SOCIOLOGY REFERENCE GUIDE

EARLY THEORISTS & THE SCIENCE OF SOCIETY

THE EDITORS OF
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Introduction

Sociology, or the study of society, surfaced as a true academic discipline in the late nineteenth-century. Classical theorists of the time pushed past the boundaries of such highly respected studies as economics, psychology, and philosophy and helped to lift sociology into its own distinguished branch of learning. As unique sociological theories and studies began to take shape, the discipline evolved into a widespread science that pervaded Europe and blossomed in America during the twentieth-century.

The Sociology Reference Guide series is designed to provide a solid foundation for the research of various sociological topics. Divided into three main parts, this volume offers an historical overview of the field and the foundational figures and theories related to the history of sociology. The first section surveys the pre-modern sociological movements of the nineteenth-century, while the second studies the three major figures of modern sociology: Émile Durkheim, Karl Marx and Max Weber. The third section concludes the collection with an introduction to major sociological theories that emerge in the twentieth-century.

In the first two essays, a summary account of early sociology in England and Europe reviews foundational theories from a range of thinkers. Simone I. Flynn's "Enlightenment Roots" establishes the "ways in which sociological thought has borrowed from and built on Enlightenment-era ideas." Her essay "Sociology in the Nineteenth Century" introduces readers to the

social, political, and economic transformations in Europe that would preoccupy sociological thinkers throughout the West.

The collection then introduces the theories of three philosophers who figure prominently in the development of formal sociology: Durkheim, Marx, and Weber. Though each developed his own distinct work in the field of human study, they are brought together through the common areas of research in economics, religion, and social transformation. Jennifer Kretchmar surveys the scholarly work of Durkheim, which also serves as an introduction to the major sociological concerns of nineteenth-century Europe, as in the "the relationship between the individual and society, or, more specifically, the nature of social bonds." The three essays on Durkheim establish the tradition upon which the works of other philosophers would emerge.

In her following three essays on Marx, Francis Duffy puts it best: "[He]… is remembered not for his political writings but for his keen observations about society, class structure and the plight of the increasingly alienated individual." The intersection between Durkheim's and Marx's investigation of the individual and society allows readers to understand the growing concerns these thinkers brought to the study of private and public experience during this time. Duffy devotes special attention to how Marx formulated his ideas on the relationship between economics and social development. As she explains, "Marx examined social change and revolution in light of his all-encompassing theory which sought to explain how societies progress materially, economically, and socio-politically. "

The transformations that occur in turn-of-the-century sociology are represented in the theories of Max Weber, whose writings on religion and capitalism marked a departure from the ideas promoted by Marx. Cynthia Vejar introduces Weber's The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism as one of his most significant contributions to the formulation of these ideas. Weber may serve as a transitional figure for the final collection of essays that establish modern and contemporary developments in sociology. In two period essays, Flynn explains the modern "American tradition of sociology" taking hold in universities in the United States and the new developments in contemporary sociology after World War II. PD Casteel explores the works of Jurgen Habermas and C. Wright Mills,

which provide two singular theories on how people and groups encounter and respond to modern experience, whether it be "the administrative and coercive nature of formal systems" (Habermas) or "the forces that play in the greater society" (Mills). If Durkheim and others represent the emergence of sociological thought in Western Europe, the final essays on George Herbert Mead and Herbert Marcuse provide examples of how this practice is recast by two American philosophers, thus setting the stage for an American tradition in sociology.

Taken as a whole, this series of essays will guide researchers through the history and establishment of sociological study and the revolutionary theories behind prominent philosophers of the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries. Complete bibliographic entries follow each essay and a list of suggested readings will locate sources for advanced research in the area of study. A selection of relevant terms and concepts and an index of common sociological themes and ideas conclude the volume.

Enlightenment Roots

Simone I. Flynn

Overview

The field of sociology has its roots in the age of the Enlightenment. The age of the Enlightenment refers to the seventeenth and eighteenth century philosophical and intellectual movements in Europe founded on the belief that reason would lead to objective and universal truths. The European Enlightenment ended with the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789. Enlightenment era philosophers challenged the power and legitimacy of the institutions of their day, despite the threat of persecution (Green, 1990).

The European Enlightenment was precipitated by a period of extreme growth in scientific knowledge called the scientific revolution, which occurred during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Modern scientific thought emerged during the Scientific Revolution. For example, Sir Isaac Newton (1642 - 1727) developed his theories about gravity and motion and Galileo Galilei (1564 - 1642) studied the solar system and discovered that the Earth was not at the center of the universe. The Scientific Revolution nurtured the invention of new methods and tools including the scientific method, and the telescope, microscope, air pump, and thermometer.

The scientific revolution changed how scientists and thinkers in other fields approached the world. As a result of the scientific revolution, intellectuals looked for rules of regularity and balance, first in the physical and then the

social and political world. The methods for scientific discovery and inquiry developed during the scientific revolution to study the physical world were used in the Enlightenment to gather information and knowledge about all areas of life. Enlightenment thinkers believed that knowledge gained through scientific means would be more accurate than knowledge gained through non-scientific observation and assumption. The scientific revolution and the European Enlightenment influenced the understanding and study of political, economic, and social behavior and thought.

Enlightenment thinkers desired to reform society and government for the betterment of all humanity. They believed that natural laws rather than arbitrary rules should govern behavior. Ultimately, Enlightenment thought was based on three principles:

- That the universe is governed by natural rather than supernatural law;
- That the scientific method can answer fundamental questions in all areas of inquiry; and
- That the human race can be taught to achieve infinite improvement (Mills & Woods, 1996).

Enlightenment philosophy was characterized by a faith in order, rigor, logic, and human rationality. Rationality refers to the idea that all beliefs and phenomena can be explained in accordance with logical principles. Believing that reason would eventually triumph over humanity's uncivilized and animalistic tendencies, the Enlightenment thinkers sought objective and scientific facts of human nature, marginalizing discussion of subjective experience, tradition, habits, history, or culture. These subjects were considered to be irrational forces that could not contribute to the era's larger projects of expanding human knowledge and truth. Enlightenment thought implied that humans, society, and history would reach fulfillment when humans learned to control their passions and drives (Verheggen, 1996).

Enlightenment narratives provided a foundation for the development of nineteenth and twentieth century sociological thought and practice. Enlightenment ideas, including the concern for just rule; the belief in scientific inquiry and empirical knowledge; the role of structure in predicting and

controlling human behavior; and the connection between private property, oppression, and inequality, were particularly influential on fin de siècle intellectuals like Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Georg Simmel, and Karl Marx. The enduring and influential socio-political theories of utilitarianism, Marxism, and social contract are all products of Enlightenment thought (Chatterjee 2004).

Understanding the Enlightenment roots of sociology is vital background for all those interested in sociology as well as the history of social theory as a whole. This article explains the Enlightenment roots of sociology in two parts:

- A description of key Enlightenment philosophers including Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, and Jeremy Bentham.
- A discussion of the ways in which sociological thought has borrowed from and built on Enlightenment-era ideas and philosophy.

Further Insights

Enlightenment Philosophers

Enlightenment thinkers, particularly those who lived through the pre-revolution years in France, were concerned with the problems of reality, knowledge, liberty, consensus, structure, agency, and order. "How is society held together?" they asked. Enlightenment philosophers worked to make sense of human behavior and society during the years of the Enlightenment and through the French Revolution.

Enlightenment theorists developed solutions to the problem of order. For example, Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau developed social contract theory as a means of explaining the mechanism of social order. The social contract, a philosophical exploration of structure and agency, refers to the hypothesis that people in a state of nature would consent to be governed. The classic social contract, an amalgamation of the theories developed by Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, is the belief that the legitimacy of government is derived from an agreement between individual human beings to surrender their private rights in order to secure the protection of a powerful society or government.

Enlightenment thinkers were also theorized about how people lived before or outside of society or government rule. They developed the concept of the state of nature (the hypothetical condition in which people lived before forming societies and governments) to explain people in their most natural, non-ruled state of being, as well as the concept of the state of society (the condition in which people live within societies and under governments) to explain how and why people give up part of their freedom to live under the protection of a society or government (Jackson, 2006).

The Enlightenment-era philosophers described below, including Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, David Hume, Immanuel Kant and Jeremy Bentham, illustrate the Enlightenment's concern for just rule, scientific inquiry, and empirical knowledge (as seen in the use of the scientific method); the role of structure in predicting and controlling human behavior; and the connection between private property, oppression, and inequality.

Thomas Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), was a philosopher who explored authoritarianism, rule, indoctrination, coercion, and obedience. His work continues to influence contemporary political sociology and political thought in general. Hobbes developed his theory of the social contract, as described in The Leviathan, as a way of justifying the existence of government rules and laws. Hobbes had great respect for individual reason and believed true political allegiance came only after individuals understood the basis of a sovereign's claim to leadership. He believed that the government's role in society was justified by a social contract between people and their leaders. In Hobbes' view, the social contract is an agreement between individuals to live peacefully and be unified under a government that facilitates peace. For the social contract to provide a stable government, individuals must submit themselves to enforcement mechanisms that Hobbes referred to as "the sword of the sovereignty." According to Hobbes, for government to work, leaders must display transparency in all of their social and political actions (Waldron, 2001).

John Locke

John Locke (1632-1704) believed in the inalienable rights of human beings. Natural law, according to him, guaranteed that all men were created equal.

Locke felt that all people have innate natural goodness that will manifest itself in the creation of a just and balanced society. He viewed the social contract between government and society as a necessary outgrowth of the need to protect families and private property. His vision of political society was an "army" of men who represent their families and unite in a commitment to punish those who transgress against themselves, their families, or their property. John Locke believed rule should be based on natural laws as opposed to arbitrary authority. Governments must make and enforce just laws that serve all people. Government, according to Locke, was responsible for creating an environment that enables all citizens to reach their full potential. Locke's theory of government provided justification for setting limits on the power of government and granting citizens the right to revolt when government oversteps these limits (Mills & Woods, 1996).

Jean Jacques Rousseau

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) studied the relationship between human society and the natural world. Building on the work of Hobbes and Locke, he developed his own version of the social contract as a compact between society and government that remedied the social and moral ills (e.g. shame, envy, and pride) that are produced by the development of society. To remediate the problem of social corruption, Rousseau worked to reestablish the integrity of human nature and promote a new society. In one of his most well-known works, Discourse on the Origins of Inequalit, he depicted man's corruption as, through society, his primitive innocence is replaced with jealousy, self-hatred, and the desire to gain power over others. According to Rousseau, reason emerges from nature not society. He believed people were born free in a state of nature but are then corrupted by their social history or circumstance. According to Rousseau, people can overcome this corruption by rebuilding themselves as political actors with strong democratic principles. His notion of "self-rule" influenced the development of both American democracy and international governing bodies ("The Child of the Enlightenment" 1996).

David Hume

David Hume (1711-1776), a key actor in the Scottish Enlightenment, developed a philosophy of naturalism based on the notion that reality can only be investigated with the scientific method. Hume, along with Adam Smith, author of The Wealth of Nations, defined the direction and developments

of the Scottish Enlightenment. David Hume, and the eighteenth century Scottish Enlightenment as a whole, explored the relationship between commercial society, self-interest, and personal relationships. Hume's work on personal relationships has influenced social theories of friendships and relationships for the last two hundred years (Silver, 1990).

Immanuel Kant

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) was a German philosopher who believed actions were just if they were motivated by duty rather than profit or gain. His work continues to influence contemporary conceptions of morality and punishment. Kant wrote about his theory of the categorical imperative in The Metaphysics of Morals. A categorical imperative refers to Kant's belief that all people have one central imperative that dictates all of their duties and obligations. Kant's philosophy of the categorical imperative attempted to make morality a universal principal (Baghai, 2006).

Jeremy Bentham

Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), an English philosopher, developed the ethical philosophy of utilitarianism. Utilitarianism, often considered a guide to moral behavior, promotes the belief that acts must be judged based solely on their results. Bentham wrote of his ethical stances in Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislations, and his principle of utilitarianism also continues to influence contemporary conceptions of morality, behavior, and punishment (Baghai, 2006).

Discourse

Sociology's Roots in Enlightenment Thought

Nineteenth and twentieth century social theorists have borrowed critical ideas from Enlightenment-era thought, including the equality of all people, just rule, the importance of scientific inquiry and knowledge, the role of structure in predicting and controlling human behavior, and the connection between private property, oppression, and inequality. Classical sociology of the nineteenth century, building on Enlightenment thought and practice, is characterized by rationality, scientific inquiry, and a belief in empirical truths. Like Enlightenment-era thinkers, the key theorists of classical sociology belonged to the diverse fields of religion, ethics, philosophy, law, and

economics. Early European sociologists were concerned with the systematic study of patterns of social behavior and the rapid social change created by industrialization and modernization. Classical sociology was concerned with the organization and behavior of complex industrial societies.

Sociology's foundations can be found in the rational empiricism of the Enlightenment, as well as the political, economic, and social upheaval and socio-political change of nineteenth century Europe. European intellectuals, including Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Georg Simmel, developed the basic tenets of sociology to help explain the social change they saw around them (D'Antonio, 1992). Nineteenth century social theorists, much like the Enlightenment philosophers, sought to understand why socio-political change was happening and whether the changes were harmful or beneficial to society. European intellectuals, philosophers, politicians, historians, and social scientists worked to understand and, in some instances, halt the socio-political changes that occurred in nineteenth century Europe.

The influence of the Enlightenment era's scientific thinking can be seen in the work of classical sociologist Herbert Spencer. Spencer (1820-1903), an English sociologist and philosopher, believed that societies moved from simple to complex. Spencer, a functionalist, believed that social structures function to meet the needs of society. Spencer developed his theory of social Darwinism, and related phrase "survival of the fittest," to argue that only the fittest members of a society survive and succeed. In addition, Spencer developed a theory of the superorganic, or the elements of society beyond individuals that account for group behavior. This theory later influenced Durkheim's theory of collective conscience. Spencer's published three volumes of work: Principles of Sociology (1896), Descriptive Sociology (1873-81) and The Study of Sociology (1873). In Principles of Sociology, Spencer attempted to explain in a scientific manner the relations, co-existence, and sequence among social phenomena. Spencer's scientific approach to the study of social phenomena and society, with roots in Enlightenment thought and practice, influenced the direction of the fields of both sociology and anthropology (Carneiro & Perrin, 2003).

Enlightenment thinkers were the first to conceptualize knowledge, personality, and consciousness as a social product. Enlightenment thinkers like

Rousseau felt that oppression and inequality were created by the acquisition and ownership of private property and believed that people were shaped by both nature and society. This Enlightenment concern for the effects of private property can be seen in the works of German philosopher and economics Karl Marx (1818-1883), who was one of the first nineteenth century scholars to identify society as a system of social relationships. He studied processes of worker alienation and objectification and developed a theory of worker alienation which argued that workers experience a lack of control and self-realization in the labor process. Marx believed economics was the primary force that shaped society. He argued that the system of capitalism created societies in which the increasing value of the material world devalued people and society. Marx believed the history of human society was primarily shaped by economic conflict between owners and laborers. He also worked to discover how the disenfranchised could create social change to improve their social and financial situations. Social change, according to Marx, could only occur through conflict between workers and the dominant classes (Yuill, 2005).

Enlightenment philosophy bequeathed the notion to classical sociologists, and social scientists in general, that social structure influences and predicts actions. The Enlightenment era's concern for social structure can be seen in the work of classical sociologists Emile Durkheim and Georg Simmel. For example, Durkheim (1855-1917) was concerned with the problem of the individual in society as well as issues of solidarity and social cohesion. According to Durkheim, it is people's social roles or functions that hold society together. He developed the theories of organic solidarity, which relates the bonds of a population of people with their employment, labor, and social roles, and mechanical solidarity, the bonding of a small group of people around similar interests, values, and beliefs. Over the course of his life, Durkheim moved from a macro focus on structural processes to a micro focus on social, psychological, and interpersonal processes such as co-presence, ritual, interaction, and emotional arousal. To learn how individuals related to society, he studied the social structure, societal norms, laws, community, groups, and societal roles in French society.

In his research, Durkheim looked for the causes and functions of social phenomena. Durkheim may be most famous for his observations about suicide among certain social groups. Durkheim's research on suicide rates

illustrates his interest in the power of social cohesion as well as his commitment to quantitative research methods. Durkheim, in his famous work Suicide (1897), showed that suicide was influenced more by social structure than individual choice or agency. Structure refers the social facts that surround and mark people including race, class, sex, gender, institutions, organizational hierarchies, roles, and geographical location. Agency refers to a person's capacity to decide and act within the constraints of social facts or challenge constraints (Turner 1990).

Like Enlightenment philosophers and Durkheim before him, German sociologist Georg Simmel (1858-1918) was also concerned with social structure and sociability. Simmel researched and wrote extensively about the nature of association, culture, social structure, the city, and the economy. Simmel's work on the metropolis was particularly relevant during the 19th century as landscapes changed from agricultural to urban. During the 19th century, the metropolis or city became a location characterized by a division of labor and individuality or individual freedom. Simmel's ability to understand and analyze individual action within the context of social structures made his work relevant and interesting throughout the 19th and 20th centuries (Nooteboom 2006).

Contemporary sociologists of the late 20th century broke with Enlightenment era's focus on structure to develop theories that blend structure and agency. For example, sociologist Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration acknowledges the influence of both structure and agency (Jackson, 2006). Anthony Giddens, born in 1938, is best known for his theory of structuration, which looks for meaning in social practices ordered across space and time rather than in the actions of individual actors. Structuration mediates the micro/macro and structure/agent dichotomies that characterize much of contemporary social theory. Giddens was critical of classical functionalism and structuralism for overlooking the role of actors in society. Giddens predicted that a new synthesis would occur in sociology to replace the competing sociological theories of the past century (Camic & Gross, 1998).

Ultimately, sociology has very deep roots in the European Enlightenment. Enlightenment thought is alive today in sociology's applied efforts to improve human rights, the scientific nature of sociological inquiry, and sociology's continued focus on the influence of social structure on human behavior.

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Sociology in the Nineteenth-Century

Simone I. Flynn

Overview

Sociology, as a field of study, emerged in early nineteenth century Europe as European society and politics were changing as a result of revolution, warfare, reform, industrialization, and urbanization. In response to the changes in the socio-political climate, European scholars, including August Comte, Herbert Spencer, Georg Simmel, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, and Max Weber, developed theories and principles to examine and understand society, in some instances with the hope of restoring order to it. This diverse body of theories and principles became the foundation for the modern discipline of sociology (Turner, 1990).

Understanding the history of nineteenth century sociology, including the socio-political influences and main actors, is vital background for all those interested in sociology as well as social theory as a whole. This article explains the history of nineteenth century sociology in three parts:

An overview of the social and political changes that occurred in Europe during the nineteenth century. This section will describe how the forces of industrialization and urbanization influenced sociology's development.

A description of the ways in which European intellectuals, in particular Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Georg Simmel, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, and Max Weber, responded to nineteenth century socio-political events, and how their works defined the field of sociology.

A discussion of the changes that occurred in the field of sociology over the course of the nineteenth century. In particular, the changes that occurred as sociological theory spread from Europe to America at the end of the century.

Europe in the Nineteenth Century

The social, intellectual, and political conditions of nineteenth century Europe had a strong influence on early sociological theory. The European industrial era, which spanned from approximately 1750 to 1900, was characterized by the replacement of manual labor with industrialized and mechanized labor and the adoption of the factory system of production. The industrial era included the period of the industrial revolution and the resulting rise of capitalism. The industrial revolution refers to the technical, cultural, and social changes that occurred in the Western world during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The movement, which began gathering force in approximately 1760 and ended around 1830, started in Britain and had spread to Europe and North America by the early nineteenth century. It was driven by technological innovation as industry and trade eclipsed farming and agriculture as regional sources of income. Across Europe, it promulgated the rise of capitalism, an economic system in which the means of production are privately owned (Ahmad, 1997).

