

Theoretical sociology through important authors

Marx, Durkheim, Weber, three names that rank above most of the sociologist writers and have contributed to the development of modern sociology. This paper will provide a comprehensive analysis of the sociological ideas of these authors; moreover, most of the dominant branches of modern social theory can be traced, although with numerous intermediate modifications and extensions, to these three authors. It is largely inspired by the work of Anthony Giddens on capitalism. Marx's Works obviously are the primary source of various forms of neo-Marxism in anthropology and sociology as well. Durkheim's writings may be identified as the dominant inspiration lying behind "structural functionalism"; and at least some of the modern variants of phenomenology derive directly or indirectly, from the writings of Max Weber.

1-Marx

1-1 Marx early writings:

Young Hegelianism of Marx

Marx thesis on Feuerbach: The essence of Christianity

Feuerbach made the first attempt to reverse idealistic premises of Hegel

1-1-1 The state and the democracy:

The Marx's critique of Hegel conception of the state was the first publication of the nascent conception of historical materialism. Marx criticized the Universalism of the state through Hegel conception. In the *Greek polis* the social, the private and the public sphere are inextricably fused. Each private sphere has a political character. The very notion of separation of civil society to the State is modern. The realisation of what Marx called true democracy can be achieved by effecting concrete changes in the relations between the State and society. For Marx, democracy proceeds from man and makes the state into man objectivised.

1-1-2 Revolutionary praxis:

Marx finds in the proletariat the 'universal character', which Hegel sought in the ideals, embodied in the rational state. Since the proletariat is the recipient of the concentrated irrationality of society, it follows that its emancipation is at the same time the emancipation of society as a whole.

Under the influence of Engels, Marx turned back to Political Economy (Economic and philosophical manuscripts)

These manuscripts are decisive because they will form the framework of the future Capital

In the Manuscripts Marx devoted several pages to the definition of alienation and the study of religion.

1-1-3 Alienation and the theory of political economy

The formation of exchange economy is an historical process, and capitalism is a historically specific system of production. According to Marx, economists attempt to reduce everything to the economic

dimension of society, and eschew whatever cannot be treated in these terms. Capitalism is founded upon an opposition between workers and capitalist class. Wages in one side and profits on the other are the source of conflict.

Marx's analysis of alienation in capitalist production starts from the fact that the more capitalism advances, the more impoverished the workers become. The enormous wealth which the capitalist mode of production makes possible is appropriated by the owners of land and capital.

The devaluation of the human world increases in direct relation with the increase in value of the world of things. The worker becomes a slave of the objects. The alienation of the worker in the capitalist economy is founded upon the disparity between the productive power of labour, which is increasing, and the lack of control which the worker is able to exert over the objects which he produces.

Sine all economic relationships are also social relationships, alienation of labour has profound social consequences. Alienated labour reduces human productive activity to the level of adaptation.

1-1-4 Early conception of communism

The organising principle of the future communist society is the abolition of private property, of human self-alienation. However, the actual attainments of communism will in reality a very severe and protracted process.

1-2 Historical materialism

Marx and Engels association produced the texts on *The Holy family* and *The German ideology*. It was the general and first statement of the tenets of historical materialism. Marx has developed the notion of alienation in German ideology and *Communist Manifesto*. At the same period he was able to draw a kernel of the theory of the state. He has borrowed to Hegel the idea of progressive self creation of man.

These elements provide the rudiments of historical materialism for the analysis of social development with a strong evolutionist point of view.

1-2-1 The materialist thesis:

Ideas are not founded in immanent categories given in the human mind independently of experience. Human consciousness is conditioned in dialectical interplay between subject and object. Labour is the creative interface between man and his environment; thus consequently that is the foundation of society.

Marx typology of societies is based upon tracing the progressive differentiation of the division of labour. As he stated in the manuscripts, the expansion of the division of labour with private property increases alienation.

1-2-2 Pre-class systems

Every society supposes some division of labour but in tribal or simple societies this division is minimum: sexual division per example. A progressive more complication division of labour goes on with the capacity to produce a surplus over and above, which is strictly necessary. Man is primitively a communal being; individualisation is an historical process.

While in the earliest writings, a single line of development is conceived, with mostly western references from antique to tribal societies (Greece, Rome), Marx later distinguishes more than one line of development out of tribalism. This includes particularly oriental societies from India and china, but Marx also distinguished specific type of tribal society, the Germanic, which in conjunction with the disintegrated Roman Empire formed the nexus of European feudalism. Marx views on the nature of the Asiatic mode of production are original. According to Marx, oriental society is highly resistant to change; the tendency of stagnation is not due only to the rigid despotic control of the centralised agency of government but also because of the internally self-sufficient village communities. Irrigation has played a key role in the formation of this kind of societies (see K Wittfogel).

Population in oriental society tends to produce new communities on the pattern of the older ones. Ancient society, a city-based civilisation, is the first definite form of class society.

1-2-3 The ancient world

Ancient societies result from the union of several tribes into a city (same view in Aristotle)
The private landowner is at the same time an urban citizen. Population growth provides pressure for territorial expansion; and this the main source of change in Roman society.

The pressure deriving from shortage of land is so strong because there is no motivation to increase productivity from existing resources. Comparison to Weber for antique economies

1-2-4 Feudalism and the origins of capitalist development

Marx apparently did not regard ancient society as a necessary stage in the development of feudalism, but it was the disintegration of the Roman Empire, which has formed the basis of western feudalism. By the ninth century serfdom has replaced slavery and serfdom, Marx told that throughout the feudal period a substructure of the old Germanic form of social organisation remained, evinced concretely in the survival of communal property at the local level

But Marx concentrated on the transition from feudalism to capitalism

The disintegration of feudalism is linked to the development of towns. Marx emphasises the municipal movement in the 12th century, as a revolutionary movement, and as a result of which the urban communities have secured a certain degree of autonomy.

In the 14th century, he finds the beginnings of capitalism with bank development in Italy and in the 15th century in England. It is in the late 15th that we find the first proletariat. Before, there was no possibility of capitalism development while the labouring majority consists of independent peasantry. The process of initial formation of capitalism is primitive accumulation, which consists of expropriation of the peasant from his means of production.

1-3 The relations of production and class structure

According to Marx, the development of society is the result of the continual productive interaction between men and nature.

Every kind of production system entails a definite set of social relationships existing between individuals involved in the productive process. Marx considers that Adam Smith has correctly identified labour as the source of man's own self-creation. But what the economists have obscured is that this self-creation entails a process of social development. Human beings never produce individually, but as members of a definitive form of society.

1-3-1 Class domination

Classes emerge where the relations of production involve a differentiated division of labour which allows for the accumulation of surplus production that can be appropriated by a minority group, which thus stand in an exploitative relationship to the mass of producers.

Marx uses the concept of class in various assumptions. Class must not be identified with either source of income or functional position in the division of labour. Classes are the fundamental aspect provided by the relations of production. This yields a model of class relations, which is basically dichotomous and antagonistic.

1-3-2 Class structure and markets relationships

It is important to notice that the dichotomous class conception appears in Marx 's writings as a theoretical construct. Only bourgeois society approximates closely his model. All historical class

societies show a more complicated system of relationships, which overlaps with the dichotomous axis of class structure.

Even in the lumpen proletariat there are heterogeneous clusters of individuals. The degree a class constitutes a homogeneous entity is historically variable.

According to Marx, the ordering of class and the nature of class conflict changes considerably with the emergence of successive forms of society.

In pre-capitalist societies, economic relationships do not manifest themselves as purely market relationships; economic domination or subordination is fused with personal ties between individuals. Thus the domination of feudal landlords operates through personal connection of bondage's and payment of tithes. But the serf conserves a large measure of control over his means of production in spite of the fact he has to cede a part of his production as a tribute to the landlord. It is only with the advent of capitalism that naked market relationships appear. In bourgeoisie society, class relation become universalised: capitalist and proletariat; The other classes: landowners, petty bourgeoisie, peasantry are transitional classes.

1-3-3 Ideology and consciousness:

The dissipation of the community, and the expansion of private property, which brings this about, underlies the origin of civil law. The codification of such a body occurs for the first time in Rome, but has no lasting consequences because of the internal disintegration of manufacture and commerce in Roman society. With the emergence of capitalism, a new phase in the formation of laws occurs: Roman law was taken over in the early centres of capitalism in Italy. The civil law which took place was based upon rationalised norms rather the religious prescriptions which are predominant in traditional communities. The modern legal system and judiciary is a principal ideological support of the bourgeois state.

According to Marx, consciousness is rooted in human Praxis, which is in turn social. This the sense of the statement that: ' It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but their social being that determine their consciousness. Language is as old as consciousness and is practical consciousness. But language is a social product, and it is only in virtue of his membership of society that the individual acquires the linguistic categories, which constitute the parameters of his consciousness. The examination of ideology must be studied in relation to the social relationships in which it is embedded. While ideologies obviously show continuity over time, neither this continuity, nor any changes that occur, can be explained purely in terms of their internal content. Ideas do not evolve on their own account; they do so as elements of the consciousness of men living in society, following a definitive Praxis.

1-4 The theory of capitalist of development:

1-4-1 The theory of surplus value

Capitalism is a system of commodity production. Every commodity has a two-fold value: its use-value and its exchange-value.

Any object, whether it is a commodity or not, can only have value insofar as human labour power has been expended to produce it (theory that Marx takes over from Adam Smith and Ricardo).

Use values and exchange values have to be related to the amount of labour embodied in the production of the commodity. Marx claims that exchange value cannot derive from use-value. Abstract labour is the basis of exchange value. It's an historical category.

The concept is not applied to any individual particular worker, but represents the socially necessary labour time. Product exchange at their values that is, according to the amount of socially necessary labour time embodied in them. The conditions of modern industrial production has allowed the worker to produce more in average working day than it is necessary to cover the cost of his own subsistence. The capitalist will appropriate this surplus. Marx calls the ratio between necessary and surplus labour the rate of exploitation.

Profit is the visible face of surplus value. In the third volume of the Capital, Marx produces a simplified theory of surplus value. The rate of surplus value and the rate of profit are defined as related to variable capital and constant capital.

Before the advent of capitalism, commodities do tend to sell at their values, but the competitive structures of capitalism breaks this down. Average profit develops historically with capitalism. There are two conditions which facilitate this process: fluidity of capital and labour mobility. This requires the extinction of monopolistic feudal relations and complete freedom of trade. It was stimulated by the development of the credit system.

Capitalist production has economic contradictions. In Marx view's, the search for profit is intrinsic to capitalism, but at the same time there is rooted in the capitalist economy a structural tendency for the rate of profit to decline. Of course, this does necessarily entail a decline in the absolute total profit of economy. It may increase even the rate of return will fall. The surplus appropriation, the changes in productivity and the pressure on wages to maintain levels of profit are the basic contradictions.

