leading to revolt.
- Nothing inevitable. Economic forces prepare the ground but it is the collective consciousness, human will organized into driving force that brings change.
- Revolt to abolish capitalism.

Did it work?

- Revolutions. Then what?
- The rise of the proletariat as a class is difficult.
- Individual competition among the proletarians. Lack class consciousness.
- Revolts against the instruments of production rather than capitalism.
- Are the bourgeoisie asleep?
- Proletarians co-opted into serving the interests of bourgeoisie..
- Bourgeoisie don't let the kettle come to boiling point.

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Lesson 25

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORISTS: MAX WEBER (1964-1920)-I
Topic 103-107

Topic 103: Introduction

Weber's professorship did not include sociology until a year before his death. He started his writings in the area of political economy and contributed to the methodology of the social sciences. He is very prolific writer in the sociology of religion. Social stratification is another area of his interest. He had an influence on: Structural functionalism, through Parsons, the conflict tradition and critical theory Symbolic interactionists through Weber's ideas on verstehen. For Weber sociology is a science concerning itself with interpretive understanding of social action in order to arrive at causal explanation of its course and effects. Acting individual attaches subjective meaning to his behavior.

- Action is social: subjective meaning takes account of behavior of others.
- Theoretical ideas embedded in his empirical, usually historical, research.

Weber's methodology shaped his research, and the combination of the two lies at the base of his theoretical orientation.

Topic 104: History and Sociology

Even though Weber was a student of, and took his first academic job in, law, his early career was dominated by an interest in history. As Weber moved more in the direction of the relatively new field of sociology, he sought to clarify its relationship to the established field of history. Although Weber felt that each field needed the other, his view was that the task of sociology was to provide a needed "service" to history. In Weber's words, sociology performed only a "preliminary, quite modest task". Weber explained the difference between sociology and history: "Sociology seeks to formulate type concepts and generalized uniformities of empirical processes. This distinguishes it from history, which is oriented to the causal analysis and explanation of individual actions, structures, and personalities possessing cultural significance". Despite this seemingly clear-cut differentiation, in his own work Weber was able to combine the two. His sociology was oriented to the development of clear concepts so that he could perform a causal analysis of historical phenomena. Weber defined his ideal procedure as "the sure imputation of individual concrete events occurring in historical reality to concrete, historically given causes through the study of precise empirical data which have been selected from specific points of view" (1903–1917/1949:69). We can think of Weber as a historical sociologist.

Weber's thinking on sociology was profoundly shaped by a series of intellectual debates (Methodenstreit) raging in Germany during his time. The most important of these debates was over the issue of the relationship between history and science. At the poles in this debate were those (the positivists [Halfpenny, 2005]) who thought that history was composed of general (nomothetic) laws and those (the subjectivists) who reduced history to idiosyncratic (idiographic) actions and events. (The positivists thought that history could be like a natural science; the subjectivists saw the two as radically different.) For example, a nomothetic thinker would

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generalize about social revolutions, whereas an idiographic analyst would focus on the specific events leading up to the American Revolution. Weber rejected both extremes and in the process developed a distinctive way of dealing with historical sociology. In Weber's view, history is composed of unique empirical events; there can be no generalizations at the empirical level. Sociologists must, therefore, separate the empirical world from the conceptual universe that they construct. The concepts never completely capture the empirical world, but they can be used as heuristic tools for gaining a better understanding of reality. With these concepts, sociologists can develop generalizations, but these generalizations are not history and must not be confused with empirical.

Weber's views on historical sociology were shaped in part by the availability of, and his commitment to the study of, empirical historical data. His was the first generation of scholars to have available reliable data on historical phenomena from many parts of the world (MacRae, 1974). Weber was more inclined to immerse himself in these historical data than he was to dream up abstract generalizations about the basic thrust of history. Although this led him to some important insights, it also created serious problems in understanding his work; he often got so involved in historical detail that he lost sight of the basic reasons for the historical study. In addition, the sweep of his historical studies encompassed so many epochs and so many societies that he could do little more than make rough generalizations (G. Roth, 1971). Despite these problems, Weber's commitment to the scientific study of empirical phenomena made him attractive to the developing discipline of sociology in the United States.

In sum, Weber believed that history is composed of an inexhaustible array of specific phenomena. To study these phenomena, it was necessary to develop a variety of concepts designed to be useful for research on the real world. As a general rule, although Weber (as we will see) did not adhere to it strictly and neither do most sociologists and historians, the task of sociology was to develop these concepts, which history was to use in causal analyses of specific historical phenomena. In this way, Weber sought to combine the specific and the general in an effort to develop a science that did justice to the complex nature of social life.

Topic 105: Verstehen

Weber felt that sociologists had an advantage over natural scientists. That advantage resided in the sociologist's ability to understand social phenomena, whereas the natural scientist could not gain a similar understanding of the behavior of an atom or a chemical compound. The German word for understanding is verstehen (Soeffner, 2005). Weber's special use of the term verstehen in his historical research is one of his best-known and most controversial contributions to the methodology of contemporary sociology. As I clarify what Weber meant by verstehen, I will also underscore some of the problems involved in his conceptualization of it. The controversy surrounding the concept of verstehen, as well as some of the problems involved in interpreting what Weber meant, grows out of a general problem with Weber's methodological thoughts. As Thomas Burger argued, Weber was neither very sophisticated nor very consistent in his methodological pronouncements (1976; see also Hekman, 1983:26). He tended to be careless and imprecise because he felt that he was simply repeating ideas that were well known in his day among German historians. Furthermore, as pointed out above, Weber did not think too highly of methodological reflections. Weber's thoughts on verstehen were relatively common among

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German historians of his day and were derived from a field known as hermeneutics. Hermeneutics was a special approach to the understanding and interpretation of published writings. Its goal was to understand the thinking of the author as well as the basic structure of the text.

One common misconception about verstehen is that it is simply the use of "intuition" by the researcher. Thus many critics see it as a "soft," irrational, subjective research methodology. However, Weber categorically rejected the idea that verstehen involved simply intuition, sympathetic participation, or empathy (1903–1917/1949). To him, verstehen involved doing systematic and rigorous research rather than simply getting a "feeling" for a text or social phenomenon. In other words, for Weber (1921/1968) verstehen was a rational procedure of study. The key question in interpreting Weber's concept of verstehen is whether he thought that it was most appropriately applied to the subjective states of individual actors or to the subjective aspects of large-scale units of analysis (for example, culture). As we will see, Weber's focus on the cultural and social-structural contexts of action leads us to the view that verstehen is a tool for macro-level analysis.

Topic 106: Causality

Another aspect of Weber's methodology was his commitment to the study of causality (Ringer, 1997:75). Weber was inclined to see the study of the causes of social phenomena as being within the domain of history, not sociology. Yet to the degree that history and sociology cannot be clearly separated—and they certainly are not clearly separated in Weber's substantive work—the issue of causality is relevant to sociology. Causality is also important because it is, as we will see, another place in which Weber sought to combine nomothetic and idiographic approaches. By causality Weber (1921/1968) simply meant the probability that an event will be followed or accompanied by another event. It was not, in his view, enough to look for historical constants, repetitions, analogies, and parallels, as many historians are content to do. Instead, the researcher has to look at the reasons for, as well as the meanings of, historical changes (G. Roth, 1971). Although Weber can be seen as having a one-way causal model—in contrast to Marx's dialectical mode of reasoning—in his substantive sociology he was always attuned to the interrelationships among the economy, society, polity, organization, social stratification, religion, and so forth (G. Roth, 1968). Thus, Weber operates with a multicausal approach in which " hosts of interactive influences are very often effective causal factors" (Kalberg, 1994:13).

Weber was quite clear on the issue of multiple causality in his study of the relationship between Protestantism and the spirit of capitalism. Although he is sometimes interpreted differently, Weber (1904–1905/1958) simply argued that the Protestant ethic was one of the causal factors in the rise of the modern spirit of capitalism. He labeled as "foolish" the idea that Protestantism was the sole cause. Similarly foolish, in Weber's view, was the idea that capitalism could have arisen "only" as a result of the Protestant Reformation; other factors could have led to the same result. In The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, as well as in most of the rest of his historical work, Weber was interested in the question of causality, but he did not operate with a simple one-way model; he was always attuned to the interrelationships among a number of social factors.

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The critical thing to remember about Weber's thinking on causality is his belief that because we can have a special understanding of social life (verstehen), the causal knowledge of the social sciences is different from the causal knowledge of the natural sciences. As Weber put it: "'Meaningfully' interpretable human conduct ('action') is identifiable by reference to 'valuations' and meanings. For this reason, our criteria for causal explanation have a unique kind of satisfaction in the 'historical' explanation of such an 'entity'" (1903–1906/1975:185). Thus the causal knowledge of the social scientist is different from the causal knowledge of the natural scientist. Weber's thoughts on causality were intimately related to his efforts to come to grips with the conflict between nomothetic and idiographic knowledge. Those who subscribe to a nomothetic point of view would argue that there is a necessary relationship among social phenomena, whereas the supporters of an idiographic perspective would be inclined to see only random relationships among these entities. As usual, Weber took a middle position, epitomized in his concept of "adequate causality." The notion of adequate causality adopts the view that the best we can do in sociology is make probabilistic statements about the relationship between social phenomena; that is, if x occurs, then it is probable that y will occur. The goal is to "estimate the degree to which a certain effect is 'favored' by certain 'conditions' " (Weber, 1903–1917/1949:183)..

Topic 107: Ideal Types

The ideal type is one of Weber's best-known contributions to contemporary sociology. As we have seen, Weber believed it was the responsibility of sociologists to develop conceptual tools, which could be used later by historians and sociologists. The most important such conceptual tool was the ideal type:

An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct . . . In its conceptual purity, this mental construct . . . cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality. (Weber, 1903–1917/1949:90)

In spite of this definition, Weber was not totally consistent in the way he used the ideal type. To grasp what the concept means initially, we will have to overlook some of the inconsistencies. At its most basic level, an ideal type is a concept constructed by a social scientist, on the basis of his or her interests and theoretical orientation, to capture the essential features of some social phenomenon. The most important thing about ideal types is that they are heuristic devices; they are to be useful and helpful in doing empirical research and in understanding a specific aspect of the social world (or a "historical individual"). Ideal types are heuristic devices to be used in the study of slices of historical reality. For example, social scientists would construct an ideal typical bureaucracy on the basis of their immersion in historical data. This ideal type can then be compared to actual bureaucracies. The researcher looks for divergences in the real case from the exaggerated ideal type. Next, the social scientist must look for the causes of the deviations. Some typical reasons for these divergences are:

1. Actions of bureaucrats that are motivated by misinformation.
2. Strategic errors, primarily by the bureaucratic leaders.
3. Logical fallacies undergirding the actions of leaders and followers.
4. Decisions made in the bureaucracy on the basis of emotion.
5. Any irrationality in the action of bureaucratic leaders and followers.

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To take another example, an ideal-typical military battle delineates the principal components of such a battle—opposing armies, opposing strategies, materiel at the disposal of each, disputed land ("no-man's land"), supply and support forces, command centers, and leadership qualities. Actual battles may not have all these elements, and that is one thing a researcher wants to know. The basic point is that the elements of any particular military battle may be compared with the elements identified in the ideal type.

In Weber's view, the ideal type was to be derived inductively from the real world of social history. Weber did not believe that it was enough to offer a carefully defined set of concepts, especially if they were deductively derived from an abstract theory. The concepts had to be empirically adequate (G. Roth, 1971). Thus, in order to produce ideal types, researchers had first to immerse themselves in historical reality and then derive the types from that reality. In line with Weber's efforts to find a middle ground between nomothetic and idiographic knowledge, he argued that ideal types should be neither too general nor too specific. For example, in the case of religion he would reject ideal types of the history of religion in general, but he would also be critical of ideal types of very specific phenomena, such as an individual's religious experience. Rather, ideal types are developed of intermediate phenomena such as Calvinism, Pietism, Methodism, and Baptism.

Although ideal types are to be derived from the real world, they are not to be mirror images of that world. Rather, they are to be one-sided exaggerations (based on the researcher's interests) of the essence of what goes on in the real world. In Weber's view, the more exaggerated the ideal type, the more useful it will be for historical research. The use of the word ideal or utopia should not be construed to mean that the concept being described is in any sense the best of all possible worlds. As used by Weber, the term meant that the form described in the concept was rarely, if ever, found in the real world. In fact, Weber argued that the ideal type need not be positive or correct; it can just as easily be negative or even morally repugnant (1903–1917/1949). Ideal types should make sense in themselves, the meaning of their components should be compatible, and they should aid us in making sense of the real world. Although we have come to think of ideal types as describing static entities, Weber believed that they could describe either static or dynamic entities. Thus we can have an ideal type of a structure, such as a bureaucracy, or of a social development, such as bureaucratization.

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Lesson 26

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORISTS: MAX WEBER (1964-1920)-II (Topic 108-112)

Topic 108: Values

Modern sociological thinking in America on the role of values in the social sciences has been shaped to a large degree by an interpretation, often simplistic and erroneous, of Weber's notion of *value-free* sociology. A common perception of Weber's view is that social scientists should *not* let their personal values influence their scientific research in any way.

Values and Research

Weber's position on the place of values in social research is far more ambiguous. Weber did believe in the ability to separate fact from value, and this view could be extended to the research world: "Investigator and teacher should keep unconditionally separate the establishment of empirical facts . . . and *his* own personal evaluations, i.e., his evaluation of these facts as satisfactory or unsatisfactory" (1903–1917/1949:11). He often differentiated between existential knowledge of what is and normative knowledge of what ought to be (Weber, 1903–1917/1949). For example, on the founding of the German Sociological Society, he said: "The Association rejects, in principle and definitely, all propaganda for action-oriented ideas from its midst." Instead, the association was pointed in the direction of the study of "what is, why something is the way it is, for what historical and social reasons" (G. Roth, 1968:5). However, several facts point in a different direction and show that despite the evidence described, Weber did not operate with the simplistic view that values should be totally eliminated from social research. While, as we will see, Weber perceived a role for values in a specific aspect of the research process, he thought that they should be kept out of the actual collection of research data. By this Weber meant that we should employ the regular procedures of scientific investigation, such as accurate observation and systematic comparison. Values are to be restricted to the time before social research begins. They should shape the selection of what we choose to study. Weber's (1903–1917/1949:21) ideas on the role of values prior to social research are captured in his concept of *value relevance.* As with many of Weber's methodological concepts, value-relevance is derived from the work of the German historicist Heinrich Rickert, for whom it involved "a selection of those parts of empirical reality which for human beings embody one or several of those general cultural values which are held by people in the society in which the scientific observers live" (Burger, 1976:36). In historical research, this would mean that the choice of objects to study would be made on the basis of what is considered important in the particular society in which the researchers live. That is, they choose what to study of the past on the basis of the contemporary value system. In his specific case, Weber wrote of value-relevance from the "standpoint of the interests of the modern European" (1903–1917/1949:30). For example, bureaucracy was a very important part of the German society of Weber's time, and he chose, as a result, to study that phenomenon (or the lack of it) in various historical settings. Thus, to Weber, value judgments are not to be withdrawn completely from scientific discourse. Although Weber was opposed to confusing fact and value, he did not believe that values should be excised from the social sciences: "An *attitude of moral indifference* has no connection with *scientific* 'objectivity'" (1903–1917/1949:60). He was prepared to admit that values have a certain place, though he

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warned researchers to be careful about the role of values: "It should be constantly made clear . . . exactly at which point the scientific investigator becomes silent and the evaluating and acting person begins to speak" (Weber, 1903–1917/1949:60). When expressing value positions, sociological researchers must always keep themselves and their audiences aware of those positions. Most American sociologists regard Weber as an exponent of value-free sociology.

Topic 109: Substantive Sociology

We turn now to Weber's substantive sociology. We begin, as did Weber in his monumental *Economy and Society,* at the levels of action and interaction, but we will soon encounter the basic paradox in Weber's work: despite his seeming commitment to sociology of small-scale processes, his work is primarily at the large-scale levels of the social world. (Many Weberians would disagree with this portrayal of paradox in Weber's work. Kalberg [1994], for example, argues that Weber offers a more fully integrated micro-macro, or agency-structure, theory.)

What Is Sociology?

In articulating his view on sociology, Weber often took a stance against the large scale evolutionary sociology, the organicism that was preeminent in the field at the time. For example, Weber said: "I became one [a sociologist] in order to put an end to collectivist notions. In other words, sociology, too, can only be practiced by proceeding from the action of one or more, few or many, individuals, that means, by employing a strictly 'individualist' method" (G. Roth, 1976:306). Despite his stated adherence to an "individualist" method, Weber was forced to admit that it is impossible to eliminate totally collective ideas from sociology. But even when he admitted the significance of collective concepts, Weber ultimately reduced them to patterns and regularities of individual action: "For the subjective interpretation of action in sociological work these collectivities must be treated as *solely* the resultants and modes of organization of the particular acts of individual persons, since these alone can be treated as agents in a course of subjectively understandable action" (1921/1968:13). At the individual level, Weber was deeply concerned with meaning, and the way in which it was formed. There seems little doubt that Weber believed in, and intended to undertake, microsociology. But is that, in fact, what he did? Guenther Roth, one of Weber's foremost interpreters, provides us with an unequivocal answer in his description of the overall thrust of *Economy and Society:* "the first strictly *empirical comparison of social structure* and normative order in *world-historical* depth" (1968: xxvii). Weber is interested in what individuals do and why they do it (their subjective motives). In the former, Weber is interested in reducing collectivities to the actions of individuals. However, in most of his substantive sociology (as we will see), Weber focuses on large-scale structure (such as bureaucracy or capitalism) and is not focally concerned with what individuals do or why they do it. 5 Such structures are not reduced by Weber to the actions of individuals, and the actions of those in them are determined by the structures, not by their motives.

With this as background, we are now ready for Weber's definition of *sociology:* "Sociology is a *science* concerning itself with the *interpretive understanding* of *social action* and thereby with a *causal* explanation of its course and consequences" (1921/1968:4). Among the themes discussed earlier those are mentioned or implied in this definition are the following:

- Sociology should be a science.

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- Sociology should be concerned with causality. (Here, apparently, Weber was combining sociology and history.)
- Sociology should utilize interpretive understanding (*verstehen*).

Topic 110: Social Action

Weber's entire sociology, if we accept his words at face value, was based on his conception of social action (S. Turner, 1983). He differentiated between action and purely reactive behavior. The concept of behavior is reserved, then as now, for automatic behavior that involves no thought processes. A stimulus is presented and behavior occurs, with little intervening between stimulus and response. Such behavior was not of interest in Weber's sociology. He was concerned with action that clearly involved the intervention of thought processes (and the resulting meaningful action) between the occurrence of a stimulus and the ultimate response. To put it slightly differently, action was said to occur when individuals attached subjective meanings to their action. To Weber, the task of sociological analysis involved "the interpretation of action in terms of its subjective meaning" (1921/1968:8). A good, and more specific, example of Weber's thinking on action is found in his discussion of *economic action,* which he defined as " *a conscious, primary* orientation to economic consideration . . . for what matters is not the objective necessity of making economic provision, but the belief that it is necessary" (1921/1968:64).

In embedding his analysis in mental processes and the resulting meaningful action, Weber (1921/1968) was careful to point out that it is erroneous to regard psychology as the foundation of the sociological interpretation of action. Weber seemed to be making essentially the same point made by Durkheim in discussing at least some nonmaterial social facts. That is, sociologists are interested in mental processes, but this is not the same as psychologists' interest in the mind, personality, and so forth. Although Weber implied that he had a great concern with mental processes, he actually spent little time on them.

Weber utilized his ideal-type methodology to clarify the meaning of *action* by identifying four basic types of action. Not only is this typology significant for understanding what Weber meant by action, but it is also, in part, the basis for Weber's concern with larger social structures and institutions.

Types of Action:
Four ideal types of action:

- *Traditional:* Controlled by tradition, deeply rooted habits. Traditional society.
- *Affectual:* Determined by the actors' specific affections/emotions
- *Value relational:* Determined by conscious belief inherent in ethical, esthetic, religious value.
- *Purposive rational:* actions to achieve certain goal. Means-ends rationale.

It should be noted that although Weber differentiated four ideal-typical forms of action, he was well aware that any given action usually involves a combination of all four ideal types of action.

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In addition, Weber argued that sociologists have a much better chance of understanding action of the more rational variety than they do of understanding action dominated by affect or tradition. We turn now to Weber's thoughts on social stratification, or his famous ideas on class, status, and party (or power). His analysis of stratification is one area in which Weber does operate, at least at first, as an action theorist.

Topic 111: Class, Status, and Party

One important aspect of this analysis is that Weber refused to reduce stratification to economic factors (or class, in Weber's terms) but saw it as multidimensional. Thus, society is stratified on the bases of economics, status, and power. One resulting implication is that people can rank high on one or two of these dimensions of stratification and low on the other (or others), permitting a far more sophisticated analysis of social stratification than is possible when stratification is simply reduced (as it was by some Marxists) to variations in one's economic situation. Starting with class, Weber adhered to his action orientation by arguing that a class is not a community. Rather, a class is a group of people whose shared situation is a possible, and sometimes frequent, basis for action by the group (K. Smith, 2007). Weber contends that a "class situation" exists when three conditions are met: (1) A number of people have in common a specific causal component of their life chances, insofar as (2) this component is represented exclusively by economic interests in the possession of goods and opportunities for income, and (3) is represented under the conditions of the commodity or labor markets. This is "class situation." (Weber, 1921/1968:927) The concept of "class" refers to any group of people found in the same class situation. Thus a class is *not* a community but merely a group of people in the same economic, or market, situation.