The industrial revolution brought with it great social change as it created new types and conceptions of employment, time, scale, landscape, property, and familial and community relationships. Social, gender and class hierarchies; family units; gender relations; immigrants' roles into society; and the conception of childhood were all affected. The revolution, with its increased need for workers, created a new working, middle, and consumer classes. However, the factory system of production (as seen, for example, in textile mills) also reinforced and maintained class relations by establishing a hierarchical and supervised workforce (Mellor, 2003). By separating the place of production from the domestic setting, the factory system created a divide between work and home life, too. The family unit and gender roles changed during the industrial revolution largely as a result of shifts in types of employment available for both men and women. They no longer labored in households or on farms, but now inside factories. In some industries, women and children worked alongside men (Abelson, 1995).

The socio-political changes that occurred during the industrial era in Europe were not wholly accepted across society. Sectors of society protested and rebelled. For example, the Luddites, led by General Ned Ludd, rejected the fast pace of social change and advocated a slower, natural pace and lifestyle. In 1811, they organized English craftsmen to riot and protest against the changes created by the industrial revolution (Kirkpatrick, 1999). In addition, the nineteenth century saw a significant and growing protest against child labor. The roots of sociology as a tool for social reform can be traced back to these early signs of social conscience and social protest.

Further Insights

Nineteenth Century Intellectuals & Their Influence on Sociology

European intellectuals like Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Georg Simmel, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber developed the basic tenets of sociology to help explain the socio-political changes they saw around them and determine whether they were harmful or beneficial to society (D'Antonio 1992). These nineteenth century intellectuals would later become known as the classical theorists and founders of sociology. Though they all began their work in diverse fields like religion, ethics, philosophy, law, and economics, over time, their ideas were grouped together to become a discrete field called sociology.

Auguste Comte

Auguste Comte (1798-1857), a French philosopher, is widely known as the "father of sociology." Wising to use science to rationalize and explain the social phenomena he saw occurring in France at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Comte coined to term "sociology" to describe his scientific approach to the study of society, seeing the field as a branch of the natural sciences, or type of social physics. He believed society progressed through three stages: theological, metaphysical, and positive. According to Comte, the positive, or scientific stage, during which the natural laws governing social phenomena would be uncovered, could and would restore order to society.

Comte developed the philosophy of positivism to this end of understanding the social world through scientific approach and scientific reason. Doubtful that metaphysical speculation can yield useful knowledge, positivism seeks to understand phenomena by empirically observing and de-

scribing them, asking not "why" a phenomenon occurs, but simply "how." Comte believed that by understanding the underlying principles of the scientific process, people could achieve positive social change.

During Comte's lifetime, France was experiencing the social protest, unrest, and disorder caused by the destruction of the ancien regime and the aftermath of the French Revolution. Comte believed his historical epoch was characterized by a crisis in community values and a destructive spread of individualism. According to him, a socio-political system founded on positivism had the potential to restore social consensus and order. Comte believed that positivism in France had the potential to revolutionize and regenerate French society (Ferrarotti, 1990).

Herbert Spencer

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), an English sociologist and philosopher, believing that societies moved from simplicity to complexity, developed the analogy of society as an organism, or an independently functioning living thing. According to Spencer, society, like an organism, represents a system with structures and functions as well as a certain level of evolutionary advancement based on its structural form. Spencer, a structural functionalist, believed that social structures function to meet the needs of society.

Spencer is perhaps best known for his theory of social Darwinism, and the related phrase "survival of the fittest," which argued that only the fittest members of society survive and succeed. In addition, Spencer developed a theory of the superorganic, or the elements of society that influence and explain group behavior, which later influenced Durkheim's theory of collective conscience. Spencer published three volumes of work: Principles of Sociology (1896), Descriptive Sociology (1873-81) and The Study of Sociology (1873). In Principles of Sociology, a monstrous 2,240 page book, he attempted to explain in a scientific manner the relations, co-existence, and sequence among social phenomena. His scientific approach to the study of social phenomena and society laid the groundwork for the field anthropology as well as sociology (Carneiro & Perrin, 2003).

Georg Simmel

Georg Simmel (1858-1918), a German sociologist, was concerned with social structure and sociability. He researched and wrote extensively about the

nature of association, culture, social structure, the city, and the economy. His work was a major influence on Durkheim and Weber as well as nineteenth century European intellectual life as a whole. Of particular relevance to the nineteenth century, was his work on the metropolis, which reflected the period's urbanizing landscape. During this time, the metropolis or city was characterized by a division of labor and individuality or individual freedom. Simmel's ability to understand and analyze individual action within the context of social structures made his work relevant and interesting throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. His most well-known works are The Metropolis and Mental Life (1903) and The Philosophy of Money (1907) (Nooteboom, 2006).

Karl Marx

Karl Marx (1818-1883), a German philosopher and economist, was one of the first scholars to identify society as a system of social relationships, and economics, capitalism, and production as major social forces. Marx believed the history of human society was primarily shaped by economic conflict between owners and laborers, and argued that the emerging system of capitalism was creating societies in which the increased value of the material world devalued people and society. He also studied processes of worker alienation and objectification, and developed a theory of worker alienation which argued that workers experience a lack of control and self-realization in the labor process. As a result, he worked to determine how the disenfranchised could create social change to improve their social and financial situations, finally concluding that social change could only occur through challenges to the power of the dominant classes (Yuill 2005).

Marx's theories of society were influenced by social revolutions and challenges to the established social order initiated by lower classes, namely the French Revolution and Bolshevik Revolution. His analysis of specific political events and rebellions in France illustrates the way in which nineteenth century sociology developed in response to the events and happenings of the day (Hayes 1993).

Emile Durkheim

Emile Durkheim (1855-1917), a protégé of Comte, was a French sociologist concerned with the problem of the relationship between the individual

and society, as well as issues of solidarity and social cohesion. According to Durkheim, it is people's social roles, or functions, that hold society together. He developed the theories of organic solidarity, the bonding of a population of people through their employment, labor, and social roles; and mechanical solidarity, the bonding of a small group of people around similar interests, values, and beliefs. Both types of solidarity, he believed, promote social cohesion and collective conscience.

Over the course of his life, Durkheim moved from a macro focus on structural processes to a micro focus on social, psychological, and interpersonal processes, such as co-presence, ritual, interaction, and emotional arousal. To learn how individuals related to society, he studied the social structure, societal norms, laws, communities, groups, and social roles of French society. Durkheim may be most famous for his research on the suicide rates among certain social groups, which illustrated his interest in the power of social cohesion, as well as his commitment to quantitative research methods.

Durkheim's theories of cultural differentiation and structural differentiation influenced nineteenth century sociology by explaining how cultural and social structures could foster social cohesion and divisiveness. Cultural differentiation refers to the idea that the degree of consensus over cognitive orientations and cultural codes among the members of a population is related to their interpersonal interaction, level of emotional arousal, and rate of ritual performance. Structural differentiation, a term borrowed from Spencer, refers to the idea that the degree of differentiation among a population is related to the level of competition among these actors, the rate of growth in this population, the extent of the ecological concentration of this population, and the rate of population mobility (Turner 1990).

Max Weber

Max Weber (1864-1920), a German politician, historian, economist, and sociologist who dedicated a large part of his work to the study of religion, is considered one of the founders of sociology. Weber, a leader in social theory, was a proponent of the interpretive method of sociological study, which entailed studying the meanings people attach to their social environments and daily lives. Out of concern for the "problem of meaning," he worked to understand how actors, or individuals in society, created meaning for themselves and others.

During the nineteenth century, Germany, Weber's country of birth, underwent extreme socio-political change as it transitioned from separate states into a unified nation state. The political turmoil combined with the urbanization, reform, and industrialization that spread across Europe made Germany rich ground for sociological investigation and analyses. Weber chose to study authority and power in German organizations as a means of understanding the social tensions he saw around him. His classical theory of organization focused on organizational bureaucracy. He established a set of rules that defined both how an organization should function and who should be a part of the organization. Weber's ideal bureaucracy was an organization characterized by hierarchy of authority, impersonality, written rules of conduct, promotion based on achievement, specialized division of labor, and efficiency. Weber warned his country that the owners and bosses of bureaucratic organizations, who were largely self-appointed leaders with great social, political, and economic power, could and would control their workers' quality of life.

In addition to his work on authority and power in organizations, Weber made significant contribution to the field of rural sociology. He studied rural populations and contemporary rural problems, such as labor-landowner relations and the divide between industrial and agricultural workers, to document and understand the change brought about by industrialization and urbanization. Weber's most famous work is The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (Munters 1972).

Discourse

A Century of Change

The field of sociology changed significantly over the course of the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the century, sociology was a collection of loosely grouped scientific principles developed by European thinkers and intellectuals. Early European sociologists were concerned with the systematic study of patterns of social behavior and the rapid social change created by industrialization and modernization. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, sociology was an established, international field of study, as was affirmed by the founding of the International Institute of Sociology in 1893. Sociology had also distinguished itself from the closely related field of anthropology.

Early nineteenth century European sociology existed largely outside of colleges and universities, and was qualitative, philosophical, and epistemological in nature. The European founders of sociology, such as Comte, were not affiliated with universities. It wasn't until 1895 that Europe's first sociology department was established by Emile Durkheim at the University of Bordeaux.

In contrast, once sociology reached North America, it was quickly institutionalized and incorporated into academic departments (Sorokin 1929). The field became a recognized academic disciple in the late 1890s when American universities like the University of Chicago and Columbia University established their influential sociology departments. The University of Chicago's Chicago School of Sociology focused on fieldwork and the sociology of urban regions, and, in 1895, began publishing the American Journal of Sociology. Meanwhile, Columbia University focused on developing quantitative and statistical sociology in the United States.

The spread of sociological theory and principles from Europe to North America at the end of the nineteenth century enriched and strengthened the field. European sociology was characterized by a collective orientation that focused on whole classes and social groups. In contrast, American sociology was characterized by individualism, and a focus on the individual's behavior. The American concern with the individual facilitated the collection of statistical data and quantitative analysis. By the early 20th century, social reformers were using sociological perspectives and applied research methods to promote social change and social justice.

Conclusion

The field of sociology developed in response to the nineteenth century European socio-political climate which was characterized by revolution, warfare, reform, industrialization, and urbanization. The key contributors to early sociology, such as Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Georg Simmel, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber, developed their sociological theories and principles in response to changes which were, in large part, brought about the industrial era. The force of the industrial revolution in Europe influenced the development of sociology's main concerns, including social cohesion, organization, power, authority, and social identity.

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Durkheim's Mechanical & Organic Solidarity

Jennifer Kretchmar

Overview

When Emile Durkheim began his university teaching career in France in the mid-nineteenth century, sociology did not yet exist as a separate academic discipline. Known as one of its founding fathers, Durkheim spent much of his early career establishing sociology as a field of study that would offer a different perspective on society than that already offered by psychology and philosophy (Ritzer, 2008; McIntosh, 1997). First and foremost, Durkheim believed social life should be studied empirically - in much the same way one might study the natural sciences - by observing and measuring what he called social facts (Ritzer, 2008). Secondly, Durkheim believed society could be understood only by observing individuals in interaction with one another; "society," he wrote, "is not a mere sum of individuals" (as cited in Ritzer, 2008, p. 78). Although Durkheim was met with opposition – from psychologists and philosophers in particular - he was successful in creating a "separate and identifiable niche" for sociology (Ritzer, 2008, p. 75).

In order to understand Durkheim's contribution to sociology, it's important to first understand the cultural and political landscape in which he lived and worked. His academic interests were largely informed by the changes he saw taking place around him. As McIntosh (1997) writes, "It is now part of the familiar history of sociology to state that it 'came of

age' during two great transformations: the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution" (p. 3). The French Revolution challenged traditional forms of authority, emphasizing instead the ideals of liberty, equality, and democracy. The individual, and his or her inherent rights, were at the forefront of revolutionaries' minds. At the same time, society was becoming increasingly industrialized. Workers were moving from farms to factories, becoming more specialized in their jobs and skills, thereby creating an economic and urban landscape never before seen.

The changes that accompanied the shift from a traditional society to a modern one became the central concern of sociologists, and for Durkheim as well. Specifically, Durkheim turned his attention to two fundamental questions: the relationship between the individual and society, and the moral health of society as a whole (Marske, 1987). Given the increasing division of labor and accompanying specialization, Durkheim wondered how society would continue to be 'held together.' Would individualism weaken or strengthen social bonds? Secondly, Durkheim was worried about how the shift from traditionalism to modernity would impact society's moral fabric. A colleague of Durkheim's wrote, "one will fail to understand his works if one does not take account of the fact that morality was their center and object" (cited in Ritzer, 2008, p. 78).

Mechanical & Organic Solidarity

Durkheim characterized societies according to the types of bonds that brought people together, and the ways in which individuals perceived themselves as part of a larger whole – in other words, according to the nature of its solidarity. For Durkheim, there were just two fundamental types of solidarity - mechanical and organic. What differentiated one from the other, he argued, was the role of the individual in relation to the larger group, as well as the nature of a society's shared beliefs, or collective conscience. As societies became increasingly modern, they changed along both these dimensions.

The Collective Conscience

In traditional, primitive societies, families are largely self-sufficient. People grow their own food, make their own clothes, and raise and educate their own children. The bond among individuals is strengthened by their

shared experience. In addition to their shared experience, however, people in primitive societies also have a common belief system. The collective conscience of primitive societies, Durkheim observed, is typically religious in nature, rigid, and pervasive (Ritzer, 2008). In primitive societies with mechanical solidarity, it is the strength of the collective conscience that provides the moral foundation for the community.

In modern, organic societies the role of the individual begins to shift. As people move from the farm to the factory, their skills and jobs become more specialized. No longer self-sufficient, the modern family must depend on other people in the community for their survival – someone else to grow their food, make their clothes, and teach their children. The maxim in such societies, Durkheim wrote, is to "equip yourself to fulfill usefully a specific function" (as cited in McIntosh, 1997, p. 183). Importantly, Durkheim recognized that the division of labor that characterized economic life also characterized other facets of social life – politics, education, law, and even academics. Such societies were more complex than primitive societies, and as a result, the collective conscience diminished. The belief system was shared by fewer people, became less religious in content, and was less rigidly imposed.

Division of Labor

According to Durkheim, the increasing division of labor in modern societies fulfilled an important function. Communities were becoming more heavily populated, leading to increased competition for scarce resources and therefore a more intense struggle for survival (Ritzer, 2008). The division of labor allowed individuals to complement rather than conflict with one another. Specialization also led to increased efficiency, and made resources more abundant. As Ritzer (2008) writes, "In societies with organic solidarity, less competition and more differentiation allow people to cooperate more and to all be supported by the same resource base. Individuality, then, is not the opposite of close social bonds but a requirement for them" (p. 87).

By emphasizing the relationship between increasing specialization and interdependence, Durkheim was able to show how solidarity and individualism could go hand in hand. "The evolution from traditionalism to modernity, according to Durkheim, paradoxically expands the role of the

state while simultaneously increasing the level of individualism in society" (Marske, 1987, p. 1). But Durkheim had another agenda – to prove that modernity didn't necessitate, as many of his colleagues believed, moral decline. As Giddens (1971) writes, "The main proposition developed in the Division of Labor is that modern complex society is not, in spite of the declining significance of traditional moral beliefs, inevitably tending toward [moral] disintegration" (Giddens, 1971, p. 72). If the collective conscience or moral fabric of society diminishes with increasing modernity, as Durkheim acknowledge it did, how could society maintain its moral health?

Durkheim acknowledged that along with modernity came increasing complexity and diversity of thought. He argued, however, that the collective conscience survived with respect to one belief – the importance of the individual. Marske (1987) writes, "The individual is eventually seen by Durkheim as the sole surviving form of mechanical solidarity in modern society. In advanced societies where organic solidarity predominates, the deepest most significant [shared] value…focuses on the rights and dignity of the individual" (p. 2). Durkheim even suggested that societies' shared belief in the dignity of the individual would become a secular religion, and replace more traditional religions like Christianity (Marske, 1987). Importantly, however, Durkheim's individual refers to man in the abstract, rather than a specific person per se, and moral individualism promotes respect for humanity, rather than self-interest or egoism.

Durkheim believed the shift from traditionalism to modernity was a natural progression that produced a "higher" type of social order, but he recognized that problems could arise during transition (Marske, 1987). In other words, he believed division of labor would produce stability and solidarity, but only under the right conditions. If the structure of a society changed too rapidly, Durkheim argued, the accompanying moral code might not have time to develop. Indeed, the changes he observed in his own time were seismic. Durkheim wrote, "Profound changes have been produced in the structure of our societies in a very short time…the morality [of traditional societies]…has regressed, but without another developing quickly enough to fill the ground that the first left vacant in our consciences" (as cited in Marske, 1987, p. 4). As a result, Durkheim characterized societies along a continuum, from the healthy to the pathological.

The Pathological Society

Durkheim was as interested in changing society as he was in studying it; he wanted to understand the root causes of pathology so that he could help cure what he viewed as a modern 'crisis' (Marske, 1987). According to Durkheim, pathological societies were caused by three different forms of abnormal divisions of labor – anomic division, forced division, and poorly coordinated division (Ritzer, 2008). In anomic division of labor, societies are characterized by a lack of regulation, so that people no longer have "a clear concept of what is proper and acceptable" (Ritzer, 2008, p. 88). In fact, without sufficient external constraint, Durkheim believed humans would become slaves to their passions; the desire to always want more. "Consequently, Durkheim held the seemingly paradoxical view that the individual needs morality and external control in order to be free" (Ritzer, 2008, p. 79). Anomic division of labor is also characterized by fragmentation and isolation, so that people often feel separate from the people who work and live around them.

Pathology could also result from a second abnormal division of labor that Durkheim referred to as forced division of labor. When the division of labor is forced, individuals are assigned jobs for which they might not be well-suited. Instead of assigning people to positions based on talent, qualifications, and interest, jobs are assigned using outdated norms and criteria – such as status, tradition, or power (Ritzer, 2008). Finally, when the division of labor is poorly coordinated, solidarity is compromised as well. Because individuals are dependent upon one another, each person must do his or her part efficiently, and not reproduce work being done by another individual.

Just as Durkheim believed social pathology resulted from abnormalities in economic structure, he believed the economic life of a society could present a solution as well. Concerned with the increasing isolation and fragmentation that accompanied the rapid shift toward modernity, Durkheim believed 'occupational groups' might help fill the void. He saw a decline in the influence of religion, the government, and even geographical ties to one another (Marske, 1987) and a corresponding growth in the significance of economic life. But in his view, occupational groups would serve both economic and moral ends. As he envisioned them, occupational groups

would "provide an intense, meaningful group life through recreational, educational, and mutual aid activities. Such a revival of associational life would help to curtail both bureaucratic centralization and egoistic individualism" (Marske, 1987, p. 9).

Further Insights

In the course of developing his theory of mechanical and organic solidarity, Durkheim addressed various aspects of social life. His discussions of crime and suicide, in particular, brought him a great deal of notoriety – not only because they further defined the two types of solidarity, but because they further differentiated sociology from psychology and philosophy. More specifically, Durkheim highlighted the ways in which both crime and suicide, seemingly individual acts, were also social in nature. And he used empirical evidence to support his claims. Thus, his analyses of crime and suicide were critical in establishing sociology as a viable field.