1-4-2 The pauperisation thesis

According to Marx, the capitalist development is characterised by increasing relative disparity between the earnings of the working class and the income of the capitalist class. Marx speaks of the increasing exploitation of the working class, and it is clear that the rate of exploitation can increase without necessarily entailing any changes in the real wages of the majority of the working class. It is the increase in the relative mass of the industrial reserve army, which produces an extension of pauperism. Marx calls this the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation, noting that like all other laws it was modified in its working by many circumstances.

1-4-3 Concentration and centralisation

The rising organic composition of capital, which takes place as capitalism proceeds, is intimately connected with a trend towards the centralisation and concentration of capital. Concentration refers to the process whereby as capital accumulates, individual capitalists succeed in expanding the amount of capital under their control. Centralisation, on the other hand, refers to the merging of existing capital a change in its distribution. The effect of both is to lead to larger and larger productive units. Centralisation is furthering promoted by the credit system and banking. The banking system centralises the money-capital of the lenders and also makes for centralisation of the borrowers. This whole process is finally transformed into an enormous social mechanism for the centralisation of capital.

Capital shows in detail that capitalism is an inherently unstable system.

2- Durkheim

2-1 Durkheim early works

To move from Marx to Durkheim is not only to move from an earlier to a later generation of social thinkers; it is also to effect a major change in institutional context and intellectual tradition. Of the three writers chosen for these lectures, he was as an academic the least involved in public and political debate. Consequently his works are far less scattered and propagandist.

The decline of feudalism and the emergence of the modern forms of society constitute the foundation for the whole Durkheim's writings.

Indeed, it could be said that the main theme in Durkheim's life work is concerned with the reconciliation of Comte's conception of the positive stage of society with Saint-Simon's partly variant exposition of the characteristics of industrialism. Other influences from an earlier generation are those of Montesquieu and Rousseau. Fustel de Coulanges as his teacher has a profound influence on Durkheim.

Durkheim's early writings, however, were concerned with the ideas of German and English authors whose have developed the theory of organicism: Schäffle, Lilienfeld. The notion that society forms an

integrated unity which is in some sense comparable to that of a living organism is, of course, one which can be traced back to classical social philosophy. But the publication of Darwin's theory of evolution gave a new stimulus to organicism and social scientists as Durkheim have been deeply influenced by biology advances.

2-1-1 Sociology and the science of moral life

Durkheim's discussion of Schäffle's book: *Bau und Leben des Socialen Körpers* was his first work, but it gives us the trend of Durkheim early thought. Schäffle important contribution is, according to Durkheim is to have outlined a useful morphological analysis of the principal structural components of different forms of society, using organic analogies, comparing various parts of society to organs and tissues of the body. This is not, in Durkheim's view, an illegitimate procedure, because Schäffle does not attempt in a direct sense to deduce the properties of social organisation from those of organic life. On the contrary he insists that the use of biological concepts represent nothing more than a metaphor which can facilitate sociological analysis. However, whereas the life of animal organisation is governed mechanically, society is bound together not by a material relation; but by the ties of ideas. The notion of society as the ideal occupies a focal place in Schäffle' thought, and is entirely consistent with the Durkheimian emphasis that society has its own specific properties which are separable from those of its individual members.

The ideals and sentiments, which constitute the cultural inheritance of the members of a society, are impersonal, that is, they are socially evolved, and are neither the product nor the property of any specific individuals. This is *conscience collective*, which is simply a composite, the elements of which are individual minds.

Durkheim asserts, only two broad forms of ethical theory are known: Kantian idealism on the one hand, and utilitarianism on the other. According to Durkheim, German social thinkers have started to put ethics on a scientific footing as Comte attempts. The work of two authors, Wagner and Schmoller were among the founders of the *Verein für Sozial Politik*. Their theory differs from utilitarian individualistic orthodox and ahistorical economy. Parts of society are organised in a definite fashion, then this organisation of relationships has properties of its own. This principle has to be applied also to the moral rules which men live by in society. : morality is a collective property and must be studied as such. Schmoller, has shown that economic phenomena cannot be adequately studied in the manner of classical economic theory, as if these were separate from the moral norms and beliefs which govern the life of individuals in society. There is no society where economic relationships are not subject to customary and legal regulation. That is to say, as Durkheim was later to express the matter in "*La division du Travail* ", a contract is not sufficient unto itself. If it were not for the existence of social norms, which provide the framework within which contracts are made, then incoherent chaos would reign in the economic world. The regulations, which control economic life, cannot be explained purely in economic terms

Rules and actions can and must be studied scientifically, as properties of social organisation. Analysing the Ethics of Wundt, Durkheim has singled out the basic significance of religious institutions in society. Religion is a force making for social unity.

2-1-2 Durkheim's concerns in the division of labour

The important point at this stage as above mentioned, is to point that Durkheim was conscious, at the onset of his career, of notions, which were supposed to have appeared later. Of course, these were only stated in a rudimentary way. These notions include a consciousness of the following elements: the importance of ideals and moral unity in the continuity of society; the significance of the individual as an active agent as well as a recipient of social influences; the dual nature of the attachment of the individual to society; the conception that an organisation of units (i.e., individuals as the units of organised societies) has properties which cannot be directly inferred from the characteristics of the component units considered in isolation from one another; the essential foundations of what was to become the theory of anomie; and the rudiments of the later theory of religion.

It is important to bear in mind when evaluating the content of the " Division of labour" which is highly polemical. One main attack is against the utilitarian individualism of the political economists and

English philosophers. The other main stream is the attack of Schäffle work, which strongly defines moral consensus to the perpetuation of the social order. Durkheim accepts this as appropriate to traditional types of society. But the main proposition developed in the work of Durkheim is that modern complex society is not, in spite of the declining moral significance of traditional moral beliefs, inevitably tending towards disintegration. Instead, the normal state of the differentiated division of labour is one of organic stability. This does not mean, however, that the integration effect of the specialised division of labour can be satisfactorily interpreted in the mode of utilitarianism, as the result of multifarious individual contracts. On the contrary, the existence of contract presupposes norms, which are not themselves the outcome of contractual ties, but constitute more general commitments without which the contract cannot operate.

On the one hand, the development of the modern form of society is associated with the expansion of individualism. This a phenomenon clearly associated with the growth of division of labour, which produces specialisation of occupational functions, and therefore the development of specific talents and attitudes, which are not shared by everyone, but are possessed only by particular groups. On the other hand, there are other contradictory moral trends, which are strong and praise the universally developed individual, which command us to follow the same ideal;

This contradiction can be understood through a historical and sociological analysis of the causes and effects of the expansion of the division of labour.

The division of labour, Durkheim says, is not wholly a modern phenomenon; but in the more traditional sorts of society, it is rudimentary, and usually confined to a sexual division. In modern societies, the phenomenon is obvious.

The increase in social differentiation which is characteristic of the process of development from traditional to modern forms of society can be compared to certain biological principles: from cells to tissues and organisms. This is paralleled in Durkheim's analysis of the development of the division of labour and its relationship to moral order. There is a trend of change in social solidarity through the epochs. Since social solidarity is not measurable, we can index it through an external index such as legal codes, precepts and moral rules even codified in laws.

A legal precept can be defined as a rule of conduct, which is sanctioned; and sanctions can be divided into two major types. Repressive sanctions are characteristic of penal law, and consist in the imposition of some kind of suffering upon the individual as a punishment for his transgression. Such sanctions include the deprivation of liberty, the loss of honour, ... Restitutive sanctions, involve restoration, the re-establishment of relationships as they were before the law was violated.

Thus if one man claims damage from another, the object of legal process is to recompense the claimant, if his claim is upheld, for some sort of loss which he has incurred as an individual. This is typical of most areas of civil, commercial and constitutional law. Penal law, on the contrary, sets forth only sanctions, but says nothing of the obligations to which they correspond. The reason why the nature of moral obligation is not specified in repressive law, Durkheim says, is evident: everyone knows of it and accepts it.

The predominance of penal law within the juridical system of a given society thus necessarily presupposes the existence of a strongly defined *conscience collective*.

The primary function of punishment, therefore, is to protect and reaffirm the *conscience collective* in the face of acts, which question its sanctity. In the simpler societies, there is unitary religious system, which is the prime embodiment of the common beliefs and sentiments of the *conscience collective*. Societies, in which the principal bonds of cohesion are based upon mechanical solidarity, have an aggregate or segmental structure: that is, they consist of juxtaposed political-familial groups or clans who are very similar each other in their internal organisation. The tribe as a whole forms a society because it is a cultural unity: all the segments of the tribe adhere to common beliefs and sentiments. It follows that there is little scope for differentiation between individuals; each individual is a microcosm of the whole society where he is embedded.

2-1-3 The growth of organic solidarity

The progressive displacement of repressive by restitutive law in an historical process which is correlated with the degree of development of a society: the higher the level of social development, the greater the relative proportion of restitutive within the juridical structure. The form of social solidarity

indexed by restitutive law presupposes the prevalence of a differentiated division of labour, since it covers the rights of individuals either over private property, or other individuals who are in a different social position from them. This type of solidarity is called by Durkheim: “organic Solidarity”.

Here solidarity stems not simply from acceptance of common beliefs but from functional interdependence in the division of labour. The progression of organic solidarity is dependent upon the declining significance of *conscience collective*; hence individualism increases in modern societies. A society in which each individual solely pursues his own interest would disintegrate shortly. There is nothing less constant than interest. To day, it unites me to you; tomorrow it will make you my enemy. Durkheim, admits, that contractual relations generally multiply with the growth of division of labour. And this expansion presupposes the development of norms, which govern contracts. However complex the division of labour, society does not become reduced to chaos of short term contractual alliances. It is mistaken to oppose a society which derives from a community of beliefs to one based on co-operation, according a moral character only to the first and seeing nothing more an economic arrangement in the second. In reality, co-operation has its own intrinsic morality. Division of labour increases as there are more individuals from different groups able to interact.

Durkheim calls the frequency of such contact “dynamic density “

In fine, the division of labour within a society varies in direct ratio with the volume and density of a society, and if it progresses in a continuous manner in the course of social development, it is because societies become regularly denser and greater in volume.

However, from a sociological perspective, physical density becomes important only in so far as it becomes transformed into moral or dynamic density, and it is the frequency of interaction which is the explanatory factor.

2-1-4 Individualism and anomie

The division of labour inevitably produces a decline in the persuasiveness of the *conscience collective* in society. The growth of individualism is an inevitable concomitant of the expansion of division of labour, and individualism can only progress at the expense of the strength of common beliefs and sentiments. Thus the *conscience collective* comes increasingly to be made up of highly generalised and indeterminate modes of thought and sentiment, which leave room open for an increasing multitude of individual differences. However modern societies do not collapse into disorder, as would follow from the standpoint of those who assume that a strongly defined consensus is requisite to social cohesion. In fact, in these societies, this form of mechanical cohesion is replaced by organic solidarity as a consequence of the division of labour.