In contrast to class, status does normally refer to communities; status groups are ordinarily communities, albeit rather amorphous ones. "Status situation" is defined by Weber as "every typical component of the life of men that is determined by a specific, positive or negative, social estimation of *honor* " (1921/1968:932). As a general rule, status is associated with a style of life. (Status relates to consumption of goods produced, whereas class relates to economic production.) Those at the top of the status hierarchy have a different lifestyle than do those at the bottom. In this case, lifestyle, or status, is related to class situation. But class and status are not necessarily linked to one another: "Money and an entrepreneurial position are not in themselves status qualifications, although they may lead to them; and the lack of property is not in itself a status disqualification, although this may be a reason for it" (Weber, 1921/1968:306). There is a complex set of relationships between class and status, and it is made even more complicated when we add the dimension of party. While classes exist in the economic order and status groups in the social order, parties can be found in the political order. To Weber, parties "are always *structures* struggling for domination" (cited in Gerth and Mills, 1958:195; italics added). Thus, parties are the most organized elements of Weber's stratification system. Weber thinks of parties very broadly as including not only those that exist in the state but also those that may exist in a social club. Parties usually, but not always, represent class or status groups. Whatever they represent, parties are oriented to the attainment of power. While Weber remained close to his action approach in his ideas on social stratification, these ideas already indicate a movement in the direction of macro-level communities and structures. In most of his other work, Weber focused on such large scale units of analysis. Not that Weber lost sight of the action; the actor

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simply moved from being the focus of his concern to being largely a dependent variable determined by a variety of large-scale forces. For example, as we will see, Weber believed that individual Calvinists are impelled to act in various ways by the norms, values, and beliefs of their religion, but his focus was not on the individual but on the collective forces that impel the actor.

Topic 112: Structures of Authority

Weber's sociological interest in the structures of authority was motivated, at least in part, by his political interests (Eliaeson, 2000). Weber was no political radical; in fact, he was often called the "bourgeois Marx" to reflect the similarities in the intellectual interests of Marx and Weber as well as their very different political orientations. Although Weber was almost as critical of modern capitalism as Marx was, he did not advocate revolution. He wanted to change society gradually, not overthrow it. He had little faith in the ability of the masses to create a "better" society. But Weber also saw little hope in the middle classes, which he felt were dominated by shortsighted, petty bureaucrats. Weber was critical of authoritarian political leaders like Bismarck. Nevertheless, for Weber the hope—if indeed he had any hope—lay with the great political leaders rather than with the masses or the bureaucrats. Along with his faith in political leaders went his unswerving nationalism. He placed the nation above all else: "The vital interests of the nation stand, of course, above democracy and parliamentarianism" (Weber, 1921/1968:1383). Weber preferred democracy as a political form not because he believed in the masses but because it offered maximum dynamism and the best milieu to generate political leaders (Mommsen, 1974). Weber noted that authority structures exist in every social institution, and his political views were related to his analysis of these structures in all settings. Of course, they were most relevant to his views on the polity.

Weber began his analysis of authority structures in a way that was consistent with his assumptions about the nature of action. He defined *domination* as the "probability that certain specific commands (or all commands) will be obeyed by a given group of persons" (Weber, 1921/1968:212). Domination can have a variety of bases, legitimate as well as illegitimate, but what mainly interested Weber were the legitimate forms of domination or what he called *authority*). What concerned Weber, and what played a central role in much of his sociology, were the three bases on which authority is made legitimate to followers—rational, traditional, and charismatic. In defining these three bases, Weber remained fairly close to his ideas on individual action, but he rapidly moved to the large-scale structures of authority. Authority legitimized on *rational* grounds rests "on a belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands" (Weber, 1921/1968:215). Authority legitimized on *traditional* grounds is based on "an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them" (Weber, 1921/1968:215). Finally, authority legitimized by *charisma* 6 rests on the devotion of followers to the exceptional sanctity, exemplary character, heroism, or special powers (for example, the ability to work miracles) of leaders, as well as on the normative order sanctioned by them. All these modes of legitimizing authority clearly imply individual actors, thought processes (beliefs), and actions. But from this point, Weber, in his thinking about authority, did move quite far from an individual action base, as we will see when we discuss the authority structures erected on the basis of these types of legitimacy.

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Bases of legitimized authority: Ideal types

1. Rational authority: Based on enacted rules. Legal.
2. Traditional authority: Based on sanctity of traditions. Sacred. Legitimate right.
3. Charismatic authority: Reverence to exemplary character, heroism, or miraculous powers. Holy.

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Lesson 27

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORISTS: MAX WEBER (1964-1920)-III (Topic 113-115)

Topic 113: Rational-Legal Authority

Rational-legal authority can take a variety of structural forms, but the form that most interested Weber was *bureaucracy*, which he considered "the purest type of exercise of legal authority" (1921/1968:220).

Ideal-Typical Bureaucracy

Weber depicted bureaucracies in ideal-typical terms: From a purely technical point of view, a bureaucracy is capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency, and is in this sense formally the most rational known means of exercising authority over human beings. It is superior to any other form in precision, in stability, in the stringency of its discipline, and in its reliability. It thus makes possible a particularly high degree of calculability of results for the heads of the organization and for those acting in relation to it. It is finally superior both in intensive efficiency and in the scope of its operations and is formally capable of application to all kinds of administrative tasks.

Despite his discussion of the positive characteristics of bureaucracies, here and elsewhere in his work, there is a fundamental ambivalence in his attitude toward them. Although he detailed their advantages, he was well aware of their problems. Weber expressed various reservations about bureaucratic organizations. For example, he was cognizant of the "red tape" that often makes dealing with bureaucracies so trying and so difficult. His major fear, however, was that the rationalization that dominates all aspects of bureaucratic life was a threat to individual liberty.

Weber was appalled by the effects of bureaucratization and, more generally, of the rationalization of the world of which bureaucratization is but one component, but he saw no way out. He described bureaucracies as "escape proof," "practically unshatterable," and among the hardest institutions to destroy once they are established. Along the same lines, he felt that individual bureaucrats could not "squirm out" of the bureaucracy once they were "harnessed" in it (for a less ominous view of bureaucratization, see Klagge, 1997). Weber concluded that "the future belongs to bureaucratization" (1921/1968:1401), and time has borne out his prediction. Weber would say that his depiction of the advantages of bureaucracy is part of his ideal-typical image of the way it operates. The ideal-typical bureaucracy is a purposeful exaggeration of the rational characteristics of bureaucracies. Such an exaggerated model is useful for heuristic purposes and for studies of organizations in the real world, but it is not to be mistaken for a realistic depiction of the way bureaucracies actually operate.

Weber distinguished the ideal-typical bureaucracy from the ideal-typical bureaucrat. He conceived of bureaucracies as structures and of bureaucrats as positions within those structures. He did *not,* as his action orientation might lead us to expect, offer a social psychology of organizations or of the individuals who inhabit those bureaucracies (as modern symbolic interactionists might). The ideal-typical bureaucracy is a type of organization. Its basic units are

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offices organized in a hierarchical manner with rules, functions, written documents, and means of compulsion. All these are, to varying degrees, large-scale structures that represent the thrust of Weber's thinking. He could, after all, have constructed an idealtypical bureaucracy that focused on the thoughts and actions of individuals within the bureaucracy. There is a whole school of thought in the study of organizations that focuses precisely on this level rather than on the structures of bureaucracies (see, for example, Blankenship, 1977).

The following are the major characteristics of the ideal-typical bureaucracy:

1. It consists of a continuous organization of official functions (offices) bound by rules.
2. Each office has a specified sphere of competence. The office carries with it a set of obligations to perform various functions, the authority to carry out these functions, and the means of compulsion required to do the job.
3. The offices are organized into a hierarchical system.
4. The offices may carry with them technical qualifications that require that the participants obtain suitable training.
5. The staff that fills these offices does not own the means of production associated with them; staff members are provided with the use of those things that they need to do the job.
6. The incumbent is not allowed to appropriate the position; it always remains part of the organization.
7. Administrative acts, decisions, and rules are formulated and recorded in writing.

The future belongs to bureaucratization and time has borne out this prediction. There is no alternative. Not even in socialism. Political leaders fail to control. The leader has been chosen for that position in the traditional manner. No merit. Lacks ideal rationality of modern society/capitalism.

Traditional Authority

- Based on the virtue in the sanctity of age-old rules and powers. Patriarch. King.
- The leader is not a superior but a personal master.
- Personal loyalty, not the official's impersonal duty, determines the relations of the staff to the master.

Charismatic Authority

- Charisma: Possession of extraordinary qualities.
- Charisma is to be defined by disciples. Definition is crucial.
- A charismatic leader can be ordinary person. Treated as having supernatural, superhuman, or exceptional powers.
- Charisma is a revolutionary force. Poses threat to system. Changes the minds of actors; causes a "subjective or internal reorientation."

Charisma and rationality: Forces of change

- Charisma is internal force. Changes people's thoughts and actions dramatically.
- Rationality is an external revolutionary force. Changes the structures of society first and then ultimately the thoughts and actions of individuals.

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- A charismatic system is inherently fragile.
- Becomes either traditional or rational-legal authority.
- Rationality: Ultimate force.

Topic 114: Rationalization

There has been a growing realization in recent years that rationalization lies at the heart of Weber's substantive sociology. As Kalberg put it, "It *is* the case that Weber's interest in a broad and overarching theme—the 'specific and peculiar "rationalism" of Western culture' and its unique origins and development—stands at the center of his sociology" (1994:18). However, it is difficult to extract a clear definition of *rationalization* from Weber's work. 8 In fact, Weber operated with a number of different definitions of the term, and he often failed to specify which definition he was using in a particular discussion (Brubaker, 1984:1). As we saw earlier, Weber did define *rationality;* indeed, he differentiated between two types—means–ends and value rationality. However, these concepts refer to types of *action.* They are the basis of, but not coterminous with, Weber's larger-scale sense of rationalization. Weber is interested in far more than fragmented action orientations; his main concern is with regularities and patterns of action within civilizations, institutions, organizations, strata, classes, and groups.

Types of Rationality:

- ***Practical rationality*** is defined by Kalberg as "every way of life that views and judges worldly activity in relation to the individual's purely pragmatic and egoistic interests" (1980:1151). People who practice practical rationality accept given realities and merely calculate the most expedient ways of dealing with the difficulties that they present. This type of rationality arose with the severing of the bonds of primitive magic, and it exists trans-civilizationally and trans-historically; that is, it is not restricted to the modern Occident. This type of rationality stands in opposition to anything that threatens to transcend everyday routine. It leads people to distrust all impractical values, either religious or secular-utopian, as well as the theoretical rationality of the intellectuals, the type of rationality to which we now turn.

- ***Theoretical rationality*** involves a cognitive effort to master reality through increasingly abstract concepts rather than through action. It involves such abstract cognitive processes as logical deduction, induction, attribution of causality, and the like. This type of rationality was accomplished early in history by sorcerers and ritualistic priests and later by philosophers, judges, and scientists. Unlike practical rationality, theoretical rationality leads the actor to transcend daily realities in a quest to understand the world as a meaningful cosmos. Like practical rationality, it is transcivilizational and trans-historical. The effect of intellectual rationality on action is limited. In that it involves cognitive processes, it need not affect action taken, and it has the potential to introduce new patterns of action only indirectly.

- ***Substantive rationality*** (like practical rationality but *not* theoretical rationality) directly orders action into patterns through clusters of values. Substantive rationality involves a choice of means to ends within the context of a system of values. One value system is no

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more (substantively) rational than another. Thus, this type of rationality also exists trans-civilizationally and trans-historically, wherever consistent value postulates exist.

- ***Formal rationality*** is the finally, and most important from Kalberg's point of view, which involves means–ends calculation (Cockerham, Abel, and Luschen, 1993). But whereas in practical rationality this calculation occurs in reference to pragmatic self-interests, in formal rationality it occurs with reference to "universally applied rules, laws, and regulations." As Brubaker puts it, "Common to the rationality of industrial capitalism, formalistic law and bureaucratic administration is its objectified, institutionalized, supra-individual form; in each sphere, rationality is embodied in the social structure and confronts individuals as something external to them" (1984:9).

Topic 115: Thesis of Rationalization

Rationalization is the basis of development of modern capitalism. Increase in money occurs in rational forms. Most important elements I this process: Calculability, predictability, civil legal system, and systematic use of science and technology. Human values disappear.

An overarching effect of rationalization

Capitalism and bureaucracies are the iron cage of formal rational structures. Rationalization taught people to master nature, to develop technology for survival, create bureaucratic system for regulating life. Existential basis of life (choice of values and ideals, search for meaning beyond calculations) disappearing. Man trapped in iron cage of commodities and regulations. Formal rationality permeates the functioning of the system. Weber tended to shy away from proclamations about whole societies.

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Lesson 28

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORISTS: MAX WEBER (1964-1920)-IV (Topic 116-118)

Topic 116: Religion and the Rise of Capitalism

Weber spent much of his life studying religion—this in spite of, or perhaps because of, his being religious, or, as he once described himself, "religiously unmusical" (Gerth and Mills, 1958:25). One of his overriding concerns was the relationship among a variety of the world's religions and the development only in the West of a capitalist economic system (Schlucter, 1996). It is clear that the vast bulk of this work is done at the social-structural and cultural levels; the thoughts and actions of Calvinists, Buddhists, Confucians, Jews, Muslims (Nafassi, 1998; B. Turner, 1974), and others are held to be affected by changes in social structures and social institutions. Weber was interested primarily in the systems of ideas of the world's religions, in the "spirit" of capitalism, and in rationalization as a modern system of norms and values. He was also very interested in the structures of the world's religions, the various structural components of the societies in which they exist that serve to facilitate or impede rationalization, and the structural aspects of capitalism and the rest of the modern world.

Weber's work on religion and capitalism involved an enormous body of cross cultural historical research; here, as elsewhere, he did comparative-historical sociology (Kalberg, 1997). Freund (1968:213) summarized the complicated interrelationships involved in this research:

1. Economic forces influenced Protestantism.
2. Economic forces influenced religions other than Protestantism (for example, Hinduism, Confucianism, and Taoism).
3. Religious idea systems influenced individual thoughts and actions—in particular, economic thoughts and actions.
4. Religious idea systems have been influential throughout the world.
5. Religious idea systems (particularly Protestantism) have had the unique effect in the West of helping to rationalize the economic sector and virtually every other institution.
6. Religious idea systems in the non-Western world have created overwhelming structural barriers to rationalization.

By according the religious factor great importance, Weber appeared to be simultaneously building on and criticizing his image of Marx's work. Weber, like Marx, operated with a complicated model of the interrelationship of primarily large-scale systems: "Weber's sociology is related to Marx's thought in the common attempt to grasp the interrelations of institutional orders making up a social structure: In Weber's work, military and religious, political and juridical institutional systems are functionally related to the economic order in a variety of ways" (Gerth and Mills, 1958:49). In fact, Weber's affinities with Marx are even greater than is often recognized. Although Weber, especially early in his career, gave primacy to religious ideas, he later came to see that material forces, not idea systems, are of greater importance (Kalberg, 1985:61). As Weber said, "Not ideas, but material and ideal interests, directly govern men's conduct. Yet very frequently the 'world images' that have been created by 'ideas' have, like

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switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest" (cited in Gerth and Mills, 1958:280).

Topic 117: The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

In Max Weber's best-known work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904–1905/1958), he traced the impact of ascetic Protestantism—primarily Calvinism—on the rise of the spirit of capitalism (Breiner, 2005; H. Jones, 1997). This work is but a small part of a larger body of scholarship that traces the relationship between religion and modern capitalism throughout much of the world. Weber, especially later in his work, made it clear that his most general interest was in the rise of the distinctive rationality of the West. Capitalism, with its rational organization of free labor, its open market, and its rational bookkeeping system, is only one component of that developing system. He directly linked it to the parallel development of rationalized science, law, politics, art, architecture, literature, universities, and the polity.

Weber did not directly link the idea system of the Protestant ethic to the structures of the capitalist system; instead, he was content to link the Protestant ethic to another system of ideas, the "spirit of capitalism." In other words, two systems of ideas are directly linked in this work. Although links of the capitalist economic system to the material world are certainly implied and indicated, they were not Weber's primary concern. Thus, *The Protestant Ethic* is not about the rise of modern capitalism but is about the origin of a peculiar spirit that eventually made modern rational capitalism (some form of capitalism had existed since early times) expand and come to dominate the economy. Weber began by examining and rejecting alternative explanations of why capitalism arose in the West in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (for an alternative view on this, see R. Collins, 1997a). To those who contended that capitalism arose because the material conditions were right at that time, Weber retorted that material conditions were also ripe at other times and capitalism did not arise. Weber also rejected the psychological theory that the development of capitalism was due simply to the acquisitive instinct. In his view, such an instinct always has existed, yet it did not produce capitalism in other situations.

Evidence for Weber's views on the significance of Protestantism was found in an examination of countries with mixed religious systems. In looking at these countries, he discovered that the leaders of the economic system—business leaders, owners of capital, high-grade skilled labor, and more advanced technically and commercially trained personnel—were all overwhelmingly Protestant. This suggested that Protestantism was a significant cause in the choice of these occupations and, conversely, that other religions (for example, Roman Catholicism) failed to produce idea systems that impelled individuals into these vocations.

In Weber's view, the spirit of capitalism is not defined simply by economic greed; it is in many ways the exact opposite. It is a moral and ethical system, an ethos that among other things stresses economic success. In fact, it was the turning of profit making into an ethos that was critical in the West. In other societies, the pursuit of profit was seen as an individual act motivated at least in part by greed. Thus it was viewed by many as morally suspect. However, Protestantism succeeded in turning the pursuit of profit into a moral crusade. It was the backing of the moral system that led to the unprecedented expansion of profit seeking and, ultimately, to the capitalist system. On a theoretical level, by stressing that he was dealing with the relationship

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between one ethos (Protestantism) and another (the spirit of capitalism), Weber was able to keep his analysis primarily at the level of systems of ideas.

The spirit of capitalism can be seen as a normative system that involves a number of interrelated ideas. For example, its goal is to instill an "attitude which seeks profit rationally and systematically" (Weber, 1904–1905/1958:64). In addition, it preaches an avoidance of life's pleasures: "Seest thou a man diligent in business? He shall stand before kings" (Weber, 1904–1905/1958:53). Also included in the spirit of capitalism are ideas such as "time is money," "be industrious," "be frugal," "be punctual," "be fair," and "earning money is a legitimate end in itself." Above all, there is the idea that it is people's duty to increase their wealth ceaselessly. This takes the spirit of capitalism out of the realm of individual ambition and into the category of an ethical imperative. Although Weber admitted that a type of capitalism (for example, adventurer capitalism) existed in China, India, Babylon, and the classical world and during the Middle Ages, it was different from Western capitalism, primarily because it lacked "this particular ethos" (1904–1905/1958:52).

Weber was interested not simply in describing this ethical system but also in explaining its derivations. He thought that Protestantism, particularly Calvinism, was crucial to the rise of the spirit of capitalism. Calvinism is no longer necessary to the continuation of that economic system. In fact, in many senses modern capitalism, given its secularity, stands in opposition to Calvinism and to religion in general. Capitalism today has become a real entity that combines norms, values, market, money, and laws. It has become, in Durkheim's terms, a social fact that is external to, and coercive of, the individual. As Weber put it: Capitalism is today an immense cosmos into which the individual is born, and which presents itself to him, at least as an individual, as an unalterable order of things in which he must live. It forces the individual, in so far as he is involved in the system of market relationships, to conform to capitalist rules of action.

Topic 118: Concluding Remarks

- Weber's work represents fusion of historical research and sociological theorizing.
- Fusion of history and sociology presents the development of a historical sociology.
- Introduced the critical methodological concept of ***verstehen.***
- Methodologically looked into the causality of phenomena.

Substantive Sociology

- Based his theories on his thoughts about social action and social relationships.
- Also interested in large-scale structures and institutions of society.
- Looked at three structures of authority: traditional, charismatic and rational-legal.
- In the context of rational- legal authority, he introduced famous ideal-typical bureaucracy.

Rationalization of the world

- At the cultural level, Weber articulated the idea that the world was becoming increasingly dominated by norms and values of rationalization.
- Rationalization was sweeping across all these institutions in the West,

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- There were major barriers to this process in the rest of the world.

Religion and Capitalism

- Established the relationship between religious ideas and the development of the spirit of capitalism and, ultimately, capitalism itself.
- Saw how the West developed a distinctively rational religious system (Calvinism).
- Showed how it played a key role in the rise of a rational economic system (capitalism)
- Other religions in China and India inhibited the growth of a rational economic system.

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Lesson 29

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORISTS: TALCOTT PARSONS (1902-1979) –I (Topic 119-123)

Topic 119: Parsons; A Link Between Classical And Contemporary Theorists

Parsons studied at London School of Economics and Univ. of Heidelberg. He was greatly influenced by Weber and Marx. He wrote his doctoral thesis on *The Concept of Capitalism in Recent German Literature. He t*ranslated *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* to English. He also analyzed classical thinker's perspective in his *The Theory of Social Action (1937).* Early publication by Parsons. The guiding principle of this book was: sociology should be the study of meaningful social action

Study of social action

He analyzed classical thinkers' perspective in *The Theory of Social Action (1937).* The guiding principle of this book was: sociology should be the study of meaningful social action. Voluntaristic perception of social action: action is the result of what people voluntarily choose to do. Choice within the social order.

Building grand theory

Parsons sought to build a grand theory of social action. Advocating the structural functional school of thought. Approaching deductive model instead of focusing on grounded theories.

Topic 120: Talcott Parsons's Structural Functionalism

Parsons is known for his functionalism – structural functionalism. Significant and dominant theory of the 20th century. Explained how the various parts, or institutional subsystems, of society are interrelated. Function.

- System: an overall order.
- Parts contribute to the survival of the system and its long-term equilibrium.
- Any happening in society is functional. Stratification.

Structures: General features

Structure is a hidden reality which determines surface appearances. Any phenomenon can be analyzed as a series of component units. These units are related to each other in definite ways. The relationships between units connect together and give it a pattern. Pattern of relationships is relatively stable and long lasting.

Society: A complex system.

A system of interrelated parts. Each part performs a specific function. Various parts work to promote solidarity and stability. Multiple causation. Integration Parts are the social structures i.e. relatively stable patterns of behavior in family, workplace, classroom, place of worship. Social institutions. Elements contribute to the functioning of system. All elements are indispensible. Prerequisites. Differentiated roles to play. Integration of all parts of the system is never perfect.

- Deviance and mechanisms to control.

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- Tendency towards balance.
    - Social change is adaptive, and evolutionary.
    - Integration is achieved through value consensus. Values inculcated through socialization.

Topic 121: Functional Theory of Social Stratification

Any happening in society is functional. Universally functional systems. Stratification. Kinship. State. Religion. Take the example of social Stratification as given by Kingsley Davis and Wilbert Moore. There is inequality in society. Inequality in any sense. Society is stratified. Social stratification is both universal and necessary. Functional necessity. System. Stratification system has a structure. System (structure) of positions carries with them different degrees of prestige. Individuals come to occupy certain positions.