On Crime

Durkheim argued that society should be studied by measuring and observing what he called social facts, or "the social structures and cultural norms and values that are external to, and coercive of, actors" (Ritzer, 2008 p. 75). Of the two broad types of social facts – material and nonmaterial – only the first kind could be directly observed. Nonmaterial facts – things like morality and collective conscience – were of great interest to Durkheim, but had to be inferred from changes in material facts. Thus, Durkheim studied the laws governing different types of society as a way to better understand the nature of their shared beliefs. McIntosh (1997) explains, "The form of punishment meted out to those who undertake a 'criminal' act is seen by Durkheim to be a visible indicator of the strength of the 'conscience collective'" (p. 185).

Before discussing the different types of laws governing mechanical and organic solidarity, it's important to understand Durkheim's perspective on crime. Durkheim was the first to suggest that an act is criminal not because of some inherent characteristic of the act, but rather because of society's reaction to it. He writes, "we must not say than an action shocks the conscience collective because it is criminal, but rather that it is criminal because it shocks the conscience collective. We do not condemn it because

it is a crime, but it is a crime because we condemn it" (as cited in McIntosh, 1997, p. 186). Secondly, Durkheim argued that crime is normal, not pathological, and is a characteristic of all societies; crime serves a useful function, in helping societies define their collective conscience (Ritzer, 2008).

How then do traditional and modern societies react to crime? What kinds of laws are in place to address violations of the collective conscience? According to Durkheim, societies held together by mechanical solidarity employ repressive laws. As Ritzer (2008) explains "because people are very similar in this type of society, and because they tend to believe strongly in a common morality, any offense against their shared value system is likely to be a significance to most individuals" (p. 87). As a result, crimes are typically punished severely. On the other hand, because organic societies have a less unified belief system, 'criminal acts' are typically viewed as offenses against particular people, rather than the community as a whole. Wrongdoers are asked to make amends with those they harmed; such laws are called restitutive, rather than repressive.

On Suicide

Durkheim's decision to study suicide was a strategic one. If he could prove that sociology had something to say about what people viewed as one of the most personal and private acts, sociology could more easily extend its reach into other subject matter as well (Ritzer, 2008). Whereas most people had studied suicide from the perspective of the individual – what was his or her motive? personality? the antecedent events? – Durkheim wanted to study variations in suicide rates across countries and time. "If various societies were predisposed to different rates of suicide then this would seem to require not a psychological explanation but a sociological one" (McIntosh, 1997, p. 212).

Durkheim believed different suicide rates could be explained in relation to two underlying social facts – integration and regulation (Ritzer, 2008). Integration refers to the strength of attachment any one person feels toward his or her community or society, while regulation describes the degree of external constraint operating on individuals within society. Suicide rates increase, Durkheim hypothesized, when a society has either too much or too little of either dimension. Thus, he identified four different types of suicide:

- Egoistic (low integration);
- Altruistic (high integration);
- Fatalistic (high regulation); and
- Anomic (low regulation).

A brief description of each follows:

Egoistic suicide: Egoistic suicide occurs in societies in which the individual is not well integrated into the larger group. Lack of social integration, Durkheim argued, could lead to currents of depression and disillusionment (Ritzer, 2008) such that the futility and meaninglessness of life dominate politics, morality, and religion. Durkheim demonstrated that suicide rates go down during times of national crises – such as war – when levels of integration are high whereas suicide rates are higher for those who are unmarried or less integrated with family.

Altruistic suicide: Altruistic suicide occurs in societies in which integration is too high. As Ritzer (2008) writes, "the individual is literally forced into committing suicide" (p. 92). Durkheim provides specific examples of societies that prescribe death for their members in specific circumstances – suicides of women upon the death of her husband, for example, or the suicide of servants upon the death of their chiefs. Durkheim writes, "Now, when a person kills himself, in all these cases, it is not because he assumed the right to do so but, on the contrary, because it is his duty" (as cited in McIntosh, 1997, p. 222).

Fatalistic suicide: Fatalistic suicide occurs when a society is governed by excessive regulation. Durkheim devoted little attention to this particular type of suicide, but described the victim of fatalistic suicide as one who has been significantly oppressed (Ritzer, 2008). A prisoner, for example, may choose to end his life rather than continue to have his every movement regulated.

Anomic suicide: Anomic suicide occurs when societies have too little regulation. Durkheim suggested anomic suicide rates would increase with both positive and negative disruptions of regulation – that is, during times of economic boom and depression. In either case, such societies lack sufficient moral constraint, such that individuals are left to pursue their own

desires and whims indefinitely. Durkheim wrote, "irrespective of any external regulatory force, our capacity for feeling is in itself an insatiable and bottomless abyss. Unlimited desires are insatiable by definition and insatiability is rightly considered a sign of morbidity" (as cited in McIntosh, 1997, p. 224).

Durkheim concluded that suicide, like crime, was a normal part of social life. He believed, however, that egoistic and anomic suicide rates had reached pathological levels in modern society. Society needed, he argued, higher levels of integration and regulation.

Viewpoints

Although Durkheim is considered a founding father of sociology, and his contribution to the field widely recognized, his work has not escaped criticism. Modern day sociologists acknowledge the flawed and unfinished nature of some of his work as readily as they acknowledge his genius. As Pope and Johnson (1983) write, "The Division of Labor has long occasioned puzzlement and ambivalence among sociologists" (p. 690). And Marske (1987) adds that coming to a clear understanding of Durkheim's use of individualism is a formidable task, because he was often "general, theoretical, and at times vague" (p. 13). In other words, although Durkheim preached empiricism, he often fell short in his own work.

Some of the confusion surrounding Durkheim's work stems from the fact that his ideas evolved over time. As Pope and Johnson (1983) note, after the publication of The Division of Labor, Durkheim never again returned to the distinction between organic and mechanical solidarity. As Parsons (1949) writes, "it was in the conception of the conscience collective that the germ of most of his later theoretical development lay" and that "gradually the conscience collective came more and more to overshadow the conception of organic solidarity" (as cited in Pope & Johnson, 1983, p. 690). Indeed, Pope and Johnson (1983) argue that Durkheim had no other course than to abandon organic solidarity, due to logical inconsistencies and ambiguities. Nevertheless, The Division of Labor and its theory of mechanical and organic solidarity served an important function – that of securing a foothold for both Durkheim and sociology in the humanities.

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Durkheim & Social Facts

PD Casteel

Overview

Introduction

French social theorist Emile Durkheim (1858 – 1917) is broadly regarded as one of the founders of modern sociology. Durkheim's work focused on establishing sociology on a firm foundation of scientific methodology and the incorporation of this new social science into academia (Pickering, 1999). Durkheim, a son of a rabbi, was born in French province of Lorraine. He attended the prestigious École Normale Supérieure and studied philosophy despite his desire to pursue a social science. Unable to receive an appointment in Paris he moved to Germany for a year to continue his studies until he received an appointment at University of Bordeaux. There Durkheim established the first European department of sociology, founded and edited the first sociological journal, and authored many of most influential early studies in sociology. At the heart of Durkheim's work was the desire to establish a scientific methodology that could objectively observe and analyze the social instead of the individual. In order to do this it was necessary to have social things that were separate and distinguishable from individuals. To this end Durkheim crafted the concept of "social facts." A social fact is a social practice, rule, duty, or sanction that exists outside of the individual. Durkheim believed the study of social facts could uncover universal social laws. These laws could then be used to judge a society's well-being (Morrison, 2006). What Durkheim did was give sociologists

a field of things to study which he thought essential to separating sociology from the disciplines of psychology and biology (Schmidt, 1995). With social facts as subject matter to observe and analyze, sociology as social science was positioned to become an established discipline in academia and an instrument to uncovering the ills of society.

Montesquieu & Social Phenomena

Durkheim identified Charles Montesquieu (1689 – 1755) as the intellectual who foreshadowed the unity of social science. It was Montesquieu, in Durkheim's opinion, who identified the relationships between social phenomena. Social phenomena, such as religion, law, morality, trade, and administration, seem to differ in nature, but are in fact interrelated and elements of a whole. It was Durkheim's belief that these phenomena existed separately from the individual and could only be understood in reference to each other. Durkheim changed Montesquieu's term to social facts and reiterated his position concisely that social facts can only be understood through other social facts. Durkheim wrote that though Montesquieu did not pursue the conclusion to these principles, he did pave the way for his successors in instituting sociology (Durkheim, 1960).

Comte & Positivism

Durkheim was greatly influenced by the work of Auguste Comte (1798-1857). It was Comte's project to set sociology (a term Comte coined) on the firm foundation of mathematical certainty and a positive scientific methodology (positivism). By doing this Comte hoped to establish sociology as an academic discipline. Positivism is a system Comte developed to understand society. Comte believed that society evolved through three stages: theological, metaphysical, and the positive. The positive stage is characterized by individuals who gathered knowledge through observation and affirmed this observation through the positive (scientific) method. Comte believed this process would allow individuals to identify problems in the world and thus govern themselves (Comte, 1988). Though Comte's influence would be significant, he was unable to establish sociology in academia. In at least two areas Durkheim's work can be seen as a continuation of Comte's project. First, Durkheim outlined some of the fundamental ideas of a social science and its methodological approach. Second, it was Durkheim who successfully introduced sociology into academia.

Though Durkheim is greatly influenced by Comte's positivism and Durkheim's social facts have become a defining attribute of positivism, Durkheim understood the limitations of the positivist's approach. According to Miller (1996), Durkheim believed scientific method "under the guise of positivism" only spreads "mystery everywhere." For Durkheim a philosophical understanding of the nature of society was essential. Scientific method without theory only clouded knowledge. The work of social science is to use scientific method to reveal the underlying laws of society (Miller, 1996). Understanding and ultimately, knowledge, doesn't arise from observation and scientific method, but rather from the underlying laws in the world. Though Durkheim didn't directly address the matter beyond this point, it can be assumed that an understanding of underlying laws remained the terrain of a philosophical approach.

Spencer & Progress

Comte's immediate successor was Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). Spencer adapted the ideas of Darwin and suggested a social order based on an evolutionary progress and survival of the fittest (Francis, 2007). Durkheim believed that Spencer was less interested in social facts and more focused on a philosophical approach that verified his evolutionary take on the social realm. Durkheim was careful in taking exception to Spenser's approach. If scientific evolution determined politics, economics, aesthetic, and morals then sociological explanation could too easily stray from observation and analysis and slip into ideology. Additionally, Spencer explained the formation of a society through its utilitarian relationships. Institutions created society through a cooperative utility that best reconciled interests and brought about greater happiness. For Spencer progress and utility were inseparable. Durkheim thought Spencer had explained the utility of social things, but failed to address the origin (Durkheim, 1982). Yet there was something to Spenser's philosophical approach. The progressive evolution of human society could be seen in the knowledge that survives each generation and joins that of the generation that follows. The social things that this progress left for the following generation appeared to be very similar to Durkheim's social facts. Additionally, Durkheim believed Spencer linked societies to the universe and the obscure forces that lay beneath the surface of the conscience collective. Durkheim was so enamored with Spencer's description of social evolution that he called progress the social fact par excellence (Durkheim, 1903).

Durkheim's Social Facts

Social facts are primarily social practices, rules, institutions, or sanctions. In The Rules of the Sociological Method (1982) Durkheim defines social facts in great detail. Social facts are:

- Different from psychological and biological facts
- A law or custom external to the individual
- Deontological in that they require and obligation or duty
- Coercive
- There are varying levels of social facts
- Social facts are general
- Statistics allow us to isolate social facts
- Social facts form a whole

Social facts are not psychological or biological facts. They exist separate from the individual. In society every individual eats, drinks, sleeps, and reasons and society has an interest in these functions that occur regularly. However, these functions are individual and biological, not social. If they were social then there would be no need for a separate discipline called sociology since psychology and biology could provide all explanations required. The individual body belongs to the domain of biology. The individual mind belongs to the domain of psychology. Social facts exist beyond both of these domains and cannot be explained by biology or psychology. This was an important issue to Durkheim, who was driven to complete Comte's project and establish sociology as its own academic discipline.

Social facts are laws and customs that are external to and precede the individual. They include how we are raised, educated, employed, and buried. They are linked together in the manner Montesquieu delineated and inherited from generations that came before the individual in the respect Spencer outlined. Social facts are not only prior to individuals, but individuals are born into them and enact them (McCormack, 1996). Durkheim leaves little room for individuals creating social facts, altering them, or reflexively coexisting with them. Durkheim believed that social facts were

things (McCormack, 1996). His effort to establish social things in no small way can be attributed to his efforts to give sociology the discipline an object to study (Pels, 2000). Social facts were also conduits to the very underpinnings of society. Social facts observed and analyzed revealed the universal or underlying laws of the world.

Characteristics of Social Facts

Social facts are deontological (not Durkheim's term). In ethics, a deontological action is taken out of duty or obligation as opposed to utility. This is where Durkheim breaks from Spencer. It is an important break since Durkheim maintains that the analysis of social facts will reveal "healthy" and "unhealthy" social societies (Thompson, 2002) When an individual fulfills an obligation or duty to family, friends, church, employer, or government they are responding to an institution of rules and practices (social facts) that informs the action. The action is taken because it is expected and deemed right or normal. It is the force of social facts felt on the collective conscience that make the action a duty. To not act in response to duty would be unethical. This element to Durkheim's construction of social facts should not be surprising, given his philosophical training and early preoccupation with ethics (Miller, 1996).

Social facts are coercive. They reflect a manner of thinking, feeling, and acting that is external to the individual. They utilize public surveillance of the collective to restrict any act that violates the social norm. Social facts inform how people eat, drink, sleep, play, work, and worship. They impose upon the individual constraints not developed by the individual.

Durkheim believed that social facts existed in varying degrees or levels of crystallization. A public gathering might cause a rise in enthusiasm or indignation. This might be seen as a "social current." This current is not created by an individual, but by a movement among many. This current consolidates or organizes into a collective manifestation and eventually organizes further into an institution. As a society becomes more advanced it reaches a point where it relies more heavily on these institutions (or social facts handed down) than new knowledge acquired (Emirbayer, 1996).

Social facts are general. That is to say they are shared by many across society or that they inform the collective conscience as opposed to the individual mind. What constitutes social facts are the beliefs, tendencies, and practices of society taken collectively. The individual could not be the starting point of sociology as he is in utilitarian philosophy. The "pre-social" individual no longer exists in modern societies (Thompson, 2002). The individual is tied up with the modern organic society and the organic self is about sentiments of attachments and solidarity. These relationships are anchored relationships guided by social facts (Miller, 1996).

Durkheim believed that the coercive characteristic of social facts had a measurable effect on society. This effect on the collective conscience could be measured and isolated with statistics. Thus, by analyzing marriage, birth, or suicide rates for example, a sociologist could identify the social current (social fact) informing the changes in society. Since the methodology includes individual cases without distinction, the specific individual motivations or circumstances that may have played some part in individual cases cancel each other out and leave only the social facts that inform the collective mind.

Finally, Durkheim returns to Montesquieu when he claims that a society's political structure is the only way in which various components, or social facts, have been able to become accustomed to one another. Society is a political society and political society is a network of social facts that exist outside and independent of the individual. More importantly, Durkheim argued that political society (the whole) was not comprised of individuals; rather individuals were derived from political society. The parts were derived from the whole (Durkheim, 1982).

Applications

How Durkheim applied his methodological approach can be seen in two of his most famous works, The Division of Labour and Suicide: A Study in Sociology. The Division of Labour was an early work and Durkheim introduced many of the elements that would inform his development of social facts. In Suicide, a mature Durkheim leverages his concepts and strengthens his argument for a sociology grounded in his methodological approach and concepts.

The Division of Labour

In "The Division of Labour," Durkheim attempts to move social theory away from the pure evolutionary framework of Comte and Spencer (and even Marx) that focused on historical transformations of society. His project was to analyze the changing social relationship brought on by modern capitalism and identify how these changes altered the basis of solidarity and how the individual related to society. The main focus of the work was to present society as a whole, comprised of layers of social structures and forces that constrained the individual (Thompson, 2002). Durkheim argued that the appearance of the more autonomous individual was misleading. Individual autonomy was actually brought on by social forces, specifically the growing division of labor.

The division of labor had been addressed by earlier theorists. Karl Marx divided the labor in society into two classes; the working class and those who own the means of production, the capital class. Adam Smith took this a step further and wrote about the separation of occupations and specialization. Both Marx and Smith leverage the idea of division of labor in order to make a moral argument about how society should construct its economic systems. Durkheim wished to avoid the moral arguments (Thompson, 2002). He called for a sociological examination of the empirical facts. To do this, Durkheim analyzed the division of labor in three modes:

- Functional: determine the function of the division of labor
- Casual: determine the causes and conditions that maintain the division of labor
- Ideal Type: classify normal and deviant forms of the division of labor

Durkheim believed that precise analysis could unearth the particular social facts and the condition of their existence. He attempted to present the division of labor as a social thing to be studied. He carefully stepped through each mode of analysis and presented his findings. However, at the end of the book he steps away from strict analysis and offers his personal take on a society he sees as poorly regulated with an artificially constructed division of labor. He determines, through a mix of analysis and personal opinion, that society is unhealthy.

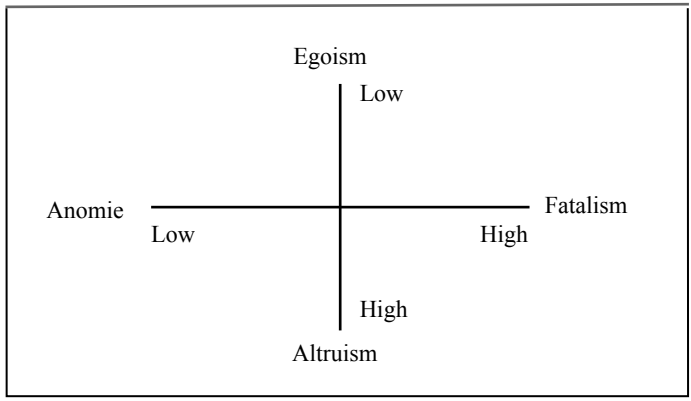
Suicide: A Study in Sociology

For Durkheim, collective tendencies, or social facts, have an existence of their own. These forces have an affect on the individual. Social facts can be observed and collected. When submitted to statistics social facts can yield proof of the forces at play in phenomena such as suicide (Durkheim, 1997). The study of suicide was Durkheim's first attempt to apply the full methodology outlined in The Rules of the Sociological Method. The social fact could not be the individual act of suicide; instead, it was statistical suicide rates. Durkheim described suicide as all deaths occurring as a direct result of the act of an individual who knows what his actions will produce (Thompson, 2002). He intentionally avoided describing suicide in terms of motivations and intentions.

Suicide rates were compared at the macro level. Countries and classes of people where analyzed. Durkheim used a model that measured degrees of group attachment (egoism and altruism) and degrees of moral regulation (anomie and fatalism) (See Table 1). Durkheim describes the social facts affecting suicides at each extreme of his model. Some of the more provocative findings were that suicides were higher for Protestants than Catholics and higher for unmarried people then married. He believed the focus on individual freedom, the absence of many of the Catholic support sacraments, and a lower number of clergy per capita contributed to high suicide rates in Protestant countries. Additionally, marriage and the size of the family appeared to be mitigating factors to suicide.

Anomic suicides occur when people with boundless appetites and desires confuse their wants for needs. Without moral constraint, a society can slip into constant economic striving as seen in many modern capitalistic societies. This endless striving leads to unhappiness. Durkheim's work showed suicides to be higher in modern economic societies than traditional agricultural societies. Suicide focused on the coercive social facts that brought disequilibrium to a society. The social facts of religion, marriage, families, and economic systems play a central role in Durkheim's analysis of suicide.

Table 1: Two Continua of Integration & Regulation



From Thompson, K. (2002). The work. In, Emile Durkheim. Oxfordshire: Taylor & Francis. p. 88.