The cult of the individual is the moral counterpart to the growth of the division of labour.

At this point, Durkheim demonstration runs into a difficulty: if the growth of the division of labour is not inevitably associated with disruption in social cohesion, what explains the conflicts, which are such an evident feature in modern societies. Durkheim recognises that the emergent class conflict in Marx sense has accompanied the expansion of the division of labour ensuing from industrialisation. It is according to Durkheim, false to declare that the conflicts are generated by the division of labour, but is consequent upon the fact that the division of economic functions has temporarily outstripped the development of appropriate moral regulation.

The division of labour does not everywhere produce cohesion because it is in an anomic state.

In stead of the requisite moral regulation, the formation of contractual relations tends to be determined by the imposition of coercive power. Durkheim calls this *la division du travail contrainte*.

2-2 Durkheim’s conception of sociological method

The notions developed in *the division of labour* constitute the foundations of Durkheim’s sociology, and the bulk of Durkheim’s subsequent writings represent elaboration of the themes originally set out in that work. This is obvious in *the rules of the sociological method* and *Suicide*.

In the Rules Durkheim explicates the methodological suppositions already applied in *The Division of Labour*.

2-2-1 The problem of suicide

Durkheim's interest in suicide, and acquaintance with the large extant literature on the subject, was established some while prior to 1897. In 1888 he already writes: "it is quite certain that a consistent increase in suicides always attests to a serious upheaval in the organic conditions of the society. The attempts to document the nature of this moral *lacuna* in modern societies are the most basic of Durkheim's concerns in *The Suicide*. But to this must be added a methodological objective: the application of sociological method to the explanation of what might *prima facie* appear to be a wholly individual phenomenon. A basic standpoint set out by Durkheim is that a strict analytical separation must be drawn between the explanation of the distribution of suicide rates, and the aetiology of individual cases. In the 19th European societies, the rate had a stable distribution from year to year with specific periodic fluctuations. The patterns of suicide as previous authors to Durkheim have assumed, must depend upon distributed phenomena of geographical, biological or social kinds. Durkheim rejected both first two as explanations. It is therefore to the third factor that we must look to explain the pattern of suicide rates.

The distribution of suicides in the countries of western Europe shows a close relationship between suicide rates and religious denomination: predominantly catholic countries everywhere have lower suicide rates than those which are mainly Protestant. This difference cannot be explained by the tolerance devoted to suicide in the Credo of each religion; both prohibit suicide with equal stringency. Its explanation must be sought in differences rooted more generically in the social organisation of the two churches. The most obvious dissimilarity between the two, according to Durkheim, is that Protestantism is founded upon a promotion of a spirit of free inquiry. The Catholic Church is formed around the traditional hierarchy of the priesthood, whose authority is binding in matters of religious dogma. Protestantism is a less strongly integrated church than Catholicism.

Durkheim finds that the degree of integration in other sectors of society is related to suicide rates in a comparable way. Unmarried persons generally show higher rates of suicide than married persons of comparable ages do, and there is an inverse relation between suicide and size of the conjugal unit. This parallels the case of the relationship between suicide and religious denomination, supplying in this instance a measure of the relationship between suicide and degree of integration in family structure.

A similar relationship between suicide rates and level of social integration can be demonstrated in another institutional context. Suicide declines in times of national political crisis and in times of war even in the civil society because crisis is stimulating an increased level of involvement within a definite set of events, bring about a stronger integration of society. A first type of suicide may be called egoistic when suicide varies in inverse ratio to the degree of integration of social groups of which the individual forms a part. It is the resultant of a state where the individual self asserts itself to excess in the face of the social self and at its expense. A second type of suicide springs from the phenomenon, which Durkheim discusses in *the division of Labour*: the anomic state of moral deregulation characterising economic relations. This is indexed by the correlation, which can be demonstrated between suicide rates and the occupational structure. Suicide rates, Durkheim points out, are higher in occupations in industry and commerce than in agricultural occupations. Moreover, within non-agricultural occupations, suicide rates are inversely related to socio-economic level, being lowest among the chronically poor, and the highest in the liberal professions. Poverty is in itself a source of moral restraint. The relationship between anomie and suicide can be demonstrated as an outcome of the anomic state of industry. In times of economic depression, suicides show a marked increase. This is not explicable only in terms of economic deprivation; suicide increases to equivalent degrees in times of marked economic prosperity.

What both upward and downward fluctuations in the economic cycle share in common is that each has a disruptive effect upon accustomed modes of life. An anomic condition of moral deregulation results. Anomie is thus, like egoism, a constant and specific factor in suicide in modern societies.

Suicide in traditional societies takes a different form to the egoistic and anomic types. Some have the character of obligatory altruistic suicide or associated with the furtherance of definite codes of honour and prestige. Both kinds of altruistic societies rest upon the existence of a strong *conscience collective*,

which so dominates the actions of the individual that he will sacrifice his life in furtherance of a collective value.

2-2-2 Externality and constraint:

The ideas developed in the *Suicide* constitute a particularly forceful testimony of the fruitfulness of Durkheim's conception of sociological method. In *The Suicide* he expresses that at any given moment the moral constitution of the society establishes the contingent of voluntary deaths. There is therefore, for each people a collective force of a definitive amount of energy, impelling men to self-destruction. The victim's acts, which at first seem to express only his personal temperament, are really the supplement and prolongation of a social condition, which they express externally.

Durkheim's attempt to define the specificity of the social is based upon use of criteria of exteriority and constraint. Social facts are external to the individual, but are constituted by multiple interactions among individuals. Durkheim uses the individual concept in more than one sense. At times the context makes it apparent that he is speaking of the hypothetical isolated individual, the asocial being which forms the starting-point of the utilitarian theory; at other times the word refers to a particular person. But the distinctions are not important. What is fundamental is the main thesis of Durkheim that is no theory or analysis related to the individual and starting from him, which can successfully grasp the specific properties of a particular social phenomenon.

The criterion of exteriority is not an empirical one. Society doesn't exist externally to all individuals, society is composed of individuals, but by the combination of their relations, produce new phenomena, which reside not in the original elements but in the totality and structure formed by their union. These are social facts that can be considered as things.

The second criterion, which Durkheim applies in specifying the nature of social facts, is an empirical one: the presence of moral constraint and obligation.

2-2-3 The logic of explanatory generalisation:

Consider social facts as things. This is obviously a methodological postulate rather an ontological one, and has to be understood in terms of the conception of the mode of development of science, which Durkheim takes over from Comte. Durkheim assimilates social facts to the world of natural reality only in that, like objects in nature, their properties cannot be immediately known by direct intuition, and they are not plastic to the individual human will. Indeed, the most important characteristic of a thing is the impossibility of its modification by a simple effort of the will.

The maintenance of the principle of treating social facts as things, demand rigorous detachment on the part of the investigator of social reality.

Durkheim's observations upon the logic of explanation and proof in sociology are closely tied-in to his analysis of the principal characteristics of social facts. The functional analysis of a social phenomenon involves establishing the correspondence between the fact under consideration and the general needs of the social organism. Function must be separated from psychological purpose, because social facts do not generally exist for the useful results they produce.

But the identification of social function does not provide an explanation as to why the social phenomenon in question exists. The need we have of things cannot give them existence, nor can it confer their specific nature upon them. But the separate character of cause and function does not prevent the existence of a reciprocal relation between the two.

2-2-4 Normality and pathology:

A substantial section of *The Rules* is devoted to an attempt to establish scientific criteria of social pathology. Where a social phenomenon is to be found within the majority of societies of the same societal type, then it can be treated as normal for that type of society. But a social fact which is general to a given type of society is normal when the generality is shown to be found in the conditions of functioning of the type of society which has an advanced division of labour.

Most of the social scientists, Durkheim points out, hold the view that there is an absolute logical gulf between scientific statements of facts and statements of value. In this conception, scientific data can serve as a technical means, which can be applied in order to facilitate the attainment of objectives, but these objectives cannot be validated through the use of scientific procedures. Durkheim rejects this Kantian dualism on the basis of denying that the division between means and ends, which it presupposes, can in fact be substantiated. For Durkheim, the dichotomization of means and ends involves similar errors in the sphere of general philosophy to those embodied in a more concrete way of the utilitarian model of society: namely that both the means and the ends which men follows are an outcome of the form of society of which they are members.

The dichotomy between means and ends, Durkheim says, can be bridged by application of similar principles to those govern normality and pathology. Durkheim admits that the identification of pathology in sociology poses peculiarly difficult problems. He therefore seeks to apply the previous methodological principle: what is normal in the social realm can be identified by the external and perceptible characteristics of universality. Normality, in other words, can be determined, with the reference to the prevalence of a social fact within societies of a given type.

This can be illustrated by reference to the main thesis of *the Division of Labour*. Durkheim shows in that work that the existence of a strongly defined *conscience collective* is incompatible with the functioning of the type of society which has an advanced division of labour. The increasing preponderance of organic solidarity leads to a decline in the traditional forms of belief: but precisely because social solidarity becomes more dependent upon functional interdependence in the division of labour, the decline in collective beliefs in modern societies is a normal trend. But modern societies are still in transition: traditional beliefs might remain important in some sphere of societies or decline and it is not a pathological phenomenon. Thus in times of rapid social change, elements of what is normal for the type which is becoming superseded still exist.

2-3 Individualism, socialism and the occupational groups

2-3-1 The confrontation with socialism:

The theory developed in *the division of labour*, inevitably culminated in bringing about a direct confrontation with socialist doctrines. The sort of socialism with which Durkheim was acquainted at that time was the reformist social democratic theory set out by Schäffle.

In both *The Division of labour* and *Suicide*, and other writings, Durkheim makes reference to the crisis which is being experienced in contemporary societies. Socialism ideas are an expression, Durkheim supposes, of the *malaise* of contemporary society, but it is not itself an adequate basis for the social reconstruction necessary to overcome it. Whereas communist ideas, in Durkheim assumption, have existed at many historical periods, socialism is uniquely a product of the very recent past.

Communist writings typically take the form of fictional utopias: diverse examples have to be found in the works of Plato, Thomas More. The main notion supporting these utopian constructions is that private property is the ultimate source of all social evils. In communist theory, economic life is separated from the political sphere: like in Plato's ideal community, those who rule have no right to intervene in the productive activity of the labourers and artisans, nor do the latter groups have any right to influence the conduct of government. Historically, communism has merged in societies where the labour division has a very low development.

Socialism, is a type of theory which could only have arisen in societies where the division of labour is highly developed and a response to the pathological condition of the division of labour in modern societies. It calls for the introduction of economic regulation, which will reorganise productive forces. In socialist theory, Durkheim stresses, there is no clear consideration concerning the state involvement in the transformation, in particular if the economy should be subordinate to the state. Moreover, it seemed to be obvious in Marx thesis that the state and the economy have to be merged with one another, and this integration eliminates the specifically political character of the state. The prime concern of socialism is to realise centralised regulation of production, which is able to overcome the exploitative character of capitalist against working class by abolition of classes.