- Society motivates and places people in their "proper" positions. Rewards.
- Occupational ranking. Importance.
- Incentives.
- Meritocracy.

Theory flawed

- How the importance of an occupation is assessed? Nurse and movie star.
- How about the caste system? Prevents the development of talent.
- High-ranking positions have a vested interest in keeping their own numbers small.
- Perpetuates inequality.
- Inequality promotes conflict. Dysfunctional. Equal society.
- People motivated just by the satisfaction of doing a job.

Topic 122: The Action Systems

Parsons' analysis of social action found in his book *The Structure of Social Action.* Sociology should be the study of meaningful social action. Weber's Verstehen. Action must not be viewed in isolation. Actions are not discrete but occur in constellations. Call them systems. Action must be understood as a process in time or as a system. Action system

Unit act

- Unit act is the hypothetical actor in a hypothetical situation bounded by culture.
- Call it action system. Order. It is means to analyze reality.
- Social action is composed of:
    1. It is oriented toward attainment of ends or goals.
    2. It takes place in situations. Conditions.
    3. It is normatively regulated.
    4. It involves expenditure of effort or energy.

The system

- A system is a set of parts or elements with the following characteristics:
    - 1. The interdependence of parts. Change in one affects others.
    - 2. Interdependence is orderly. Equilibrium tendency.

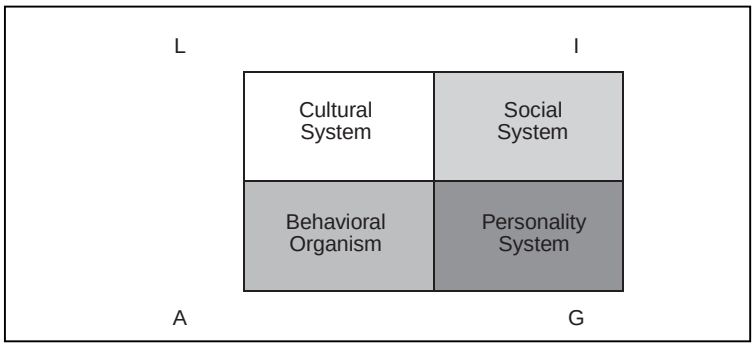
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- 3. Equilibrium is not indefinite. Internal processes will handle change. Modify the disruptive elements.

The Action System

We are now ready to discuss the overall shape of Parsons's action system. Figure outlines Parsons's schema.



It is obvious that Parsons had a clear notion of "levels" of social analysis as well as their interrelationship. The hierarchical arrangement is clear, and the levels are integrated in Parsons's system in two ways. First, each of the lower levels provides the conditions, the energy, needed for the higher levels. Second, the higher levels control those below them in the hierarchy.

In terms of the environments of the action system, the lowest level, the physical and organic environment, involves the nonsymbolic aspects of the human body, its anatomy and physiology. The highest level, ultimate reality, has, as Jackson Toby suggests, "a metaphysical flavor," but Toby also argues that Parsons "is not referring to the supernatural so much as to the universal tendency for societies to address symbolically the uncertainties, concerns, and tragedies of human existence that challenge the meaningfulness of social organization" (1977:3). The heart of Parsons's work is found in his four action systems. In the assumptions that Parsons made regarding his action systems we encounter the problem of order that was his overwhelming concern and that has become a major source of criticism of his work (Schwanenberg, 1971). The Hobbesian problem of order—what prevents a social war of all against all—was not answered to Parsons's (1937) satisfaction by the earlier philosophers. Parsons found his answer to the problem of order in structural functionalism, which operates in his view with the following set of assumptions:

1. Systems have the property of order and interdependence of parts.
2. Systems tend toward self-maintaining order, or equilibrium.
3. The system may be static or involved in an ordered process of change.
4. The nature of one part of the system has an impact on the form that the other parts can take.
5. Systems maintain boundaries with their environments.
6. Allocation and integration are two fundamental processes necessary for a given state of equilibrium of a system.

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7. Systems tend toward self-maintenance involving the maintenance of boundaries and of the relationships of parts to the whole, control of environmental variations, and control of tendencies to change the system from within.

These assumptions led Parsons to make the analysis of the *ordered* structure of society his first priority. In so doing, he did little with the issue of social change, at least until later in his career:

We feel that it is uneconomical to describe changes in systems of variables before the variables themselves have been isolated and described; therefore, we have chosen to begin by studying particular combinations of variables and to move toward description of how these combinations change only when a firm foundation for such has been laid.

Parsons was so heavily criticized for his static orientation that he devoted more and more attention to change; in fact, as we will see, he eventually focused on the evolution of societies. However, in the view of most observers, even his work on social change tended to be highly static and structured. In reading about the four action systems, the reader should keep in mind that they do not exist in the real world but are, rather, analytical tools for analyzing the real world.

Topic 123: Social System

Parsons's conception of the social system begins at the micro level with interaction between ego and alter ego, defined as the most elementary form of the social system. He spent little time analyzing this level, although he did argue that features of this interaction system are present in the more complex forms taken by the social system. Parsons defined a *social system* thus:

A social system consists in a plurality of individual actors *interacting* with each other in a situation which has at least a physical or environmental aspect, actors who are motivated in terms of a tendency to the "optimization of gratification" and whose relation to their situations, including each other, is defined and mediated in terms of a system of culturally structured and shared symbols. (Parsons, 1951:5–6)

This definition seeks to define a social system in terms of many of the key concepts in Parsons's work—actors, interaction, environment, optimization of gratification, and culture.

Despite his commitment to viewing the social system as a system of interaction, Parsons did not take interaction as his fundamental unit in the study of the social system. Rather, he used the *status-role* complex as the basic unit of the system. This is neither an aspect of actors nor an aspect of interaction but rather a *structural* component of the social system. *Status* refers to a structural position within the social system, and *role* is what the actor does in such a position, seen in the context of its functional significance for the larger system. The actor is viewed not in terms of thoughts and actions but instead (at least in terms of position in the social system) as nothing more than a bundle of statuses and roles.

Actors and the Social System

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Parsons did not completely ignore the issue of the relationship between actors and social structures in his discussion of the social system. In fact, he called the integration of value patterns and need-dispositions "the fundamental dynamic theorem of sociology" (Parsons, 1951:42). Given his central concern with the social system, of key importance in this integration are the processes of internalization and socialization. That is, Parsons was interested in the ways in which the norms and values of a system are transferred to the actors within the system.

In a successful socialization process these norms and values are internalized; that is, they become part of the actors' "consciences." As a result, in pursuing their own interests, the actors are in fact serving the interests of the system as a whole. As Parsons put it, "The combination of value-orientation patterns which is acquired [by the actor in socialization] *must in a very important degree be a function of the fundamental role structure and dominant values of the social system"* (1951:227). In general, Parsons assumed that actors usually are passive recipients in the socialization process. Children learn not only how to act but also the norms and values, the morality, of society. Socialization is conceptualized as a conservative process in which need-dispositions (which are themselves largely molded by society) bind children to the social system, and it provides the means by which the need-dispositions can be satisfied. There is little or no room for creativity; the need for gratification ties children to the system as it exists. Parsons sees socialization as a lifelong experience. Because the norms and values inculcated in childhood tend to be very general, they do not prepare children for the various specific situations they encounter in adulthood. Thus socialization must be supplemented throughout the life cycle with a series of more specific socializing experiences.

Despite the fact with a little gentle reinforcement, tend to remain in force throughout life. Despite the conformity induced by lifelong socialization, there is a wide range of individual variation in the system. The question is: Why is this normally not a major problem for the social system, given its need for order? For one thing, a number of social control mechanisms can be employed to induce conformity. However, as far as Parsons was concerned, social control is strictly a second line of defense. A system runs best when social control is used only sparingly. For another thing, the system must be able to tolerate some variation, some deviance. A flexible social system is stronger than a brittle one that accepts no deviation. Finally, the social system should provide a wide range of role opportunities that allow different personalities to express themselves without threatening the integrity of the system.

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Lesson 30

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORISTS: TALCOTT PARSONS (1902-1979) –II

Topic 124-127

Topic 124: Personality System

The personality system is controlled not only by the cultural system but also by the social system. That is not to say that Parsons did not accord some independence to the personality system: My view will be that, while the main content of the structure of the personality is derived from social systems and culture through socialization, the personality becomes an independent system through its relations to its own organism and through the uniqueness of its own life experience; it is not a mere epiphenomenon. (Parsons, 1970:82) We get the feeling here that Parsons is protesting too much. If the personality system is not an epiphenomenon, it is certainly reduced to a secondary or dependent status in his theoretical system. The *personality* is defined as the organized system of orientation and motivation of action of the individual actor. The basic component of the personality is the "need disposition." Parsons and Shils defined *need-dispositions* as the "most significant units of motivation of action" (1951:113). They differentiated need-dispositions from drives, which are innate tendencies—"physiological energy that makes action possible" (Parsons and Shils, 1951:111). In other words, drives are better seen as part of the biological organism. Need-dispositions are then defined as "these same tendencies when they are not innate but acquired through the process of action itself" (Parsons and Shils, 1951:111). In other words, need-dispositions are drives that are shaped by the social setting.

Need-dispositions impel actors to accept or reject objects presented in the environment or to seek out new objects if the ones that are available do not adequately satisfy need-dispositions. Parsons differentiated among three basic types of need dispositions. The first type impels actors to seek love, approval, and so forth, from their social relationships. The second type includes internalized values that lead actors to observe various cultural standards. Finally, there are the role expectations that lead actors to give and get appropriate responses.

This presents a very passive image of actors. They seem to be impelled by drives, dominated by the culture, or, more usually, shaped by a combination of drives and culture (that is, by need-dispositions). A passive personality system is clearly a weak link in an integrated theory, and Parsons seemed to be aware of that. On various occasions, he tried to endow the personality with some creativity. For example, he said: "We do not mean . . . to imply that a person's values are entirely 'internalized culture' or mere adherence to rules and laws. The person makes creative modifications as he internalizes culture; but the novel aspect is not the culture aspect" (Parsons and Shils, 1951:72). Despite claims such as these, the dominant impression that emerges from Parsons's work is one of a passive personality system. Parsons's emphasis on need-dispositions creates other problems. Because it leaves out so many other important aspects of personality, his system becomes a largely impoverished one.

Another aspect of Parsons's work—his interest in internalization as the personality system's side of the socialization process—reflects the passivity of the personality system. Parsons (1970:2) derived this interest from Durkheim's work on internalization, as well as from Freud's work,

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primarily that on the superego. In emphasizing internalization and the superego, Parsons once again manifested his conception of the personality system as passive and externally controlled.

Although Parsons was willing to talk about the subjective aspects of personality in his early work, he progressively abandoned that perspective. In so doing, he limited his possible insights into the personality system. Parsons at one point stated clearly that he was shifting his attention away from the internal meanings that the actions of people may have: "The organization of observational data in terms of the theory of action is quite possible and fruitful in modified behavioristic terms, and such formulation avoids many of the difficult questions of introspection or empathy".

Topic 125: Cultural System

Parsons conceived of culture as the major force binding the various elements of the social world, or, in his terms, the action system. Culture mediates interaction among actors and integrates the personality and the social systems. Culture has the peculiar capacity to become, at least in part, a component of the other systems. Thus, in the social system culture is embodied in norms and values, and in the personality system it is internalized by the actor. But the cultural system is not simply a part of other systems; it also has a separate existence in the form of the social stock of knowledge, symbols, and ideas. These aspects of the cultural system are available to the social and personality systems, but they do not become part of them.

Parsons defined the cultural system, as he did his other systems, in terms of its relationship to the other action systems. Thus *culture* is seen as a patterned, ordered system of symbols that are objects of orientation to actors, internalized aspects of the personality system, and institutionalized patterns (Parsons, 1990) in the social system. Because it is largely symbolic and subjective, culture is transmitted readily from one system to another. Culture can move from one social system to another through diffusion and from one personality system to another through learning and socialization. However, the symbolic (subjective) character of culture also gives it another characteristic; the ability to control Parsons's other action systems. This is one of the reasons Parsons came to view himself as a cultural determinist. However, if the cultural system is preeminent in Parsonsian theory, we must question whether he offers a genuinely integrative theory. As pointed out in the Appendix, a truly integrative theory gives rough equivalency to all major levels of analysis. Cultural determinism, indeed any kind of determinism, is highly suspect from the point of view of an integrated sociology. (For a more integrated conception of Parsons's work, see Camic, 1990.) This problem is exacerbated when we look at the personality system and see how weakly it is developed in Parsons's work.

Topic 126-127: The Pattern Variables

A dichotomy that describes five alternatives (choices) of action between which each person or group has to choose in every situation.

1. Affectivity vs. Affective neutrality
    - Affectivity: emotional impulses are gratified. Love for parent.
    - Affective-neutrality: Emotional impulses are inhibited. Teacher grading papers.
2. Self-orientation vs. Collectivity orientation

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- Self …: Action based on self-interest.
- Collectivity …: What is best for collectivity.

3. Universalism vs. Particularism.
   - Universalism: Action based on universal laws/morals.
   - Particularism: Action based on priority or attachment.
4. Ascription vs. Achievement.
   - Ascription: Action based on attributes – race, sex, age.
   - Achievement: Action based on performance. Get degree after the completion of course.
5. Specificity vs. Diffusiveness.
   - Specificity: Action based on specific criteria/roles e.g. teacher student role.
   - Diffusiveness: Open guidelines for action. Becoming friends with teacher, going beyond the boundaries of teacher/student relation.

Provides a framework to analyze everyday situations (e.g. buying something), role (e.g. father), an organization (e.g. bureaucracy), or type of society (e.g. modern capitalist).
Typologies like organic solidarity vs. mechanical solidarity by Durkheim. Traditional vs. modern society.

The pattern variables in traditional vs. modern societies

- Tradition societies
  - Affectivity
  - Collectivity orientation.
  - Particularism.
  - Ascription.
  - Diffuseness
- Modern societies
  - Affective neutrality
  - Self-orientation
  - Universalism
  - Achievement
  - Specificity

Pattern variables serve an important role in explaining the functioning of systems. Refer to variant normative priorities of social systems. The dominant modes of orientation to personality systems. The patterns of values in cultural systems (scope of universal human values, personal morals).

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Lesson 31

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORISTS: TALCOTT PARSONS (1902-1979) –III (Topic 128-130)

AGIL

AGIL paradigm is part of Parsons's larger action Theory. *The Structure of Social Action* in *The Social System*.
Parsons designed the AGIL scheme to be used at *all* levels in his theoretical system (for one example, see Paulsen and Feldman, 1995). In the discussion below on the four action systems, we will illustrate how Parsons uses AGIL.
The *behavioral organism* is the action system that handles the adaptation function by adjusting to and transforming the external world. The *personality system* performs the goal-attainment function by defining system goals and mobilizing resources to attain them. The *social system* copes with the integration function by controlling its component parts. Finally, the *cultural system* performs the latency function by providing actors with the norms and values that motivate them for action.

Functional imperative: AGIL framework

A function is a complex of activities directed towards meeting a need or needs of the system.
There are four functional imperatives for all "action" systems.

AGIL functional imperatives

A *function* is "a complex of activities directed towards meeting a need or needs of the system" (Rocher, 1975:40; R. Stryker, 2007). Using this definition, Parsons believes that there are four functional imperatives that are necessary for (characteristic of) all systems—adaptation (A), goal attainment (G), integration (I), and latency (L), or pattern maintenance. Together, these four functional imperatives are known as the AGIL scheme. In order to survive, a system must perform these four functions:

- *Adaptation:* A system must cope with external situational exigencies. It must adapt to its environment and adapt the environment to its needs.
- *Goal attainment:* A system must define and achieve its primary goals.
- *Integration:* A system must regulate the interrelationship of its component parts. It also must manage the relationship among the other three functional imperatives (A, G, L).
- *Latency (pattern maintenance):* A system must furnish, maintain, and renew both the motivation of individuals and the cultural patterns that create and sustain that motivation.

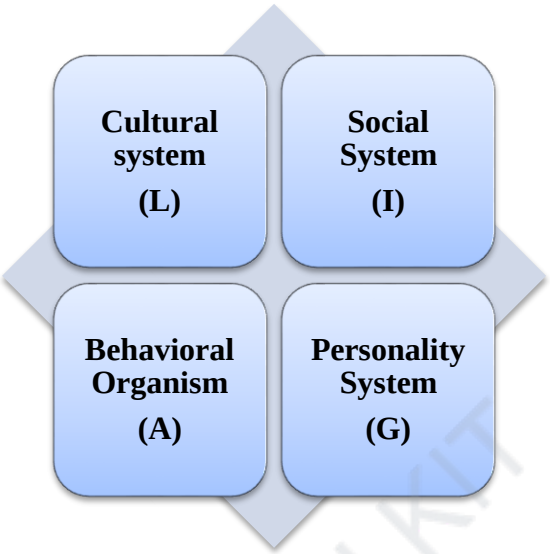
The AGIL in operation

- The behavioral organism is the action system that handles the adaptation function by adjusting to and transforming the external world.

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- The personality system performs the goal-attainment function by defining system goals and mobilizing resources to attain them.
- The social system copes with the integration function by controlling its component parts.
- The cultural system performs the latency function by providing actors with the norms and values that motivate them for action.



Structure of the General Action System

AGIL Systems

- AGIL is the abbreviation of adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency.
- The four functional characteristics in all action systems.
- All human systems need to accomplish these four systems in order to survive.
- Each system corresponds to AGIL.
- Take society as a system -- interrelated set of institutions

Society as a system: AGIL in operation

Society has to secure sufficient resources from the environment for survival. Here is how a social institutions work as AGIL.

1. Economy

The economy performs the function by:

- Adapting society to the environment.
- Also the economy adapts the environment to society's needs.

2. Political system

The political system performs this function by:

- Mobilizes the resources and energies to attain system goals.
- Power to establish priorities.

3. Social system

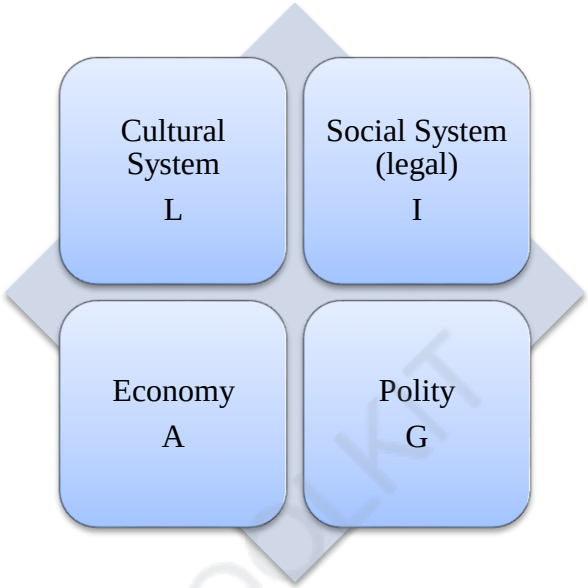
- The social system copes through social control.
- Coordinates, adjusts, and regulates relationships.
- Legal institutions, courts.

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4. Cultural system

- Cultural system performs the latency function. Latent pattern maintenance and tension management.
- Actors motivated to play their part in maintaining value pattern. Actors become the trustees.
- Provide mechanisms for tension management.
- The schools, the family, and religion handle the latency function by transmitting culture to actors. Internalized.



Structure of the general action system

Social change: Evolutionary theory

Parsons developed a paradigm of evolutionary change that explains evolutionary trend toward increase in adaptive capacity. According to him evolution and progress emerges to be synonymous. Parsons theory of change is similar to Durkheim's change of undifferentiated societies (mechanical solidarity) to structural differentiation (organic solidarity).

Components of evolutionary theory by Talcott Parsons:

Evolutionary theory has following component:

1. Differentiation

- Any society is composed of a series of subsystems
- Sub systems differ in their structure and their functional significance.
- As society evolves, new subsystems are differentiated. Industrial revol. Specialization.

2. Adaptive upgrading

- New subsystems must be more adaptive than earlier subsystems.
- Enhancement of adaptive capacities with environment
- Better able to cope with problems of society.

3. Inclusion

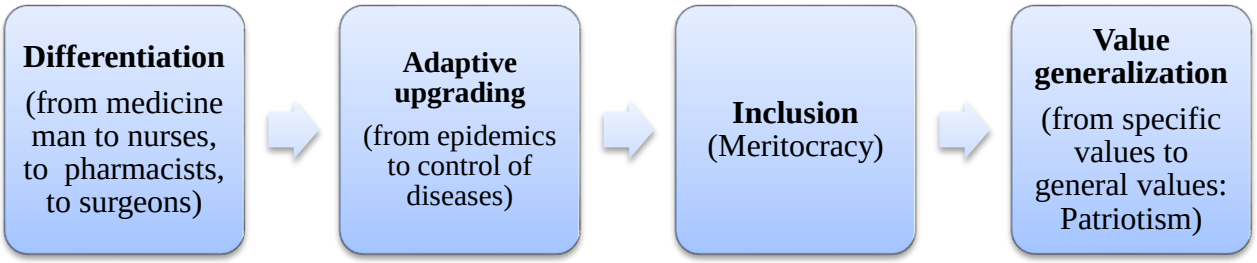
- Evolution must move from a system of ascription to one of achievement.
- No exclusion on the basis of demographic traits.

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4. Value generalization

- ➢ Values shared by all members – patriotism, liberty, life.
- ➢ Value generalization needed in differentiated society.
- Evolutionary trend toward increase in adaptive capacity.
- Evolution and progress emerge to be synonymous.
- Parsons theory of change is similar to Durkheim's change of undifferentiated societies (mechanical solidarity) to structural differentiation (organic solidarity).



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Lesson 32

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORISTS: RALF DAHRENDORF (1929-1979)-I (Topic 132-134)

Like functionalists, conflict theorists are oriented toward the study of social structures and institutions. In the main, this theory is little more than a series of contentions that are often the direct opposites of functionalist positions. This antithesis is best exemplified by the work of Ralf Dahrendorf. To the functionalists, society is static or, at best, in a state of moving equilibrium, but to Dahrendorf and the conflict theorists, every society at every point is subject to processes of change. Where functionalists emphasize the orderliness of society, conflict theorists see dissension and conflict at every point in the social system. Functionalists (or at least early functionalists) argue that every element in society contributes to stability; the exponents of conflict theory see many societal elements as contributing to disintegration and change.