Viewpoints

Criticism of Durkheim

Criticism of Durkheim, his social science, and social facts focuses on the assumptions Durkheim made in his approach to understanding society. Durkheim's social science is really not science. It's really more of a philosophy that incorporates observation and statistics into an approach to reasoning about social phenomena. At the foundation of Durkheim's research projects are his assumptions about the structure of nature and society. His conclusions about the health or pathology of a society is as determined as much by his assumptions about the structure of the social as it is his research.

Many critics hold an opposing view of society insisting that society is constructed of individuals and not the other way around. Their critique of Durkheim's view of society is that it does not fully take into consideration the individual's ability to create and alter social facts and ultimately lead to a philosophical determinism. Because social facts limit the agency of the individual, the concept fails to give an accurate view of society and individuals.

Another problem arises where Durkheim insists on underlying laws or principles and gives a prognosis of health based on local environments that do not align with these laws. The judgment of a society is based on his Western understanding of these laws. Additionally, his methodology of studying social facts in Western societies tends to establish the underlying laws of social facts based on what already exists. The failure in this approach is that it censures non-Western societies and the very progress within Western societies that Durkheim championed. Finally, since social facts as a category as self-referencing (social facts can only be understood through other social facts) they have been attacked as irreducible.

Durkheim's Influence

Despite the criticism of Durkheim's work his influence in and out of sociology is substantial. He is viewed by many as the father of sociology and has a significant impact on the study of history, anthropology, criminology, religion, law, and education. Durkheim's rules gave sociology its methodological foundation. French historian Marc Bloch, one of modern history's most influential theorists, was greatly influenced by Durkheim. Bloch called for a history that took into consideration social facts, solidarity, and the coercive force social facts (Colbert, 1978).

The foundations of twentieth century French structural anthropology and British social anthropology emphasize a mechanical society, which can be traced back to the writings of Durkheim (Erikson & Murphy, 2008). Durkheim's research on crime, punishment, division of labor, suicide, law, and education still inform these disciplines today. Durkheim's view of society's structure and social facts has been incorporated into the theories of sociological giants Talcott Parsons, C. Wright Mills, and Robert Merton. Perhaps most impressively is the recent rise in academic circles of Durkheim's concept of social facts. Of course, the term social facts is rarely used, but the idea of culture, the re-conceptualized and re-named heir of social facts, is being discussed and studied everywhere.

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Durkheim: The Structure & Function of Society

Cynthia Vejar

Overview

Émile Durkheim (1858-1917) was a French sociologist who dedicated his life to establishing sociology as an indispensable contributing force that elucidates information about individuals and the communities that they inhabit. Durkheim claimed that sociological influences were both all-encompassing and potent, superceding that which could be understood through the individualized reduction of psychological paradigms. Indeed, in the grand scope of human existence, if each person were represented by a grain of sand that constituted the seashore of an entire beach, Durkheim would declare that while each particle is indisputably important, the sum is surely greater than its individual parts; hence, his differentiation between sociology and psychology in the pursuit of meaning. Moreover, during a person's individual existence, he progresses through many different developmental stages, acquires a variety of interests and companions, and retroactively classifies his life by these assorted phases and eras. As such, the individual is always in a state of flux, and borrows cultural norms from the larger, more stable society to assist his transition between these fluctuations, a society that transcends the life of man since it predates his lifetime, and will also succeed him (Fenton, Reiner, & Hamnett, 1984; Jones, 1986; Nisbet, 1965; Thompson, 1982; Wallwork, 1972).

Throughout the course of his life, Durkheim proposed several provocative theories that significantly contributed to the fabric of contemporary sociological design. A prominent ideology that he established was the notion that in terms of sociological inquiry, "The first and most fundamental rule is consider social facts as things" (Durkheim, as cited in Thompson, 1982, p. 101; Vowinckel, 2000), similar to the conceptions that people hold toward the data that is derived in "hard" sciences such as biology or physics, which is generally considered indisputable and objective. Such a premise does not mean that sociological facts are necessarily fixed and unyielding, but that their properties share similar dimensions to other scientific methodologies, in that there are specific causalities that mold their development, effects that are imparted by their existence, various functions that they seek to fulfill, and that they should be approached with a healthy amount of skepticism and few preconceived assumptions.

Despite his religious lineage and the rabbinical expectations that were placed upon him by his family, Durkheim abstained from a pious lifestyle, although he studied religion from a scholarly perspective and found it a meaningful sociological tool to help unveil significant information about collective groups of people (Alexander, 1986; Fish, 2002; Rawls, 2001; Robertson, 1004; Stark, 2003; Thompson, 1993). Durkheim claimed that it was not only beneficial to study religions of the world, in terms of their current practices and contemporary ramifications, but also their historical and evolutionary development, which contains a revealing cauldron of information. According to Durkheim, an accurate method of understanding sociological archetypes was to study primitive religions since they were socially-constructed belief systems that subsequently evolved into more elaborate scientific and philosophical hypotheses: "…If philosophy and the sciences were born of religion, it is because religion began by taking the place of the sciences and philosophy…" (Durkheim, as cited in Thompson, 1982, p. 125). He felt that despite the various ceremonial customs unique to each respective creed, there existed a thread of commonality that each religion shared, which was carried out through rites of passage that helped deliver universal goals. These goals were usually more transparent among primitive religions, since the sacramental practices of such groups were typically genuine and unrefined, and therefore held the most accessible elements of sociological truth.

Applications

Mechanical & Organic Solidarity

Durkheim weighed primitive societies against advanced societies in order to gain insight toward both individualistic and group morale (Merelman, 1988). In primitive societies, members forged a sense of shared ideals and camaraderie, which were based upon similar value structures and intellectual frameworks, as well as comparable methods in which time was structured. Indeed, the daily undertakings and overall schedules that those from primitive societies maintained included similar missions and philosophical endeavors with regard to obtaining food sources, as well as pursuing family relations and entertainment activities. As such, Durkheim coined the term mechanical solidarity (Chang, 1989; Downey, 1969; Tiryakian, 1994) to describe the collective conscience that pertained to such a fused existence; not because they were robotic per se, but because the homogenized standardization of such "group think" and behavior was analogous to that of a mechanical device, such as a watch, including parts that act in repetitive unison with each other in order to uphold its functionality.

Specialization

Quite conversely, advanced societies (Perrin, 1995) are the antithesis of primitive group ideals and identity, and instead revere individualistic ambitions and focus on the unique characteristics that make each human distinct. In such a system, diversity is highly regarded, and taps into one's notable contributions that will allow him to forge a marked pathway in the world, including refining his particular skill set and eventual profession of choice. Rather than societies who perform routine tasks in synchronized concurrence, such as primitive societies that wake up at the same time, eat together, hunt-and-gather accordingly, and celebrate together, advanced societies have the distinct feature of specialization. A specialized society consists of individual members, each of whom has dedicated their lives around their specific strengths and interests. Incidentally, the binding force of such advanced communities relies on their established differences, or the complementary elements that contribute toward the larger social scheme.

For example, in "Smalltown, USA," the following residents are employed in their own respective careers: Jane Doe is a medical doctor, John Smith is a

computer technician, Bob Riley is a plumber, and Sally Jones is a musician. It is likely that each community member came from different backgrounds, found inspiration in miscellaneous sources, and pursued divergent educational training; it is also safe to postulate that they currently have varied salaries, job duties that necessitate proficiency in separate arenas, and daily schedules that are highly dissimilar. Nevertheless, in an ideal sense, each person relies on each other to perform duties in the concentrated areas that they themselves lack: Jane would be sought after by John, Bob, and Sally to cure the physical afflictions that ail them; likewise, John would be called upon to repair faulty PCs, while Bob would unclog congested lavatories, and Sally would shoulder the entertainment responsibilities.

Division of Labor

The conglomeration of such individualized compartmentalization is what constitutes as Durkheim's division of labour, which Durkheim referred to as organic solidarity (Pope & Johnson, 1983; Sil, 2000). Organic suggests the complimentary nature akin to human anatomy, in that each biological organ specializes in its own independent domain (i.e., the heart, brain, lungs), but shares an overarching function of sustaining human life. In advanced societies, the division of labour not only focuses on separate careers and corresponding economic classifications, but also partitions a range of categorical ideologies that pertain to politics, religion, values, as well as science and the arts. Interestingly, although it is common for people in advanced societies to establish practical relations with those whose opposing specializations maintain an equilibrium toward their own respective areas of expertise, people nevertheless seek to initiate friendships and other personalized contact with those whom they deem like-minded, which is a primitive characteristic that has persevered.

Deviance

Durkheim felt that there was a functional element to deviant behavior (Cohen & Machalek, 1994; Kidd, 2007; Liska & Warner, 1991). In fact, felonious deeds helped clarify an outlined value structure within society, because people would otherwise struggle with the ability to specifically delineate that which is "good" and "moral" against that which is "bad" and "amoral;" such determinations are facilitated by witnessing conduct that is unsavory or unscrupulous. For example, Mary inherently seeks to be a kind, law-abiding citizen. In order to construct her mannerisms in alignment with that of

a conscientious, upright person, she would have to be exposed to positive role models whose behavior she might replicate. Likewise, she would have to conceptualize how not to act, perhaps by accessing examples of morally bereft offenders, such as her classmate Steve who initiates physical altercations as a means to resolve conflict, and her next-door neighbor, Alan, who has been convicted of drug possession. The parameters that define such legally and morally sanctioned ideals can vary between generations, and are culturally contextual as Durkheim contends, "In other words, we must not say that an action shocks the common conscience because it is criminal, but rather that it is criminal because it shocks the common conscience. We do not reprove it because it is a crime, but it is a crime because we reprove it…" (Durkheim, as cited in Thompson, 1982, p. 77).

Deviant acts can, ironically, serve as an unpleasant adhesive that unites people together, as is witnessed during times of social calamities such as the tragic events that unfolded on September 11, 2001, during which many U.S. citizens found solace in national solidarity (Davis & Silver, 2004; Kennedy, 2001). Additionally, deviance can serve as an agent for positive social change, such as the civil rights movement, the women's movement, and the gay liberation movement (Miroff, 2006); each of which spawned progressive social strides based upon unsettling and exploitive norms that were rooted in deviance, discrimination, and exclusion.

Restitutive & Repressive Law

Regarding litigious matters, advanced societies respond to criminal acts of deviance through restitutive law (Merton, 1994), which aims at restoring their complementary (i.e., division of labour) conventions back to states of normalcy; a process that takes place in accordance with the logical, judicial precincts that have been properly outlined. As such, the fraudulent matters become a contention between the criminal and the state (government). This contrasts with primitive societies, whose concentration on repressive law circulated around the criminal who had encroached upon the unspoken rules of society's collective conscience, and thus threatened its cohesive nature. When such salacious acts were encountered, primitive societies relied less on formalized legal doctrines to determine appropriate reprimands, but on members of society to employ prompt application of a collectively deemed, unofficial, and punitive sentence that was impassioned, and often rooted in religiosity. Hence, the deviant issues-at-

hand were much more personalized in primitive societies, and resolution unfolded between the perpetrator and the victim(s).

Suicide

Suicide was a social phenomenon that Durkheim explored at tremendous depth, and he formulated a theoretical framework that helped unearth the sociological forces germane to its existence (Befani, 2005; Cox, 2005; Hassan, 1998; Kushner & Sterk, 2005; Lubell, 2002). Individual biological and/or psychological contributions toward self harm held no relevance to Durheim, because he deemed that the malevolent case-by-case traits that were possessed by such victims (e.g., insanity, depression) would independently cancel each other out, and this inability to conduct gross generalizations held little collective relevance. Rather, Durkheim examined statistical analyses that emerged based upon influential societal patterns, and devised a model that contained four types of suicide (i.e., egoistic, altruistic, anomie, and fatalistic) that were broken down into two dimensions, the first of which indicates one's level of group attachment or lack thereof (i.e., egoistic and altruistic), while the second indicates an acute lack or prevalence of social control (i.e., anomie and fatalistic).

The two extreme forms of attachment-related suicide as described by Durkheim include egoistic suicide (Berk, 2006; Breault & Barkey, 1982) and altruistic suicide (Riemer, 1998; Whitt, 2006) which relates to a person's aberrant ability to integrate into society and construct appropriate ties.

Egoistic Suicide

People who commit egoistic suicide can be characterized as extremely detached, isolated, and removed from their respective communities. If their personal experience with social isolation ventures into depressed territory, the determination to take their life is made exclusively within the domain of their own cognitive sector, as opposed to consultation with outside parties, and without regard for what the ramifications of such a decision, as they pertain outside of themselves, include.

Durkheim felt that the breakdown of traditional institutions (e.g., the church, family, professional unions) had slowly crumbled into a state of existence that made social seclusion a viable option, and no adequate institutional replacements had been substituted in their place. Durkheim pointed out

the higher prevalence of suicide among religious denominations that encouraged free-thought and independence, such as Protestantism. Catholicism, on the other hand, had more regimented practices, less autonomy, and more religious figures to provide support, which consequently made people feel more group attachment, and posed as a suicidal deterrent. The suicide rates of Jews were akin to Catholics, but for different reasons; the historical acrimony that they had collectively endured provided a cohesive and sturdy sense of group identity, which strengthened them and helped avert burgeoning levels of suicidal ideologies. Further verification of the ills of an isolated existence include the higher predominance of suicide among those who are single as opposed to married, and those who come from small families.

Altruistic Suicide

On the other end of the attachment extreme lies altruistic suicide, which includes people who take their lives because of an all-inclusive affiliation toward group membership, and who have accrued stunted levels of individuality. An example of a person who might commit this type of suicide can be seen by he who terminates his life at the death of his spouse due to an exaggerated sense of dependency, or subordinate group members who kill themselves at the loss of their leader. Likewise martyrdom, whereupon a person kills oneself for a higher group "cause," as well as members of armed forces, whose self destruction rebukes a mistake that they fear dishonored their country, are additional illustrations that exemplify this type of suicide. Durkheim pointed out that in the face of tremendous societal disparity, such as war, altruistic people often establish intense levels of national dedication, pride, and self-sacrifice, to the point of taking their own lives if they conceptualize that their patriotic duty mandates such a course of action, which they believe will result in benefiting the group-at-large.

Social Regulation: Anomic & Fatalism

An unbalanced amount of societal parameters, as defined by social norms, rules, and expectations, including a person's economic state of affairs that may be either unregulated (i.e., anomie) or restrictive (i.e, fatalistic) can have significant consequences that might result in suicide. According to Durkheim, anomie (Besnard, 1988; Hilbert, 1986; Mestrovicacute; 1985; Olsen, 1965; Srole, 1965; Willis, 1982) is often initiated by social change and

takes the form of a limitless, boundless society or one that is economically undernourished and/or socially deficient, and in either instance results in scarce levels of rules, structure, and social control. Either type of anomie can be detrimental, as is witnessed in social upheaval during which chaos and lawlessness are common, as well as within groups of people who live in the "lap of luxury," whereby their opulence often yields aimlessly destructive outcomes. An example of the latter can be demonstrated by celebrities who, by the layperson's standards have all of their needs met: an elevated financial status, the ability to disregard legal limitations to which the rest of the population is expected to adhere, renowned fame and stardom, and disposable amounts of time. These seemingly alluring qualities, however, allow people to act independently from the moral regulations that are imposed upon the remainder of society, and which contain harsh penalties. Renowned rock stars such as Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison, and Kurt Cobain each had the ability to uphold their celebrity status while indulging in highly destructive lifestyles that eventually led to their ultimate demise (Macionis, 2001). Likewise, there have been several documented cases in which "lucky" proletarian lottery ticket holders amass tremendous fortune, only to find themselves in the depths of disparity shortly thereafter (Nissle & Bschor, 2002).

The second suicidal category based upon an uneven amount of social regulation, and Durkheim's last suicidal type, was termed fatalistic suicide (Stack, 1979), which is rooted in a lifestyle monitored by extreme regulation that often transitions into rigidity, oppression, and a tyrannical regime. Interestingly, Durkheim devoted very little energy describing such a suicidal tendency, because he felt that it held little social relevance. The primary example that he did produce to exemplify this type of suicide was the conditions that a slave would endure. As he explained, "Do not the suicides of slaves, said to be frequent under certain conditions…belong to this type, or all suicides attributable to excessive physical or moral despotism?" (Durkheim, as cited in Wallwork, 1972, p. 52).

Education & Societal Reform

There were similar ideologies possessed both by Durkheim and Karl Marx, such as the emphasis that both men placed on the structural forces within society, which trickle down and pose as forces of desolation for both in-

dividuals and their communities. Unlike Marx, Durkheim emphasized that while certain maladies might uniquely afflict impoverished communities who have limited access to resourceful means, all members of every social stature and economic class were at risk for potential self-directed malaise. An avid scholar, Durkheim felt that a reparative strategy that might instill moral behavior, and thus overturn the growing suicide rates, was an increase in educational opportunities provided to members of society (Cladis, 1995). Although Durkheim acknowledged statistics that portrayed a correlation between educational advancement and a rise in suicide rates, he stated that such a relationship was rooted in the detachment of tradition. In other words, as one progresses through their scholarly endeavors, he simultaneously sheds some of his traditional roots. This loss of tradition, as opposed to an enhanced education, is that factor that increases the risk of suicide.

Durkheim's classification of education was diffused to the degree that it embraced a less formalized definition, focusing on the adaptations people applied toward socializing with the culture to which they found membership. Moreover, Durkheim was not convinced that this educational feat alone would initiate change, as it would need to be coupled with modifications toward other structural elements (e.g., the economy): "…It [education] is only the image and reflection of society. Education is healthy when people themselves are in a healthy state; but it becomes corrupt with them, being unable to modify itself…Education, therefore, can be reformed only if society itself is reformed. To do that, the evil from which it suffers must be attacked at its source." (Durkheim, as cited in Thompson, 1982, p. 116).

Discussion

As Western civilization becomes more technologically advanced, there are significant implications of which society should be aware. From a positive perspective, there have been countless medical breakthroughs that have helped sustain the quality and quantity of life (Harrar, 2000). Additionally, advanced entertainment devices, including video games that progressively become more life-like, detailed, and graphic, such as "Grand Theft Auto" (Croal, 2008) enable groups of people to enjoy the perks of an active or exciting lifestyle in the comfort of their own home. Or, the innovative "Wii" video games (Schiesel, 2008) allow people to simulate sport activities like tennis and bowling, which may benefit those who are unable to engage

in vigorous physical discourse such as nursing home residents. Unfortunately, for the majority of society, this type of technological "candy" can be both seductive and addictive, and might exacerbate a societal rise in anomie, or anomie-related suicide due to the corresponding levels of isolation and communicative restraint that accompanies such excessive technological extravagance. Although Durkheim's life did not contain many of today's societal norms (e.g., technology), his theories on the division of labour, suicide, religion, and deviance are relevant themes that should continually explicate contemporary social trends.

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Marx, Social Change & Revolution

Francis Duffy

Overview

At heart, Marx was an ideologue, a philosopher convinced he had discovered the immutable laws governing social change. To Marx, only economics mattered. Free will, shifting societal values and aspirations, population growth and dislocation, and many other possible causes of social change mattered little in the Marxian universe. Rather, Marx believed, how we produce and exchange the goods necessary for our survival shapes how we relate to each other. Moreover, he claimed that in order to take advantage of new knowledge and technology people always have organized themselves around said production differently at distinct times in history. However, he believed, society has often lagged behind these changes, creating friction and conflict until a new social order more conducive to the emerging economic order replaces the old social order (Holton, 1981).

At best, social change is an uneven process that continually pits emerging interests against entrenched ones. That is why Marx famously concluded in the Communist Manifesto "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." Yet the idea of class struggle itself was far from new in Marx's day. Aristotle in fact wrote about class and conflict in the fourth century BCE, observing that in democracies the poor ruled, while in oligarchies the rich did. Further, he believed that politics reconciled the interests of the many with those of the few, sometimes equitably, sometimes not (Arendt, 2002).