2-3-2 The role of the state:

While Durkheim explicitly rejects the necessity of reorganising contemporary society on the basis of class revolution, he does foresee a definite trend towards the disappearance of class divisions. The maintenance of rights of inheritance is a basic factor supporting a class division between the two main classes in society, labour and capital: the hereditary transmission of wealth allows the continuation of the concentration of capital in the hands of a few. Durkheim concedes that regulation of the economy should be able to alleviate the effects of concentration. But economic reorganisation alone will exacerbate rather than resolve the crisis facing the modern world, since this a crisis which is moral rather than economic. The increasing dominance of economic relationships, consequent upon the destruction of the traditional religious institutions that were the moral background of previous societal forms, is precisely the main source of anomie in contemporary society. In failing to understand this, socialism provides no more adequate solutions to the modern crisis than those offered by orthodox political economy. While being opposed on most issues, both the socialist and the economic theorists share the same characteristics: both take economic measures to be the avenue whereby modern society may overcome its present difficulties. Both believe it possible and desirable to reduce the role of government to a minimum; The economists propose that the free play of the market should be given full scope, so that government is limited to the enforcement of contracts; socialists wish to confine government to the ordering of the market through the centralised control of production. But both deny it the capacity to subordinate other social organs to it and to make them converge upon an objective that surpasses them.

In Durkheim's conception the state must play a moral as well as an economic role; and the alleviation of the *malaise* of the modern world must be sought in measures which are general moral rather than economic. The dominant position of the authority of religion in former types of society provided all strata with a horizon for their aspirations, counselling the poor to accept their lot and instructing the rich in their duty to care for the less privileged. While this order was repressive, containing human actions and potentialities within narrow bounds, it's nevertheless gave a firm moral unity to society.

The characteristic problem facing the modern age is to reconcile the individual freedoms, which have sprung from the dissolution of traditional society with the maintenance of the moral control upon which the very existence of society depends.

Durkheim's analysis of the state and the nature of political participation in a democratic polity are at the core of his conception of the trend of development of contemporary societies. The notion of the political presupposes a division between government and the governed. But the existence of authority as such cannot be taken as the only criterion for indicating the presence of political organisation. A kinship group, a council of elders, while it might have a definite individual or group in authority, is not thereby a political society. Durkheim also rejects the Weber idea that permanent occupation of a fixed territory is a necessary characteristic for the existence of a state. The development of fixed and clearly demarcated territories is a late occurrence in history. This would be to deny any political character to the great nomad societies whose structure was often very elaborate.

The political society (the same idea is developed in Aristotle's *Politic*) is not a single kinship unit, but is composed of an aggregate of families, or lesser number of secondary social groups, subject to the same one authority which is not itself subject to any other superior authority duly constituted. The term state, Durkheim suggests, should not be made coterminous with political society as a whole, but should be reserved to designate the organisation of officials, which is the instrument whereby governmental authority is focussed.

The three components of Durkheim's analysis are thus the existence of constituted authority, exercised within a society, which has at least some degree of structural differentiation, and applied, by a distinct group of officials.

Durkheim attempts to separate his standpoint from the mainstreams of thought which he sees as offering contrasting theories of state and society: Hegelian idealism and utilitarianism or socialism. The state is neither superior to the society nor merely a parasite upon society if it regulates anything more than purely economic relationships. The state does and must fulfil moral obligations and functions, but it does not entail the subordination of the individual to the state as Hegel supposes.

2-3-3 Democracy and the occupational groups

The main trend of development, as societies become more complex, is towards the progressive emancipation of the individual from subordination to *the conscience collective*. Associated with this process, is the emergence of moral ideals, which stress the rights, and dignity of the individual human being. This would at first sight appear to create an impossible opposition to the expansion of the activities of the state. It is plainly true, Durkheim says, that the state tends to grow in importance with the growth of the division of labour and moral individualism: the growth of the state is a normal characteristic of societal development.

Given this analysis, may it not be the case that the increasing expansion of the activities of the state will eventually reach a point where it becomes a bureaucratic tyranny? This can occur if secondary groups, which intervene, between the individual and the state are not strongly developed: only if these are vigorous enough to form a counterbalance to the state can the rights of the individual can be protected. It is this assertion of the need of pluralism, which draw the connection between Durkheim's theory of the state and his conception of democracy and from thence with his call for the resurgence of occupational associations or corporations.

A society is more or less democratic, to the degree that there is a two-way process of communication between the state and others levels of society. *Durkheim calls the state the social ego while the conscience collective, as a whole is the social mind.* The state is thus often the origin of novel ideas, and leads society as much as being led by it. In those societies where the state does not assume this directive role, the result can be stagnation almost as great as that in societies held in the yoke of tradition. In modern societies, there are many avenues open for the display of critical spirit and changes of opinion in the mass are frequent; if the state simply reflects these, the result is constant uncertainty and vacillation in the political sphere, which leads to no concrete change and routine. On another hand, the same conditions which, given a strong state, can lead to a tyrannical despotism, can produce inconstant instability where the state is weak.

Durkheim reaches the conclusion that occupational associations should play a larger part in contemporary societies than is the case at present. It is not difficult to perceive the relationship between this and the analysis of the anomic division of labour.

Accordingly, it is necessary to re-establish occupational associations as legally constituted groups, which play a social role instead of expressing only various combinations of particular interests. These groups are not the copies of medieval guilds; while having a high degree of internal autonomy, they would be brought within the overall legal supervision of the state; they would have the authority to resolve conflicts both within their own membership and in other occupational groups; and they would be the focus for a variety of educational activities.

2-3-4 Religion and moral discipline

Even in his earliest writings Durkheim comments upon the importance of religion in society, recognising it to be the original source of all subsequently evolved moral, philosophical, scientific and juridical ideas. In the *Division of Labour* he outlines the thesis that any belief which forms part of the *conscience collective* in society tends to assume a religious character. But Durkheim's recognition of the probable significance of religion in relation to the influence of *conscience collective* is counterbalanced by an awareness of the fact that very profound changes have occurred with the emergence of the modern societal type.

The main body of theory is presented in the *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. This work concerns the functional role of religion and has to be understood genetically, in relation to the series of profound changes, which have rendered modern societies very different in form from prior types. In criticising Tonnies, Durkheim emphasises that there is not absolute break between mechanical and organic solidarity; the latter supposes the same level of regulation than the former, although this regulation cannot be of the traditional sort. *The Elementary Forms* leads to a clarification of the nature of this continuity between the traditional and modern forms of society.

2-3-5 The character of the sacred

The Elementary Forms is based upon close scrutiny of what Durkheim calls the simplest and primitive religion known to day: Australian totemism. In establishing a conceptualisation of religion, Durkheim follows Fustel de Coulanges's typification of the sacred and the profane. It is fallacious, Durkheim says, to suppose that the existence of supernatural divinities is necessary to the existence of religion: there are systems of belief and practice which we should quite properly call religious, but where gods are either absent or are only of minor importance. The distinctive characteristic of religious beliefs is that they presuppose a classification of all things known to men, real and ideal, into two classes. The character of religious thought cannot be grasped except in terms of dichotomy: the world is separated in two entirely distinct categories of objects and symbols: the sacred and the profane, which are absolute and the two categories are opposed each other.

A religion is never simply a set of beliefs: it always involves prescribed ritual practices and a definite institutional form. There is no religion, which does not have a church; the concept of church refers to the existence of a regularised ceremonial organisation pertaining to a definite group of worshippers; it does not imply that there is necessarily a specialised priesthood. Thus Durkheim pertains his famous definition of religion: as a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things; beliefs and practices which unite in a single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them. According to this definition, totemism is a form of religion. Thus isolating the factors underlying the origin of totemism allows the discovery of the causes leading to the rise of the religious sentiment in the humanity.

Looking after the complex relationship between totemism and clan organisation, Durkheim states that the totem is a symbol. It symbolises both the sacred energy and the identity of the clan group. The totemic principle is the clan itself, represented to the imagination in the form of vegetables or animals, which serves as totem. Society commands obligations and respect, the twin characteristics of the sacred. Whether it exists as a diffuse impersonal force or whether it is personalised, the sacred totem is conceived as a superior entity, which in fact symbolises the superiority of society on the individual. Durkheim doesn't argue that religion creates society but rather that religion is the expression of the *self-creation*, the autonomous development of human society.

2-3-6 Ceremonial and ritual:

The religious force takes the specific form of a totem because the totem is the emblem of the clan: the sentiments aroused by the presence of the collectivity fix themselves upon the totem as the most easily identifiable symbol of the group. This explains why the representation of the totem is more sacred than the totemic object itself. Since the religious force emanates from the collective assembly, at the same time as it appears to be outside of the individuals and to be endowed with a sort of transcendence over them. In a sense it is immanent in them and they necessarily represent it as such. Thence derives the third feature of totemism that the individual members of the collectivity share in the religiosity of the totem.

It remains to account for the second fundamental aspect of religion: the ritual practices, which are found in all religions. Two closely intertwined rituals exist. Sacred phenomena are by definition separated from the profane. One set of rites function to maintain this separation: these are negative rites or taboos, which are prohibitions which limit contacts between the sacred and the profane. Thus special sacred garments are put on for ceremonial occasions, and all the normal temporal occupations are suspended. Negative rites have one positive aspect: the individual who submits to them has sanctified himself and has thereby prepared himself for entry into the realm of the sacred. Positive rites proper are those which affect fuller communion with the religious, and which constitute the core of the religious ceremonial itself. The function of positive rites is to renew the commitment to religious ideals which otherwise would decline in the purely utilitarian world.

The positive rites entailed in religious ceremonial thus provide for the regular moral reconsolidating of the group, necessary because in the activities of day to day life in the profane world pursue their own

egoistic interests, and are consequently liable to become detached from the moral values upon which societal solidarity depends

2-3-7 The categories of knowledge

In totemism the divine principle is much more all-pervasive than in more complex societal forms. The totemic classification of nature provides the initial source of the logical categories or classes within which knowledge is ordered. The classification of objects reproduces the totemic clan divisions and merely the division and unity of the society.

The existence of logical classes and genres involves the formation of clear-cut dichotomies. However, nature itself manifests continuity in space and time. Thus the notions of logical class, and the hierarchical distribution of relationships between categories, derive from the division of society into clans and phratries. But the mode in which objects are put into one category rather than another is directly influenced by sensory discriminations. The axiomatic categories such the dimension of force, space and time derive from society and it is the elemental religious force which provides the original model from which the different concepts are built and later incorporated into philosophy and natural sciences (Aristotelian categories). The concept of time is not personalised; it involves an abstract category shared by all the members of the group. The notion of space similarly presupposes some original fixed point; there can be no north or south, or right or left. The territory occupied by this society provides this standard.