Functionalists tend to see society as being held together informally by norms, values, and a common morality. Conflict theorists see whatever order there is in society as stemming from the coercion of some members by those at the top. Where functionalists focus on the cohesion created by shared societal values, conflict theorists emphasize the role of power in maintaining order in society.

Topic 132: Power

Power is the ability of the actor in social relationship to carry out his own will despite resistance. Force others. Power is the control of sanctions, which enable the powerful to give orders and obtain what they want from the powerless. People dislike submission that is why there exists an inevitability of conflict of interests all the time in society. Power is a lasting source of friction.

Power and norms

Norms do not define or emerge from consensus. It is established and maintained by power. Norms are explained in terms of interests of powerful sanctions for violations. People use power of law for punishment and that there are established norms that are nothing but ruling norms.

Topic 133: Conflict

Dahrendorf (1959, 1968) is the major exponent of the position that society has two faces (conflict and consensus) and that sociological theory therefore should be divided into two parts, conflict theory and consensus theory. Consensus theorists should examine value integration in society, and conflict theorists should examine conflicts of interest and the coercion that holds society together in the face of these stresses. Dahrendorf recognized that society could not exist without both conflict and consensus, which are prerequisites for each other. Thus, we cannot have conflict unless there is some prior consensus. For example, French housewives are highly unlikely to conflict with Chilean chess players because there is no contact between them, no prior integration to serve as a basis for a conflict. Conversely, conflict can lead to consensus and integration. An example is the alliance between the United States and Japan that developed after World War II.

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Despite the interrelationship between consensus and conflict, Dahrendorf was not optimistic about developing a single sociological theory encompassing both processes: "It seems at least conceivable that unification of theory is not feasible at a point which has puzzled thinkers ever since the beginning of Western philosophy" (1959:164). Eschewing a singular theory, Dahrendorf set out to construct a conflict theory of society.
Dahrendorf began with, and was heavily influenced by, structural functionalism. He noted that to the functionalist, the social system is held together by voluntary cooperation or general consensus or both. However, to the conflict (or coercion) theorist, society is held together by "enforced constraint"; thus, some positions in society are delegated power and authority over others. This fact of social life led Dahrendorf to his central thesis that the differential distribution of authority "invariably becomes the determining factor of systematic social conflicts" (1959:165).

Conflict and change
Powerful and powerless is always in opposition to each other. He looks for new balance between power and opposition. Conflict is great creative force of human history due to its ability to bring change. It looks more like a coercive theory of society.

Topic 134: Power and Social Stratification

Social differentiation of positions, status rank and order in the society are due to power distribution. Norms define its working. Norms derived and upheld by power. For functionalists stratification is need of the society. Serves function. Power helps attracting talented to occupy important positions but Dahrendorf does not agree because the talented may not occupy important positions.

Powerful prevent competition
Occupants of power positions try to legitimize and take advantage of power position and convince everyone for its legitimacy and importance for their own indispensability. It prevents competition from groups with different potential power bases but such social stratification can create conflict.

Coercion and integration
In typical industrial society:

- Separation of ownership and control of business.
- Managers don't own.
- Owners don't manage.
- Ownership and control blurred. Different from Marx.

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Lesson 33

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORISTS: RALF DAHRENDORF (1929-1979)-II (Topic 135-138)

Conflict: Determinants

Inequalities and conflicting interests produce conflicts. Conflict will take place among groups that differ in their authority over others. Authority is power attached to a role or position.

Legitimacy: Legitimacy is being *defined and delimited* by social norms backed by sanctions which are stable and recurrent patterns of authority and are institutionalized. The conflict may be generated between those who have authority and those who don't have the authority. We may call these groups as classes that signifies conflict groups in *organizations in which orders are given and taken.*

Authority is dichotomous: One may have it or may not have it. Incumbents' interests are formed accordingly. Persons/groups may have more or less authority. Conflict may come from other groupings. All classes do no engage in active conflict all the time. It needs necessary prerequisites.

The mobilization of classes: The structural requirements

Formation of active "interest groups" requires:

1. *Technically:* A founder and charter/ideology.
2. *Politically:* More liberal the state, the more likely is the mobilization for active conflict.
3. *Socially:* Group formation is more likely if:

i. Structural requirements

- Potential group members are well concentrated geographically
- Can communicate easily. Technology helps
- Stand in the same relation to authority, recruited in similar ways, with similar background. Homogeneity
- Nevertheless, sufficient degree of force can suppress the conflict

ii. The psychological requirements

- Individuals identify themselves with the interests associated with their position.
- Interests are important and real to them. (Class interests will be more real to people who share the culture.)
- Should not belong to number of associations
- Greater their personal chances of class mobility, less likely they are to identify actively with it.
- Individuals may have all the psychological requirements for class mobilization, yet may not react.
- It happened in preindustrial societies.
- It is a question of fate.

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The violence and conflict
Violence through various methods (weapons) is only chosen if conflict is institutionalized to keep the conflict less violent. These are the established rules of the game and procedures are laid down through discussions and no physical violence takes place.

Conflict and the state
State is the most powerful association. The ruling class (elite group) holds the positions on top of state hierarchy. There exist critical lines of conflict between those who give orders and those who receive it. Additionally, bureaucracy also has a chain of command that becomes part of ruling class that acts as buffer against any threat.

State and bureaucracy
State and bureaucracy serves together as a separate institution where authority and power are separated to have control on other groupings, so that others are likely to oppose and restrict its control over them. The conflict between government and business/industry, other groupings/unions spearheads the conflict and restrict state's control and ultimately conflict gets resolved in certain new arrangements of power and authority.

The state and conflict
Some government projects have consequences for range and intensity of political conflict for example the project or "Orange Train" in Lahore – Pakistan that was opposed by many groups and courts intervened and tried to resolve after listening to both the parties.

Concluding remarks
Dahrendorf discussed a close relationship between power and conflict and presented a theory of conflict group formation where group formations reflect potential confrontations. He claims that the conflict may lead to violence and the conflict and violence gets resolved only through a continuous dialectical process.

Dialectics of conflict
According to Dahrendorf Groups have different powers although not typical of the type what Marx talked about like of "haves" and "have nots." Conflict can be between the state and the rich business groups. Polarization between those with and without authority is an important source of conflict. No conflict according to him is of permanent nature and it can be resolved. Some government projects have consequences for range and intensity of political conflict. Movements can be part of conflict groups for example feminism vs. adult franchise, government vs. business groups, bureaucracy vs. public.

Conflict functionalist
Consensus and conflict are the two faces of society. Dahrendorf did not reject consensus approach by the functionalists. Neither approach should plead exclusive validity. It may be complimentary. Separate only for the sake of analysis. Consensus has seeds of conflict. The resolution of conflict results in consensus. That is change.

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Lesson 34

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORISTS: GEORGE HEBERT MEAD (1863-1931)-I (Topic 139-141)

Topic 139: Introduction

George Herbert Mead is one of most prominent American Philosopher, Social Scientist and Social Psychologist. George Herbert Mead is famous for developing evolutionary theory connecting body, mind, self and society. As a Social Psychologist he was interested in the social development of individuals by examining how individuals develop socially as a result of participating in group life.

Symbolic interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a term coined by Herbert Blumer that represent a wide range of ideas of various thinkers associated with this approach including George Herbert Mead, Charles H. Cooley, Erving Goffman, W. I. Thomas, and Herbert Blumer. Mead have gained popularity as a Symbolic Interactionist within the broader field of social Psychology because of his believe that humans have the capacity to create and use symbols in order to represent to one another about the objects, ideas, feelings and virtually anything that they experience in their life. Humans use symbols for communication and the use of these symbols becomes the basis of interaction.

Key elements of environment: Symbols

One create ones image through various interactions. People interact in the form of symbols with an agreed meanings associated to these symbols. The symbols are either written or verbal. Society teaches us these symbols. One can understand social reality through interactions between individuals mediated by these symbols. Symbols denote objects, signs, gestures, letters, words, numbers and figures that stand for realities in social and physical environment. The social environment includes common set of symbols and their understanding by people in a group.

Actions not predetermined

Every member of the society needs language for interaction. Actions of the members of the society are not predetermined by nature, rather they are learnt. Just because the actions are learned; the newborn infant is unorganized and dependent on adults for direction and survival. Nature determines the ability of a child whereas subsequent development depends on the interaction with other individuals those are part of the social environment.In other words nature is important but not deterministic of future development.

Mind, Self and Society

Famous book *Mind, Self and Society*, was published retrospectively by students of Mead based on their notes of Meads courses that moved his ideas from the realm of oral to that of written tradition. This volume is of utmost important as far as symbolic interactionism is concerned because it serves as an intellectual pillar of symbolic interactionism. According to G. H. Mead, mind, self, and society are connected through interaction. Symbols related to the environment are necessary for interaction.

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Topic 140: The Priority of the Social

In his review of Mind, Self and Society, Ellsworth Faris argued that "not mind and then society; but society first and then minds arising within that society would probably have been [Mead's] preference" (cited in D. Miller, 1982a:2). Faris's inversion of the title of this book reflects the widely acknowledged fact, recognized by Mead himself, that society, or more broadly the social, is accorded priority in Mead's analysis. In Mead's view, traditional social psychology began with the psychology of the individual in an effort to explain social experience; in contrast, Mead always gives priority to the social world in understanding social experience. Mead explains his focus in this way:

We are not, in social psychology, building up the behavior of the social group in terms of the behavior of separate individuals composing it; rather, we are starting out with a given social whole of complex group activity, into which we analyze (as elements) the behavior of each of the separate individuals composing it. . . . We attempt, that is, to explain the conduct of the social group, rather than to account for the organized conduct of the social group in terms of the conduct of the separate individuals belonging to it. For social psychology, the whole (society) is prior to the part (the individual), not the part to the whole; and the part is explained in terms of the whole, not the whole in terms of the part or parts. (Mead, 1934/1962:7; italics added)

To Mead, the social whole precedes the individual mind both logically and temporally. A thinking, self-conscious individual is, as we will see later, logically impossible in Mead's theory without a prior social group. The social group comes first, and it leads to the development of self-conscious mental states.

The conception of society

For Mead, society is term for the processes of role taking with varieties of specific and generalized others and the consequent coordination of action. Diverse individuals come into contact, role take, and adjust their responses. A community of attitudes is created. It regulates the actions of individuals. More individuals join, more differentiation in roles, generate additional perspectives to guide actions. Society is nothing more than a process of role taking by individuals. Individuals or groups make adjustments with each other.

Composed of plurality of actors who:

- Play different roles;
- Share common set of significant symbols;
- Perceive them as a distinguishable entity;
- Share a community of attitudes.
- Is a geopolitical entity.

Topic 141: The Social Act

Mead considered the act to be the most "primary unit" in his theory. In analyzing the act, Mead focused on stimulus and response. Yet stimulus does not elicit an automatic, unthinking response from the human actor. The stimulus serves as an occasion or opportunity for the act, not as a compulsion or a mandate.

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Four stages of social act

Mead (1938/1972) identified four basic and interrelated stages in the act (Schmitt and Schmitt, 1996); the four stages represent an organic whole (in other words, they are dialectically interrelated). Both lower animals and humans act, and Mead is interested in the similarities, and especially the differences, between the two.

Impulse

The first stage is that of the impulse, which involves an "immediate sensuous stimulation" and the actor's reaction to the stimulation, the need to do something about it. Hunger is a good example of an impulse. The actor (both nonhuman and human) may respond immediately and unthinkingly to the impulse, but more likely the human actor will think about the appropriate response (for example, eat now or later). In thinking about a response, the person will consider not only the immediate situation but also past experiences and anticipated future results of the act.

Hunger may come from an inner state of the actor or may be elicited by the presence of food in the environment, or, most likely, it may arise from some combination of the two. Furthermore, the hungry person must find a way of satisfying the impulse in an environment in which food may not be immediately available or plentiful. This impulse, like all others, may be related to a problem in the environment (that is, the lack of immediately available food), a problem that must be overcome by the actor.

Indeed, while an impulse such as hunger may come largely from the individual (although even here hunger can be induced by an external stimulus, and there are also social definitions of when it is appropriate to be hungry), it usually is related to the existence of a problem in the environment (for example, the lack of food). Overall, the impulse, like all other elements of Mead's theory, involves both the actor and the environment.

Perception

The second stage of the act is perception, in which the actor searches for, and reacts to, stimuli that relate to the impulse, in this case hunger as well as the various means available to satisfy it. People have the capacity to sense or perceive stimuli through hearing, smell, taste, and so on. Perception involves incoming stimuli, as well as the mental images they create. People do not simply respond immediately to external stimuli but rather think about, and assess, them through mental imagery. People are not simply subject to external stimulation; they also actively select characteristics of a stimulus and choose among sets of stimuli. That is, a stimulus may have several dimensions, and the actor is able to select among them. Furthermore, people usually are confronted with many different stimuli, and they have the capacity to choose which to attend to and which to ignore. Mead refuses to separate people from the objects that they perceive. It is the act of perceiving an object that makes it an object to a person; perception and object cannot be separated from (are dialectically related to) one another.

Manipulation

The third stage is manipulation. Once the impulse has manifested itself and the object has been perceived, the next step is manipulating the object or, more generally, taking action with regard to it. In addition to their mental advantages, people have another advantage over lower animals. People have hands (with opposable thumbs) that allow them to manipulate objects far more subtly than can lower animals. The manipulation phase constitutes, for Mead, an important

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temporary pause in the process so that a response is not manifested immediately. A hungry human being sees a mushroom, but before eating it, he or she is likely to pick it up first, examine it, and perhaps check in a guidebook to see whether that particular variety is edible. The lower animal, in contrast, is likely to eat the mushroom without handling and examining it (and certainly without reading about it). The pause afforded by handling the object allows humans to contemplate various responses. In thinking about whether to eat the mushroom, both the past and the future are involved. People may think about past experiences in which they ate certain mushrooms that made them ill, and they may think about the future sickness, or even death, that might accompany eating a poisonous mushroom. The manipulation of the mushroom becomes a kind of experimental method in which the actor mentally tries out various hypotheses about what would happen if the mushroom were consumed.

Consummation

On the basis of these deliberations, the actor may decide to eat the mushroom (or not), and this constitutes the last phase of the act, consummation, or more generally the taking of action that satisfies the original impulse. Both humans and lower animals may consume the mushroom, but the human is less likely to eat a bad mushroom because of his or her ability to manipulate the mushroom and to think (and read) about the implications of eating it. The lower animal must rely on a trial-and-error method, and this is a less-efficient technique than the capacity of humans to think through their actions. 3 Trial-and-error in this situation is quite dangerous; as a result, it seems likely that lower animals are more prone to die from consuming poisonous mushrooms than are humans.

For ease of discussion, the four stages of the act have been separated from one another in sequential order, but Mead sees a dialectical relationship among the four stages. John C. Baldwin expresses this idea in the following way: "Although the four parts of the act sometimes appear to be linked in linear order, they actually interpenetrate to form one organic process: Facets of each part are present at all times from the beginning of the act to the end, such that each part affects the other" (1986:55–56). Thus, the later stages of the act may lead to the emergence of earlier stages. For example, manipulating food may lead the individual to the impulse of hunger and the perception that the individual is hungry and that food is available to satisfy the need.

The social act: one organic process

Four stages are separated in sequential order. Mead sees a dialectical relationship among the four stages. The four parts of the act sometimes appear to be linked in linear order. Parts interpenetrate to form one organic process.

Act: Total process

It is a covert mental process that occurs between the stimulus and the response. Mead recognized the importance of observable behavior (empiricism) but there were covert aspects of behavior (philosophy). It is what goes on between stimulus and response. The act comprises both overt and covert aspects of human action. The act involves only one person. The social act involves two or more persons.

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Lesson 35

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORISTS: GEORGE HEBERT MEAD (1863-1931)-I (Topic 142-145)

Topic 142: Gestures

The act involves only one person, but the social act involves two or more persons. The gesture is in Mead's view the basic mechanism in the social act and in the social process more generally. As he defines them, "gestures are movements of the first organism which act as specific stimuli calling forth the (socially) appropriate responses of the second organism" (Mead, 1934/1962:14; see also Mead, 1959:187). Both lower animals and humans are capable of gestures in the sense that the action of one individual mindlessly and automatically elicits a reaction by another individual. The following is Mead's famous example of a dog fight in terms of gestures:

The act of each dog becomes the stimulus to the other dog for his response. . . . The very fact that the dog is ready to attack another becomes a stimulus to the other dog to change his own position or his own attitude. He has no sooner done this than the change of attitude in the second dog in turn causes the first dog to change his attitude. (Mead, 1934/1962:42–43)

Mead labels what is taking place in this situation a "conversation of gestures." One dog's gesture automatically elicits a gesture from the second; there are no thought processes taking place on the part of the dogs.

Humans sometimes engage in mindless conversations of gestures. Mead gives as examples many of the actions and reactions that take place in boxing and fencing matches, when one combatant adjusts "instinctively" to the actions of the second. Mead labels such unconscious actions "nonsignificant" gestures; what distinguishes humans is their ability to employ "significant" gestures, or those that require thought on the part of the actor before a reaction.

The vocal gesture is particularly important in the development of significant gestures. However, not all vocal gestures are significant. The bark of one dog to another is not significant; even some human vocal gestures (for example, a mindless grunt) may not be significant. However, it is the development of vocal gestures, especially in the form of language, that is the most important factor in making possible the distinctive development of human life: "The specialization of the human animal within this field of the gesture has been responsible, ultimately, for the origin and growth of present human society and knowledge, with all the control over nature and over the human environment which science makes possible" (Mead, 1934/1962:14).

This development is related to a distinctive characteristic of the vocal gesture. When we make a physical gesture, such as a facial grimace, we cannot see what we are doing (unless we happen to be looking in the mirror). In contrast, when we utter a vocal gesture, we hear ourselves just as others do. One result is that the vocal gesture can affect the speaker in much the same way that it affects the listeners. Another is that we are far better able to stop ourselves in vocal gestures than we are able to stop ourselves in physical gestures. In other words, we have far better control over vocal gestures than physical ones. This ability to control oneself and one's reactions is critical, as we will see, to the other distinctive capabilities of humans. More generally, "it has been the vocal gesture that has preeminently provided the medium of social organization in human society" (Mead, 1959:188).

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Topic 143: Significant Symbols

A significant symbol is a kind of gesture, one which only humans can make. Gestures become significant symbols when they arouse in the individual who is making them the same kind of response (it need not be identical) they are supposed to elicit from those to whom the gestures are addressed. Only when we have significant symbols can we truly have communication; communication in the full sense of the term is not possible among ants, bees, and so on. Physical gestures can be significant symbols, but as we have seen, they are not ideally suited to be significant symbols because people cannot easily see or hear their own physical gestures. Thus, it is vocal utterances that are most likely to become significant symbols, although not all vocalizations are such symbols. The set of vocal gestures most likely to become significant symbols is language: "a symbol which answers to a meaning in that experience of the first individual and which also calls out the meaning in the second individual. Where the gesture reaches that situation it has become what we call 'language.' It is now a significant symbol and it signifies a certain meaning" (Mead, 1934/1962:46). In a conversation of gestures, only the gestures themselves are communicated. However, with language the gestures and their meanings are communicated.

One of the things that language, or significant symbols more generally, does is call out the same response in the individual who is speaking that it does in others. The word dog or cat elicits the same mental image in the person uttering the word that it does in those to whom it is addressed. Another effect of language is that it stimulates the person speaking as it does others. The person yelling "fire" in a crowded theater is at least as motivated to leave the theater as are those to whom the shout is addressed. Thus, significant symbols allow people to be the stimulators of their own actions.

Adopting his pragmatist orientation, Mead also looks at the "functions" of gestures in general and of significant symbols in particular. The function of the gesture "is to make adjustment possible among the individuals implicated in any given social act with reference to the object or objects with which that act is concerned" (Mead, 1934/1962:46). Thus, an involuntary facial grimace may be made in order to prevent a child from going too close to the edge of a precipice and thereby prevent him or her from being in a potentially dangerous situation. While the nonsignificant gesture works, the "significant symbol affords far greater facilities for such adjustment and readjustment than does the nonsignificant gesture, because it calls out in the individual making it the same attitude toward it . . . and enables him to adjust his subsequent behavior to theirs in the light of that attitude" (Mead, 1934/1962:46). From a pragmatic point of view, a significant symbol works better in the social world than does a nonsignificant gesture. In other words, in communicating our displeasure to others, an angry verbal rebuke works far better than does contorted body language. The individual who is manifesting displeasure is not usually conscious of body language and therefore is unlikely to be able to adjust later actions consciously in light of how the other person reacts to the body language. In contrast, a speaker is conscious of uttering an angry rebuke and reacts to it in much the same way (and at about the same time) as the person to whom it is aimed reacts. Thus, the speaker can think about how the other person might react and can prepare his or her reaction to that reaction.

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Of crucial importance in Mead's theory is another function of significant symbols—that they make the mind, mental processes, and so on, possible. It is only through significant symbols, especially language, that human thinking is possible (lower animals cannot think, in Mead's terms). Mead defines thinking as "simply an internalized or implicit conversation of the individual with himself by means of such gestures" (1934/1962:47). Even more strongly, Mead argues: "Thinking is the same as talking to other people" (1982:155). In other words, thinking involves talking to oneself. Thus, we can see clearly here how Mead defines thinking in behaviorist terms. Conversations involve behavior (talking), and that behavior also occurs within the individual; when it does, thinking is taking place. This is not a mentalistic definition of thinking; it is decidedly behavioristic. Significant symbols also make possible symbolic interaction. That is, people can interact with one another not just through gestures but also through significant symbols. This ability, of course, makes a world of difference and makes possible much more complex interaction patterns and forms of social organization than would be possible through gestures alone. The significant symbol obviously plays a central role in Mead's thinking. In fact, David Miller (1982a:10–11) accords the significant symbol the central role in Mead's theory.

Topic 144: Mind

The mind, which is defined by Mead as a process and not a thing, as an inner conversation with one's self, is not found within the individual; it is not intracranial but is a social phenomenon (Franks, 2007). It arises and develops within the social process and is an integral part of that process. The social process precedes the mind; it is not, as many believe, a product of the mind. Thus, the mind, too, is defined functionally rather than substantively. Given these similarities to ideas such as consciousness, is there anything distinctive about the mind? We already have seen that humans have the peculiar capacity to call out in themselves the response they are seeking to elicit from others. A distinctive characteristic of the mind is the ability of the individual "to call out in himself not simply a single response of the other but the response, so to speak, of the community as a whole. That is what gives to an individual what we term 'mind.' To do anything now means a certain organized response; and if one has in himself that response, he has what we term 'mind' " (Mead, 1934/1962:267). Thus, the mind can be distinguished from other like-sounding concepts in Mead's work by its ability to respond to the overall community and put forth an organized response.