A more contemporary writer on the subject, the early nineteenth century social theorist Henri de Saint-Simon, differentiated rich from poor as well. He went one important step further, though, by explicitly distinguishing "producers" or laborers, from mere consumers or property-owners (Kim, n.d.). Marx soon turned this purely descriptive distinction into a socio-economic dynamo of the first order. Indeed, the impetus for all social change, he asserted, emanated from the class struggle between workers, or the proletariat, and owners, or the bourgeoisie. However, Marx believed that the ultimate source of this change lay elsewhere: in the inevitable conflict between the economic forces of production and the communal relations of production, a dialectical process he called historical materialism.

Here, man is defined entirely by what he makes, by the labor this production requires, and by the interactions with others production necessitates. Broadly-speaking, labor, technical expertise, and the organizational ingenuity needed to make efficient use of both make up the forces of production. The relations of production, conversely, arise from the social interactions among workers and between workers and the owners of the means of production, who, in capitalism's case, are the bourgeoisie. Constantly in flux, the forces and relations of production are all but guaranteed to clash, with the more basic of the two, the forces of production, prevailing. Changes in the way things are made, in effect, require new forms of communication and cooperation, giving rise, over time, to new relations of production.

Further Insights

In very real and persistent ways, then, the economic base of a society periodically re-invents itself, prompting broader socio-political and cultural change. To perpetuate itself materially society must have order, so every economic system gives rise to a corresponding societal superstructure. Courts, government bureaucracies, social mores, family and religious values, and even culture itself all stem from the economic base they buttress. When this base falters, the social fabric woven around it inevitably unravels (Wacquant, 1985).

In capitalism's case, Marx believed owners would ultimately bankrupt themselves trying to remain competitive, and that this base would literally

consume itself at humanity's expense. In effect, things would get far worse before they got better. It was and is a bleak vision. And herein lies one of Marx's more uncomfortable beliefs: that lasting social change would come at a terrible price. The capitalist system would have to self-destruct before a more equitable socialist system could take its place. It must, in other words, fail so many so miserably that the dictatorship of the proletariat following it would be welcomed with open arms. Then and only then would the real revolution occur as private property gave way to collective ownership, class distinctions morphed into a society of equals, and thinly veiled authoritarianism transformed into rule by consensus.

Such, at least, was Marx's utopian vision of the future, one so ideal that there would be no further need for a state. In the meantime, increasing swathes of humanity not only would but had to live and die in the direst of conditions. For, if nothing else, this utter deprivation will fan the flames of class struggle to a fever pitch, hastening capitalism's demise. There is a logic, then, to Marx's rather dour prescription for social change. Incremental reforms like reducing the length of the workday or banning child labor, he believed, were no more than temporary ploys owners, citing declining profits, would revoke the minute workers put their own parochial interests above those of their class as a whole.

Marx's Classes

But what exactly did Marx mean by "class?" Marx himself insisted that people, even if they are in similar circumstances, are not a class per se unless they are aware of their shared relationship. A hereditary caste was thus not a class in the Marxian sense, and neither are the upper, middle, and lower income bracketed classes sociologists study today. Of those he did identify, the largest and, from his point of view the most important by far, was the working class or proletariat. Technically-speaking, anyone who drew a regular wage belonged because, owning no private property or any means of production, these workers were reduced to selling their labor-power to survive.

Capitalists, or the bourgeoisie, on the other hand owned the means of production outright and purchased workers' labor-time. Sooner or later, though, they would find ways to boost earnings by increasing the tempo of production but keeping workers daily wages the same. Marx saw this pur-

loining as inherently exploitive. Those who enjoyed wealth did not actually produce it, and those who did produce it lived in poverty. However, the latter had no "legitimate" means of righting this wrong because laws, governments, and religious and social institutions all existed in order to validate the existing forms of ownership and deflect any and all challenges to these forms.

A keen social observer, Marx also acknowledged the transient existence of more marginal classes: most notably the petty bourgeoisie and the lumpenproletariat. Primarily artisans, shopkeepers, and small farmers, the petty bourgeoisie owned their means of production and, doing so, worked for themselves. Until, that is, a declining capitalism would no longer accommodate small businesses, at which point the petty bourgeoisie would enter the ranks of the disaffected proletariat. The lumpenproletariat, on the other hand, didn't work at all. Its ranks were populated by those farthest removed from the means of production: the chronically unemployed, the unemployable, and the criminals. Marx predicted that, when push came to shove, the lumpenproletariat would align with the proletariats, albeit tenuously, since the promised socialist revolution would provide for everyone's needs regardless of their social status.

Additionally, there were the peasantry, the tenant farmers Marx considered part of the proletariat. Like the petty bourgeoisie, they were victims of secondary exploitation because they had to pay the capitalist class rent and interest on loans. Finally, there were the administrators, supervisors, police and other intermediaries charged with the day-to-day management of the capitalist system. As wage earners they could technically be considered part of proletariat. In reality, though, they enjoyed a far better living than the average worker, and had a vested interest in preserving the capitalist system.

Capitalism & Class Struggle

In the end, Marx believed, market competition would undermine the economic viability of small producers, small-holder farms, and the petty bourgeoisie, and sooner or later these classes would all find their circumstances reduced and be relegated to the proletariat class. Left to its own devices, it seems capitalism's penchant for large-scale operations and technology-heavy production processes would end up ruthlessly polarizing

both the economy-at-large and the labor force. All of which would only succeed in further intensifying class struggle as the ranks of the militant proletariat swelled with the newly displaced and disaffected.

In Marx's world, lasting social change for the better would come about only after a prolonged, fractious decline in people's living standards that was dictated by purely economic factors. For so great was the innate competitiveness of the capitalist system that owners would have to extract ever more surplus value from an ever dwindling pool of wage earners. Incomes across all boards would decline and with them the very sales capitalists depend upon. Everyone but the very rich would end up a pauper. The starker this polarization, the more cathartic the resulting class struggle. Eventually, the day would come when no one, not even the bourgeoisie's intermediaries, would be willing to defend the interest of the remaining rich, sparking a breaking point (Rattansi, n.d.).

Revolution

Marx called violence the "handmaiden" of history. Not surprisingly, then, he foresaw a violent end in store for capitalism. But the spilling of blood at this point would be very much the coda, not the prelude, to revolution. For violent acts of rebellion, first of all, do not always lead to revolution, which by definition ends with the demise of the existing state and the establishment of alternative form of governance (Boswell & Dixon, n.d.) Often rebellions are brutally quashed by the military, or else subside once concessions are wrung from the existing government. Marx drew valuable lessons from the "revolutions" of 1848 that swept Europe and from the Paris Commune of 1870: he concluded that spontaneous popular uprisings were just inconclusive skirmishes in a much more protracted war against exploitation and oppression. Revolution, on the other hand, came about through protracted class warfare in which the most potent weapons were ideas, the winning tactics not martial but political, and the victors the masses which unite to constitute themselves as a class-for-itself. "Class-for-itself" does not simply describe what a generic class is – Marx uses the term "class-in-itself" for this – rather it refers to a class that is conscious of its collective relationship to the means of production, which spurs it to politically organize itself in its own interests. A proletariat, or working, class-for-itself recognizes the extent to which not only its economic but also its human needs are not being met under capitalism, despite its role as the direct producers of society's material prosperity (Baxter, n.d.).

Marx predicted that workers would never share in this prosperity unless they rid themselves of the bourgeois state, the protector of private property and cause of their misery, through persistent collective action. Demonstrations, strikes, and sporadic violence might accompany these actions, however full scale violence would materialize only when a worker-led rebellion overthrew the last vestiges of the civil infrastructure protecting a bankrupt capitalism.

The very first step towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, then, is self-enlightenment. According to Marx, one has to see historical materialism's imprint in one's immediate environs, gauge the progress made to date in the class struggle, and then form the political parties necessary to educate and organize the proletariat. He expected that with ever lower wages, more frequent and pronounced economic crises, and the growing recognition that all but a very few face a future of endemic poverty, support for these parties would grow. The groundswell of converts would genuinely believe that their lives would be better in a classless society based on collective ownership of the means of production.

Congregated together by the very industrial system that exploited them, capable of duplicating the organizational efficiency of the workplace in the political arena, and, most of all, disciplined and dedicated, the wage earners making up these parties would become the vanguard converting skeptics and confounding opponents. Winning this struggle, moreover, would take many years if not many decades, and would ultimately depend on party activists scrupulously pursuing permanent revolution.

By permanent revolution, Marx meant that the proletariat's revolutionary actions must continue as long as all the proletariat's goals are not fully met. In spite of any partial gains and no matter how powerful the opposition, Marx believed, this militancy must continue until workers gain complete control of the means of production. He warned that although other political parties, especially those of the petty bourgeois, might attempt to form political alliances after the overthrow of the existing state, these overtures must be resisted. In effect, even after the downfall of bourgeois rule the revolution would continue, making it as much a frame of mind as an actual event.

Viewpoints

Evaluating Marx

In hindsight, it's easy to think that Marx was naïve about social change and revolution. History certainly supports such a view. Capitalism, much less a proletariat, barely existed in agrarian Russia and China when they were transformed by prolonged and bloody revolutions instigated by elite cadres of professional communist organizers. Further, the more classically Marxian proletariat revolutions that occurred in industrial Europe immediately after the First World War failed for want of widespread popular support.

To his credit, though, Marx was the first theorist to systematically link social change to economic change, fully appreciate the political implications of class, and provide a cogent rationale for organizing workers en masse. All of these ideas resonate to this day. If Marx had a great failing as a theorist, it was to see the world too starkly, to think of it categorically as a series of 'either/ors, leaving little if any room for nuance. It is the kind of sweeping analytic rigidity one expects more in a dogmatic revolutionary than in a truth-seeking philosopher. Marx saw himself as both. With all the zeal of a revolutionary he devoted his life to furthering the cause of the industrial labor movement of the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Its socialist ideals became Marx's vision of the end of history, the time when the workers revolution would have seized control of the means of production, rid society of the ills of private property, and dispensed with class altogether.

Marx provided his activist colleagues with all the assurances they could possibly want about the appropriateness and inevitability of the cause they championed. He did this to spectacular effect by presenting the world with a set of carefully-argued theories to show that the coming socialist epoch was actually the culmination of historical trends countless centuries in the making. What is more, he claimed that these trends were propelled by immutable economic forces. The world view he put forward was and is an intellectual tour de force: encyclopedic in scope, detailed almost to excess, on the whole logically argued, and written with passion and verve. Still, it was and is also sprawling, dogmatic, polemical, at times inconsistent, and not above an emotional appeal when logic and factual evidence failed.

Marx's work was, least we forget, very much a product of its time. Profound structural changes had been set in motion by the Industrial Revolution, the full ramifications of which were not yet known. All too apparent even then, though, were the often appalling living and working conditions the new industrial laborer endured without any real recourse. Politically, Europe had reverted to a reactionary stance since the Napoleonic Wars and viewed any proposed change with great suspicion. If ever there was a time when a robust, sweeping theory of social, political, and economic change was needed, it most likely was then.

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Marx & Historical Materialism

Francis Duffy

Overview

Some consider Marx's historical materialism an overly simplistic answer to a very basic question: what causes society to change? Others still consider it a sound, systematic explanation. No one, however, would deny that, conceptually at least, it is the keystone of Marxist theory, the philosophic underpinning of an ideology that views the world as profoundly economic in scope and nature. More to the point for our purposes, historical materialism was one of the first comprehensive theories to emerge during the mid- to late- nineteenth century in the then nascent discipline of sociology. To understand Marx the philosopher and social theorist, one has to appreciate the boldness and originality of his central ideas.

Marx & Hegel

With a certainty bordering on bravado, Marx flatly rejected the basic premise of the preeminent philosopher of his youth, Georg Hegel. An idealist, Hegel believed the real world was actually the embodiment of a higher, abstract order. A man was more than a just man, Hegel thought, he was an incarnation of an absolute spirit. As such, his everyday needs and place in civil society, though immanently appreciable, were actually just manifestations of a universal, abstract life-force (Jeannot, n.d.). Marx, on the contrary, believed that the true essence of a person or thing lay entirely in the person of thing itself. For meaning, then, man had only to look to

his physical surroundings and, more importantly, to what he made out of them (Kain, n.d.). Consciousness, when all's said and done, originated in the material world not outside it, Marx thought.

Interestingly, though Marx may have jettisoned Hegel's abstract forms in favor of concrete reality, he never abandoned Hegel's belief that dialectic conflict lay at the heart of all change. In Hegel's account, the dialectic process pits a thesis against its antithesis until a synthesis of the two emerges as a new idea, viewpoint, or relationship. Hegel thought the dialectic revealed the "rational" unity underlying the world and was the source of the unbroken moral and spiritual progress of history. Marx thought it revealed exploitation, class struggle, and the inevitable demise of the capitalist system.

Marx & Feuerbach

Marx also drew upon the ideas of another near-contemporary, Feuerbach. Equally disenchanted with Hegel's quasi-religious metaphysics, Feuerbach championed sensuality, emotion, and all things human in their place. What's more, he believed that a person could be defined in a number of ways because he or she assumes a number of distinct roles in society each and every day. Philosophic inquiry, therefore, was fundamentally an anthropological exercise. Man was much more than the material world he lived in, Feuerbach argued, and was thus the philosopher's true subject (Bottormore & Outhwaite, 1993).

Not so, said Marx: social relations were part and parcel of the material world, for collaboration and the resulting human discourse, as Marx famously said, allow us to produce the goods necessary for our survival. And were it not for what we produce, we would be like any other animal. Our labor and "instruments" of production along with the social relations that compliment them effectively define our being, Marx thought (Sayer, 1975).

Marx & Durkheim

Later nineteenth century social theorists would also come to view man as a "social animal." Emile Durkheim, the first practitioner of empirical sociological inquiry, seconded Marx's belief in the importance of social relations, if for very different reasons. Durkheim's chief concern was to find an

explanation for the growing purposelessness and alienation he observed in people, a condition he called anomie. After much research, he attributed it to a decline in values and mores brought on by economic dislocation and rapid urbanization. Durkheim and Marx held diametrically opposed views, though, on the nature of the resulting social conflict. An adherent of economic determinism, Marx saw class struggle as historically inevitable. A strong believer in social cohesion, Durkheim saw class struggle more as a sort of open wound in need of healing (Østerberg, 1979).

Marx's own thinking was influenced in turn by other ground-breaking theorists, most notably the naturalist Charles Darwin whose On The Origins of the Species was published the same year as Marx's seminal A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy. Both works espoused a theory of evolution – one biological, the other socio-economic – that operated outside humankind's agency or control. Marx initially embraced Darwin's idea of natural selection because it served as a useful counterpoint to his own idea of class struggle. Eventually, though, Marx grew alarmed when Darwin's followers sought to explain and justify contemporary capitalist society via natural selection (Nolan, n.d.).

Further Insights

The Base & the Superstructure

If, as Marx insisted, the dialectic drives history, what are the fundamental forces that continually clash to create a new socio-economic synthesis? There is perhaps no more basic question in all of Marxism. The doctrinaire answer is the base (or, the forces and relations of production), and the superstructure (or, the socio-political institutions and values that evolve to foster and protect said production). Marx ardently believed and tirelessly argued that economics ultimately determine everything. Indeed, he spent more time thinking and writing about exchange value, surplus value, labor-time, and declining rates of profit than any other topic.

The forces of production include:

- the workforce;
- the technical expertise required to maintain and foster actual production techniques; and,

- the organizational knowledge needed to efficiently muster, train, and deploy needed skilled labor along functional lines.

The means of production are made up of the tools, machines, plants, and related infrastructure needed to produce goods on the one hand, and, on the other, the actual raw materials that are given added value through production. Combined, the means and forces of production form the material basis of life.

The social interaction between workers amongst themselves and with owners, meanwhile, are the relations of production. In capitalism, these relations are defined by the private ownership of the means of production by the bourgeoisie, in socialism by public ownership. Critically, given the dynamism of both the forces and relations of production, the two invariably clash. In Marx's view, though, the forces of production always win out, in the end triggering first economic then broader socio-political change.

In the interim before this change, though, the cohesion between the two takes on an identifiable shape or distinctive mode of production. The base—a given economic structure—gives rise to a societal superstructure (Wacquant, 1985). For, as Marx saw it, every mode of production requires a corresponding social order to perpetuate itself materially. This materially based social order is equally evident within the family, among and between different classes, and throughout the civic, religious, and intellectual fabric of all nations. According to Marx, history's primary function is to identify and analyze the root causes of each past dominant mode of production.

Modes of Production

Marx never actually discussed his theory of history in great detail, much less the actual methodology he used to arrive at it. He nonetheless considered all historical change a by-product of evolving human "productive power," and believed it was his role to catalogue how well or poorly a given society accommodated or stymied this evolution. In a word, in the Marxian universe economics mold all that is social, political, and spiritual in life. Economics manifests itself in the laws we must obey, the govern-

ments to which we owe nominal allegiance, and in the ideologies and belief systems we uphold.

Marxists divide history into six successive modes of production: the primitive, Asiatic, ancient, feudal, capitalist, and socialist. Production in the earliest of these modes was organized along kinship lines, the distribution of communal wealth, and a flat social hierarchy. People lived hand-to-mouth, first as bands of nomads, then as tribes of subsistence farmers. Humankind however was not destined to this life in perpetuity. Eventually, the innately dynamic "productive forces" of humankind led to improved crop yields and food surpluses. As the scale of agricultural production grew, so too did the need to better coordinate the use of natural resources and labor.

This task initially fell to the priesthood, then to secular bureaucracies who lived off the surpluses of farm workers. Outright state ownership of large tracts of arable land largely replaced communal village holdings in ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, India, and America. This consolidation was required, in part, to feed large standing armies and growing urban populations. This Asiatic mode of production lasted in some parts of the world for over a thousand years.

The early western civilizations of Greece and Rome evolved differently. Land was privately-held and increasingly worked by slaves. Only a citizen – a duly recognized member of an elite body politic with both rights and obligations – could own property. One was thus either a patrician with rank and wealth, a commoner or plebian who typically earned a modest living as an artisan or tradesman, or a slave who was literally someone else's property and without any rights whatsoever. Anarchic economic conditions caused by the dissolution of the Roman Empire brought an end to this so-called ancient mode of production. Agriculture of course continued, but on large estates where laborers worked in exchange for protection and a subsistence living .

The estates were apportioned to members of the political-military elite who appropriated any agricultural surplus. What remained after the estate owner paid his soldiers and his overload's share was his to spend, provided he kept his obligations to his tenants. They in turn, though legally

"free," were bound by their obligations to till his land and perform other services. Said serfdom was the hallmark of the feudal mode of production (Habermas, 1975).

Conflict between the elite, who controlled the political and military establishment, and the peasantry, who manned and effectively ran the economy, was inevitable. The peasants were not the only ones who suffered, moreover, for less and less was re-invested into the land itself, undermining the very means of production. Serfdom's eventual demise precipitated the next mode of production: capitalism. Within this system commoners were free to sell their labor to producers who, in turn, were free to directly sell their wares to the highest bidder.

With nothing of material value to offer besides their sheer labor-power, peasants and workers were literally forced to sell themselves. Marx saw a certain irony in this, for the peasant-class' success in overturning the feudal system resulted only in the vast majority of peasants being reduced to day laborers. A minority of peasants, though, consolidated their land holdings, introduced new cultivation techniques, and prospered as commercial tenants of the large landowners. With the lifting of traditional strictures against buying, selling, or renting land, these peasant-proprietors would go on to become the modern world's first owners of private property (Katz, 1993).