As a theory of knowledge, the thesis advanced in *The Elementary Forms* is primarily genetic in character: it is not, as it is sometimes taken to be, a theory which postulates the existence of an unvarying set of connections between social organisation and collective ideas. A basic aspect of Durkheim's general conception of the process of social development concerns the changing character of the content of the idea-system which are found in modern societies, and the increasingly diversified nature of the social processes which underlies them.

Of particular importance here is the relationship between modern rationalism and secularised morality. The importance of the *Elementary Forms*, in Durkheim's thought, is that it demonstrates conclusively that there can be no collective moral beliefs which do not possess a sacred character. Thus while both the content and the form of the moral order found in contemporary societies have changed radically, as compared to traditional societies, there is indeed no solution of continuity between the traditional and modern forms of solidarity.

The modern world becomes more and more penetrated by rationalism, which an aspect, Durkheim says, of moral individualism.

Rationalism, ethics, and the cult of the individual

Man has everywhere in religious thought, conceived himself to be two distinct beings, body and soul. The body is believed to reside in the material world, the soul in the discontinuing sphere of the sacred. A belief which is universal cannot be fortuitous, nor wholly illusory, and must rest upon some duality which is intrinsic to human life in society. Sensations are obviously egoistic, in that they relate to the individual appetite and have no implied reference to any other person. Conceptual thought and moral rules are, by contrast, impersonal in the sense that they are universalised; they pertain to no particular individual. The moral demands of life in society cannot be wholly compatible with egoistic inclinations. If sensory needs are the type by excellence of egoistic tendencies, there are varieties of egoistic desires which do not derive directly from sensory needs. Our very egoism is in a large part a product of society.

Durkheim clarifies this elsewhere through historical analysis. Christianity and Protestantism more specifically, is the immediate source from which modern moral individualism is derived. Christian ethics provided the moral principles upon which the cult of the individual is founded, but now Christianity is becoming supplanted by sacred symbols and objects of a new sort. This is clearly exemplified in the French Revolution, where freedom and reason were glorified, and where there was a high level of collective enthusiasm stimulated by public ceremonial. But the initial ardour of these times was ephemeral and the French Revolution gave the most impetus to the growth of moral individualism in modern times. The sentiment of the supreme worth of the human individual is thus a

product of the society, and it is this which decisively separates it from egoism. The cult of the individual is based, not upon egoism, but upon the extension of quite contrary sentiments of sympathy for human suffering and the desire of social justice.

The trends towards increasing individualism is irreversible, since it is the outcome of the profound societal changes. This is at the root of Durkheim's conception of freedom, and its relationship to the moral order. Freedom cannot be identified with liberation from all restraints: this anomie, a state in which individuals are not free because they are chained to their inexhaustible desires.

Consequently it is a basic error to believe that moral authority and freedom are mutually exclusive opposites; since man only obtains whatever freedom he enjoys through his membership of society, he must be subject to the moral authority which the existence of the society presupposes. For Durkheim, there is no paradox in this, because to be free is not to do what one pleases; it is to be master of oneself.

Discipline, in the sense of the inner control of impulse, is an essential component of all moral rules.

3 MAX WEBER

3-1 Max Weber's Protestantism and capitalism

While Max Weber was an almost exact contemporary of Durkheim, the intellectual climate in which each lived was very different. There are at least two sets of writings by German authors, which connect Durkheim and Weber directly: those of Schmoller and the members of the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* on the one hand, and those of Georg Simmel on the other. But while Simmel's thought was important in the shaping of Weber's views, Durkheim was highly critical of Simmel, and while the writings of Schmoller were a starting point of Durkheim early works, those aspects of their views which Durkheim found most sympathetic were exactly the ones which Weber rejected, and indeed fought against.

The apparent lack of any significant reciprocal influence between Durkheim and Weber has often occasioned surprise among several writers.

3-1-1 Early works

Weber's doctoral dissertation was dealing with the legal provisions governing medieval trading enterprise. In this thesis, Weber gives particular attention to the Italian mercantile cities such as Genoa and Pisa, showing that the commercial capitalism which developed there entailed the formulation of principles of law regulating the mode in which the distribution of risk and profit should be apportioned among the collaborators in a business enterprise. At that time Weber was also concerned with an issue which was later to play an important role in his later works: the impact of Roman law upon the development of the juridical system of medieval and post medieval Europe. His second work, which was dealing with this aspect under the aegis of Mommsen, was mostly concerned with Rome itself. This work provided a detailed analysis of the evolution of the land-tenure system, and connecting to this the analysis of the legal and political changes. In contrast to those who argued that the economic history of Roman agriculture has a particular framework and was unique in its properties, Weber has tried to show that it is amenable to treatment in terms of concepts derived from other economic contexts.

These texts indicate clearly the nascent line of Weber's intellectual development. They already manifest the main focus of his immense work: the nature of the capitalist enterprise and the specific characteristics of western European capitalism. As Marx did before him, Weber perceives in ancient Rome certain of the main elements which brooked large in the formation of modern capitalism. Like Marx, Weber considers that Ancient civilisation is distinct from the medieval form; but that in its driving expansionism, in the formation of large-scale commercial interests, and in the development of a money economy, Rome reached a level of economic development comparable to that early post-medieval Europe. Weber's early work on Roman history also shows an early awareness of the complicated nature of the relationship between economic structures and other aspects of social

organisation, and more especially, a conviction that all forms of crude economic determinism must be rejected.

In the analysis of German agrarian economy in the XIX century, Weber has demonstrated that the commercialisation of agriculture has not lead to any improvement in the living standards of the workers , but instead has tend to depress them. All the early works have continuity with the themes explored in *The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism*.

3-1-2 The origins of the capitalist spirit:

Some of the principal features of the ethos which occupies Weber's attention in *The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of the capitalism* are already in his study of agricultural labourers in Germany. The contrast between the conditions of life and the outlook of the bonded and the day labourers is largely one between acceptance of traditional patterns of deference and patronage on the one hand , and an attitude of economic individualism on the other. This latter attitude is , however, clearly not merely an outcome of the economic circumstances of the day-labourers, but represent a part of an ethic which in itself helping to break down the old traditional structure of the landed estates. Weber opens the book by posing a statistical statement for explaining the fact that in modern Europe business leaders and owners of capital, as well as the higher grades of skilled labour, and even more the higher technically and commercially trained personnel of modern enterprises, are overwhelmingly Protestant. This was an historical fact: tracing the association back, it can be shown that some of the early centres of capitalism development in the early part of sixteenth century were strongly Protestant. Weber considers that we must look to the specific character of Protestant beliefs if we are to account for the connection between Protestantism and capitalism. Protestantism, rather than relaxing the control of the church over day-to-day activities, demanded of its adherents a much more vigorous discipline than Catholicism, and thereby injected a religious factor into all spheres of the life of the believer. There is clearly a relationship between Protestantism and modern capitalism which cannot be wholly explained by seeing the former as a result of the latter; but the character of Protestant codes of behaviour and beliefs is quite different from which might be expected, *prima fasciae*, to stimulate economic activity. The spirit of modern capitalism is characterised by a unique combination of devotion to the earning of wealth through legitimate economic activity, together with the avoidance of the use of this income for personal enjoyment. This is rooted in a belief in the value of efficient performance in a chosen vocation as a duty and a virtue. In Modern capitalism, what has occurred is a rational reorganisation of production, directed maximising productive efficiency. Such a change cannot be explained by a sudden influx of capital but rather by the introduction of a new spirit of entrepreneurial behaviour: the capitalist spirit the dominant characteristic of which is rationalisation. According to Weber, this spirit is made of rigorous calculation, directed towards economic success which is sought in sharp contrast to the hand-to-mouth existence of the peasant, and the privileged traditionalism of the guild craftsman and of the adventures' capitalism, oriented to the exploitation of political opportunities and irrational speculation.

But the spirit cannot be simply inferred from the growth of rationalism as an historical process of unilinear development of rationalism: in fact, the rationalisation of different institutions in western societies shows an uneven distribution. Rationalisation is a complex phenomenon which affects variably the different areas of social life in various countries. *The Protestant Ethic* is concerned only with discovering whose intellectual child that particular form of rational thought was, from which the idea of a calling and devotion to labour in the calling has derived.

The concept of calling merges only at the period of Reformation. It is not found in Catholicism, nor in Antiquity. The significance of the calling, and the mode in which it is employed in Protestant beliefs, is that it serves to bring the mundane affairs of everyday life within an all-embracing religious influence. The calling of the individual is to fulfil his duty to God through the moral conduct of his day-to-day life. This impels the emphasis of Protestantism away from the Catholic ideal of monastic isolation, with rejection of the temporal, into worldly pursuits.

3-1-3 The influence of ascetic Protestantism

Lutheranism cannot be regarded as the main source of capitalism spirit. Luther conception of the calling remained traditional. The further elaboration of the later branches of Protestantism: Calvinism, Methodism, Baptist sectarianism. Weber has analysed deeply the philosophy and ethics of Calvinism. Weber proceeds to identify three major tenets as most important in Calvinism. Firstly, the doctrine that the universe is created to further the greater glory of God, and only has meaning in relation to God's purposes. God doesn't exist for men, but men for the sake of God. Secondly, the principle that the motives of the Almighty are beyond human comprehension. Men can know only the small morsels of divine truth which God wishes to reveal to them. Thirdly, the belief in predestination: only a small number of men are chosen to achieve eternal grace.

The consequence of the doctrine for the believer, Weber argues, must have been one of unprecedented inner loneliness. In what was for the man of the age of the Reformation the most decisive concern of his life, his eternal salvation, he was forced to follow his path alone to meet a destiny which has been decreed for him from eternity. The eradication of possibility of salvation through the church and the sacraments, according to Weber, is the most decisive difference which separated Calvinism from Catholicism. Calvinism thereby brought about a final conclusion to a great historical process which Weber discusses elsewhere in detail: *the gradual process of disenchantment of the world*.

The enormous strain to which this exposed the Calvinist is evident. Calvin, since he believes himself to be selected by God to carry out a divine mission, he was confident of his own salvation. But no such certainty was possible for his followers. Consequently Calvin's doctrine that there are no external differences between the elected and the damned quickly came under pressure on the level of the pastoral care. Thus the performance of good works became regarded as a sign of election – not in any way a method of attaining salvation, but rather of eliminating doubts of salvation.

Idleness and time-wasting are the foremost sins. It is not time is money but each hour lost is lost to labour for the glory of God.

Thus labour in the material world, for the Calvinist, becomes attributed with the highest positive ethical evaluation. The possession of the riches does not provide a man with any sort of exemption from the divine command to labour devotedly in his calling. The accumulation of wealth is morally condemned only to the degree that it forms an enticement to idle luxury; where material profit is acquired through the ascetic pursuit of duty in a calling, it is not only tolerated, but is in fact morally recommended.