Mead also looks at the mind in another, pragmatic way. That is, the mind involves thought processes oriented toward problem solving. The real world is rife with problems, and it is the function of the mind to try to solve those problems and permit people to operate more effectively in the world.

Topic 145: Self

Much of Mead's thinking in general, and especially on the mind, involves his ideas on the critically important concept of the self (Schwalbe, 2005), basically the ability to take oneself as an object; the self is the peculiar ability to be both subject and object. As is true of all Mead's major concepts, the self presupposes a social process: communication among humans. Lower animals do not have selves, nor do human infants at birth. The self-arises with development and through social activity and social relationships. To Mead, it is impossible to imagine a self-

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arising in the absence of social experiences. However, once a self has developed, it is possible for it to continue to exist without social contact. Thus, Robinson Crusoe developed a self while he was in civilization, and he continued to have it when he was living alone on what he thought for a while was a deserted island. In other words, he continued to have the ability to take himself as an object. Once a self is developed, people usually, but not always, manifest it. For example, the self is not involved in habitual actions or in immediate physiological experiences of pleasure or pain.

The self is dialectically related to the mind. That is, on the one hand, Mead argues that the body is not a self and becomes a self only when a mind has developed. On the other hand, the self, along with its reflexiveness, is essential to the development of the mind. Of course, it is impossible to separate mind and self, because the self is a mental process. However, even though we may think of it as a mental process, the self is a social process. In his discussion of the self, as we have seen in regard to all other mental phenomena, Mead resists the idea of lodging it in consciousness and instead embeds it in social experience and social processes. In this way, Mead seeks to give a behavioristic sense of the self: "But it is where one does respond to that which he addresses to another and where that response of his own becomes a part of his conduct, where he not only hears himself but responds to himself, talks and replies to himself as truly as the other person replies to him, that we have behavior in which the individuals become objects to themselves" (1934/1962:139; italics added). The self, then, is simply another aspect of the overall social process of which the individual is a part.

The general mechanism for the development of the self is reflexivity, or the ability to put ourselves unconsciously into others' places and to act as they act. As a result, people are able to examine themselves as others would examine them.

The self also allows people to take part in their conversations with others. That is, one is aware of what one is saying and as a result is able to monitor what is being said and to determine what is going to be said next.

In order to have selves, individuals must be able to get "outside themselves" so that they can evaluate themselves, so that they can become objects to themselves. To do this, people basically put themselves in the same experiential field as they put everyone else. Everyone is an important part of that experiential situation, and people must take themselves into account if they are to be able to act rationally in a given situation. Having done this, they seek to examine themselves impersonally, objectively, and without emotion.

However, people cannot experience themselves directly. They can do so only indirectly by putting themselves in the position of others and viewing themselves from that standpoint. The standpoint from which one views one's self can be that of a particular individual or that of the social group as a whole. As Mead puts it, most generally, "It is only by taking the roles of others that we have been able to come back to ourselves" (1959:184–185).

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Lesson 36

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORISTS: GEORGE HEBERT MEAD (1863-1931)-III (Topic 146-149)

Topic 146: Generalized Other

The game stage yields one of Mead's (1959:87) best-known concepts, the generalized other (Vail, 2007d). The generalized other is the attitude of the entire community or, in the example of the baseball game, the attitude of the entire team. The ability to take the role of the generalized other is essential to the self: "Only in so far as he takes the attitudes of the organized social group to which he belongs toward the organized, co-operative social activity or set of such activities in which that group is engaged, does he develop a complete self " (Mead, 1934/1962:155). It is also crucial that people be able to evaluate themselves from the point of view of the generalized other and not merely from the viewpoint of discrete others. Taking the role of the generalized other, rather than that of discrete others, allows for the possibility of abstract thinking and objectivity (Mead, 1959:190). Here is the way Mead describes the full development of the self:
So the self reaches its full development by organizing these individual attitudes of others into the organized social or group attitudes, and by thus becoming an individual reflection of the general systematic pattern of social or group behavior in which it and others are involved—a pattern which enters as a whole into the individual's experience in terms of these organized group attitudes which, through the mechanism of the central nervous system, he takes toward himself, just as he takes the individual attitudes of others.

In other words, to have a self, one must be a member of a community and be directed by the attitudes common to the community. While play requires only pieces of selves, the game requires a coherent self. Not only is taking the role of the generalized other essential to the self, it also is crucial for the development of organized group activities. A group requires that individuals direct their activities in accord with the attitudes of the generalized other. The generalized other also represents Mead's familiar propensity to give priority to the social, because it is through the generalized other that the group influences the behavior of individuals.

Mead also looks at the self from a pragmatic point of view. At the individual level, the self allows the individual to be a more efficient member of the larger society. Because of the self, people are more likely to do what is expected of them in a given situation. Because people often try to live up to group expectations, they are more likely to avoid the inefficiencies that come from failing to do what the group expects. Furthermore, the self allows for greater coordination in society as a whole. Because individuals can be counted on to do what is expected of them, the group can operate more effectively. Mead identifies two aspects, or phases, of the self, which he labels the "I" and the "me" (for a critique of this distinction, see Athens, 1995).

Phases of self: I and me

As Mead puts it, "The self is essentially a social process going on with these two distinguishable phases" (1934/1962:178). It is important to bear in mind that the "I" and the "me" are processes within the larger process of the self; they are not "things."
The "I" is the immediate response of an individual to others. It is the incalculable, unpredictable, and creative aspect of the self. People do not know in advance what the action of the "I" will be:

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"But what that response will be he does not know and nobody else knows. Perhaps he will make a brilliant play or an error. The response to that situation as it appears in his immediate experience is uncertain" (Mead, 1934/1962:175). We are never totally aware of the "I," and through it we surprise ourselves with our actions. We know the "I" only after the act has been carried out. Thus, we know the "I" only in our memories. Mead lays great stress on the "I" for four reasons. First, it is a key source of novelty in the social process. Second, Mead believes that it is in the "I" that our most important values are located. Third, the "I" constitutes something that we all seek—the realization of the self. It is the "I" that permits us to develop a "definite personality." Finally, Mead sees an evolutionary process in history in which people in primitive societies are dominated more by the "me" while in modern societies there is a greater component of the "I." The "I" gives Mead's theoretical system some much-needed dynamism and creativity. Without it, Mead's actors would be totally dominated by external and internal controls. With it, Mead is able to deal with the changes brought about not only by the great figures in history (for example, Einstein) but also by individuals on a day-to-day basis. It is the "I" that makes these changes possible. Since every personality is a mix of "I" and "me," the great historical figures are seen as having a larger proportion of "I" than most others have. But in day-to-day situations, anyone's "I" may assert itself and lead to change in the social situation. Uniqueness is also brought into Mead's system through the biographical articulation of each individual's "I" and "me." That is, the specific exigencies of each person's life give him or her a unique mix of "I" and "me." The "I" reacts against the "me," which is the "organized set of attitudes of others which one himself assumes" (Mead, 1934/1962:175). In other words, the "me" is the adoption of the generalized other. In contrast to the "I," people are conscious of the "me"; the "me" involves conscious responsibility. As Mead says, "The 'me' is a conventional, habitual individual" (1934/1962:197). Conformists are dominated by the "me," although everyone—whatever his or her degree of conformity—has, and must have, a substantial "me." It is through the "me" that society dominates the individual. Indeed, Mead defines the idea of social control as the dominance of the expression of the "me" over the expression of the "I."

Mead also looks at the "I" and the "me" in pragmatic terms. The "me" allows the individual to live comfortably in the social world, while the "I" makes change in society possible. Society gets enough conformity to allow it to function, and it gets a steady infusion of new developments to prevent it from stagnating. The "I" and the "me" are thus part of the whole social process and allow both individuals and society to function more effectively.

Topic 147: Society

At the most general level, Mead uses the term society to mean the on-going social process that precedes both the mind and the self. Given its importance in shaping the mind and self, society is clearly of central importance to Mead. At another level, society to Mead represents the organized set of responses that are taken over by the individual in the form of the "me." Thus, in this sense individuals carry society around with them, giving them the ability, through self-criticism, to control themselves. Mead also deals with the evolution of society. But Mead has relatively little to say explicitly about society, in spite of its centrality in his theoretical system. His most important contributions lie in his thoughts on mind and self. Even John C. Baldwin, who sees a much more societal (macro) component in Mead's thinking, is forced to admit: "The macro components of Mead's theoretical system are not as well developed as the micro" (1986:123).

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At a more specific societal level Mead does have a number of things to say about social institutions. Mead broadly defines an institution as the "common response in the community" or "the life habits of the community" (1934/1962:261, 264; see also Mead, 1936:376). More specifically, he says that "the whole community acts toward the individual under certain circumstances in an identical way. . there is an identical response on the part of the whole community under these conditions. We call that the formation of the institution" (Mead, 1934/1962:167). We carry this organized set of attitudes around with us, and they serve to control our actions, largely through the "me."

Society shapes mind and self

The capacity for mind and self-arises out of, and continues to be dependent on, role-taking. It is one's view of oneself as an object, and one's capacity to select (mind) among alternatives behaviors takes place in the company of others i.e. society. It is about reading the gestures of others. It's about determining the attitudes of others. The whole community acts toward the individual under certain circumstances in an identical way. There is an identical response on the part of the whole community. That is the formation of the institution. Organized set of attitudes is always with us. These set of attitudes serve to control our actions, largely through the "me".

Self: Process of adjustment

Society is simply the stable interactive processes. Humans act within a framework imposed by stable relations. The key to understanding society lies in:

- The use of language
- Role taking by individuals with mind and self

Topic 148-149: Symbolic Interactionism: Basic Principles

Some symbolic interactionists (Blumer, 1969a; Manis and Meltzer, 1978; A. Rose, 1962; Snow, 2001) have tried to enumerate the basic principles of the theory. These principles include the following:

1. Human beings, unlike lower animals, are endowed with the *capacity for thought*.
2. The capacity for *thought is shaped by social interaction*.
3. In social interaction people *learn the meanings and the symbols* that allow them to exercise their distinctively human capacity for thought.
4. Meanings and symbols allow people to carry on distinctively human *action and interaction*.
5. People are able to *modify or alter the meanings* and symbols that they use in action and interaction on the basis of their interpretation of the situation.
6. People are able to make these *modifications and alterations* because, in part, of their ability to interact with themselves, which allows them to examine possible courses of action, assess their relative advantages and disadvantages, and then choose one.
7. The intertwined patterns of action and interaction make up *groups and societies*.

1. Capacity for Thought

The crucial assumption that human beings possess the ability to think differentiates symbolic interactionism from its behaviorist roots. This assumption also provides the basis for the entire theoretical orientation of symbolic interactionism. Bernard Meltzer, James Petras, and Larry Reynolds stated that the assumption of the human capacity for thought is one of the major

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contributions of early symbolic interactionists, such as James, Dewey, Thomas, Cooley, and of course, Mead: "Individuals in human society were not seen as units that are motivated by external or internal forces beyond their control, or within the confines of a more or less fixed structure. Rather, they were viewed as reflective or interacting units which comprise the societal entity" (1975:42). The ability to think enables people to act reflectively rather than just behave unreflectively. People must often construct and guide what they do, rather than just release it.
The ability to think is embedded in the mind, but the symbolic interactionists have a somewhat unusual conception of the mind as originating in the socialization of consciousness. They distinguish it from the physiological brain. People must have brains in order to develop minds, but a brain does not inevitably produce a mind, as is clear in the case of lower animals (Troyer, 1946). Also, symbolic interactionists do not conceive of the mind as a thing, a physical structure, but rather as a continuing process. It is a process that is itself part of the larger process of stimulus and response. The mind is related to virtually every other aspect of symbolic interactionism, including socialization, meanings, symbols, the self, interaction, and even society.

2. Thinking and Interaction

People possess only a general capacity for thought. This capacity must be shaped and refined in the process of social interaction. Such a view leads the symbolic interactionist to focus on a specific form of social interaction— socialization. The human ability to think is developed early in childhood socialization and is refined during adult socialization. Symbolic interactionists have a view of the socialization process that is different from that of most other sociologists. To symbolic interactionists, conventional sociologists are likely to see socialization as simply a process by which people learn the things that they need to survive in society (for instance, culture, role expectations). To the symbolic interactionists, socialization is a more dynamic process that allows people to develop the ability to think, to develop in distinctively human ways. Furthermore, socialization is not simply a one-way process in which the actor receives information, but is a dynamic process in which the actor shapes and adapts the information to his or her own needs.

Symbolic interactionists are, of course, interested not simply in socialization but in interaction in general, which is of "vital importance in its own right" (Blumer, 1969b:8). Interaction is the process in which the ability to think is both developed and expressed. All types of interaction, not just interaction during socialization, refine our ability to think. Beyond that, thinking shapes the interaction process. In most interaction, actors must take account of others and decide if and how to fit their activities to others.

3. Learning Meanings and Symbols

Symbolic interactionists, following Mead, tend to accord causal significance to social interaction. Thus, meaning stems not from solitary mental processes but from interaction. This focus derives from Mead's pragmatism: he focused on human action and interaction, not on isolated mental processes. Symbolic interactionists have in general continued in this direction. Among other things, the central concern is not how people mentally create meanings and symbols but how they learn them during interaction in general and socialization in particular. People learn symbols as well as meanings in social interaction. Whereas people respond to signs unthinkingly, they respond to symbols in a thoughtful manner. Signs stand for themselves (for example, the gestures

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of angry dogs or water to a person dying of thirst). " Symbols are social objects used to represent (or 'stand in for,' 'take the place of') whatever people agree they shall represent" (Charon, 1998:47). Not all social objects stand for other things, but those that do are symbols. Words, physical artifacts, and physical actions (for example, the word boat, a cross or a Star of David, and a clenched fist) all can be symbols. People often use symbols to communicate something about themselves: they drive Rolls-Royces, for instance, to communicate a certain style of life.
Symbolic interactionists conceive of language as a vast system of symbols. Words are symbols because they are used to stand for things. Words make all other symbols possible. Acts, objects, and other words exist and have meaning only because they have been and can be described through the use of words.

4. Action and Interaction

Symbolic interactionists' primary concern is with the impact of meanings and symbols on human action and interaction. Here it is useful to employ Mead's differentiation between covert and overt behavior. Covert behavior is the thinking process, involving symbols and meanings. Overt behavior is the actual behavior performed by an actor. Some overt behavior does not involve covert behavior (habitual behavior or mindless responses to external stimuli). However, most human action involves both kinds. Covert behavior is of greatest concern to symbolic interactionists, whereas overt behavior is of greatest concern to exchange theorists or to traditional behaviorists in general.

Meanings and symbols give human social action (which involves a single actor) and social interaction (which involves two or more actors engaged in mutual social action) distinctive characteristics. Social action is that in which the individuals are acting with others in mind. In other words, in undertaking an action, people simultaneously try to gauge its impact on the other actors involved. Although they often engage in mindless, habitual behavior, people have the capacity to engage in social action.

5. Making Choices

Partly because of the ability to handle meanings and symbols, people, unlike lower animals, can make choices in the actions in which they engage. People need not accept the meanings and symbols that are imposed on them from without. On the basis of their own interpretation of the situation, "humans are capable of forming new meanings and new lines of meaning" (Manis and Meltzer, 1978:7). Thus, to the symbolic interactionist, actors have at least some autonomy. They are not simply constrained or determined; they are capable of making unique and independent choices. Furthermore, they are able to develop a life that has a unique style (Perinbanayagam, 1985:53).

6. Thinking ability helps in altering the meanings

People are able to make these modifications and alterations because of their ability to interact with themselves. Thinking ability can examine possible courses of action. Assess the relative advantages and disadvantages, and then choose one.

7. Groups and societies

The intertwined patterns of action and interaction make up groups and societies. Actors may not be passive elements of the group. Human society is to be seen as consisting of acting people.

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Acts are not isolated pieces. Actions are intertwined -> collective action, may take entirely a new shape. Micro level focuses of society.

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Lesson 37

MUSLIM THINKERS: ABD AL-RAHMAN IBNE KHALDUN (1332-1406)-I (Topic 150-153)

Topic 150: Introduction

Walıal-Dın ʻAbd al-Rah.man Ibn Muh. ammad Ibn Khaldu n al-Tunisıal- Had ramı(732–808 AH/1332–1406 AD) is probably the most well-known among Muslims scholars both in the Muslim world and the West as far as the social sciences are concerned. Born in Tunis, he traces his descent to a South Arabian clan, the Kinda, that originate in the Hadhramaut, Yemen. His ancestors had settled in Seville, Andalusia, in the early period of the Arab conquest of the Iberian Peninsular. They left Andalusia for the Maghrib (North Africa) after the Reconquista, settling in Tunis in the 7th/13th century. One of the more prominent of Ibn Khaldun's ancestors was one Kurayb, who is said to have revolted against the Umayyads towards the end of the 9th century and established a quasi-independent state in Seville. In fact, Ibn Khaldu¯ n himself was a judge, and held posts in many of the courts of the Maghrib and Andalusia.

Ibn Khaldun is best known for his Muqaddimah, a prolegomena or introduction to the scientific study of history, a work which provides a method for the study of society. It is in this work that Ibn Khaldun claims to have discovered a new science, that he refers to as both 'ilm al-'umran al-basharı (the science of human social organization) and 'ilm al-ijtima' al-insanı (the science of human society).

Ibne Khaldun is often excluded from the serious study of the history of sociology, sociological theory or historical sociology. Mostly very little attention is given to non-western precursors of sociology or non-western social thinkers. In fact Ibne Khaldun is probably the most well-known among Muslims scholars both in the Muslim world and the West as far as the social sciences are concerned.

Three periods of his life

1. Professional political life serving variety of *sultans* in Tunis, Morocco, Spain and Algeria (1352-1372).
2. Seclusion in *ben-salameh* Burg where he worked on his *Muqaddimah* (1372-1376). Returned to Tunesia and finished the *Muqaddamah* there in 1382
3. Period of juridical and academic work in Egypt (1376-1406).

Topic 151-152: Beyond Philosophy of History

Hegel has identified three types of writing History, namely, "Original history", "Reflective history", and "Philosophical history". "Original history", according to him, "records the deeds of a people and a time; "Reflective history", "records the deeds of the past, but embodies the spirit of later age and interprets the past in terms of it. This type is itself of four kinds: a) "Universal" history, which "records the whole history of a people a country or the world. b) "Pragmatic history which attempts to assimilate the past to the present and to drive lessons for the present. c) "Critical" history, which "assesses the sources and plausibility of other historical accounts." d) Histories of specific fields. Finally, "Philosophical" history uses the results of original and

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reflective history to interpret "history as the rational development of spirit in history." (Hegel: 1956 1-8)
This categorization can help understanding Ibn-Khaldun's enterprise. He starts his Mughaddimah by "critical history" of Muslim histories. Then, by trying to go beyond the mere historical "facts", he does a "reflective history" through the systematic interpretation of the historical facts. Then, he intends to learn lessons from history and apply them to his own time by doing a "pragmatic history". Such historical writing involved a vision which was distinct from the Islamic tradition of writing history. In his vision, History is: informing about human society, the qualities which happen to the nature of this society, like savagery, coexistence, solidarities and all kinds of man's conquests and domination of one group by another and what results from these solidarities and dominations, and what man attains by his efforts and his works, like professions, subsistance , knowledges and arts and other habits and conditions which result from the nature of this society".(Ibn Khaldun: 1967) By such vision, lbn-Khaldun provided a framework which would reveal the social dynamics of human history and went far beyond the established norms of historical thinking. According to this conception: the method for distinguishing right from wrong in historical information on the grounds of inherent possibility or absurdity is to investigate human social organization, which is identical with civilization. We must distinguish the conditions that attach themselves to the essence of civilization as required by its very nature, the things that are accidental and cannot be counted on; and the things that cannot possibly attach themselves to it. (Ibid: 39)

By this theoretical undertaking, which looked at the political, social, and cultural aspects of a civilization as a totality in flux, Ibn Khaldun did not merely seek to “pass through” history but intended to “pass beyond it.. and reveal its secrets through comprehension and the analysis of the nature and causes of historical events. (Mahdi, 1964: 6) His therefore is a historiography which firstly is a "Reflective History" by which historical change is explained and then accordingly a normative (political) vision of society is built up:
I have covered everything that I could regarding the origin of races and states and the contemporaneousness of the early nations. Also, the reasons for revolution and decay of nations in the past, and what comes to be such as state and nation… and what has come to pass and what can come to be. (Ibid: 43)

What is not often known among non-specialists is that Ibn Khaldun’s Muqaddimah, completed in 1378, serves as an introduction to his larger empirical work on the history of the Arabs and Berbers, the Kitab al-’Ibar. In the foreword to the Muqaddimah, Ibn Khaldun gives us the rationale for this work. The discipline of history, if it is to be understood as mere information about dynasties and political events of the past, merely scratches the surface. This surface (z. a¯ hir) aspect of history is to be distinguished from the inner meaning (bat.in) of history, which ‘involves speculation and an attempt to get at the truth, subtle explanation of the causes and origins of existing things, and deep knowledge of the how and why of events’ (Ibn Khaldun, 1378/1981: 1 [1967: Vol. I, 6]).

The Kitab al-’Ibar in Ibn Khaldun’s terms, therefore, covers the surface phenomenon of history in that it details the history of the Arab and Berber dynasties of the Arab East (al-Mashriq) and Arab West (al-Maghrib). The inner meaning of history, on the other hand, is dealt with in the Muqaddimah, the prolegomena and the first book of Ibn Khaldun’s voluminous Kitab al-’Ibar.

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Ibn Khaldun wrote the Muqaddimah in order to clarify the method that would enable the scholar to ascertain true events from false narratives.