In a further irony, though, the very cash economy many owed their new found prosperity to would soon desert them. Owners of large feudal estates in England were in constant need of money. In feudal times, very little of what was produced ever got to market: over half was appropriated by the landlords, and much of the remaining half was consumed by its direct producers. A strictly cash economy changed all this. The so-called use value of an item receded as its exchange value – the amount of other goods that could be bought from its sale represented in monetary terms – came increasingly to the fore.

Production, moreover, was now predicated more on profit-minded market demand, and less on the laborer's immediate material needs. The latter lesson became painful clear in late medieval England. By then, demand for scarce wool in Flanders's flourishing textiles trade caused its price to spike.

Large land owners accustomed to life's fineries needed cash just as the farm hand, though considerably more. In short order, these estate-owners began to convert their fields into pastures to raise sheep instead of cereals and grains. Feudal and commercial tenants alike were summarily driven off the land. Many migrated to towns and cities, creating a ready-made market and an ample supply of cheap labor. A new class of entrepreneurial-minded guild artisans, petty burghers, and tradesmen who could bootstrap their way into the bourgeoisie was also created (Birnbaum, 1953).

Capitalism arose as a mode of production because of its two unique innovations in the relations of production. One of these was the division of labor, or the compartmentalization of the manufacturing processes to promote greater efficiency on the factory floor. The other was technology, the mechanical means of making goods at a faster rate than manual laborers ever could. Together, these two innovations allowed factory owners to increase daily output without increasing wages, and thereby sell more goods and earn higher returns. Marx called the net difference surplus value.

But competition invariably ate into said profits, and machinery had to be purchased before it could be used. So owners would appropriate ever more surplus value from an ever decreasing pool of labor. Eventually, Marx thought, everyone except the very, very rich would end up paupers. Unless, that is, workers overthrew this highly exploitive economic system first and replaced it with a more equitable one. That this revolution was predestined by virtue of capitalism's irreconcilable internal contradictions Marx had little doubt. He was equally certain that a socialist mode of production based on collective ownership would succeed it (Worsley, 2002).

Viewpoints

After Marx

Late in his life Marx reputedly said, "I'm not a Marxist." It was a sardonic comment, directed at the growing number of his professed disciples who he thought were by far too eager to reinterpret his ideas. Marxism in fact lives on as a theory and a belief-system to this very day largely because others – Lenin and Mao amongst them – revised it to meet changing circumstances. Anyone who has read most or all of the Marxist canon cannot help but be impressed by how ingenious the philosophy's adapters have

been. Perhaps the most inventive addendum of all is dialectical materialism, a concept formalized in the Soviet Union in the late 1920s. It holds that Marxism must adjust to the material basis of a life that is constantly in flux, with one major proviso: any change in doctrine must be arrived at through the dialectic.

Still, historical materialism has certain structural elements no theorist can alter without undermining the basic premises defined by Marx himself. These constants are responsible for all of the world's change, Marxists' hold:

- Periodically the forces and the relations of productions fall out of alignment;
- The productive forces invariably prevail in the ensuing conflict; and
- More conducive relations of production emerge from this conflict and, with them, a new superstructure until the socialist mode of production presents itself.

Marx fervently believed that once private property was eliminated and the price of goods once again equal to the labor expended in making them, the forces and relations of production would be harmonized forever after. More recent history, of course, has proved otherwise, though some Marxists still hold that the rise and fall of communism were preludes to a grander socialist mode of production of the future, one predestined by historical materialism.

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Marx's Political Economy

Francis Duffy

Overview

During communism's hey-day, nearly half the world knew his name. Philosopher, pamphleteer, social critic, and revolutionary, Karl Marx is remembered today for his writings on alienation and social class rather than his ideology. Certainly the realities of the Soviet Socialist States of the twentieth century turned out differently from what Marx himself envisioned: the revolution of the proletariat lead to the "withering away" of the state Marx had predicted in The Communist Manifesto. In his defense, though, Marx was a man imbued with the ideas and grappling with the social realities of the nineteenth century, not those of the twentieth.

More to the point, perhaps, Marx did not see himself as a political thinker, much less as a sociologist, but rather first and foremost as an economist. Throughout his voluminous writings, he returned again and again to same basic themes: capital, landed property, wage labor, the state, foreign trade, and the world market (Freidheim, 1976). Well versed in the economic theory of his day, Marx's own work incorporated ideas from such leading proponents of free-market capitalism as Adam Smith and David Ricardo. Unlike Marx, though, these theorists studied economic matters in isolation to better understand their inner workings. Marx, on the other hand, saw economics as the well-spring and driving force of all the "social, political, and spiritual processes of life" (Brennan, 1998, p. 263).

Of course the classical economists before Marx did speculate on the effect market forces might have on politics and society and vice versa, but rarely did they assert formal causal relationships as Marx did. To do so would go against the grain of the scientific empiricism that had shaped the very nature of all their intellectual inquiry. All knowledge, they fervently believed, came from observation, and a theory was sound only as long as empirical evidence supported it. Marx, on the other hand, was deeply influenced by the German philosopher Hegel, an idealist who believed in an abstract force he called the Spirit which, by expressing itself via conflict, preordained all of history. Marx was also utterly committed to the nascent European labor movement and the socialist ideals it embraced. So great were these influences that Marx premised all of his analysis on them as articles of faith.

But what, you ask, in broad strokes, did Marx believe? Well, for starts, he held the modern industrial system accountable for destroying the social relations of production, or the interactions people have with things and each other as they work. Effectively disenfranchised, workers had no other option but to sell their labor as a commodity much like a mop or a shovel, Marx claimed (Bottormore & Outhwaite, 1993). And as mere commodities on the open market, workers neither earned a comfortable living from nor controlled any aspect of the production process. Worse still, so bleak were their prospects, these dispossessed workers eventually came to see themselves as just mere "things."

Marx called this dehumanizing process reification, and attributed it to capitalist economies' overdependence on cash. The precapitalist equation common to all transactions – consumer good exchanged for money which is then exchanged for another consumer good – was turned inside out by capitalism. The new, and in Marx's view the more sinister, formula was money exchanged for consumer good which is again exchanged for money (Booth, n.d.). In this new formula people acquired things as a means to an end, the accumulation of wealth, not as ends unto themselves. Taken to extremes, Marx warned, humankind would increasingly fixate on objects per se, compulsively buy them, and so fall victim to a kind of commodity-fetishism.

Consumption for consumption's sake, though, stimulates demand for wares, which, in turn, necessitates expansion of the means of production:

the tools, machines, plants, and transportation infrastructure required to transform raw materials into finished goods. The purchase, upkeep, and profitable use of these means of production also all require investment funds, i.e. accumulated capital. And, since workers made only a subsistence wage at best, the requisite financing could only come from those with wealth in hand, or those who owned private property.

Now, the disparity between the "have's" and "have not's" is as old as civilization. Marx was also not the first to write about class. He himself drew upon the ideas of near contemporaries like Saint-Simon and the British materialists in his own very original analysis. However, Marx is unique for tracing the root causes of the class structure back to their economic origins, and showing how central the existence and preservation of private property was to it.

According to Marx, those who owned private property had social rank, a meaningful occupation or life of ease, and excellent prospects for the future. They were well-fed, well-clothed, and well-housed, and could afford luxuries and entertainments. Those who did not own private property went wanting, their number growing ever larger. Marx attributed this stratification to capitalism, which he believed to be inherently exploitive. Furthermore, he believed, with class divisions came class struggle. The middle class would prove no safe haven in this regard, Marx believed, because it too would eventually be pauperized. In true Hegelian fashion, Marx saw only rich and poor, and society itself as a dynamic synthesis of base and superstructure. The division of labor, the means of production, private ownership, and the economy as a whole belonged to the base, which spawns the superstructure comprising the political, legal, and social institutions. As long as the base supplies society with its material needs, Marx believed, the superstructure survives. As soon as it doesn't, the superstructure starts to buckles (Fulcher, 2003). In sum, Marx saw economics ultimately dictating all facets of society, yet he also believed that workers had the power to change the economy and thus the course of history.

Further Insights

It goes almost without saying that society is structured around the efficient allocation of resources to meet human needs. To one degree or another,

then, social structure and economics are inextricably bound together. Marx had a very deterministic view of the primacy of economics as the organizing force of society. He was absolutely convinced that the combination of how commodities were innately valued, how the workforce was organized, and how investment capital was raised preordained everything else. Ironically, the basic economic theory he so fervently believed in has since been largely discredited and forgotten. However, other elements of his work have survived the test of time, despite his whole world view being premised on said theory. With this in mind, then, let us now turn to its specifics.

Use, Exchange & Surplus Value

Unless we are totally self-sufficient, to meet our needs we must be prepared to meet others' in like measure. This exchange, however, can only proceed once we agree upon the intrinsic worth of the goods or service we offer and require. All economic activity ultimately hinges on this question of valuation. In modern-day free markets, people are said to buy things that are useful or pleasing. These countless individual decisions coalesce into an aggregate demand which profit-seeking suppliers then attempt to satisfy. Theoretically, the price of said goods is the exchange value set when supply exactly equals demand.

Not so in Marx's day: prevailing wisdom then held that only the amount of work that went into a good or service determined its value. No less a luminary than Adam Smith deemed that, alone, an item's perceived usefulness to the buyer is an insufficient criterion for determining its value. A costly diamond, he argued, was hardly ever used, whereas cheap water was constantly used. Mining for a diamond, however, was incredibly labor intensive whereas drawing water was often just a chore. By Marx's time, the labor theory of value had few if any detractors.

Also, by Marx's time, the industrial revolution was well and truly underway. Writing in 1776, Smith had only an inkling of how technology and its necessitated division of labor would transform the workplace. Seventy-five years later, Marx observed first hand the full effect of both, taking particular note of how many factory laborers now performed a limited set of repetitive tasks. There was an economic rationale for these phenomena: the compartmentalization and rationalization of production processes

fostered greater efficiency on the factory floor. Compartmentalization and rationalization in turn allowed the same number of workers to manufacture more goods faster, lowering the labor value of each. A lower exchange value, of course, meant more people could now afford the commodity and owners could earn higher profits.

But this state of affairs meant that the owners could literally do nothing, yet still reap sizable financial rewards. Doesn't this, Marx asked, fly in the face of the labor theory of value? Pondering this apparent contradiction led Marx to an even more important insight. Namely, even when the effort others expended elsewhere to make the machinery that sped up production lines was factored in as an additional cost, owners still earned more in sales (exchange value) than they paid workers in wages. Output increased during the standard 10 to 12 hour shift, but the amount of labor-time, the basis of compensation, effectively remained unchanged (King, 2007).

The difference, or surplus value as Marx called it, was a ready means of raising additional capital at little or no cost. Moreover, unskilled factory hands had no real job security, bargaining power, or control over the conditions or the tempo of their work. The prevailing wage, or the monetary equivalent of 'labor-time,' was set by the owners whose ideas of adequate compensation extended little beyond providing, to use Marx's term, a subsistence wage. This wage typically came to just enough for a worker to support his family and so ensure an adequate supply of future labor. Anyone agitating for higher wages would lose his or her job, and very few workers could forfeit the use value of even a paltry pay packet. But the outrage workers felt at being so thoroughly exploited eventually would cost owners everything, Marx's believed, for it was grist in the mill of the class struggle that would hasten capitalism's demise.

Rates of Profit & Exploitation

Hasten, that is, but not outright cause. Capitalism's own internal contradictions would see to that. And, ironically, the agent of its destruction would be the very profits it constantly sought. Early nineteenth century economic doctrine held that profits invariably fall as the need for capital grows. Marx identified the constant need for two kinds of capital – fixed and circulating. The labor value of the machinery and other "things" necessary to production make up the former, workers' wages the latter.

Now, one can always borrow money or sell stock in one's company to raise money. Debt, though, has to be paid off with interest on a regular schedule out of future profits. Stock certificates, alternatively, ceded partial ownership in a firm and thus rights to future profits. For these reasons, surplus value is the least onerous, most accessible form of capital available to owners. In Marx's way of thinking, then, for every rate of "profit," there is a commensurate rate of exploitation. Unfortunately, though, to remain competitive, firms invariably have to replace workers with machines because the latter produce saleable goods more quickly and thus with greater surplus value.

But as the proportion of fixed to circulating capital rises, the amount of socially necessary labor that goes into production falls and, with it, a commodity's intrinsic worth. For, machines per se do not create value; men using machines do. So, paradoxically, if the labor theory of value holds true, owners invest more and more for a less and less tangible profit. Even worse, perhaps, the fewer the actual man-hours worked, the smaller the pool of untapped surplus value left for owners to appropriate.

More daunting still, nineteenth century economists believed that the economy as a whole was subject to the so-called law of the equalization of the rate of profit. Subscribed to by Smith, Ricardo, and Marx, the law states that the aggregate growth in earnings from loans, property rentals, equipment-leasing, and natural profits, or the "wages of entrepreneurship," at best remains fairly static year in and year out. This is because the overall economy was and still is seen as a collection of separate markets in different stages of growth or decline. The lure of higher profits brings new entrants into one market, putting downward pressure on its prices until profits fall. Meanwhile, prices in other markets with lower rates of profit rise, because there are now fewer producers to meet demand (Murno, n.d.).

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, what's more, profit rates actually fell with such regularity that Smith, Ricardo, and other leading classical theorists expected no better for the future. Marx was even more dour in his appraisal: declining profit rates would hurt workers sooner and more grievously than the owners of capital. Crushing poverty and its accompanying miseries would become so endemic that they would sweep away a dying capitalist system in a paroxysm of social and political upheaval.

Viewpoints

Evaluating Marx

It would be unfair to blame Marx for what were basically the inadequacies of the economic theory of his day. Two of his central tenants—the labor theory of value and the law of the equalization of profits—were widely held to be true. And it must be said that even when mainstream economists began to doubt their validity, Marx's intellectual disciples continued to uphold them. Paradoxically, for all the importance he placed on economic theory and the rigor of his analysis of nineteenth century capitalism, Marx never described in detail how the economy would function under communism, capitalism's replacement. He seemed content to limit himself to broad generalities, almost as if communism didn't really require an economy in the traditional sense.

Of course, as history would prove, it did, and a very authoritarian version at that. The command economies of the twentieth century communist regimes relied on central planning, not markets, to allocate scare resources; believed in collective not private ownership; and sought to build a classless society. Their rejection in recent years by the very people whose lot they were meant to better shows just how wide the gulf was between communist rhetoric and communist realities.

We remember Marx today not for his outdated economic theory, but for his brilliant insights into topics that would become focal points in the emerging field of sociology: alienation, class, materialism, and economic determinism. Perhaps his greatest contributions in this respect were his careful, near encyclopedic observations of these phenomena in Das Capital. His analysis may have relied at times on circular reasoning and a myopic view of history, but his depiction of the social realities of the industrial revolution and of the dislocation, loss of identity, and rigid class distinctions of his epoch resonate still.

Reading even the most obscure passages of his work one cannot help but be impressed by the passion Marx brought to his subject matter. As an intellectual, he cannot be easily pigeonholed. He was clearly an ideologue, convinced as he was at the onset of the rightness of his subsequent analysis, yet he also sought to unearth the general principles buried in the daily

minutiae of reality, much like an empiricist would. Ultimately, though, Marx was also a Hegelian who saw the dark side of capitalistic competition. Class struggle was inevitable, he thought, because the class system itself favored the economic interests of the few over the many.

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Weber's Interpretive Sociology

Francis Duffy

Overview

Most of us first hear about Max Weber during a discussion about the role that the protestant ethic played during capitalism's formative years. His essay tracing this link has been widely read ever since its publication in 1904, and deservedly so, for it is a brilliant treatise. But as any trained sociologist will tell you, economics was just one of fields of study Weber pursued with equal rigor. The nature of religion, politics, bureaucracy, class, and urban life also drew his interest. A polymath trained as a lawyer, classical scholar, and economic historian, Weber's greatest talent as a social scientist may well be as a theorist, and his most important contribution the methodology of sociological inquiry he championed.

For Weber, every one's feelings, thoughts, and deeds coalesce with every one else's into recognizable patterns he called social actions. We exercise free will in the sense that we comport ourselves as we wish. But, critically, we are also sensitive to the effects our conduct has on others and are thus prepared to modify it accordingly. The resulting interaction constitutes a social action. The principal task of the sociologist is thus to identify the underlying commonalities and differences observable in these myriad interactions and then arrange them into an intelligible schema.

This approach put him squarely at odds with one of the leading sociological theorists of his day, Emile Durkheim, who believed we naturally

acquiesce to what he called social facts: the roles which society prescribes to us and cue individual behavior. According to Durkheim, we may think we exercise free will, but are in fact just conforming. Passed through tact from generation to generation, we learn early to equate these social facts with reality itself. Discerning their true nature thus requires us to first shed any and all preconceived notions. Observing social phenomena, Durkheim insisted, requires the same strict impartiality science employs when observing natural phenomena.

Weber countered that even when we try our utmost to be objective, we still interpret experience subjectively, that raw perception is inchoate without the filter of preconceived ideas and value judgments. Each and every one of us simultaneously observes, makes senses of, and interacts with the world. But each of us does so according to a unique set of perceptual, cultural, and ideological biases which condition our individual behavior.

Weber recognized the methodological problems this relativistic worldview created for the social scientist. At the root of them was a profound philosophic question: in examining social phenomena, where do the subjective value judgments of the investigator end and the objective facts of the matter begin? The boundary between the two was clearly marked by what Weber called the norms of thought - logic and inference, and deductive and inductive analysis. These are the litmus test that tells us if the available evidence supports a conclusion and if the reasoning behind a factual judgment is sound. Universally recognized, the rules of logic confer a measure of objective truth upon what would otherwise be dismissed as subjective supposition (Farganis, 1974).

A far more practical problem, however, also stood in the way of the scientific study of social actions: how can you scrutinize billions of people's social actions individually without succumbing to the minutiae? Weber's solution to this very real problem: identify the general patterns in these individual incidents, the commonalities and differences that are emblematic of collective behavior.

These patterns, once confirmed, serve as the foundation for an ideal-type, a mental construct or a representational synthesis of real world phenomena. Logically arrived at, it is ideal in the sense that certain liberties are taken:

some facets are accentuated at the expense of others, and certain intricate are processes simplified. And for good reason, too, for as a type, it has to be sufficiently inclusive to be useful to the social scientist (Jacobs, 1990). Value-relevant at the same time, an ideal-type is more akin to a life-like painting than a photograph.

Their value, he asserted, lay in the insight they shed on the meanings, intentions, and motives people themselves assign to their actions and expect in the actions of others. All of which is key to Verstehen, or interpretive understanding, the object of all sociological inquiry. Premised on an extensive cataloguing and classifying of myriad forms of human behavior, the ideal type carries tremendous weight as an exercise in meta-analysis and as well as in Weber's subsequent conclusion that all social action adheres to one of four ideal-types of social action: the affectual, the traditional, the value-rational, and the instrumentally-rational.

The first of these, the affectual, is characterized by spontaneous, often impulsive expressions of emotion - laughter, anger, etc. - and devoid of any ulterior motive. Traditional actions are also unreflective, but for very different reasons: habit and custom govern these actions to such an extent that they're performed without any conscious deliberation. These routine, humdrum behaviors punctuate our lives in much the same way as they punctuated the lives of our parents and grand-parents.

Value-rational actions, ironically, are at heart anything but rational. Within the ideal type, arbitrary, often rigid belief-systems adhered to for their own sake motivate peoples' behavior. People act not out of want but out of an all-consuming faith and stringent sense of duty. Taken to extremes, these are the actions of religious zealots, political ideologues, and moral absolutists who put their rational minds entirely in the service of irrational ends.

By contrast, instrumentally-rational actions are all about achieving specific, real world objectives. Here, the emphasis is on efficiency in the service of maximum gain; the ends are utilitarian and the means calculated, pragmatic and utterly rational. For these reasons, Weber considered this last ideal-type instrumental in economic, political and scientific matters (Fulcher, 2003a).