It is crucial to Weber's analysis that these characteristics are not logical but psychological consequences of the original doctrine of Calvinism. These subsequent developments in Puritan doctrine stem from the phenomenal isolation experienced by believers, and the anxieties to which they gave rise. The doctrine of predestination is not unique to Calvinism; Islam shares this idea but Islamic belief on predestination doesn't produce the worldly asceticism of Calvinism, but a complete obliviousness to self, in the interest of fulfilment of the religious commandment of a holy war for the conquest of the world.

The origins of the capitalist spirit thus have to be sought in that religious ethic which is most precisely developed in Calvinism. Weber is careful to disclaim the suggestion that the Puritan ethos is a necessary component to the functioning of modern capitalism, once it is established upon a broad scale. On the contrary, the specific conclusion of the *Protestant Ethic* is that, while the Puritan, because of his religious faith, deliberately chose to work in a calling, the specialised character of the capitalist division of labour forces modern man to do so. There is an elective affinity between Calvinism and the rational exigencies of economic ethics of modern capitalist activity. The work seeks to demonstrate that the rationalisation of economic life in modern capitalism connects with irrational value-commitments. But, it's a prefatory task; Weber explicitly states that to achieve the demonstration two tasks have to be undertaken: firstly the analysis of the origins and spread of rationalism in other spheres besides that of economic, and secondly the investigation of in what ways Protestant asceticism was itself influenced by social and economic forces. But Weber has rejected strongly historical materialism. For him, to deduce the Reformation from an historically necessary development from economic changes is a theory impossible to achieve.

3-2 Weber's methodological essays

The protestant Ethic concludes with a plea for a rejection of both materialistic and idealistic interpretations of history as overall theoretical schemes: each Weber says, if it does not serve as the preparation, but as the conclusion of an investigation, accomplishes equally little in the interest of historical truth.

Whereas Durkheim was steeped in a tradition of positivism which reached back to well before Comte, no directly comparable tradition existed in German social thought. Weber rejects the idea that the sciences are ordered in the form and empirical and logical hierarchy, in which each science depends upon the prior historical emergence of the one below it in the hierarchy. In this form of positivism orthodoxy, social science is treated as involving simply the extension of the presuppositions and methods of the natural science to the study of human beings.

3-2-1 Subjectivity and objectivity:

Weber concedes that the social sciences are necessarily concerned with spiritual or ideal phenomena, which are peculiarly human characteristics which do not exist in the subject matter treated by natural sciences. But this differentiation between subject and object need not, and must not, involve the sacrifice of objectivity in the social sciences, nor does it entail the substitution of intuition for replicable analysis.

The social sciences, Weber points out, originated in a concern with practical problems, and were stimulated by the concern of men to effect desired social changes. It was from within such a context that there emerged the impetus towards the establishment of disciplines interested in formulating objective statements about human social and cultural reality. This development, however, was not accompanied by a clear understanding of the essential logical discontinuity between factual statement, and normative propositions concerning not what are, but ought to be. Most forms of social thought have sought to establish a closure between factual and normative propositions on the basis of one of the two following assumptions. The first is that the desirable can be identified with what is immutably existent: that are the invariant laws governing the operation of social and economic institutions. The other is that the assimilation of the desirable and the real come to be located in general principles of evolutionary development: not in the immutably existent, but in the inevitably emergent.

Both of these conceptions must be rejected. It is impossible for an empirical discipline to establish, scientifically, ideals which define what ought to be. This constitutes a fundamental premise of the epistemology which Weber adopts. As value-judgements cannot be validated through scientific analysis, this most emphatically does not mean they must be removed from the sphere of scientific discussion. All judgements concerning whether or not the scope of an action ought to be taken can be separated into means, which are employed to reach particular ends. Scientific analysis can allow us to determine the suitability of a given range of means for the attainment of a determinate end. But no amount of scientific knowledge can demonstrate logically that a man should accept a given end as a value. The social scientist is able to show, if a given objective is sought, what advantages are to be gained by employing one mean against an other, and thus also what costs are entailed. It is also possible, through empirical analysis, to evaluate the end itself.

Weber illustrates these points by the reference to the aspiration of revolutionary socialism. The realisation of a socialist society by revolutionary means involves the use of the force to secure the desired changes. But the application of force must necessarily involve political repression after revolution, which will negate some of the freedoms which are embodied in the aspirations and the very ideal of socialism; Secondly, the construction of the socialist economy, particularly in a world where nations remain capitalists, is likely to entail a range of difficulties which are neither predicated nor desired by socialists. Thirdly, whatever the means whereby a socialist society comes into being, the result will almost contravene the objective which brought it into being, by creating a bureaucratic state.

There is still one additional sense in which scientific analysis can facilitate the pursuance of practical ends, but this is of somewhat different order from those stated previously. This does not involve

empirical study, but rather the assessment of the internal consistency of the relationship between the ideals which a person holds.

The logical consequence for Weber is that the human universe is characterised by the existence of *irreducibly competing ideals*. Since there is no single ideal or set of ideals which, at any point of history, can be shown by scientific analysis to be right or wrong, there can be no universal ethics. This methodological standpoint finds its main application in its Sociology of Religion. Ideals and meanings can never be derived from science itself. We cannot learn the world from the results of its analysis, be it ever so perfect; it must rather be in a position to create this meaning itself.

Political conduct may be oriented within either an ethic of ultimate ends or an ethic of responsibility. Such conduct is finally religious in character, or at least shares with religious conduct its exemplary attributes. The various developments of social science are of importance to the politics of responsibility. An attitude of moral indifference has no connection with scientific objectivity.

3-2-2 Judgements of facts and judgements of value

Science itself rest upon ideals which cannot, any more than others values, be validated scientifically. Thus the principal objective of social science is the understanding of characteristic uniqueness of the reality in which we move. That is to say, the main goal of social sciences is to understand why particular historical phenomena come to be as they are. But this presupposes abstraction from the unending complexity of empirical reality. Any form of scientific analysis whether in social sciences or natural, involves selection from the infinitude of reality.

The social sciences are interested in knowing the relationships and the cultural significance of individual events in the contemporary manifestations and on the other the grounds of their being historically so and not otherwise. Since the reality is extensively and intensively infinite, and since therefore the social scientist selects some problems of interest, we must ask what the value-criteria are Which determine the critical choice? This cannot be easily answered, by the assertion that in social sciences we should be searching laws such as exist in natural sciences. The formulation of laws involves a special order of abstraction of the complexity of the reality, such that every event which does not fall under the law, is considered to be accidental, and consequently scientifically unimportant.

Moreover, it is wrong to presume that the natural sciences are only interested in the discovery of laws. Astronomy, as an example, is often concerned with particular sequences of development which are neither subsumable under laws, nor derive their relevance to the formulation of general relationships. In terms of generalisation on the universe, the comprehension of our solar system is utterly insignificant. This shows that the distinction between natural and social sciences is not an absolute one. While the natural sciences are concentrated upon the edification of general principles, knowledge of the particular is not avoided. . Nor is it valid to consider that causal explanation is only possible through the classification of events under general laws. An event (see epistemology) which is accidental from the point of view of a given law can trace back to a causal explanation.

In social sciences, the formulation of general explanatory principles is not so much an end in itself as a means which may be used to facilitate the analysis of the particular phenomena which are to be explained. A valid imputation of any individual effect without the application of nomological knowledge -the knowledge of recurrent sequences- would be in general impossible.

But how, more concretely, do we establish the existence of causal relationships? .In his famous illustration, Weber gives the example of Marathon's battle significance for western culture development. To show this significance, we have to consider two separable contingencies: Hellenism versus Persian theocratic influence over subsequent European cultural development. These are not ontologically real possibilities, just abstractions, which provide perspectives, involving the construction of a thought experiment, whereby the social scientist projects what would have happened if certain events either had not taken place or had occurred in a different way.

In the example of Marathon's battle this can be shown: if a Persian victory is imagined, and its probable consequences, it is certainly the case that these would indeed have greatly influenced the development of Hellenic, and thence of European culture. Weber designates this as an example of adequate causation. We can confidently state, that a different outcome of the battle would have been adequate to produce changes in European cultural development

The fact that the selection and identification of the concerns of social science is necessarily subjective does not imply that objectively valid causal analysis cannot be made.

3-2-3 The formulation of ideal-type constructs

Weber's specification of the nature of ideal-type concepts, and their usage in the social sciences, is logically rooted in this general epistemological standpoint. The concepts which are used in the social sciences cannot be derived directly from reality without the intrusion of value-presuppositions, since the very problems which define the objectives of interest are dependent upon such presuppositions. Thus the interpretation and explanation of an historical configuration demands the construction of concepts which are specifically delineated for that purpose and which, as in the case of the objectives of the analysis itself, do not reflect universally properties of reality. In setting forth the normal characteristics of ideal-type concepts, Weber does not consider that he is establishing a new sort of conceptual method, but that he is making explicit what is already done in practice.

An ideal-type is constructed by the abstraction and combination of an indefinite number of elements which, although found in reality, are rarely or never discovered in this specific form. Thus the characteristics of the Calvinist ethic which Weber analyses are taken from the writings of various historical figures, and involve those components of Calvinist doctrines which Weber identifies as of particular importance in relation to the formation of the capitalist spirit. Such an ideal type is neither a description of any definite aspect of reality, nor according to Weber, is it an hypothesis; but it can aid in both description and explanation. An ideal-type is not, of course, ideal in a normative sense: it does not carry that its realisation is desirable. It's a pure logical construction, this mental construction cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality.

The utility of an ideal-type can be assessed only in relation to a concrete range of problems, and the only purpose of its construction is to facilitate the analysis of empirical questions. But the ideal-type is not formed out of a nexus of purely conceptual thought, but is created, modified and sharpened through the empirical analysis of concrete problems, and in turn increases the precision of that analysis.

Ideal types are thus different in both scope and usage from descriptive concepts. Descriptive types play an important and necessary role in social sciences. These simply summarise the common features of groupings of empirical phenomena. Whereas an ideal-type involves the one-sided accentuation of one or more point of view, the descriptive involves the abstract synthesis of those traits which are common to numerous concrete phenomena. Weber gives the example of the concept of church and sect. These may serve as the basis for a classificatory distinction; religious groups can be said to fall into one category or another. However, if we wish to apply the distinction in order to analyse the importance of sectarian movements for the rationalisation of modern western culture, we have to reformulate the concept of sect to emphasise the specific components of sectarianism which have been influential. The concept then becomes an ideal type one. Any descriptive concept can be transformed in an ideal type through the abstraction and recombination of certain elements: in practical terms, Weber says, this is what is often done.

Weber concentrates his discussion upon the formulation of ideal types which relate of specific historical configurations, since this presents the clearest differentiation of descriptive and ideal types. The transition from descriptive to ideal types takes place when we move from descriptive classification of phenomena towards the explanatory or theoretical analysis of those phenomena.