He considered that existing historical works were fraught with errors and unfounded assumptions. The Muqaddimah was conceived by Ibn Khaldun to be an integral part of the larger Kitab al-'Ibar, which comprises three books. The Muqaddimah is the First Book of the Kitab al-'Ibar and deals with the merit of the new science of human society and its methods. Books Two and Three deal with the history and dynasties of the Arabs, Israelites, Persians, Greeks, Byzantines, Turks and Berbers (Ibn Khaldun, 1378/1981: 6 [1967: Vol. I, 11–12]). Dealing with the subject-matter of Books Two and Three, however, is dependent on, as El-Azmeh (1979: 17) put it, a master science, that Ibn Khaldu¯ n calls the science of human society. The effort to establish what was probable and possible among the events of history required an independent science that 'has its own peculiar object – that Ibn Khaldu¯ n was very conscious of the uniqueness of his science of human society, noting that it did not belong to existing disciplines such as rhetoric or politics, although it shared some similarities with them (Ibn Khaldu¯ n, 1378/1981: 38 [1967: Vol. I, 78]).4 The substantive interest of Ibn Khaldu¯ n, in both the Muqaddimah and the Kitab al-'Ibar, lies in the explanation of the formation and decline of Maghribian and Arab states. The bulk of the Muqaddimah is devoted to elaborating a theory of state formation and decline.

Elm al Umran

Instead of using Tarikh (History), Ibn Khaldun invents the new discipline of elm al umran, or the Knowledge of Social Life. This discipline is "an independent science."Social organization is its subject matter, a science which has its own peculiar problems, that is, explaining in turn the conditions that attach themselves to the essence of civilization. [Its object] does not belong to rhetoric, whereby the mass is moved to accept or reject a particular opinion. It is also not politics, because politics is concerned with the administration of home or city in accordance with ethical and philosophical requirements, for the purpose of directing the mass toward a behavior that will result in the preservation and permanence of the species. In a way, it is an entirely original science.(Ibn khaldun: 3)

Topic 153: Elm al Umran

Ibn Khaldun calls this "new science" Elm al umran three essential elements of which are Umran, Ebar and Asabiyya.

Umran is an Arabic term with the root word of umr, or "life". Umran means a certain interrelated set of relations which evolves and changes through time. The material necessities of life, namely Ma'ishat conditions the formation of umran, which can be badavi (sedentory) where and when people have to relocate persistently due to enviornmental limitations and the requirenments of subsistence. It could, on the other hand, be hadhary (settled) where the settlement of cities are allowed by the existing natural aboundance and sufficient means for protection against various threats. Each formation in itself develops objective relations, rules of social conduct, taboos, and sense of belonging.

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Lesson 38

MUSLIM THINKERS: ABD AL-RAHMAN IBNE KHALDUN (1332-1406)-II (Topic 154-157)

Topic 154: New Science: Elm al Umran Sociology

Umran also refers to “political authority and dynasties”, “savagery and sociability” and also different “ways of making a living”. "Different ways by which one group of human beings achieves superiority over another …" As such then, umran is a “very complex” notion which "covers everything from geographical and demographic notion of the settled world to sociability." (Lacoste: 93)

Human beings have to dwell in common and settle together in cities and hamlets for the comfort of companionship and for the satisfaction of human needs, as a result of the natural disposition of the human beings toward co-operation in order to be able to make a living Umran may be found in outlying regions and mountains or it may be sedantry as found in the cities, villages, towns, and small communities that serve the purpose of protection and fortification by means of walls. In all these different conditions, there are things that affect civilization essentially in as far as it is social organization. (Ibn khaldun: 43)

As such, umran is determined by the material conditions of its formation. For, according to Ibn Khaldun, "differences in nations' customs" and their "ways of living" is actually "the result of the difference in their economic life." (Rosenthal: 91) With such conception, Ibn Khaldun proposes his elm al umran (the science of social life) as a theory of social formations and political change. Accordingly he undertakes to formulate a comprehensive framework to study the socio-structural process of formation and transformation of life-worlds and political systems. The subject matter of elm-al umran then is human life in association with others and subjection to rules and necessities of social life within space and time: Sociality is inevitable and necessary for mankind, otherwise man's being and God's will through man and his viceregentship would not actualize. And this is the meaning of umran which we consider as the subject matter of this discipline. (Ibid: 47)

Elm al umran is formulated upon the methodological notion of ebar (understanding) and the theoretical concept of asabiyya (solidarity). Instead of using khabar, that pertained to matters like “geographical fact”, or “an event of recent history”, or “a miraculous happening”, Ibn Khaldun begins his historical analysis with ebar. (Ibid: 114, 202, 203) For him, it was important "not to give reports about the past generations [but] understand events. Such „understanding‟ is attainable only if one applies suitable methods for historical knowledge. Criticising analogical reasoning in historical investigation, Ibn Khaldun identifies such an approach, along with 'forgetfulness and negligence', as a factor which may "sway man from his purpose and diverts him from his goal". (Ibid: 25-26) To apply knowledge of the present to historical information is a great error and to have "an accurate" understanding of history, one ought to be aware of the "changes that conditions have undergone." (Ibid: 27)

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Topic 155-156: Social Change

Ibn Khaldun theorizes the differences in social organization between nomadic (*Al-umran al-Badawı)* and sedentary societies (*Al-Umran Alhadarı*). Fundamental to his theory is the concept of A*sabiyyah*, or group feeling. Only a society with a strong *Asabiyyah* could establish domination over one with a weak *Asabiyyah*.

Asabiyyah and power
Asabiyyah refers to the feeling of solidarity among the members of a group based on sharing of common descent. *Asabiyyah* makes a group a power group. According to him Bedouin have superior *Asabiyyah* that is why they defeated sedentary people in urban areas. They eestablish their own dynasties or *Aldawlah*.

Change in society: Formation and decline of states
Bedouin get set in the urban ways of life and experienced great decline in their *Asabiyyah* followed by the decline in military strength and became vulnerable to attack and conquest by tribal groups from the outside. This is the cycle of rise and decline of sates. Ibn Khaldun estimated this cycle to take approximately four generations.

Ibn Khaldun captivated by the rapid phenomena of change which took place in the 14th century in the Maghreb of the Arab world (North Africa). The Berbers, the original population of the Maghreb was replaced by an influx of Arabs that began in the eleventh century. The Arabs outnumbered and overpowered the Berbers, stripped them of most of their lands.

Asabiyyah and power
He analyzed the dynamics of change and evolution in Arab societies in the Maghreb and in Mashreq and attempted to lay down the general laws governing the transformations of human societies and developed a sociological classification model of Arab societies which closely resembles the models used by Western sociologists.

Theory of change
In the *Muqaddima*, he discussed questions like:

- How have the dynasties risen and and fallen?
- What were the roles of al-asabiyya and religion in social change?
- Why do the vanquished always tend to imitate their conquerors?
- How did the Arab State systematically follow the short-lived cycle patterns of growth and development?

Typology of society
The Bedouin & Sedentary discussed by Ibne Khaldun are similar to Western sociologists typology of traditional & modern, rural & urban, folk & urban, pre-industrial & industrial, Gemeinschaft & Gesellschaft and mechamical & organic solidarity.

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Role of religion

Both the Bedouin society and the new Muslim society had a strong sense of solidarity. *Al-asabiyya* was the social bond for Beudouin society. "Muslim brotherhood" had the biding factor of the new multi-ethnic society.

Ibn khaldun intermingles his notion of asabiyya with religious notion of "good". Thereby, he presents an alternative practical answer to the persisting problems. For him, religion is a revolutionary and normative force in history resting upon its relationship with asabiyya. Ibn Khaldun considers religion as a self – concious asabiyya. In religiousity, an individual will is mediated into collective will. This happens not due to the objective conditions of life but by a moral choice "with God's mediation". In the light of such conception, Ibn Khaldun establishes a mutual relationship between religion and asabiyya. In his theoretical scheme, he formulates this mutuality as that in which both religion and asabiyya are in need of each other while they reinforce the other at the same time. According to hime no religion could have succeded in history without asabiyya as its social ground. This explains how good life can be acheived for a community when it already has asabiyya and religion too comes to its help. In other words, although social deterioration is an inevitable historical necessity, it can be sustained when asabiyya is reinforced by religion. " Asabiyya is necessary to the Muslim community. Its existence enables (the community) to fulfil what God expects of it" (Ibid: 160).Therefore, when the force of asabiyya is joined with religion, social ethos, and individual morality, are intertwined.

Act: Total process

For Ibne Khaldun a sedentary, over-materialistic environment corrupts human nature and, consequently, undermines the basis of Islamic values and resulted in decline of Islamic civilization that is his *theory of change* describing the transformation of society from a simple state to a more complex one.

Topic 157: The Social Philosophy of Solidarity: Al-asabiyya

Another central notion in the elm al umran is asabiyya (solidarity). Applying his critical method of ebar to the frequently observable data, namely that of political strife and social instability, he reaches at the theoretical construct of asabiyya. According to Ibn Khaldun, asabiyya comes from blood relationsxhip "or something corresponding to it": For, blood ties (elteham) is something natural among men, with the rarest exception. It leads to affection for one's relations and blood relatives. If the direct relationship between persons who help each other is very close, so that it leads to close contact and unity, the ties are obvious and clearly require the [existence of a feeling of solidarity] without any outside [prodding].(Ibid: 98) Asabiyya is rooted in s-b which denotes binding, and derived from the verb asaba which means „he twisted". Asabiyya then means men twisted together" by some form of proximity. Asabiyya, as filliative solidarity is very much related to the natural enviornment and simpilistic life system of family and tibal bond. For Ibn Khaldun, asabiyya is a two-edged historical phenomenon, it is a simple life sysytem of mutual belonging and egalitarian relationships. It, however, is not a psychological term, for, it pertains to a "complex sociological reality", with significant psycological implications. As such, asabiyya "produces the ability to defend oneself, to offer opposition, to protect oneself, and to press claims. Whoever loses it is too weak to do any of these."(Ibid: 103, 111)

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Lesson 39

MUSLIM THINKERS: ABD AL-RAHMAN IBNE KHALDUN (1332-1406)-III (Topic 158-161)

Topic 158

Asabiyya comes through Elteham (filial bound), and Sale rahem (family bound) which is the arabic word for a natural emotion of attachment between family members. Also it results from Vala' (mutual help) and Halef (the bound of frienship). (Ibn Khaldun: p.98) As such Asabiyya has been translated variously as „the vitality of the state‟, the life of the people‟, Lebenskraft‟, „public spirit‟, "esprit de corps", „social solidarity‟, „group cohesion‟ and „common will‟. It, therefore, resembles as much Durkheim‟s ame collective as the Weberian notion of genossenheit, in both of which a social and human bond is the forming tread of a life form. (Lacoste: 101) Gemeinshaft and filiation are thus two terms that can be used to define the notion of asabiyya.

As such the peculiarity of asabiyya is its explaining the sense of "belonging" which denotes as being subject to the "laws and conditions" of the group. Asabiyya, is therefore, more than anything else, a form of "intersubjectivity" which carries social life through time and space. (Cox: 100) It thus can be conceived of as an intersubjective-inner sense of belonging which plays an objective role in social life by mediating between individual and group life. Asabiyya then, signifies social and intersubjective cohesion. (Manoochehri: 2011)

Topic 159-160: The Rise and Fall of Political Orders

For Ibn Khaldun "the destiny of political entities" is that of "many intertwined and dialectical contradictions". (Ibid: 158) In any social formation, there is a dialectical relationship between asabiyya on the one hand, and the rise and fall of political power, on the other: The goal to which asabiyya leads is political authority. This is because asabiyya gives protection and makes possible mutual defense, the pressing of claims, and every other kind of social activity. This is because political authority results from superiority, (and) superiority results from asabiyya (Ibn Khaldun: 107, 125, 138) In the midst of such relationship the political authority goes through several stages of change organically explained by Ibn Khaldun.

In the first stage, the ruler successfully overthrows all opposition, and then appropriates authority from the proceeding dynasty and claims "all glory for itself": Glory was the common (property) of the group, and all members of the group made an identical effort, their aspirations to gain the upper hand over others and to defend their own possessions were expressed in exemplary unruliness and lack of restraint. They all aimed at fame. (Ibid: 133)

In the second stage the ruler gains complete control over the people and claims all the authority for himself, thereby "excluding and preventing others from trying to have a share in it." (Ibid: 231) In this relation, Ibn Khaldun first uses the notion al enferade bel majd that is basically what Max Weber later called sultanism. According to Weber, sultanism: Tends to arise whenever traditional authority develops an administration and a military forces which are purely personal instruments of the master. Only then are the group members treated as subjects. Previously the

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master‟s authority appeared as a pre-eminent group right, now it turns into his personal right. (Weber: 231 – 23) Ibn Khaldun too has explained the process of change taking place in the nature of political authority from riasa (rulership) to al enferade bel majd (despotism): Initially, rulers…have to accept and follow the customs and norms from prior to their own time; they undertake much of it and remember the habits of the previous generation. But there appear changes in their norms and differences with the pervious generation show up. (Ibn Khaldun: 25)

In the third statge, leisure and tranquillity are enjoyed as the fruits of the authority. So, new economic and political situation dominates the umran and new interrelationships between the new authority and its original asabiyya take shape. These interrelationships have dialectical characteristics and tend towards entropy, "these changes continue with the following governments and finally lead to contradictions."(Ibid: 25)

In the fourth stage the ruler is content with what his predecessors have built. In this stage, the ruler wastes on pleasure and amusements accumulated by his ancestors, through generosity to his inner circle. The ruler seeks to destroy the great clients of his people and followers of his predecessors. He loses a number of his soldier by spending their allowances on his pleasure.
He ruins the foundations his ancestors had laid. .. . In this stage, the dynasty is seized by senility and the chronic disease from which it is destroyed. (Ibn khaldun: 141-142)

Decline in asabiyya and political degeneration
This would finally end in a total political degeneration, whence there exist no concrete relationship between the social basis of power, namely asabiyya, and the power structure. (Ibid: 135) Such new political orientations ultimately result in the breakup of asabiyya and consequently the breakdown of the existing system: If the ruler continues to keep a forceful grip on his subjects, asabiyya (group feeling) will be destroyed. [His subjects] become fearful and depressed and seek to protect themselves against him through lies, and deceit… (Ibid: 133, 111) [Hence], the feeling of the people of the dynasty become diseased as a result of the contempt in which they are held and the hostility of the ruler … .. The great danger inherent in this situation reverts upon the dynasty. There can be no hope it will recover from that illness (Ibid: 147)

Topic 161: The Dynamics of Political Change

This moment also involves an structural process of change in the relationship between newly formed "hadhari" system and other already existing "badavi" collectivities, which come to be the power vicinity of the new hadhari power system. The moment of resistance by the dominated badavi-periphery against the hadhari-center. In Ibn Khaldun's theoretical scheme, the dialectic of domination and revolt is yet another dimention to the dynamics of asabiyya. In his view, hadhary "center", as a power bastion exercises domination over the "periphery" badavin; "in the city there is .. a king whence badavin have to submit to him.. The chief obliges the badavin … to submit to him, by will or by force. (Ibn Khaldun: 122) But, the submision of the badavin is not a trouble free situation for the hadhary-center. Due, once again, to the asabiyya, the dominated badavin resists the hadhary domination and does not submit to it so easily: [I]t is easy to establish a dynasty in lands that are free from group feelings (asabiyya). Government there will be tranquil affair, because seditious and rebellious are few, and the dynasty does not need much asabiyya (Ibn Khaldun, quoted in Lacoste: 104).

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At this point, the asabiyya of the dominated badavi-periphery appears as resistance against the hadhari-center. This is the moment of the second dialectic, namely that of Dialectics of Domination and Revolution. Therefore, in a condition of political domination, asabiyya plays a role essentialy different from its original role as the genesis of political power. This is a rebellious role which undermines the established power. In other words, Asabiyya is simultanously a will to power and a will to resist. This rebellious undertaking happens when a "rebel revolts, or, by inviting people around himself, gathers power". (Ibn Khaldun:109) Therefore, as the result of the dual process of the entropic degeneration of asabiyya inside the "city" and resisting force of "badavi" asabiyya, the gripes of city domination over the badavi periphery is weakened and challenged. A new force of asabiyya is hence formed in the periphery (of power) that challenges the existing, though faltering, power of the center. As the result of this process, a new political authority takes shape.

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Lesson 40

MUSLIM THINKERS: ABD AL-RAHMAN IBNE KHALDUN (1332-1406)-IV (Topic 162-165)

Religion and alasabiyya

Ibne Khaldun considered religion as a revolutionary and normative force in history where revolution needs some unifying force and religion as a missionary force. According to Ibne Khaldun there is a relationship between religion and *asabiyya*. He considered religion as a self - conscious *asabiyya*.

Dynamics of asabiyya

In religiosity an "individual will" is mediated into "collective will". Collective will is a moral choice "with God's mediation". Both religion and *asabiyya* are in need of each other that is why they reinforce each other. According to him Religion cannot succeed without *asabiyya* at its social ground. Religious call cannot materialize without *asabiyya*. Every mass (political undertaking) by necessity requires group feeling. "God sent no prophet who did not enjoy the protection of his people." According to him good life can be achieved for a community when it already has *asabiyya* and religion also comes to its help.

Asabiyya: A will to power and a will to resist

Group/dynasty gets power because of *asabiyya*. Social deterioration is an inevitable historical necessity. Social deterioration can be sustained when *asabiyya* is reinforced by religion. *Asabiyya* is necessary to the Muslim community that enables (the community) to fulfill what God expects of it.

Intertwining of religion and *asabiyya*

When the force of *asabiyya* is joined with religion, the social ethos (action patterns) and individual morality are intertwined. Theoretically every action is supposed to be a moral action for a common good in such a way that the action is expected/ supported by religion i.e. mediated by God. The purpose of human beings is their worldly welfare and happiness in the other world. The rreligion guides humans in this regard as religious laws have their purpose to cause humans to follow such a course in all their dealings with God and their fellow men. People are reoriented by religion. Solidarity amongst them is upgraded by mutuality. The afiliative association of different kind would actualize amongst them and that afiliative association is "Muslim brotherhood."

Muslim brotherhood is a part of religious beliefs where people set aside the mutual jealousy among themselves and they share a group feeling by concentrating on the truths revealed by the religion. When people come to have the (right) insight into their affairs, nothing can withstand them. God's laws among the subjects are nothing but goodness and consideration of their good. The deterioration happens when the hold of religion/asabiyya declines within a society.

Umran as interdisciplinary paradigm

The contemporary Philosophy of Social Science tries to find answers to two fundamental questions:

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1. *What is there to know about? What is the reality? What is the nature of this reality? Ontology*
2. *What is the way or an approach to know about it? Epistemology of reality – science of knowing.*

Ontology: The reality

Elm al umran answers the first question as: The real world exists independent of our knowing it. *Umer* means time. In *Umran* human life is conceived as it actually is lived in its sociality and historicity. It is a process of human life in time. The social and the political are intertwined. The social characteristics of an entity precondition any political situation as well as institution.

Epistemology: The study of reality

For Ibn-Khaldun: Epistemology is to know the reality by observing real or objective relations between social phenomena that he calls "Zahir" and "Batin." He uses interpretative method to understand socio-historical phenomena.

Umran as interdisciplinary paradigm

In the notion of *Umran*, the dynamic character of social reality makes "sociology" inseparable from "history", and also from "politics". Umran attempts to get at the truth and looks for subtle explanation of the causes and origins of existing things, and deep knowledge of how and why the events occur.

The history of the dynasties he mentioned provides evidence about their rise and fall by looking into the *'Zahir'* and *'Batin'* of the realities as processes in time *(umar)* by interpreting the observables like the history of polities, dynasties, empires and societies. For him life is time process of change. In *Umran* human life is conceived as it actually is lived in its sociality and historicity and history, polity, and sociology look to be intertwined. The social characteristic of an entity preconditions any political situation as well as institution.

Following interdisciplinary approach is pragmatic as well as hermeneutic. Hermeneutics requires interpreting the manifestation of human action to its inner meaning by moving from outer to inner. It interpret the reality in its context. Sociology gets intertwined with other disciplines. That is Ibne Khaldun's Umran-human life in time.

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Lesson 41

MUSLIM THINKERS: ABU HAMID MUHAMMAD AL-GHAZZALI (1058-1111)-I (TOPIC 166-169)

Topic 166: Introduction

Imam Ghazali is the most influential Muslim thinker, logician, philosopher, Jurist and religious scholar who was born in the city of Tus in the Khurassan region of Persia in a family with modest means and renowned for learning and an inclination towards Sufism. He devoted his whole life for the quest of true knowledge because he was never satisfied with what he already knew. He studied several branches of traditional Islamic sciences like *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *tafsir* (Quranic interpretation) and *hadith* (Prophetic tradition) in his home town of Tus, Gurgan and Nishapur. He coincided with the Abbasid Dynasty in Baghdad, the time when Muslim civilization and culture was at its zenith, though showing signs of decline. From an early age, he has participated in Sufi practices throughout his life he staggered between sequences of ardent intellectual activity and Sufism. He suffered a number of serious doubts in his life about the real knowledge.

Ghazzali served as Professor of Islamic jurisprudence in Baghdad and devoted his life to the pursuit of knowledge. He suffered a number of crises of doubt in his life and experienced a nervous breakdown while he was at the zenith of his fame as a professor and jurist (1095). He then realized that there was no way to certain knowledge except through Sufism.As a jurist he observed the corruption and moral decay all around in the society that made him doubt about the knowledge that he learnt so far. He got disillusioned and he renounced his brilliant career, abandoning his post and turned to Sufism. He went for a pilgrimage to Mecca alone leaving behind his family. Then he went on a secret journey to Damascus in search of his inner self seeking solitude. After spending three years in disguise he re-emerged as a sufi mystic Baghdad. For three years Ghazzali remained incognito as a Sufi mystic and re-emerged in Baghdad at the dawn of 12th century. As a result he got convinced that he was "predestined by Allah to be one of the reformers of the religion. After that he kept on a furious pace of intellectual activity and often visited his native city for solitude and mysticism.

Ghazzali has produced 400 books in various fields of theology, jurisprudence, logic, philosophy, ethics and extensive commentaries on the Quran. *Ihya Ulumuddin* (Revival of Religious Sciences) in 4 volumes is an immortal work that came closest to capturing the essence of Quranic knowledge. Central objective in all his writings is that the unity of knowledge (unified knowledge), rooted in the Oneness of Allah, and in reasoning that according to him was the categorical imperative of freedom and free will. It was his conviction that the belief in Allah is the ultimate path for fundamental concepts of morality. He believed that the doubts can shake knowledge because doubts are essential condition for developing new knowledge. But the only thing that in his life remained unshaken was his faith. So, he concluded that the faith in oneness of Allah is the only source that can lead to true knowledge.