Applications

A boundless curiosity about people as social beings, economic actors, churchgoers, citizens, city-dwellers, members of the lower, middle or upper class, et. al., animated Weber's interpretive sociology and left us with a body of published work near encyclopedic in scope. If, after a close reading all his essays, articles and books, one was asked to sum up in one word or phrase, a theme common to all, what might that be? In his exegesis of Weber's writings on religion, the authority of the state, capitalism, and class, Turner found time and again that power - be it spiritual, political, economic, or material - was never far from Weber's mind (1990).

Religion comes down to the question of who - whether they be prophets, preachers, priests, theologians, sects, congregations, or large institutional churches - tells us what to believe, tell us what value-judgments to hold, or which of our social actions are moral and which immoral? It also professes to know the answer to the question that rivets us unlike any other: what happens when we die. Now, nature and presumably God decide who dies when, but so too, legally and morally, does the state. In fact, the state has sanctioned recourse to violence in order to preserve social order and protect its citizens from foreign invaders.

The state, in fact, has to establish a monopoly vis-à-vis the use of violence, as Weber brilliantly pointed out, in order to be a state. If it did not have this exclusive franchise, history tells us, interlopers will resort to force-of-arms. All in all, though, power is easier to hold if it is seen to be legitimate, an expression of political will. And class stratification settles the question of who lays claim to the lion's share of goods, property, and privilege, factual judgments made initially on purely economic grounds that subsequently become socially-transmitted value-judgments.

Religion

Affective, traditional and value-relevant actions come together dramatically in religion. This perhaps explains why Weber wrote so widely and so often on the subject in such works as: The Sociology of Confucianism and Taoism, The Sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism, The Sociology of Judaism, The Sociology of Religion, Religious Rejections of the World and Their Direction, The Social Psychology of the World Religions, and,

of course, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism and a follow-up volume on American religiosity, The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism.

In each and every religion he studied, Weber found what he called a life-orientation, a total cognitive world-view that gives meaning, purpose, and direction to one's social actions. Calvinist Protestantism, for example, embraces the doctrine of predestination, that no amount of good deeds or righteous living can spare you eternal damnation if that's the fate God intended for you (Spencer, 1979). Anxiety bordering on dread was thus the daily fare of the faithful. To allay their fears, Calvinists convinced themselves that worldly success could be a sign that you were one of the elect destined for salvation. Provided, that is, you did not become a sinner in the process. To do that, you had to renounce all bodily pleasure and ostentatious wealth, discipline oneself to work hard, and waste nothing, particularly time. A calculating, rational mind was an asset in living up to this ascetic ideal. Thus as the Puritan values of industriousness, efficiency, and thrift were ideally suited to the rigors of capitalism (Fulcher, 2003c).

Further, Weber theorized that spirituality itself was originally a communal experience, characterized by psychic states of mind not that dissimilar from the orgiastic ecstasy of prehistory. The power of suggestion was such that people and objects temporarily took on magical qualities that inspire a belief in the transcendent (Smith, 1998). Religious institutions proper, for Weber then, took one of two forms: the ecciesia and the denomination.

The former practiced what he called "hierocratic coercion" by claiming complete authority over all things spiritual, ethical and familial, by making membership compulsory for all, and by having a paid priesthood well versed in the official dogma to conduct prescribed rituals and be the local center of moral authority. Catholicism and Islam fall in this category.

Denominations behave very differently: religious pluralism is tolerated; membership is strictly voluntary; beliefs are less rigid and dogmatic, and the clergy less authoritarian and rituals less ostentatious; and the individual congregation has greater autonomy in temporal matters. Baptists and Methodists epitomize this style of institutional worship (Fulcher, 2003b).

Erudite and insightful as he was on the subject of religion, Weber was very pessimistic about its future. Rational scientific inquiry, he believed, was robbing people of their sense of mystery, the root of all religious experience. Secularization, meanwhile, had all but broken organized religion's once powerful hold over the economy and the state; worship was fast becoming a private exercise.

Weber believed that as this "desacralization" of society proceeds, the emblems and institutions of traditional religious belief will recede farther and farther from the public consciousness along with, eventually, whatever spiritual meaning they once held. (Fulcher, 2003c). In the end, Weber prophesied, this process of disengagement and disenchantment would leave humankind vainly struggling to make sense of a cold, soulless world.

Authority & the State

With secularism, the center of moral authority migrates from the church to the state, and the strictures of religious dogma are increasingly replaced by the strident ideological doctrine. Some may even find in the mass political rally and the messianic leader meaning that the pew and pulpit no longer give them. But what makes a state a state and a ruler a ruler? Weber's answer: a would-be ruler must have a territory to govern, the physical force to seize and keep it, and a legitimate claim to authority to which the citizenry accedes. A state's borders, in other words, must be widely recognized, uncontested, and defensible borders; the government must have a monopoly on the use of force within them and be prepared to use it; and the ruler must have a convincing rationale with which to justify his or her power.

Of course the threat of physical force is sufficient to coerce obedience but not, crucially, consent or allegiance. And therein, Weber thought, lies the value of legitimacy. Authority deemed rightful by the citizenry commands its respect, acquiescence, and, to one extent or another, its approval. All true political power flows from this consent. For Weber, legitimacy underpins three distinct ideal-types of authority: the traditional, the charismatic, and the rational-legal, and corresponding styles of political leadership. (Fulcher, 2003d)

Traditional authority is generally inherited; it's the power of the monarch over his noblemen, the warrior class that swears fidelity to him and

is rewarded with land, rank, and power. The larger society which the monarch and the noblemen rule rigidly follows custom and convention and is consequently highly stratified and static, which may explain its remarkable historical longevity.

Most dynasties, though, were founded by political leaders whose personal magnetism and inspirational appeal won them a wide enough popular support to give them what Weber called charismatic authority. Loyalty here, however, extends only so far as the depth of followers' emotional attachment to the person, not to the political movement he or she heads. A projection, perhaps, of the public-psyche's quasi-religious need for a prophetic or strong, confident ruler, the net effect in either case is extensive, sometimes extraordinary power (Spencer, 1970).

Rational-legal authority relies neither on entitlement or emotional groundswell, but rather on the rule of constitutional law. It is a realm governed by the office-holder, the elected politician answerable to constituents, legislative oversight committees, partisan opponents, the press, and numerous other stakeholders. But Weber was far from convinced that the representatives of the people wielded the actual power. That, he feared, rested more in the hands of the bureaucracy of unelected civil servants since they are the ones who translate broad policies into detailed administrative rules and procedures.

As much as Weber thought rational-legal authority was an advancement over traditional and charismatic authority, he worried even more that the bureaucrats would eventually herd each of us into an "iron cage" of rules, regulations, and rational norms of behavior. Worse still, though, was his vision of a bureaucracy at the service of a charismatic dictator bent on a rational-value agenda. He prophesized that the "politically passive" masses could well elect an authoritarian demagogue who would set about dismantling the very democratic process that put him in power (Falk, 1935)

Class

Who among us is most deserving of wealth, status, and influence? Each of us, no doubt, would be at the top of our own lists of nominees. The problem, alas, is that the decision isn't ours to make – it is society's. As such, Weber concluded, the ultimate arbitrator of advantage is power, be it

economic, communal, or authoritarian. How much or how little power we individually exercise largely determines the ease or difficulty we will have in procuring goods, gaining advancement, and achieving inner satisfaction (Smith, 2007).

Economic considerations - one's income, assets, and prospects as owners, investors, and workers - determine what Weber referred to as our class situation, and, by extension, our chances in life. When many people share the same situation, they form a class proper in Weber's lexicon. The three major ones discussed by Weber in Society and Economics are the property, the commercial, and the social class (Fulcher, 2003e). The first two terms are self-explanatory and show why society is hierarchically stratified. In comparison, social class emphasizes more intangible, cultural commonalities that are unique to people in similar class situations.

Viewpoints

Max Weber brought a modernist's sensibility to the formal study of social phenomena. He recognized that for sociology to be an observational science, it had to be interpretive. Objectivity, the touchstone of the physical sciences, he realized, could not be faithfully duplicated in the social sciences because we inherently interpret the actions of others through a veil of preconceived notions, of perceptual and cultural biases of which we are not even consciously aware. Weber spanned the subject-object divide with his creation of the ideal type, which he then applied rigorously and with great effect to his inquiries into religion, capitalism, politics, and class. Simply put, he was and is one of sociology's great thinkers.

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Max Weber: Religious Ideals & the Capitalist Society

Cynthia Vejar

Overview

Max Weber was a German sociologist who generated thought-provoking analyses on politics, religion, and economics (Andreski, 1983; Bendix, 1960; Collins, 1986; Holton & Turner, 1989; Miller, 1963; Mitzman, 1969; Poggi, 1983; Swedberg, 1998; Turner, 2000). Weber wrote extensively on world religions and touched upon the fiscal elements that shaped their existence, including those in the East such as Islam, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Hinduism (Bennion, 1992; Matin-Asgari, 2004; Zagoria, 1997), which he generally regarded as mystical and lacking in fundamental rationality. Conversely, in Western teachings, Weber valued the determination and diligence in Judaism (Fishman & Goldschmidt, 1990; Sacks, 1999), although he ruthlessly labeled the Jews as "pariah people" and thus only capable of achieving "pariah capitalism" (Barbalet, 2005; Derks, 1999; Momigliano, 1980). The emphasis of this article, however, surrounds the merge between capitalism and religion that was conveyed through The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, a thesis written in 1905 for which Weber received both reverence and denigration (Kaelber, 2002; Molnar, 1997; Stark, 1966; Whimster, 2007). This piece of work was written at the offset of what was considered to be Weber's "dark years," a six-year time span during which he sank into the depths of depression following the death of his father, and through which he was academically and professionally immobile.

The Ideal Type

Weber coined the phrase ideal type to refer to mutual traits surrounding actions, groups of people, or a social phenomenon (Bruun, 2001; Weinert, 1996; Zouboulakis, 2001). Regarding religion, the ideal type would apply to the prototypical Jew, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, or Muslim within each faith. The ideal type is not representative of any actual person from each respective religion, per se, but symbolizes the generalized essence that people collectively possess by narrowing down essential traits into a singular composite figure. Counterintuitive to its namesake, an ideal type does not signify a supreme, upright, and honorable archetype; ideal types also exist to represent roles that are scandalous in nature, as demonstrated by ideal types that correspond with the thief, the prostitute, and the drug addict. Nevertheless, the ideal type is rational, in that it harnesses a person's fundamental group attributes into a linear framework, which can help dictate behavioral norms across various situations. The ideal type provides a paradigm for people to structure behavior with lucid precision, because in actuality, life is muddled and unsystematic, and the ideal type functions as a semblance of consistency that enables people to navigate through a sea of disorganization. Weber illustrates the importance of upholding an ideal type:

To understand how a war is conducted, it is necessary to imagine an ideal commander-in-chief for each side—even though not explicitly or in detailed form. Each of these commanders must know the total fighting resources of each side and all the possibilities arising there-from of attaining the concretely unambiguous goal, namely, the destruction of the enemy's military power. On the basis of this knowledge, they must act entirely without error and in a logically "perfect" way. For only then can the consequences of the fact that the real commanders neither had the knowledge nor were they free from error, and that they were not purely rational thinking machines, be unambiguously established (as cited in Sadri, 1992, p. 6).

Rationalization

Of tremendous importance is Weber's notion of rationalization (Oakes, 2003; Cockerham, Abel & Luschen, 1993; Wallace, 1990; Wilson, 2002), a concept that he consistently wove into his theories, which, depending on contextual forces surrounding the reference, may bear a slightly different

meaning. For example, he specifies artistic components that differentiate "rational" vs. "irrational" music (Feher, 1987), in addition to endorsing rationality as a dominant and indispensable cornerstone within society. Features defining that which is rational include consistency, action-oriented behavior, predictable, systematic, and directional outcomes, the exertion of willpower, and the exclusion of magical or superstitious ideologies (Angus, 1983). Weber felt that as each of the world religions adopted more rational characteristics, they inherently became more distinct from each other, since the process of rationalization entails the refinement of systematic rules and regulations that constitute group identity, and which erect distinguishing mechanisms that are discordant from counter religions. Thus, intra-religious rationality equates with inter-religious conflict. Additionally, Weber surmised that the tenets of rational religion also conflict with other established groups, such as the "family" group. This is evidenced, in part, by provisional stipulations among reputable religious roles (e.g., monks & priests) that are expected to bypass sexual and procreation desires in order to channel their energies into religious conviction.

Disenchantment

During the timeframe in which Weber proposed many of his theories, all of Europe was undergoing tremendous economic transition, which served as a platform for him to compare different societal underpinnings. In particular, he determined that traditional societies (Inglehart & Baker, 2000) were those that were drawn to sentimental and romanticized notions of established, time-honored routines, which tended to be habitual norms passed continually throughout the generations. Weber favored the lifestyle and progressive nature of rational cultures, which utilized innovative technological advancements, logic, and intellectually sound standards of modality. The process of transitioning from a traditional society to that which is rational includes a period of disenchantment (MacKinnon, 2001; Schroeder, 1995) from which one distances himself from sentimentality and familiar patterns.

The Industrial Revolution

Additionally, the rise of the Industrial Revolution (Knox & Schacht, 2008; Mastel, 2008) was another societal trend that Weber cited as a rational period in time, and the innovative norms that emerged during the Indus-

trial Revolution ameliorated the incorporation of rationality into his theoretical models. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, families thrived based on the abundance of agricultural products from the farm. The Pre-Industrial era consisted of a collectivist society, in that individual ambitions and desires were deemed secondary to family demands, and enmeshed personal and professional family investments were expressed through the long hours of labor extended toward the farms on which they resided. In this period, the continuation of the family rested on an ability for equitable collaboration toward mutual farm-related commodities.

At the turn of the 20th century, the shift toward industrialization began, which relied on the advent of technological, factory-oriented machinery, the eventual arrival of mechanized transportation, and the mandatory regulations that required children to receive public education outside of the home. These innovations commanded that parents separate from each other throughout the workday in order to engage in individual work responsibilities, with offsite supervisory standards serving to regulate behavior (e.g., job duties, hours of operation), while the children studied a formalized curriculum at neighborhood schoolhouses. Weber viewed such a societal shift as rational, and as a contribution to capitalistic ideals.

Power & Leadership

Weber published extensively on the concept of power, and elaborated on three categorical forces that defined the utilization of leadership:

- Legal domination,
- Traditional domination, and
- Charismatic domination (Pfaff, 2002; Poggi, 1988; Steffek, 2003; Thomas, 1984).

According to Weber, legal domination was the most favorable means of upholding rational thinking, which is a condition that allows for the development of bureaucratic designs. A bureaucracy (Gale & Hummel, 2003; Kalberg, 1993) is the organizational hierarchy that sanctions productive output, which can be easily witnessed in large-scale procedural structures such as governmental or militaristic institutions. Weber emphasized how power differentials naturally constitute bureaucracies in terms of the "enforcer" and his corresponding "subordinates," although the latter

adheres to the provisional standards and administration of the organization, as opposed to the actual person in charge. The bureaucrat, or authority figure, is a person who has achieved such a position through the refinement of educational and professional application. Once he secures this position of power, he is able to reside there indefinitely, and receive resultant benefits such as a stable, continuous salary.

In contrast, Weber illustrates the nature of traditional domination as an irrational system that can be demonstrated in part through a sub-category termed patrimonialism (Eisenberg, 1998; Stone, 1995), which is the loyalty that subjects extend toward an authoritative ruling power. In such circumstances, subordinates respond to the dictatorship of the person as opposed to the generalized set of rules set forth by an organization. As such, the patrimonial leader is the primary source of both power and economic funding, which enables the perpetuation of such an organization. In many societies, such as Eastern caste cultures, patrimonialism is a birthright, not a role that can be strived for or achieved by the lay public.

The third type of power, charismatic domination is expressed in families and/or organized religion, and leadership results from the dynamic and captivating traits that the leader possesses; therefore power, to some extent is something that can be earned. Also, over time subordinates of charismatic domination rise from their inferior status, because the process of routine contributes toward equalizing the hierarchy.

Applications

The Protestant Ethic & the Spirit of Capitalism

Weber found that there were communal behavioral patterns among geographical regions that embraced different religious beliefs. In particular, Weber reasoned that areas that accepted Catholicism as the predominant religion consisted of affiliates who were educationally and professionally complacent since the Catholic religion professed that spiritual enlightenment was internal and could not be obtained through worldly, material gain. Such observations inspired Weber to write one of his most prolific and controversial documents titled The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (1930), in which he intertwined two of his passions, economics and religion, into a consolidated theory. Weber reflected on the rational

advancements that corresponded with the Calvinistic, or Puritan denominational sect of Protestant Christianity, and speculated on the diligent work ethic and monetary strides that paralleled this religious faction.

Calvinism & Predestination

One of the hallmarks of Calvinism was the notion of predestination (Sass, 1991; Spencer, 1982), or, the belief that a person's fate has been scripted before birth, which included their earth-bound deeds, as well as their eventual placement in the afterlife. According to this premise, a person's conduct held no bearing on his elect (i.e., saved) or damned status. Proponents of this ideology felt that it was unnerving to anticipate an unknown, and possibly torturous, destination point and determined that the primary indicator specifying where the soul would eventually reside rested on the fruitful and lucrative accomplishments of their vocational pursuits. In other words, the ideal type of a person who was spiritually saved was he who was industrious, productive, and conscientious. He who refused to capitalize on his God-given skills was negligently corrupt:

If God show you a way in which you may lawfully get more than in another way (without wrong to your soul or to any other), if you refuse this, and choose the less gainful way, you cross one of the ends of your calling, and you refuse to be God's steward (Weber, 1930, p. 59).

Of course, the irony of such a pact was that the orchestration of such output could not influence the future placement of one's soul under the auspices of predestination. Hence, an industrious, fruitful life allowed people to placate corresponding levels of anxiety that accompanied an unknown fate. In other words, the painstaking efforts they extended toward work-related endeavors were not an attempt to appear favorable in the eyes of God, who had already undergone the selection process, but the psychological conviction that alleviated high levels of trepidation. Weber theorized that the energy connected with the laborious efforts put forth by sanctimonious, God-fearing Calvinists was a manifestation of their fear that indolence equated with damnation.

Asceticism

The term Weber used to convey the obligation toward a sober, steadfast, and relentlessly constructive life was asceticism (Arnold, 2005; Mulyadi,

2006). The ascetic were those who fully engaged in their calling, or vocational pursuits that utilized their skill set, capabilities, and ability for production, regardless of the mundane, insignificant, or toilsome nature of such tasks. An ostentatious or indulgent disposition did not correspond with the ascetic's daily life, nor did laziness, spontaneity, or procrastination. "Idle hands are the devil's workshop" is a suitable adage that fit the ascetic's adherence to time, which consequently affected his or her ability for social restraint, orderliness, and above all, a strong work ethic. Additionally, the Puritan code of ethics imparted equitable, honest business transactions, as well as a tendency toward financial conservation or reinvesting monies into valuable domains; frivolous extravagance was highly shunned (Runciman, 2005).

Interpersonally, the ascetic was courteous and respectful, while simultaneously maintaining an emotionally detached distance from those in his midst, since not only was he uncertain of his own destiny, but was also doubtful of those in his surrounding. As such, it was detrimental to form intimate attachments with family members, neighbors, or work associates in the chance that they were of the ill-fated, damned classification. Moreover, as opposed to early Christianity's interaction with esoteric, numinous acts (Acikel, 2006; Scribner, 1993), such as "turning water into wine," the ascetic Calvinist shed himself of any remnants of ceremonial rituals and mysticism.