3-3 Fundamentals of sociology

3-3-1 Interpretative sociology

Weber rejects the view that generalisation is impossible in the social sciences, but treats the formulation of general principles mainly as a means to an end in its early works. *Economy and Society* provides a certain change, Weber's interest moves more towards a direct concern with the establishment of uniformities of social and economic organisation: that is, towards sociology.

Sociology, Weber says, is concerned with the formulation of general principles and generic type concepts in relation to human social action: history, by contrast, is directed towards the causal analysis and explanation of particular, culturally significant actions, structures, and personalities. One of the main steps to the analysis of social phenomena, therefore, is that of rendering intelligible the subjective basis upon which it rests; a principal theme of the essay, of course, is that the possibility of the objective analysis of social and historical phenomena is not precluded by the fact that human activity has a subjective character. In outlining his conception of interpretative sociology in *Economy and Society*, Weber preserves this stress upon the significance of the subjective for sociological analysis. Weber shall be taken to refer to a science concerning itself with the interpretative understanding of social action and thereby with a causal explanation of its courses and consequences. There are two senses in which the meaning of action may be analysed: either in reference to the concrete meaning which action has for a given individual actor, or in relation to an ideal type of subjective meaning on the part of an hypothetical actor.

Large sectors of human activity which are important for sociological purposes lie on the margins of meaningful actions: this is especially true of behaviour of a traditional kind. Moreover, the same empirical activity may involve a fusion of understandable and non-understandable elements. This may be the case, for instance, in some of religious activity, which may involve mystical experiences which are only partially understandable to a social scientist that has not experienced them.

While Weber accepts that subjective meaning is a basic component of much human conduct, he is pointing that intuitionism is not the only doctrine which can offer the possibility of study; on the contrary interpretative sociology can and must be based upon techniques of the interpretation of meaning which are replicable, and thus are verifiable according to the canons of a scientific method. This can be accomplished, either by rational understanding of logical relationships which form part of the subjective framework of the actor, or by understanding of a more-emotive sympathetic kind. Rational understanding is most precise and complete in many situations, but there is no clear line between the comprehension of propositions of logic in this strict sense, and the manner in which we understand the actions of the man who rationally selects and employs a given means to reach a practical end. While empathy is an important means of obtaining understanding of action which takes place in an emotive context, it is mistaken to identify empathy, and understanding : the latter demands not merely a sentiment of emotional sympathy on the part of the sociologist, but the grasping of the subjective intelligibility of action. In general, however, it is true that the more ideals towards which human activity is directed are foreign to those which govern our own conduct, the harder it is to understand the meaning they have for those who hold them. We must accept, in these circumstances, that only partial comprehension is possible, and when even this cannot be attained, we have to be content to treat them as given data.

Sociology, must of course, take account of objects and events which influence are devoid of subjective meaning. An artefact such as a machine can be understood only in terms of the meaning which its production and use have had or were intended to have.

In explanatory understanding, the particular action concerned is placed in an understandable sequence of motivation, the understanding of which can be treated as an explanation of the actual course of behaviour. Thus for a science which is concerned with the subjective meaning of action, explanation requires a grasp of the complex of meaning in which an actual course of understandable action thus interpreted belongs. This is extremely important in Weber's conception of the application of interpretative sociology to empirical analysis. The understanding of motivation always involves relating the particular conduct concerned to a broader normative standard with reference to which the individual acts. In order to reach the level of causal explanation, a distinction has to be made between subjective and causal adequacy .The interpretation of action can be subjectively adequate if the motivation of this action corresponds to recognised normative patterns and makes sense according to these norms. But it is not enough to provide a viable explanation of the particular action. Indeed it is the basic fallacy of idealist philosophy to identify subjective adequacy with causal adequacy. The essential flaw in this view is that there is no direct and simple relationship between complexes of meaning, motives and conduct.

It follows from Weber' method, of course, that if any generalisation, however verified, lacks adequacy on the level of meaning, then it remains a statistical correlation outside the scope of interpretative sociology.

Moreover, meaningful action is not refractory to statistical treatment. Weber does not limit the range of information which is of value in the study of human social conduct to that which can be analysed according to the method of interpretative sociology, and Weber does not assume interpretative sociology as the sole basis of generalisation in relation to human social conduct.

Functionalism, Weber notes, has a definite utility in approaching the study of social life : as a means of practical illustration and practical and for provisional orientation, it is not only useful but indispensable. Just as in the case of the study of organic systems, in the social sciences functional analysis allows us to identify which units within the whole society it is important to study. But at a certain point the analogy between society and organism breaks down , in that in the analysis of the former it is possible, and also necessary, to go beyond the establishment of functional uniformities. Rather than being a barrier to scientific knowledge, however, the achievement of interpretative understanding should be regarded as offering explanatory possibilities which are unavailable in the natural sciences.

Weber differs from his other contemporaneous social scientists on the issue of the logical status of holistic concepts. He considers that sociologists who take their point of departure from the whole and from thence approach the analysis of individual behaviour are easily lured into the hypostatisation of concepts. Thus society, which is never more than the multitudinous interactions of individuals in particular milieus , takes on a reified identity of its own, as if it were an acting unit which has its own peculiar consciousness. Weber admits, of course, that it is necessary in the social sciences to use concepts which refer to collectivities, such as states, industrial firms, etc. But it must be not forgotten that these collectivities are solely the resultants and modes of organisation of the specific acts of individual men, since these alone are for us the agents who carry out subjectively understandable action.

Interpretative sociology, according to Weber, does not involve the connotation that social phenomena can be explained reductively in psychological terms. The findings of psychology are certainly relevant to all the social sciences, but no more so than those of those of other borderline disciplines. The sociologist is not interested in the psychological make-up of the individual per se, but in the interpretative analysis of social action. Weber rejects the idea that social institutions can be derived in an explanatory sense from psychological generalisations. Since human life is primarily shaped by socio-cultural influences, it is in fact more likely that sociology has more to contribute to psychology than vice-versa.

3-3-2 Social relationships and the orientation of social conduct

Social action covers any sort of human conduct which is meaningfully oriented to the past, present or expected future behaviour of others. A social relationship exists whenever there is a reciprocity on the part of two or more individuals, each of whom relates his action to acts or anticipated acts of the other. This does not necessarily imply, however, that the meanings involved in the relationship are shared : in many cases, such as in a love relationship which confirms to the proverb:” *il y a une personne qui aime et l’autre qui se laisse aimer* “, the attitudes held by one party are not at all the same as those held by the other. Nevertheless in such relationships, if they are continued over time, there are complementary meanings which define for each individual what is expected of him. Following Simmel, Weber speaks about *Vergesellschaftung* (societalisation) which carries the sense of the formation of relationships, rather than *Gesellschaft* (society). Many of the relationships of which social life is compounded are of a transitory character, and are constantly in the process of formation and dissolution. Nor, of course, is it implied that the existence of a social relationship presupposes co-operation between those involved. As Weber is careful to point out, conflict is a characteristic of even the most permanent of relationships.

Not all types of contact constitute a social relationship in Weber sense.

Weber distinguishes four types of orientation of social conduct. In pure positively rational conduct, the individual assesses the probable results of a given act in terms of the calculation of means to an end. In securing a given objective, a number of alternatives of reaching that end usually exist. The individual faced with these alternatives weighs the relative effectiveness of each of the possible means of reaching the ends, and the consequences of securing one end from other goals which the individual

holds. Here Weber applies the schema, already formulated with regard to the rational application of social scientific knowledge, to the paradigm of social action in general

Value rational action is by contrast, directed towards an overriding ideal, and takes no account of any other considerations as relevant. All actions which are solely directed to these ideals such duty, honour, devotion to a cause, approximate this type;

Affective action is a third type: it is the action which is carried out under the sway of some sort of emotive state, and as such is on the borderline of meaningful and non meaningful conduct. It shares with value rational action the characteristic that the meaning of the action is not located, as in purposively rational conduct, in the instrumentality of mean to ends, but in carrying out the fact for its own sake.

The fourth type of orientation of action, traditional action, also overlaps the margins of meaningful and non meaningful conduct. Traditional action is carried out under the influence of custom and habit. This applies to the great bulk of all everyday action to which people have become habitually accustomed. In this type of action, the meaning is derived from ideals or symbols which do not have the coherent, defined form of those are pursued in value rationality. In so far values become rationalised, traditional action merges with value rational action.

This typology which Weber delineates underlies the empirical substance of *Economy and Society*. It is an ideal-type which provides a mode of applying Weber's stated dictum that the analysis of social action can be best pursued through the use of rational types against which irrational deviations can be measured. Thus a particular instance of human behaviour can be interpreted according to which of the four types it is most closely appropriate. But most of the cases will incorporate a mixture of elements from more than one type.

In the discussion of the difficulties posed by the problem of verification in interpretative sociology, Weber stresses that causal adequacy always is a matter of degrees of probability; those who have argued that human behaviour is unpredictable are demonstrably mistaken: the characteristic of incalculability is the privilege of the insane. But the uniformities which are found in human conduct are expressible only in terms of a probability that a particular act or circumstance will produce a given response from an actor. Every social relationship thus may be said to rest upon the probability that an actor or plurality of actors will direct their action in a specified manner. To affirm the element of contingency in human conduct, in Weber's view is not to deny its regularity and predictability; but it is to emphasise once again the contrast between meaningful conduct and the invariant response characteristic of a subconsciously mediated withdrawal reaction to a painful stimulus. Uniformity of conduct founded upon usage or custom contrasts with that associated with the ideal type of rational action where individuals, subjectively pursue their own self interest.

3-3-3 Legitimacy, domination and authority

The most stable forms of social relationship are those in which the subjective attitudes of the participating individuals are directed towards the belief in a legitimate order. Actions may be guided by the belief in a legitimate order in other ways than through adherence to the tenets of that order. Such is the case with a criminal, who violating the laws, recognise and adapts his conduct to their existence by the very measures he takes to plan his criminal activity.

It is very important to notice that the same legitimate order may be interpreted in different ways. This is something which can be illustrated from Weber's analysis of religions. Thus, Protestantism of the reformation was a radicalisation of the very same Christian order as was claimed by the Catholic Church as the basis of its legitimacy.

There is no clear line between usage and custom, and what Weber calls convention. Conformity is not in this case a matter of the voluntary disposition of the individual. If, for example, a member of a high ranking status group departs from the conventions governing appropriate standards of politeness, the probability is that he will be ridiculed or ostracised by the rest of his own group. The mobilisation of these sanctions is often an extremely powerful mode of securing compliance to an established order. Law exists where a convention is backed, not simply by diffuse informal sanctions, but by an individual, or more usually a group, who has the legitimate capacity and duty to apply sanctions against transgressors. The law-enforcement agency need not necessarily involve the sort of specialised professional body of judiciary and police found in modern societies; in the blood feud, the clan fulfils

an equivalent task as a sanctioning agency. The empirical relationship between custom, convention and law is an intimate one. Even the hold of the sheer usage may be very strong. Usage and customs do in most cases provide the origins of rules which become laws.