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Topic 167: Ideal State: A Welfare State

Ghazzali's idea of a unified knowledge is the fundamental source of the political theory he developed. That is why an overriding theme that runs throughout Ghazzali's writings is Islamic concept of *maslahah* that means social welfare. According to him Islam sets goals for human life that are all aimed at Public welfare. All activities/things that help in achieving these goals increase social welfare. These matters are called *masalih*, or utilities, opposite of which are *mafasid* , or dis-utilities. *Maslahah* means Social welfare through acquisition of benefit and repulsion of harm to the public in such a way that all actions are also harmonious with Sharia. So, it includes all human activities, economic and others, private and public, relevant to the promotion of social welfare.

Economic aspect of *Maslahah*
Ghazzali proposed a tripartite hierarchy of social utilities:

1. *Necessities (darurat):* The key to the minimum protection and preservation of the foundations of *Shariah* lies in the provision of necessities for people.

2. *Conveniences or comforts (hajat):* Conveniences or comforts (*hajat*) are needed to relieve or remove impediments and difficulties in life.

3. *Refinements or luxuries (tahsinat):* Luxuries include activities and things that go beyond the limits of conveniences.

The key to the minimum protection and preservation of the foundations of Shariah lies in the provision of necessities for people. Obligation (*fard kifayah*) of a *Welfare State* is to perform "need fulfillment" function as resources permit under equity.

Topic 168: Individual in Community: Spiritual and Social Personality

Ghazzali's political theory revolves around good governance with a clear goal of humanism which is a doctrine that people's duty is to promote human welfare. Human welfare requires a holistic, harmonious, well-ordered cosmos as created by Allah. According to Imam Ghazzali in an Ideal State, good governance is the criterion that is a divine gift, entrusted to a wise ruler who holds himself accountable to Allah. Such ruler brings development and prosperity to the world through justice and equitable rule.

At the center of Ghazzali's ideal state is the individual with a spiritual as well as a social personality. Spirituality gives that individual inner strength through solitude and contemplation, often in mystical experience as exemplified in Ghazzali's own life. According to Imam Ghazzali, only Allah is perfect and all individuals are the pilgrims here in this world seeking perfection. According to him an individual's social and material needs enabled complete living. An individual had basic needs in temporal life and satisfaction of these basic needs requires moderation. Respect for, and tolerances of others are essential requisites of virtuous living.

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Individual identity seen as multilayered: expanding from the self through self in family, then in neighborhood, and finally in *Ummah*, the Muslim brotherhood. All actions must be guided by rights and duties to God, and others in interpersonal relations. Sharing, reciprocity and charity are essential virtues in this life for every individual. All human actions should reflect an ethical system for virtuous living in accordance with Allah's will. Economic system is a means to establish an ethical system for such virtuous living. Economic relations for public welfare according to Imam Ghazzali are subjected to self-imposed (voluntary) rules of moderation, honesty and integrity.

Topic 169: Justice: The State Upholder of the System

Imam Ghazzali desired for stability in society that only a good government can bring based on equity and reforms (from within). According to Imam Ghazzali ideal state is a system of social justice. He advises that Rulers' hearts should be "abode of justice" and between courage and justice, the king should possess justice.

Ideal state

Justice itself requires a careful and constant balancing of qualities that needs to be linked in pairs:

1. Intelligence with knowledge
2. Wealth with gratitude
3. Charity with kindness
4. Effort with *Dawlat* (good government)

When *Dawlat* comes, all the qualities must go with it. According to Ghazzali, the Justice is directly linked to development and prosperity. Thus, prime duty of Dawlat (state) is to promote ad'l (social justice). The rulers must bring development and prosperity to their subject through justice and equitable rule because he believed that the greater the prosperity, the longer their rule and the more numerous their subjects. So, he claims that there exists a direct correlation between injustice and underdevelopment. According to Ghazzali's political ideology, a just monarch is the unique divine gift that is rendered the authority to bring social justice through good governance. That is why; Ghazzali's state is non-democratic and is monarchical that is governed according to the principles of Islam. Regime stability according to him is sacred because instability leads to chaos and anarchy. He also claims that political change must be a reform from within, guided by knowledge, wisdom and justice.

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Lesson 42

MUSLIM THINKERS: ABU HAMID MUHAMMAD AL-GHAZZALI (1058-1111)-II (TOPIC 170-174)

Topic 170: The State Ruler: Checks and Balances

Although the ruler in Ghazzali's Dawlat (state) is monarchic in order to attain regime stability, but there are certain checks over the ruler contrary to Plato's idea of philosopher-king. Ghazzali proposed two set of checks and balances, one divine, the other secular as discussed below:

1. *Divine Check:* The king's rule is a trusteeship from Allah and king is ultimately answerable to Allah.
2. *Secular Check:* Daily actions and decisions of the king are limited by advice from the learned scholars, *ulama*.

Circle of equity

According to Imama Ghazzali:

> *"The religion depends on the monarchy, the monarchy on the army, the army on supplies, supplies on prosperity, and prosperity on justice"*

Since, Ghazzali's checks and balances on the king have formed the bedrock of traditional Islamic political theory. The most complete statement about the Circle of Equity is found in Ibn Khaldun:

- There can be no royal authority without the military
- There can be no military without wealth
- The subjects produce the wealth
- Justice preserves the subjects' loyalty to the sovereign
- Justice requires harmony in the world
- The world is a garden, its walls are the state
- The Holy Law [*shari'ah*] orders the state
- There is no support for the *shari'ah* except through royal authority

Ghazzali's ideas on social justice remain a challenge for all well-meaning social scientists interested in global equity today. Ghazzali's economic philosophy is mainly based on his deep commitment to the Islamic faith and his comprehensive study and knowledge of Islamic shariah. An overriding theme that runs throughout Ghazzali's writings is the Islamic concept of *maslahah* a powerful concept which encompasses all human activities, economic and others, private and public, relevant to the promotion of social welfare of the community and consistent with the rules and goals of shariah.

The starting point is that Islam sets goals for human life. All matters (be they activities or things) that help in achieving these goals increase social welfare, and are called *masalih*, or utilities; those opposite are *mafasid*, or disutilities. Thus, Ghazzali defines an Islamic social welfare function, with a clearly specified hierarchy of individual and social needs.

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Topic 171: Objectives of a Welfare State

Al-Ghazali emphasizes that the goodness of this life and the Hereafter (maslahah al din wa al-dunya) represents the key objective of a welfare stae in shariah and this goal is necessarily known from shariah's overall teachings. So, all human activities should be relevant to the promotion of social welfare of the community: *Maslahah.* It also includes activities that prevent *Mafsadah* (evil). Goal of an Islamic society is to strive for *Maslahah* (social welfare) that is to secure the benefit or prevent harm to humans. Activities should also be in harmony with *shariah.* Increasing social welfare is the goal of Islamic society.

Foundation of Islamic society
Shariah mandated foundations of Islamic society:
1. *Deen* i.e. Religion
2. *Nafs* i.e. life or soul
3. *Nasl* i.e. progeny
4. *Mal* i.e. property or wealth
5. *Aql* i.e. intellect or reason

Maslahah (public interest) requires the protection of these foundations against *mafasid* (evil). The goodness of this life and the Hereafter (*maslahah al din wa al-dunya*). The noblest of all worships is the promotion of society's wellbeing. In support Ghazzali quoted Prophet's (PBUH) saying: All creatures are dependents of Allah and the most beloved of them to Allah are those who are most beneficial to His dependents." Create a welfare society.

Topic 172: Islamic Way of Life

According to Ghazzali hereafter is actually the place for ultimate rewards and punishments for one's deeds and that wordly life is not only temporary but the earth is the place for struggle and preparation for one's salvation. However, this struggle is not to be at the expense of neglecting mundane human affairs, including economic pursuits. Indeed, the rightful conduct of worldly life is a means and a pre-requisite for one's salvation in the Hereafter.

Ghazzali divided people into three groups in their worldly pursuits:

1. Those who ignore the Hereafter by indulging them- selves almost completely in mundane affairs - they will be destroyed;
2. Those whose pursuit of the Hereafter is at the expense of worldly life – they will be successful; and
3. Those who follow the "middle path" and engage in worldly affairs, including economic activities, according to the rules of *shariah* - they will achieve salvation. When intentions are consistent with *shariah*, such activities are tantamount to worship. Such activities become *Fard Kifayah* i.e. social obligations.

In addition, Ghazzali considers the development of the economy and pursuit of economic activities as part of the shariah-mandated socially-obligated duties (fard kifayah); and if they are not fulfilled, then wordly life would collapse and humanity would perish. According to him, the

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economic activities as per *Shariah* are virtues (religious duties). Ghazzali identified three distinct goals for members of Islamic society as far as economic activities are concerned:

1. Achievement of self-sufficiency for one's survival
2. Provision for the well-being of one's progeny
3. Provision for assisting those in economic need

Ghazzali considered any shortcomings in the pursuit of worldly obligations as religiously "blameworthy". Over and above *kifayah* that is defined as a moderate standard of living to be surrendered and surplus should be spent on certain groups of people who need not engage in economic activities directly and are needy.

Topic 173-174: State, Religion and Society

Ghazzali did not enumerate all the possible functions of state as listed in some text book presently. Ghazzali made specific emphasis on justice, peace and security. To promote prosperity, the state must establish justice and provide conditions of peace and security.

State and justice
According to Ghazzali where injustice and oppression are present:

- The people have no foothold,
- The cities and localities go to ruin,
- The inhabitants flee and move to other territories,
- The cultivated lands are abandoned,
- The kingdom falls into decay,
- The revenue diminishes, the treasury becomes empty, and
- Happiness fades among the people.
- The subjects do not love the unjust king, but always pray that evil may befall him.

State to take care of internal/external threats
According to Ghazzali rulers have to keep the army in order to defend the country and to protect people from robbers and have he also must have the judiciary for settlement of disputes. He also suggests that the ruler must have only those people on such positions who are specialists for the said functions. They have to be provided their living necessities by other industries. He claims that justice, security, peace, and stability are necessary to promote prosperity.

Institution of al-Hisbah
To keep checks on the harmful practices that may prevail in the markets, the ruler must establish the institution of *al-Hisbah* headed by *muhtasib.* All dealings to be in accordance with *Shariah.* State, religion, and society are inseparable.

Concluding comments
For Ghazzali the state and the ruler were of primary importance for Islamic society. He compiled a separate volume on this subject, called *Kitab Nasihat al-Muluk* or Book of Counsel for Kings. He rrecommended for the rulers of the Islamic state ten "principles of justice and of the equitable treatment of subjects.

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Ten principles

1. The ruler should first of all understand the importance, and also the danger, of the authority entrusted to him. In authority there is great blessing, since he who exercises it righteously obtains unsurpassed happiness; but if any (ruler) fails to do so, he incurs torment surpassed only by the torment of unbelief.
2. The ruler should be always thirsting to meet devout 'ulama and ask them for advice; and that he should beware of meeting 'ulama with worldly ambitions who might inveigle, flatter and seek to please him in order to gain control over his terrestrial body by stealth and deceit.
3. The king should understand that he must not be content with personally refraining from injustice, but must discipline his slave-troops, servants, and officers and never tolerate unjust conduct by them; for he will be interrogated not only about his own unjust deeds but also about those of his staff.
4. The holder of authority should not be dominated by pride; for pride gives rise to the dominance of anger, and will impel him to revenge.
5. In every situation which arises, the ruler should figure that he is the subject and that the other person is the holder of authority; and that (he should not sanction of others) anything that he would not sanction for himself.
6. The ruler should not disregard the attendance of petitioners at his court and should beware of the danger of so doing. As long as the Muslims have grievances, he need not occupy his time with supererogatory religious observances, for redressing the grievances is more meritorious.
7. The ruler should not form a habit of indulging the passions. Should have contentment. Without contentment, just conduct will not be possible.
8. The ruler should make the utmost effort to behave gently and avoid governing harshly; only then the rulers themselves will be treated gently in the Hereafter.
9. The ruler should endeavor to keep all the subjects pleased with him; there is the Prophet's (PBUH) saying, "The best of my community are those who love you and whom (you love), and the worst of my community are those who hate you and whom you curse." Even through espionage, the ruler should check and find out if all the subjects are genuinely pleased with him.
10. The ruler should not give satisfaction to any person if a contravention of God's law would be required to please him; for no harm will come from such a person's displeasure.

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Lesson 43

MUSLIM THINKERS: QUTBUDDIN AHMAD SHAH WALIULLAH (1703-1763)-I (TOPIC 175-179)

Topic 175: Introduction

Qutbuddin Ahmad Shah Waliullah was an Eighteenth century scholar who was born in Subcontinent. His lineage is traced to Caliph 'Umar' on paternal side and to Caliph 'Ali' on the maternal side. He completed his formal training and education at age 15 and started teaching in the school established by his father who was a prominent scholar attached with Mughal king Aurangzeb.

Qutbuddin Ahmad Wali Ullah (1703-1762) , popularly known as Shah Wali Ullah, is famous for his intellectual prowess, profound learning and dynamic role in promoting the cause of Islamic Revival (Tajdid) in South Asia. He possessed a remarkable clarity of vision, and accurately analyzed social pathologies in his days. His solutions to the social evils indicated his superb knowledge of social psychology and practical wisdom. During his era, Mughal empire in India was in fast decline. Shah Wali Ullah exercised his influence to foster social order in the country. In his "Hujjat Ullah al Baligha", he presented a viable concept of Development of Society. His concept, based on rational and empirical grounds carries significance equally for contemporary sociologists and theorists of modern and post-modern societies.

During his stay in Hijaz in 1731 he further studied the sciences of religion, the Traditions and *Fiqh* with distinguished scholars. On return, he continued teaching at the same institution which was his Alma-Mater.

Shah Wali Ullah led a purposeful life. He suggests that basically three factors shaped his life and gave direction to it:

1. He firmly believed in the truth of Islam, acquired its sound knowledge, and put it into action with resolve.
2. He lived in a healthy family environment, and his father imparted him good *"Tarbiyah"*.
3. He used education as a means to serve society.

Decline of state and society

Shah Waliullah flourished during the decline of the Mughal Empire and experienced disintegration of Muslim political power. All pervasive political declines soon began to permeate the other spheres of society. The fear of religious collapse set Shah Waliullah's on a divine mission of Muslim revivalism.

Mission revivalism

Shah Waliullah narrated a *kashif* in his famous work, *Hujjat Ullah Ulbaligah* as:

> *"One day I sat attentive to Allah after Asar Prayers, when suddenly the soul of the Holy Prophet appeared; it covered me so that I felt that I was covered with a cloth. At that time I felt light in my chest which gradually increased. After this when I was in Mecca, I dreamed that Imam Hasan and Imam Hussain ...*

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bestowed me a pen and said that it was the pen of our grandfather…"

Shah Waliullah addressed the social crisis and tried to reform the society. He asked the rulers to rule according to the *Shari'ah* by ensuring peace and improving governance.

Negligence by *Ulema*

Shah Wali Ullah severely criticized the Ulama for not imparting the correct knowledge of religion to people. Similarly, he censured phony mystics who deceived and misled people. His harangue to the Muslim community was highly moving. He observed that the community that had declined in morals, lived beyond their means; lacked self-reliance; had lost balance in their lifestyle; had adopted harmful customs; and given themselves in to a life without self-control. Resultantly the community had:

- declined in morals,
- lived beyond their means,
- lacked self-reliance,
- lost balance in their lifestyle,
- adopted harmful customs, and
- lost self-control.

Topic 176: Religion: Basis of Sociocultural Thought

Shah Wali Ullah cited the Qur'anic verses and wrote that the root of the revealed religions (Din or Faith) is one and the same. All the Prophets have preached unanimously the belief in divine unity and in the Judgment Day. They preached the unity of moral values, obeying the laws of marriage, and prohibited fornication etc. The unity of faiths and moral values stemmed from the fact that the human nature has remained unchanged through the march of time. He stated that each Prophet brought with him different Shari'ah to suit the conditions of his own people and time.

According to Shah Waliullah, the unity of faiths and moral values has stemmed from the fact that the human nature has remained unchanged although the environment and situations have kept on changing. That is why each Prophet brought different *Shari'ah* to suit these conditions of his own people and time but the fundamental principles and set of believes they taught were always the same for example believe in *Oneness of Allah*. It implies that Shah Waliullah considered the social system as a dynamic process that is subjected to change and the only source that provides complete understanding of these dynamic processes is religion.

Religion and social control

Shah Wali Ullah mentions that God raised Prophets to teach religion, and also to eradicate bad customs in society. He noted that religion was averse to living in seclusion. To live in society and work for its progress was a part of religions. He devoted a chapter to how the laws of Shari'ah promoted socio-cultural advancement and helped improve social control.

A glance at the contents of Hujjah manifested that Shah Wali Ullah studied social deviance from different angles. With regard to social control, he suggested the need to stop deviance (tahrif) in religion. He opined that this step could ward off social normlessness. He wrote that tahrif is a chronic disease of people. Among the modes, which caused tahrif, he listed: disregard for

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religion in the educational system; base motives to please rulers; innovations and introducing excesses; blind taqlid; an admixture of teachings of one religion into another.
Shah Wali Ullah quoted different Traditions and argued that Islam favoured moderation. He mentioned thirteen ways to achieve ease and moderation. Among these, he said, the Prophet used to set personal example and only those actions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) are enshrined in Shari'ah which the Prophet (P.B.U.H) undertook. Shah Wali Ullah attached importance to the study of social phenomena for understanding the Qur'an. He stressed the need of adherence to the Qur'an and the Sunnah. He mentioned that such an approach could ensure the realization of social ideal of the individual and socio-cultural progress of humanity.

Topic 177: Rationalism

on the subject of Tradition (of Holy Prophet) as it covers a variety of themes ranging from exposition of the basic tenets of Islam and their benefits for practicing Muslims to the principles of Islamic governance. This book also reflects his thorough understanding of jurisprudence and fiqh. In Hujjat Ullah al-Baligah Shah urged that the time was ripe to present the Sharia in the light of demonstrative proof at the same time rejecting the Greek and Babylonian philosophical traditions.

Maqulat
All his writings on Holy Quran, Hadith, Fiqh, and Mysticism, Muslim Philosophy and Illmulkalam and Shia-Sunni controversy reflect inclination towards maqulat i.e. reasoning based on purely Islamic tradition. Through his work on maqulat, he wanted to chart a new course of Muslim revivalism. His translation of Quran Fateh-ur- Rehman is the first translation of the Holy Quran in Persian. This to some extent broke the monopoly of the traditional Ulama. This also encouraged educated Muslims to study the Holy Quran on the broader scale directly without relying on the secondary and tertiary means such as tafsir (commentary). The basic scriptures now became accessible to masses.

> "A task to which Shah Waliullah set himself early in life was the diffusion of the knowledge of the Quran. His most memorable contribution in this field was his translation of the Quran which he completed within five years of his return from Arabia."

He translated Quran in Persian so that the common people can understand the Quran on their own rather than depending on traditional *Ulema*. He enabled the common people to understand by comprehending the tenets of Islam according to their faculties of reason. He believed that the focus should be not only be on *manqulat (legitimate principles from Traditional Islamic sources)* but also on *maqulat (evidences from logic).*
Waliullah interpreted Islam in the light of reason and provided the rational interpretation of even miracles for example the event of Moses passage through river is cited in his book *Tawil-al-Ahadith*. Walliullah's mind was very rational, scientific and eclectic. Through his work on *maqulat*, Walliullah wanted to chart a new course of Muslim revivalism. The very First translation of Quran *(Fateh-ur-Rehman)* in Persian to some extent broke the monopoly of the traditional *Ulama* and tried to synthesize all four schools of Muslim thought as well.

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He interpreted religious injunctions (commandments) on the basis of rationalistic criteria for example A*srar-i-namaz, asrar-i-zakat* and *asrar-i-roza*. He also highlighted benefits of religious obligations for the individuals and society. As a result he developed the theory of *Irtifaqat* (beneficent) that means all human actions benefit their survival in the society.

Topic 178-179: Revivalist Movement

Walliullah's mission was to bring social change through reviving the religious teachings based on correct interpretations. He questioned the role of *Ulema*. His movement aimed to abridge *Sufism* and not to eliminate it. He believed that the *Sufis* with insufficient knowledge of the Quran and the Tradition were, in reality, the robbers and thieves of religion. Waliullah declared himself the *Mujaddid* of the 18th century. A *Mujaddid* is a fighter for the cause of God who is entrusted with the task to eradicate impurities and evils from within the Muslim society which had polluted the religion. He used the concept of *Irtjfaq* (benefit) that the religion is for the collective benefit of society. *Irtifaq* stands for the ways and means by which one can tide over his social and economic difficulties. So, *Irtifaqat* means a work done collectively by people and with cooperation for collective benefit of the society because he believes that Allah has commanded all human beings to pursue *Irtifaqat* (useful, ends) for their necessities, since the days of Adam.

According to him, social well-being and social order depends on the virtues of purity, cleanliness (*taharah*), humility (*ikhbat*), sublimation (*samaha*), and justice (*adalah*). He believes that the fundamental cause of decline in the society is the lack of these virtues and there is a dire of their revival in the society.

Shah Waliullah revived Islam based on a broader vision of reasoning and rationality (*Maqulat)* rather than based on traditional theological approach. His philosophy of religion was that:

- The rational understanding is the solution for the revival of virtues
- The virtues are rooted in religion
- A broad humanistic sociological base was emphasized by a doctrine of social and economic Justice in Islamic terms.

Waliullah's reform efforts spearheaded a process of Islamic revivalism in South Asia. After his death, his family carried forward his mission and his sons disseminated his teachings through Quranic translations (into Urdu) and delivering public lectures.
During Shah Waliullah's life time his movement mainly influenced the elite, not the masses because his teachings were highly scholarly that only learned people and *Ulama* could have understood. His sons endeavored to carry his message to masses in a language easily communicable to people of society at that time that was Urdu. After Waliullah, his movement assumed two strands i.e. Scholastic and Jihadi. Scholastic strand influenced a large body of *Ulama.* Jihadi strand focused on reforming society. Under the influence of his teachings sub-continent (India) has been declared as *dar-ul-harb* in order to establish a state modeled on early Islamic caliphate.

Mujahideen preferred armed resistance against British rulers. *Mujahideen* participated in Afghan war, the war of Independence that was fought in 1857. During 1862-69 British encounters and

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crushed the *Mujahideen* who were fighting the war of Independence and thus this strand of movement came to an end. Shah Waliullah's teachings inculcated a sense of collective *Ummah* by establishing the superiority of *Sharia* over the *tasawaf*.

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Lesson 44

MUSLIM THINKERS: QUTBUDDIN AHMAD SHAH WALIULLAH (1703-1763)-II (TOPIC 180-184)

Topic 180: Revivalist Movement

Shah Waliullah interpreted Islam in the light of reason and provided the rational interpretation of miracles. *Maqulat* (Rationalism) is the fundamental aspect of Shah Waliullah's ideology that tries to explain material aspects of miracles. He tried to establish accordance among religion and rational sciences and endeavored to eradicate the rationalist's doubt about the truthfulness of religion. With the ascendancy of colonial control the effects of modernity began to permeate in the Indian society. The Muslim reform movement could not escape the impact of this modernity.

Three antecedent traits of Modernity transformed the character of the Movement. These three traits included:

1. The western type of education and Missionary Agency
2. Translation of scriptures into local languages
3. Technology of printing

Topic 181-184: Evolution of Society

For Waliullah society is just like a living organism and is more like human body. Various parts are interlinked, interdependent, and interactive. Society just like living organism is subject to health and soundness, advancement and progress, regress and weakness, and decay and death. According to Shah Waliullah human life grows in stages:

- Childhood
- Adolescence
- Manhood and
- Maturity

Irtifaqat – Stages of growth

He divided society after its birth into four stages of growth until it reaches perfection and called these stages as *irtifāq.* Ways and means by which one can tide over his social and economic difficulties are called *irtifāq.* "*Irtifāq"* literally means gentleness or the use of gentleness. So, *Irtifāqāt* means a work done collectively with cooperation and approach the things with gentleness. It is quite useful in management of human affairs and growth of societies or civilizations for collective good.

Four stages of *Irtifaqat*

Waliullah studied the structure, and formulated a theory for the preservation of Muslim society. Historically the growth of the civilization (societies) can be into four stages:

1. The primitive society
2. The life of cities and towns
3. Nationalism
4. The caliphate

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1. Primitive Society

The first stage irtifāq is that of primitive society which has a minimal code of social behavior. The urges of food and sex are basic human urges, which ensure the continuation of human existence on earth. Food keeps man's body intact while the sex-urge preserves the human race and regulates generation. Allah has also inspired mankind to build shelters to live in and to defend himself against the weather. These needs are common to all men who have an innate desire to excel in the modes of acquiring them. For this purpose different ways and means are adopted which include the use of agricultural methods, cooperating with each other, adopting civilized style of speech, cooking and monogamy. When society achieves these requirements of social development it acquires the first degree of its perfection i.e. the first irtifāq. An instance of this primitive stage is the life of Adam. As Allah has created him with a specific purpose that was to be His vicegerent on earth. To fulfill his physical needs he looks to his surroundings where he would like to find, for instance, food and drinks of his taste, would desire beautiful women, descent dress, a house for shelter etc. On the other hand, man needs spiritual fulfillment as well. But he is inherently unable to guide himself spiritually on his own, which is why Allah sends messengers to the human society from within in order to save them from any kinds of impediments, and guide them spiritually as well. These messengers or leaders act as agents of Allah being naturally capable of a higher king of perfection in bringing law and order to society and curing it of evils and removing obstacles.

2. Life of Cities and Towns

While, in the primary stage, the requirements are rude and unpolished, in the secondary stage they are more refined and polished as expansion to the former with behavioral knowledge and good morals. By means of dividing them into different classes such as domestic, social, and political etc., and testing them in the light of sound experience, high morality and the common welfare, they are rendered into such forms as make them better, more beneficial and less harmful. Therefore, the chief difference between the requirements and principles of the two stages is one of degree rather than of kind.

When these first requirements are met in its refined and sophisticated way according to Shāh Waliullah, they need five sciences to usher in the second degree of social perfection. These requirements and the five sciences embraced together constitute the second degree of perfection, i.e. the second stage of irtifāq. The five sciences are:

i. ***Economic wisdom***

As stated by Shāh Waliullah, it includes the adoption and utilization of edifying manners, new experiments and modes of eating, drinking, dress, domestic habits, dwelling, etiquette, sitting, walking, sleeping, enjoying conjugal life, travelling, the rules of cleanliness, of conversation, of medical treatment, of foresight, of festivities, of fellow-feeling, and of removing the death, etc. when those requirements, Shāh Waliullah views, are met in the proper manner and in the light of past experience it gives to rise to economic wisdom.

All civilized people observe the above-mentioned items, in some form or other and all great thinkers have tried to find out the best possible form of observing those conventions from their respective angles of vision. The naturalist, for instance, has given more importance to the natural side of these conventions. The astrologer has put much stress on the effects of the stars, while the divines have applied the principles of good and evil to decide is best form. This is why, there are so many ways followed by different people. (Walīullah. (1996)., pp.121-122).

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ii. ***Domestic wisdom***

This wisdom shows the ways and means of preserving good relations amongst the different members of the family (society) in the secondary stage of civilization. It refers to married life, rearing children, protection, slavery, the right and responsibility to relatives, management and manners of companionship etc.

iii. ***Earning wisdom***

It means that everyone should pursue a distinct and separate activity appropriate to his energies and faculties, such as agriculture, trade, crafts of fellah, carpenter, smith etc.

iv. ***Business wisdom***

It includes matters of dealing, purchasing and selling, exchanging gifts, tenancy and hiring, landing, incurring debts, loans, or mortgage and so on.

v. ***Cooperative wisdom:***

It enjoins surety (security etc), bail, guarantees, co-proprietorship, commercial enterprise, power of attorney and tenure etc.

All these five social wisdoms have a great bearing on the economic life and activity of a society. This shows the extent to which Shāh Walīullah gives importance to the economic dimensions of the social development. The second irtifāq is the most important in the process of the perfection of a society and its role is more fundamental. If the second irtifāq is duly achieved, its perfection in the remaining degrees is easily attainable. If these five wisdoms are practiced in a sound and suitable way give birth to innumerable developments in culture and civilization.

3. Nationalism

When these five wisdoms interact with the moral human excellences they give rise to the third degree of social development. This irtifāq is mostly based on cooperation of men so as to achieve the outcome of the five wisdoms. Without cooperation these sciences can neither be put into practice nor produce the expected results. Cooperation is very much needed because men are not equally endowed with all sorts of qualities to work for the society. They include fools, the wise, the wealthy, the poor, the one who is capable of earning, and the one who is not. Some of them are practicing small and ordinary professions and the others do high professions, while some others have several commercial undertaking and the others are unemployed. It is just a composite figure of various professions. If these people do not co-operate with each other in realizing their socio-economic objectives their socio-economic life will be no effect.

The interaction of the five wisdoms with each other and with the moral excellence and mutual cooperation naturally leads to the emergence of a socio-political organization- Madina or state. Madina is not merely a city, if the citizens of a group of cities and towns have this interaction and cooperation their group will also be termed as Madina. Every Madina has a unity, which must be preserved in its original and perfect form, and its benefits should also be accomplished.
This unity and perfection can, in fact, be maintained and accomplished by Imam i.e. the government or the ruling group in Shāh Walīullah's terminology. The state is not confined to its boundaries, its marketplace or its edifies. The state in fact, means a special kind of relationship among various groups. This relationship is imperative and is necessitated by the five principles

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of the second irtifāq. When these groups cooperate with each other for the realization of the five wisdoms and carry on transactions and interact with each other they become like a single individual and work as a living organism. And again this unity and the organism necessitate the further evolution of society, which takes place in the direction of creation and development of a congenial government. This "corporate" individual undergoes health or illness arising from outward and inward causes. To remedy this corporate individual, i.e. the state, from its illness and to protect its health the congenial government should act as a competent and skilled state physician. The schemes for this do not only aim at safeguarding, preservation and conservation of society, its unity, state and government, are also conducive to the fullest benefit that the unity and the state and government can handle to the members of the society.

This stage of social development is called the third irtifāq, i.e. the first stage of political organization or the state. This is the third stage where Shāh Walīullah has discussed the qualification of the Imām or ruler and the details of the government agencies. This, however, will be discussed later on in the political views of Shāh Walīullah.

4. Caliphate: Internationalism

And the final stage of social development where several states (Mudun Kathira) exist at a time, disagreements arise and illnesses infect the body politic of the states. Then a superior physician (tābīd al-'atibba') is required to cure these inter-state diseases; he may also be called Imam al-a'immah. (Walīullah. (1970)., p.64). Elsewhere the Imām al-a'immah has been termed as Khalifah. (Walīullah. (1322 A.H.)., p.37). This is the fourth stage, which is, in fact, and elementary form of international politics. Defining the fourth irtifāq, Shāh Walīullah says: "It is the science (hikmah) which discusses the policy of the rulers and kings of the states and the ways and means of the preservation of co-ordination and relationship existing among the people of various countries".

So, in short, the first irtifāq represents the most primitive societies or to be more specific the pre-social human existence. The second irtifāq represents the pre political stage of social organization. The third and the forth irtifāq are the stages of political organization of society.

Walīullah's concept of society is systemic. It is a system. Society is not assemblages of units but living organisms that performs certain functions and have various parts those are:

- Interlinked
- Interdependent
- Their movements are interactive.

Just like human body and other living organisms, society according to Waliullah is subjected to:

- Health and soundness
- Advancement and progress
- Regress and weakness
- Decay and death

Shah Waliullah see mutual coordination and integration act as an essential element to make up a healthy and sound social unit and according to him a society grows through four above mentioned stages.

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Waliullah used a special term *Irtifaq* in his discussion on society. *Irtifāq* means a work done collectively and with cooperation. God has inspired man to pursue *Irtifaqat* concerning his necessities, since the days of Adam. All actions have to be for the mutual and collective benefit.
For Waliullah humans have the ability to imitate, to experiment and to use their intellect. Man possessed two faculties - the angelic (*malakiyah*) and the animalistic (*bahimiyah*) which constantly influence human behaviors in such a way that both the faculties remain in a state of conflict. Angelic faculty, when developed, adds to human happiness.

Virtues and wellbeing
Animalistic (*bahimiyah*) trait is kept in check by striving to acquire essential virtues. The well-being of social order depended on the adoption of virtues and values that help individual and society to bring normalcy in different spheres of life.

Social justice
Justice is an essential moral trait of human society augmented more on collective than the individual level. So, when there would be moral decay at society level, it would be more disastrous and may even prove fatal. For smooth functioning of the society, the justice encompasses the entire spectrum of diverse human pursuits: dress, manners, income, and expenditure etc.

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Lesson 45

MUSLIM THINKERS: QUTBUDDIN AHMAD SHAH WALIULLAH (1703-1763)-III (TOPIC 185-189)

Topic 185: Social Institutions

Family

Shah Wali Ullah provided valuable information and advise about the management of the household. He considered family as the pivotal institution of society. He explained the psychological difference between the sexes, and showed how in marriage they both complement each other. He noted that wife played a distinct role in tarbiyah of progeny. He listed seventeen prominent issues that needed attention in the successful conduct of households. He emphasized the rights and duties of married persons, and accorded special consideration to the rights of women. He devoted considerable effort in explaining ways that could create curable amity between marriage partners.

Shah Wali Ullah mentioned that the range of social affairs is extremely wide. All aspects of human activity, from cradle to grave, fall in the purview of social affairs. He advised that social conduct might be assessed from the beauty of culture and nicety of social interaction. Every nation is diverse in dress and manners. He asserted that food affects the body and morality in a subtle way. The consumption of intoxicants abates intellects and boosts bestial faculties. He stated that modes of customs existed in all societies. He recorded that when families who care more for personal gains than the benefits of the society, come in power they plunge society into total social chaos. Under their protection lecherous practices, drinking, gambling, usury, reduction in weights and measures are revived. He advised that the solution lay in fighting these aberrations. He stressed that it is obligatory on righteous individuals to strive hard in the eradication of these social evils.

Topic 186: Economy

He mentioned that cooperation and smooth business dealings are pleasing signs in a society. In vocations he listed agriculture, mining, tool making and many other occupations. He wrote that in commerce and trade silver and gold came to be used as standard of exchange because these metals were precious and lighter in weight. He observed that many persons find difficulty in adopting a useful vocation. They resort to gambling and larceny, as profession. He pointed out that vocational balance is essential for economic stability. For instance, if the majority of people take to commerce and trade, agriculture will fall in dire straits. He advised that professions, which encourage lewdness, should be curbed in the larger interest of society. He explained that wisdom of healthy business transactions and how they promote welfare of society. He wrote that it is obligatory to ensure that human needs are met.

Shah Waliullah observed that the economic system of his era in subcontinent is predominantly dysfunctional. He believes that:

- The wealth originates from labor.
- The laborers and farmers are the fountains of labor and consequently of wealth.

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- System is made to help in the concentration of wealth.
- The labor gets exploited.
- The system becomes dysfunctional.
- Economic conditions influence man's character.
- For upholding the moral values, just economic order is necessary i.e. the proper distribution of wealth.
- Imbalance in organism creates health problems.
- Same is true about the health of system.

Shah Waliullah suggested that:

- Improving the health of the nation requires improvement in economic conditions.
- Revolutionary measures must be taken because when society becomes corrupt beyond control then revolution is a must.
- When economic institution becomes an abscess then it needs surgery for its removal.
- The forces which hinder the performance of the working classes should be crushed mercilessly.
- For just distribution, centers of power to be smashed.
- A government which do not properly and justly manage the economic system should be up-rooted.
- The working classes should not be exploited and everyone should be paid on the principle of mutual cooperation.
- The production and income which is not based on mutual cooperation is not valid.
- The working hours of the working classes should be fixed.
- The economic system will become functional.
- Society's ailments likely to get cured.

Topic 187-188: Polity

Shāh Walīullah did not see religion and politics separately. As a scholar of Islamic sciences he conceived religion as a way of life, and in his Hujjatullah al-Baligha he successfully strived to present Islam as a code of human life, spiritual as well as temporal. Matter and spirit do not make any contrast in his system of thought.

Khilāfah. relates to both of these aspects, and as man is the Khalifah (vicegerent) of Allah on earth, he is dutybound to carry out the demands of Khilāfah. According to Shāh Walīullah, it is collectively incumbent (Fard Kifāya) upon Muslims at all times to elect and install a Khalifah possessing the requisite qualifications and preconditions. To support this contention he gave several arguments that can be summed up here.

First, the collective reason of mankind requires that a Khalifah should be there to look after interests which otherwise cannot be protected. Secondly, the Khalifah is appointed to achieve the two categories of objectives. The prophet (SAAS) was also sent to achieve them. Therefore, after the Prophet (SAAS) passed away, a Khalifah or Imam was needed to succeed him and implement his inunctions and commandments. That is why obedience to the Amir or Khalifah is equal to obedience to the Prophet of Allah and his disobedience amounts to disobedience to Allah.

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Shāh Walīullah argued that the establishment of Khalifah was due to given the importance to appoint immediately after the death of the Prophet (SAAS) and even before the funeral of the Prophet (SAAS). Upon the Khilafah develops the following: the Jihad, the administration of justice, the revival of Islamic science, the establishment of the pillars of Islam, the defense of the Darul Islam, and such other things which have been collectively enjoined upon the Muslim Ummah. These are the arguments advanced by Shāh Walīullah, to justify the institution of the Khilafah. Unlike the early political thinkers of Islam, Shāh Walīullah makes a distinction between Khilafah Zahiriyyah (succession to the Prophet (SAAS) in the spiritual matters). This distinction is absent in the political discussions of as late a political thinker as even Ibn Khaldun. Shāh Walīullah is, perhaps, the first Muslim political scientist who has so elaborately dwelt upon making a distinction between the two kinds of Khilafahs. It shows that the outer caliphate relates to the temporal and the inner caliphate to the spiritual aspects of life. The Khalifah (ruler) as the head of the Muslim state, in true sense, is the man who embodies in his personality the virtues of Khilafah as a whole.

He says, the outer caliphate would be responsible for securing order and stability, whereas, the inner caliphate would guide the ruler spiritually and instruct the community accordingly. In a flawed political order, Shāh Walīullah sought an important role for the religious leadership, the kind of role he himself exemplified in advising rulers, guiding the community, and safeguarding the intellectual heritage. Shāh Walīullah viewed that the Muslim political leader is the Khalifah (vicegerent), elected or selected. And again, he divided the khalifah into two categories: The khalifah-i-khassah (special vicegerent) and the khalifah-i- ‘ammah (common vicegerent). To all intents and purpose, argued Shāh Walīullah that elevated to the khalifah-i-khassah was sent to fulfill the functions of messengers (rusul). He tried to prove that the khalifah-ikhassah had been confined to the first two successors of the Prophet Muhammad (SAAS). However, the khalifah-i-‘ammah was dependent on traditional conditions outlined by orthodox Sunni jurists and political theories.

Process of choosing a Khalifah

Shāh Walīullah had given procedures for the appointment of a khalifah. According to him khilafah is established by one of the following four ways:

1. Through the Bay‘ah (oath of allegiance) by the people of loosing and binding from amongst the ‘Ulama’, quadis, leaders, army commanders and eminent people having opinion and well-wishing for the Muslims as was established the khilafah of Abu Bakr (R).
2. Thorough the will of the outgoing or departing khalifah. The khalifah has to nominate the most highly qualified person among all the possible candidates as successor. He has to declare this choice to an injunction in this connection. This was how ‘Umar, the second khalifah was chosen.
3. Through the Shura (mutual consultation) of a certain group as was established the khilafah of ‘Uthman and even ‘Ali.
4. Through the successful assumption of power by a man possessing the requisite qualities and qualifications as applicable to the Caliphs succeeding the Prophet (SAAS).

However, it seems that Shāh Walīullah does not consider these four means as being inflexible and the method of electing a Khalifah is not confined to these four methods. He argued that the

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most important consideration in this regard is the pleasure of the masses with the person concerned as their caliph, their consensus on him and their respect and honor towards him. If he enjoys the confidence of the masses and establishes the Hudud, defends the Millat (nation) and implements the commandment of Islam, he is the Khalifah in whatever way he might have become Khalifa.

According to Shah Walīullah *Khalifah-i-'Amma* and the *Sultan* (king) were interchangeable terms. He agreed with the Ahadith relating to the prohibition of rebellion mentioned in the works of hadith, such as Sahih of Muslim, but stressed the following three conditions under which rebellion was permissible.

1. Should the caliph refuse to obey the rules of the faith and turn apostate, rebellion against him is the best form of jihad.
2. Should the caliph killing his people, plunder their property and rape their women, he and his followers then come under the category of robbers and as such it was imperative to defend the people and annihilate such tyranny.
3. The war against the caliph who clearly violated Islamic laws permissible in order to establish the law of Shari'ah.

Guidelines for Khalifa

1. Should not involve himself in problems, purely for worldly motives, nor should he destroy his followers through war in order to collect riches.
2. Should consider the overall prosperity or the majority of his supporters.
3. Should not expect from a person more than his natural ability could fulfill.
4. Should use persuasion and threats to prepare them to fight the enemy.

Khilafah should be:

1. Brave in the face of opposition from his rivals and forcefully assert his prestige among his subjects.
2. Affable (halim) and wise.
3. Highly developed senses of sight and hearing and should be well known and of such distinction as to arouse universal respect.

Walīullah took keen interest in the politics of his day when the Mughal Empire was passing through a period of decay. He decided to bring changes in the socio-political set up with a conviction that Allah had made him the spokesman (nātiq), the guide (hādi), the philosopher (hākim) and the 'pivot of his age' (qaiyyūm al-zamān). He took it as his duty to remove the abuses of his time.

Waliullah regarded the entire Muslim world as a single entity. His main concern was to restore Muslim dominance in the government of India and to achieve that he outlined a three-point program:

1. The Muslims must rely on the military force to overcome their political adversaries.
2. The Muslim society in India must be structured in accordance with the early Islamic ideals.
3. The Muslims of the subcontinent must explore the possibility of inviting Muslim intervention from outside, if necessary.

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This is how he invited Ahmad Shāh Abdali for helping Muslims against Marathas and the Jats. Invade India.

Revolution

Walliullah's socio-political thought is a very systematic and rational. He tried to present Islam as a complete code of life. His utmost effort was in reconciling religion and politics based on rationalism. He claimed that when the sociopolitical climate of the state goes incurably corrupt, it becomes necessary for every member of the state to bring about a revolution in order to remove the cancer of corruption.

Topic 189: Religion

The real mission of Shah Waliullah was:

- To purify Islamic ideals of all unhealthy influences.
- Providing a fresh intellectual ground to meet the challenge of the time.

Shah Waliullah explained some significant factors for the religious decline. According to Shah Waliullah, *truth* and *Deen* are the identical terms as both have the same origin. He observed that there has been a decline in the society of that time and it was his duty to bring a positive change in society because there was prevailing situation of following problems in the society:

- Corruption all over
- Sexual anarchy
- Needs perfect implementation of the Shari'ah.
- Jihad is the answer.
- Jihad is a sacred duty for every Muslim.

According to Shah Waliullah, the performance of *Jihad* at his time was inevitable for the betterment of the society and for the perfect implementation of the Shari'ah. By *Jihad* he generally meant revolution (*inqilab*) that is why he strongly recommended the retention of the spirit of *Jihad* for all times and according to him neglecting *Jihad* is equivalent to the loss of collective good.

According to Shah Waliullah, Muslims must make their worldly life and economy strong and prosperous. They must also have to make themselves militarily so strong that the enemy's sudden and unexpected attack be effectively repelled. He suggested that simultaneously Muslims must always be prepared for both defense and offence against aggression from enemies in order to sustain their survival and the Muslims must be infused with the spirit of jihad. Shah Waliullah suggested that Muslims must make preparations in advance against all evils either they are social, economic, moral or political. Waliullah encouraged people to launch a rigorous fight against the corrupt order and rotten society till the rule of justice is established. He also explained that the *Jihad* does not mean that all the non-Muslims are forced to be converted to Islam by sword.

Shah Waliullah was against Islamization by sword, instead he was a strong believer of removing doubts from the mind of non-Muslims and newly converted Muslims because he believed that such converts who became Muslim due to the fear of sword might return to infidelity. So, he

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suggested that the *Imam* (ruler) should convince the people through rational argument instead of converting them forcefully.

Shah Waliullah suggested that the office of the Qazi (Judge) should be given to those people who have never been charged with bribery; the Imam of the mosques should be paid high salaries; strict orders should be issued for the observance of prayers and the fasts of the month of Ramadan must be observed for the overall betterment and welfare of the state.

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