Weber does not hold that we can only speak of the existence of the law where the coercive apparatus involved is a political agency. A legal order exists in any circumstance in which a group, even a kinship group or a religious body assumes the task of applying sanctions to punish transgressions. The influence of religious groups upon the rationalisation of law is a main theme in Weber's empirical writings. In more general terms, the interrelationships between the legal, religious and political are obviously of decisive significance to economic structures and economic development. Weber defines a political society as one whose existence and order is continuously safeguarded within a given territorial area by the threat and application of physical force on the part of the administrative staff. This does not imply, of course, that political organisations exist only through the continual use of force, merely that the threat or actual employment of force is used as an ultimate sanction, which may be utilised when all else fails. A political organisation becomes a state where it is able successfully to exercise a legitimate monopoly over the organised use of force within a given territory.

Weber defines power as the probability that an actor will be able to realise his own objectives even against opposition from others with whom he is in social relationship. In this sense, every sort of relationship is to some extent a power relationship. This definition is too broad. The concept of domination is more specific. Acceptance of domination may rest upon quite different motives, ranging from sheer habit to the cynic promotion of self advantage. The possibilities of obtaining material rewards and of securing social esteem are two of the most pervasive forms of tie binding leader and follower. But no stable system of domination is based purely upon either automatic habituation or upon the appeal to self interest: the main prop is belief by subordinates in the legitimacy of their subordination.

Weber distinguishes three ideal types of legitimacy upon which a relationship of domination may rest: traditional, charismatic, and legal. Traditional authority is based upon the belief in the sanctity of age-old rules and powers. In the most elementary kinds of traditional domination, those who rule have no specialised administrative staff through which they exercise their authority like in many small rural communities: village elders who are the more qualified in traditional wisdom and thereby qualified to hold authority, household patriarchs who possess the authority and this authority is transmitted from generation to generation through rules of inheritance. Where an administrative staff exists, subordinates by ties of allegiance to a master, patrimonialism develops.

Patrimonialism is the characteristic form of domination in the traditional despotic governments of the Orient as well as in the near East and in medieval Europe. Patrimonial authority is rooted in the household administration of the ruler (African states); the intermingling of courtly life and governmental functions is its distinctive feature. Officials are first recruited from the personal retainers or servants of the ruler. Patrimonial domination over large territories provides a basis for a variety and conflicts between local rulers and notables.

The pure type of traditional organisation offers a contrast with the ideal type of rational bureaucracy, which is founded upon legal domination. In traditional organisations, the tasks of the members are ambiguously defined, and privileges and duties are subject to modification according to the inclination of the ruler; recruitment is made on the basis of personal affiliation; and there is no rational process of law-making: any innovations in administrative rules have to be made to appear to be rediscoveries of given truths.

Weber sets out the pure type of legal authority as follows. In this type, an individual who holds authority does so in virtue of impersonal norms which are not the residue of tradition, but which have been consciously established within a context of either purposive or value rationality. Those who are subject to authority obey their superior, not because of any personal dependence on him, but because of their acceptance of the impersonal norms which define that authority; thus the typical person holding legal authority, the superior, is himself subject to an impersonal order, and orients his actions to it in his own dispositions and commands. Those subject to legal authority owe no personal allegiance to a superior, and follow his commands only within the restricted sphere in which his jurisdiction is clearly specified.

The pure type of bureaucratic organisation shows the following characteristics. The activities of the administrative staff are carried out on a regular basis, and thus constitute well-defined official duties.

The spheres of competence of the officials are clearly demarcated, and levels of authority are delimited in the form of a hierarchy of offices. The rules governing conduct of the staff, their authority and responsibilities, are recorded in written form. Recruitment is based upon demonstration of specialised competence via competitive examinations or the possession of diplomas or degrees giving evidence of appropriate qualifications. Office property is not owned by the official, and a separation is maintained between the official and the office, such that under no conditions is the office owned by its incumbent. This type of organisation has several consequences for the position of the official:

- a) The career of the official is governed by an abstract conception of duty
- b) The official obtains his position through appointment and demonstration of technical skills, he is not elected.
- c) He normally holds a tenured position
- d) His remuneration takes the shape of a fix salary
- e) The occupational position of the official is such as to provide for career involving movement up the hierarchy of authority; the degree of progression achieved is determined either by manifest ability or seniority, or by a combination of the two.

It is only with capitalism that organisations are found which approximate to this ideal typical form. The main examples of developed bureaucracies, prior to the emergence of modern capitalism, were those of ancient Egypt, China, the later Roman principate, and the medieval Catholic Church. These bureaucracies were patrimonial, and were based largely upon the payment of officials in kind. This shows that there is no prerequisite of a money economy to build up bureaucracy. The advance of bureaucratisation in modern societies is directly associated with the expansion of the division of labour in various spheres economic and non economic. The separation of the labourer of his production's means is not limited to industry as Marx suggested, but extended to all the institutions: army, polity... In post medieval Europe, bureaucratisation of the state has preceded that in the economic sphere. The modern capitalist state is completely dependent upon bureaucratic organisation. In ancient Egypt, the oldest bureaucratic state was primarily determined by the need of co-ordination and regulation of the irrigation institutions.

Charismatic domination, Weber's third type, is wholly distinct from the other two. Both traditional and legal domination are permanent systems of administration, concerned with the routine tasks of everyday life. The pure type of charismatic domination is, by definition, an extraordinary type. Charisma is supernatural and at least requires specific and exceptional qualities. A charismatic individual is, therefore, one whom others believe to possess unusual capacities. Charismatic domination can arise in the most varied social and historical contexts. Consequently charismatic figures range from political leaders, religious prophets whose actions have influenced the course of development of civilisations to many sorts of petty demagogues. The claim to legitimacy in charismatic authority, in whatever context is found, is always founded upon the belief of both leader and followers in the authenticity of the leader's mission. The charismatic figure normally supplies proof of his genuineness through the performance "miracles" or other spectacular things which are signs of validity of his authority. Members of secondary authority positions in a charismatic movement are not based upon privileged selection through personal ties, or upon the possession of technical qualifications. There is no fix hierarchy. Moreover, there is a break with the accepted order which the emergence of charismatic domination represents. Charismatic domination rejects the past. According to Weber, it is a specifically irrational phenomenon. The evolutive routinisation of charisma hence involves the devolution of charismatic authority in the direction of charismatic authority in the direction of either traditional or legal organisation.

3-3-4 The influence of market relationships: classes and status groups

Economy and Society contains two sections dealing with class and status groups. Both sections, however, are short, and are incommensurate with the importance of the concepts in Weber's historical writings. Like Marx, Weber did not complete a detailed analytical account of the notion of class and its relationship to others bases of stratification in society. Weber's conception of class takes its point of departure from his more generalised analysis of economic action in the market. Economic action is defined by Weber as a conduct which seeks, through peaceful means, to acquire control of desired

resources and utilities, including goods and services. A market is distinguished from direct reciprocal exchange in so far as it involves speculative economic action oriented towards the securing of the profit through competitive trading. Classes can only exist when such a market - which may take numerous concrete forms- has come into existence, and this in turn presupposes the formation of a money economy. Money plays an extremely important part in this because it makes possible the estimation of the values exchanged in quantitative and fixed, rather than in subjective terms. Economic relationships thus free themselves from the particular ties and obligations of local community structure, and become fluidly determined by the material chances which individuals have of using property, goods or services which they possess for exchange on the competitive market.

Weber admits with Marx, that ownership versus non-ownership of property is the most important basis of class division in a competitive market. Those who share the same market or class situation are all subject to similar economic exigencies, which causally influence their standards of life. A class denotes an aggregate of individuals who thus share the same class situation. Weber distinguishes ownership classes, commercial classes and negatively advantaged classes without either ownership or skills to offer as marketable services.(wage labourers) Between the positively and the negatively advantages groups fall a range of middles who either own small properties or possess skills such as officials, peasants and artisans. The middle class includes petty bourgeoisie, administrative officials in government or industry.

According to Weber's assumptions, there could be as many class divisions as there are minute combinations. In fact, Weber regards only some definite combinations organised around ownership or non ownership of property as historically significant, following Marx point of view. Weber also distinguishes what he calls simply social classes. In so far as individuals may move freely within a common cluster of class situations, they form a definite social class. Compressing some of the divisions which compose the commercial classes, Weber describes the social class composition of capitalism as consisting of the following:

1) The manual working class. The existence of skill differentials is a major factor threatening the unity of the working class, but the increasing mechanisation of industry is pushing a large proportion of workers into semi-skilled categories. 2) the petty bourgeoisie 3) Property less white-collar workers, technicians and intelligentsia; 4) The dominant entrepreneurial and propertied groups, who also tend to share a privileged access to educational opportunities.

The relationship between the existence of similar class interests, and the occurrence of manifest class conflict, is historically contingent. Groups of individuals may share a similar class situation without being aware of it, and without forming any organisation to further their common economic interests. It is not always the most marked inequalities in the distribution of property which lead to class struggle. Class consciousness does not develop spontaneously. On another hand, the influence of class upon social action operates independently of any valuations these individuals might make of themselves or the others. Since Weber rejects the notion that economic phenomena directly determine the nature of human ideals, it follows that such valuations have to be conceptualised independently of class interests. Weber distinguishes class situation from status situation. The status of an individual refers to the evaluation which the others are making of his social position, thus attributing to him some positive or negative esteem or prestige. A status group is a number of individuals who share the same status position. Status groups, unlike classes, are always conscious of their common position. There is no necessary or universal connection between social status and class appartenance. However property classes often, constitute status groups; commercial classes rarely do so.

Status groups normally manifest their distinctiveness through following a particular life-style, and through placing restrictions upon the manner in which others may interact with them. Caste represents the most clear-cut example of this. Stratification by status is not, for Weber, simply a complication of class hierarchies: on the contrary, status groups, as differentiated from classes, are of vital significance in numerous phases of historical development. Moreover, status groups may act to influence in a direct way the operation of the market, and so may affect class relationships. One historically important way in which this has occurred is through the restriction of the spheres of economic life which are permitted to become governed by the market.

The degree to which status stratification is prevalent in any given social order is influenced by how far the society in question is subject to rapid economic transformation.

Where marked economic changes are occurring, class stratification is a more pervasive determinant of action than in a situation where there is little change.

Both class and status group membership may be a basis of social power; but the formation of a political party is a further, analytically independent, influence upon the distribution of power.

The growth of the modern state has brought with it the development of mass political parties, and the emergence of professional politicians. A political order in which recruitment to positions of power is filled by those live for politics is necessarily drawn from a propertied elite, who are usually renters rather entrepreneurs. This does not imply that such politicians will pursue policies which are wholly directed towards favouring the interests of the class or status group from which they originate.