Through non-flamboyant, hard-working measures, the Calvinists naturally led ample and prosperous standards of living. As such, Weber equated middle-class, capitalist lifestyles as verifiable traits of elect souls who were saved from eternal damnation. The unlucky, who found themselves destitute and in the throes of poverty were representations of the damned, and Calvinists avoided interacting with underprivileged groups in order to dissociate from those who were spiritually disparaged.

The choice occupations for most Calvinists were those related to business endeavors. Agricultural jobs were seasonally inconsistent, in that there were patterned times to productively labor in the fields, which made it difficult to steadily express devotion toward work-related efficiency. Likewise, at the time both military and politically oriented positions were deemed opulent, whereas the goal of Puritan fervor related to grueling efforts that yielded middle-ground bourgeois.

The Religion of Capitalism

It is essential to point out that Weber disapproved the notion that capitalism reinforced negative traits such as greed, because he thought that humankind was naturally prone toward such a disposition. Nor did he unite capitalism and self-serving materialism in tandem, since affluent abundance was a coincidental offshoot of capitalistic exertion. In fact, those whose diligence was fueled solely by profit, as opposed to religious dogmatism, were engaging in sinful aberrance, "you may labor to be rich for God, though not for the flesh and sin" (Weber, 1930, p. 59). Incidentally, over the course of time Weber predicted that the religious component associated with the capitalistic, Puritan work ethic would dissipate, and what would remain was a direct affiliation between capitalism and monetary attainment. During this futuristic era, Weber pessimistically surmised that people would be relegated to "iron cages," (Lackey, 1971; Tiryakian, 1981) in which there would be "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart" (Weber, 1930, p. 68).

As passionate as Weber was toward upholding the legacy of Calvinism, he was cynical about the future outcome such values and behavioral customs would yield. He imagined people fulfilling their rote daily routines through uninspired, mechanistic means. Furthermore, Weber asserted that as Western civilization evolved into a secularized society (Fenn, 1969), people would replace religiosity as the sole source of professional motivation with materialistic, product-fueled goals, which was the bane of his theories.

Viewpoints

Modern scholars frequently compare current sociological, economic, and religious affairs against that which Weber theorized in The Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism. Wolfe (2007) suggests that the correlation between devout religiosity and financial success can be demonstrated by the economic and entrepreneurial prosperity of today's Mormon community. Likewise, Murove (2005) points to indigenous African civilizations that possess moral frameworks rooted in tradition as an underlying principle to explain failed attempts at inducing capitalism in such areas. Fukuyama (2005) notes the derived interpersonal benefits that the Protes-

tant, or Puritan work ethic has extended into contemporary society. More specifically, the strong work ethic that was upheld by those who were spiritually "enlightened" was all-consuming, and transcended into the moral transactions between people and their communities, which had previously been demonstrated solely among family members, thereby forging a sense of societal trust among non-intimates.

Until the publication of The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, one of the most renowned theories that broached the concepts of politics and religion was that which was proposed by Karl Marx. His premise, most frequently captured in the quote "religion is the opium of the people" (Kowalewski & Greil, 1990; Marx, 1844), juxtaposed Weber's supposition, in that it claims that religion serves to placate society, as opposed to motivate productivity. Also, Marx's emphasis on social conflict, or society's struggle to compete over shared resources, was the foundation for his eventual Communist Manifesto. Essentially, Marx encouraged the oppressed portion of society to overthrow those considered to be the oppressors in order to equalize gross power and monetary differentials. Marx asserted that such progress is naturally cyclical, since eventually the oppressed convert into the oppressors, and likewise again, need to be overthrown. A thorough understanding of Weber enables comprehensive insight into sociological matters, particularly when contrasting his theories with those of Karl Marx, an equally influential philosopher who held a diametrically divergent stance.

Conclusion

It is essential to understand the etiology of contemporary capitalist ideals, particularly the religious factor that Weber held in high regard, which has consequently been phased out of modern capitalism. Weber's morose outlook for the future has indisputably come to fruition, as some critics of capitalism associate such an economic system with perpetuating values solely revolving around individualistic financial attainment. Other maladies correlated with Weber's capitalistic ideals surround environmental concerns and consumption (Lodziak, 2000), as well as capitalistic pressures inciting psychological distress among college students (Kasser & Ryan, 1993), and the overall production of an inferior moral structure (Jordan, 1997). Furthermore, Weber's notion that capitalism eventually "reduces every worker to a cog in this bureaucratic machine" (Weber, 1978,

p. 8) is certainly an expression that can be justified in today's society, as demonstrated by Western pressures for production, efficiency, and materialistic gain in lieu of quality-of-life and psychological welfare (Haight, 2001).

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Weber & Rationalization

PD Casteel

Overview

Max Weber (1864-1920) is considered one of the founders of modern sociology. His work ranged from studies in economics, the modern political state, and religion. At the core of Weber's work was a concern with the modern German state. He was a thinker situated in history between the positivist foundations of sociology embodied in the works of Comte and Durkheim, and the rise of the anti-positivist movement. Weber was a contemporary of Wilhelm Dilthey. Dilthey argued that the social sciences were altogether different from the natural sciences, but needed their own distinct and similarly scientific approach (Dilthey, 1989).

Weber embraced Dilthey's argument. In his last major lecture, Science as a Vocation, he said that the natural science can only tell the answer to the question of what we should do if we want to technically master nature. It cannot tell us whether we want to or should master nature (Landmann, 1984). For Weber rationalization was totally alien to value consideration (Gronow, 1988). It is interesting to note that his influence on sociology is such that sociologists working in the vein of both positivists and anti-positivists claim Weber as their own. Weber's contribution to sociological method is unquestioned. He refined existing concepts and introduced many more to the sociological approach to knowledge. He wrote at length about objective sociology and the subjective. To this end he addressed

concepts such as value-free research, social norms, ideal types, and social relations.

Perhaps Weber's most influential and enduring work was on rationalization. Rationalization is the movement over time away from institutional structures that engender actions based on the emotional, mystical, traditional, and religious to institutional structures that produce actions based on reason, calculability, predictability, and efficiency. It was in the light of his theory on rationalization that Weber viewed both the progress and growing disenchantment of Germany.

Rationality

H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (1978) described rationalization as the most fundamental element of Weber's philosophy of history. The urge of religious teachers, artists, intellectuals, and eventually scientists throughout history has been towards comprehensive and meaningful interpretation of the universe. This constant drive away from institutional structures of magic, mysticism, and religion towards secular structures of rationalization has been at the center of the progress of history and what Weber called the "sociology of knowledge." Weber writes about the rise of bureaucracy and its presuppositions and causes in Economy and Society. Weber sees the money economy as the primary presupposition of bureaucracy and gives as examples of the rise of historical bureaucracies the ancient Egyptian and Roman civilizations, the Roman Catholic Church, modern Western states, and modern capitalism.

Once created, these bureaucratic machines take on a life of their own and are permanent in character. Rationalization in these structures is comprised of calculability, efficiency, technology, and control over economic goods, labor, opportunities and advantages, and even values. This control allows for bureaucracy to better predict probable outcomes and mitigate risk (Weber, 1978). Throughout, his career Weber continued to develop the idea of rationalization and in doing so identified four types of rationality:

- Practical,
- Theoretical,
- Formal,
- Substantive (Kalberg, 1980).

Practical Rationality

Practical rationality is based on an individuals experience and context. By considering their observations in light of their desired ends individuals weigh their options and pursue the actions that are most likely to bring about the desired ends. Practical rationality is pragmatic and assumes action. Weber believed, like Sigmund Freud and later Michele Foucault, that culture and its institutions of rationality shape practical reason (Ritzer, 1975).

Theoretical Rationality

Unlike practical rationality, theoretical rationality does not assume action will be taken. Rather, theoretical rationality attempts to understand and explicate the world. This does not mean that theoretical rationality cannot give rise to action, rather that the theoretical rationality does not necessitate action.

Substantive Rationality

Substantive rationality involves the consideration of numerous cultural, institutional, or personal values. It does accept the pragmatic or legal as the applying to all circumstances (Weber, 1978). Rather it acts as a jurist to give birth to new order (Weber, 1989). This is because people often find themselves caught between competing values, norms, or laws. In this instance, one must choose between conflicting values or rationalities. The fact that substantive rationality is necessary points to a significant dilemma of structures of rationalization.

Formal Rationality

Formal rationality typifies bureaucratic institutions. Formal rationality embraces the norms, rules, and laws of economic, legal, and scientific organizations. With the rise of the rational structures within the church, even religion has become subjected to formal rationality. Adherence to formal rationality is based on an impersonal bond. This bond, something Sigmund Freud (1989) called "guilt" and Michel Foucault (1979) termed "discipline," imposes adherence and action (Weber, 1989). Formal rationality is the most coercive rationality and the most prevalent in social structures.

Disenchantment

Weber embraced scientific rationalization and its effectiveness in the natural sciences, though he remained wary of its limitations. His critique was directed towards the Kantian promise that reason would bring progress. Weber viewed Kantian reason, and Enlightenment thinking in general, as leading towards a rationalization of the economy that would limit individuals and lead to disenchantment (MacKinnon, 2001). Additionally, he often complained that the constant extension of rationality in bureaucracy through technology designed to emancipate eventually leads to an "iron cage" (Habermas, 1981).

Here lies the rub in Weber's work: Weber understood the value of rationalization and bureaucracy and the benefits it brought society. He did not see how history could march forward without it. However, he was deeply troubled by hegemony and the deep personal feeling of disenchantment that rationalization heaped on individuals.

He saw rationalized structures offering individuals worldly alternatives to their own nature. The rational structures that arose in churches offered religious love, brotherhood, and neighborly love in the place of sexual love. In this way the church could dictate sexual behavior. The idea of religious love, though an effective substitute, does not give a sense of accord to the passion of youth or the intellectual love in a mature adult (Bellah, 1998). Here Weber is echoing Nietzsche's critique that the Enlightenment and its pursuit of scientific rationality have stripped humanity of its passion and virility. What Weber is proposing is that a mature intellectual love can stand in opposition to the determining fiats of rationalized institutions and keep the individual in tune with his or her inner-world.

Applications

Economy

Weber closely links the development of rationality with the rise of society and capitalism made possible by the subjugation of nature to manmade technology. It was technology that relieved humanity from the limits placed on it by nature and gave rise to techniques and organizations that undoubtedly determine the ideals of modern life (Weber, 1987). A contemporary of Weber was Frederick Winslow Taylor. Taylor's scientific management (also called Taylorism) exemplified the historical progres-

sion of rationalization that Weber theorized. Taylor called for a vanguard of engineers to lead the process of using job observation, reengineering of job tasks, teaching workers the standard method, and to use rewards to drive efficiency to breakdown the "willful loafing and lagging of workers" (Taylor, 2008).

Fordism followed Taylorism. Henry Ford applied rationalization to automobile manufacturing. Fordism broke down complicated jobs into several smaller uncomplicated tasks and then assigned unskilled workers to perform that task over and over again. The assembly line and mass production are practices most closely associated with Fordism. Today sociologists may refer to the McDonaldization of the economy. With the rise of the white collar jobs, specifically the service sector, and globalization, the practices of the McDonald's fast food chain embodies Weberian rationalization. A McDonaldized organization is efficient, calculable, predictable, and practices control over labor and over resources (Ritzer, 2000). In fact, Lippmann and Aldrich (2003) have argued that McDonaldization may be the best way to teach Weber to college students.

Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is an ordered organization with specific and fixed jurisdictional areas governed by laws and/or administrative regulations. The hierarchy of a bureaucracy is fixed by individual duties and responsibilities. Authority is delimited by rules and regulations rigidly enforced and placed at the disposal of officials. The strength of bureaucracy was that authority rested in the position, not in the people who filled the position. This allowed for the perpetuity of rules and regulations (Weber, 1978). Weber was interested in the historical development of bureaucracy in ancient Egypt, China, and Rome, as well as its development within religious organizations. Weber explored the benefits and limitations of bureaucracy in government, economy, church, and military. Bureaucracy was Weber's historical necessary evil. The efficiency of rationalized bureaucracy was indisputable. Yet he described bureaucracy as ensnaring the individual in an "iron cage" of rules and regulations that channel the human life to a "polar night of icy darkness" (Weber, 1978).

Body & Mind

One of the more provocative elements of Weber's idea of rationalization is the ever increasing control that rationalized structures practice on in-

dividuals. It is not a concept readily associated with Weber, but rather many of his later critics. Weber believed that rationalized organizations could to a great degree control individual actions and ideas (Weber, 1987). Freud picked up on this theme in his sociological work, Civilization and Its Discontents (1989). Freud's idea of civilization reflects that of Weber's bureaucracy and administration. Freud believed that civilization used laws, norms, and guilt to create an agency within that keeps watch over one's actions and intentions. Ultimately, conformity separates the individual from his natural instincts and this causes discontent. Foucault (1979) believed that the institutions of the modern state and economy create a discipline within that takes a hold on the body - training it and forcing it to carry out tasks.

Critical Theorists write about culture as a rationalized structure and believe that it separates the individual from the self and burdens them with false needs (Marcuse, 1991). Today the control may go beyond the body and thoughts. Barbara Ehrenreich (2006) believes that employers are already starting to dictate what feelings an employee can and cannot have about their jobs. Whether it's social norms determining what time of the year its appropriate to wear white, factories controlling when employees can or can't go to the restroom, church doctrine guiding allowable thoughts, city code making a home owner cut their grass, or advertisers telling a consumer they need a product, or an employer demanding an employee feel genuine passion for their job, one thing is clear: if Weber is correct, then this isn't going to stop and the rationalization of our structures is only going to increase.

Viewpoints

Critique of Weber's Rationalization

Criticisms of Weber's idea of rationalization include that the development of rationalization Weber presents is not historically accurate, the concept is too pessimistic, the concept is deterministic, and that rationalization isn't a comprehensive concept.

One of the more famous critiques of Weber's rationalization is from social philosopher Jurgen Habermas, who believes that Weber did not go far enough. Habermas portrays Weber's rationalization as purely instrumen-

tal, that ii involves only calculation and efficiency. Habermas' concern is that Weber had not accounted for the possibility of true democracy in his concepts. Following Weber's reasoning, democracy and the freedom to choose would eventually be rationalized out of society as bureaucracy increasingly sets the most efficient actions with its rules and regulations.

Habermas offers an additional form of rationality: communicative rationality. Habermas believes that communicative actions have the ability to broaden understanding and in doing so broaden the opportunities to better social, economic, and political life (Habermas, 1981). Habermas wrote about what he called the "ideal speech situation." The ideal speech situation exists when two or more conversationalists agree to suspend judgment, discuss a topic on its merits, and agree to accept the most reasonable argument. Habermas believes communicative rationality actually expands the horizon of reason and brings into play new ideas and opportunities that Weber's instrumental rationality cannot (Habermas, 1980). Habermas's theory of communicative rationality recognizes a universal pragmatics in language that allows conversationalists to leverage the intrinsic nature of language to criticize the control of rationalized structures (Kellner, 2004). It is this ability to alter the direction of rationalization that makes, for Habermas, democracy possible.

Conclusion

Weber's influence remains significant in the discipline of sociology. His ideas about rationalization, bureaucracy, the decline of religion in favor of a rationalized religious order have stood the test of time. Since Weber presented rationalization as an element of his philosophy of history and he was careful to shy away from the idea of rationalization as progress he was able to nuance the complexity of the idea while spelling out the benefits and ills. It is this complexity that has kept the concept relevant when so many ideas have faded into history.

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Weber: Antipositivism & Verstehen

Katherine Walker

Overview

Since sociology first emerged as a social science in the 19th century, there has been much discussion about how to best study social dynamics. Some sociologists, called positivists, argue that sociology should study society in the same way that physical scientists study their subject matter, through careful observation of the behavior of the subject, subjected to rigorous analysis. Other sociologists point out that unlike the subject matter of the hard sciences--chemicals, atoms and the like-- humans attach meaning to their actions. These sociologists argue that to fully comprehend human action, it is necessary to develop an understanding of the subjective states of the human actors—that is, to understand action, it is necessary to understand the motives and meanings attached to it. This approach is called interpretive sociology.

Max Weber (1864-1920) is one of the most important figures in the history of sociology, and was one of the earliest and strongest advocates for an interpretive methodology. One of the building blocks of his methodology was the concept of verstehen, an approach that takes individual meaning into account when analyzing society. To understand how verstehen fits into his methodology and sociology in general, it is necessary to explore Weber's definition of social action, his concept of ideal types, and his use of verstehen to connect individual action to broader social processes.

What is Verstehen?

Verstehen, a German word usually translated as "understanding," was a key element in the sociology of Max Weber. Weber is considered one of the major founding figures of sociology, along with Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) and Karl Marx (1818-1883). Unlike Marx and Durkheim, Weber did not limit his sociological analysis to macro-level social phenomena; in fact, he did not make a strong distinction between macro-level analysis and micro-level analysis. Instead, he thought that sociology should be rooted in a systematic understanding of the subjective meanings that individuals place on their actions, and that these individual-level understandings could in turn help explain social structures and historical change.

Verstehen was the methodological tool Weber used to accomplish this mission. In Weberian sociology, verstehen is necessary to create concepts and meaningful explanations of society, and to link the individual with the structural. Through his emphasis on understanding at the individual level, Weber avoided the reification of social structure that is so often the downfall of social analysis. In other words, he never forgot that action is human action. As he put it, "Action in the sense of a subjectively understandable orientation of behavior exists only as the behavior of one or more individual human beings… for sociological purposes there is no such thing as a collective personality which 'acts'" (Weber 1964 pp 101-102). While other theorists of his time tried to explain the existence of social institutions by referring to other institutions—for example, claiming that religion is a response to the economy, or social disorder is a response to specialization—Weber said that institutions cannot act. All action is human action; humans are the proper subject matter of interpretive sociology.

Weber's Antipositivism

This focus on understanding and interpretation was in contrast to sociology's trajectory before Weber. Auguste Comte (1798-1857), who first coined the word "sociology," envisioned his invention as a positivistic science. Positivists value observation and measurement, believing that sociology should strive to emulate the research methods of hard sciences like chemistry or biology. They prioritize empiricism and quantification, and they believe that through careful application of the traditional scientific method, sociologists should be able to discover laws that govern human behavior.

The positivistic program invented by Comte was first effectively employed by Emile Durkheim, who analyzed group-level phenomena (what he called "social facts"), such as the suicide rate, to discover the predictable and regular nature of human action. Durkheim's work contrasts with Weber's because Durkheim had little interest in the subjective interpretation of events, being more interested in social forces that were external to any individual. In a sense, Weber began his research at the point where Durkheim's ended.

Weber thought that the methods used by the natural and physical sciences could not explain human action because they neglected the human ability to attach meaning to action or to exercise free will and act according to intelligible motives. Thus he rejected positivism. But to say he was anti-positivist does not mean he was anti-empirical. He did incorporate large-scale historical and statistical data into his analysis, but he did so as part of his questions; in his view, data needed interpretive explanation. His answers always were grounded in verstehen, explanatory understanding (Smelser & Warner, 1976). Weber believed that social patterns and social structures were inventions that people constructed and imposed on their world to create order and meaning. To arrive at a true understanding of social dynamics, it was necessary to begin with the subjective meaning attached to action. Even when discussing broad processes, Weber held steadfast to his interpretive framework and rejected the sort of functionalist analysis that treated structures or institutions as things with the ability to act.

Social Action

Weber used the term social action to refer specifically to the meaningful acts of individuals, distinguishing these acts from mere reflex behavior. Social action is oriented toward other individuals and is given meaning by them. Weber distinguished social action from reflex action (for example, sneezing), involuntary action (like being accidently shoved in the line at the concession stand) or irrational acts (for example, the actions of a person with dementia). In his words, "Action is social in so far as, by virtue of the subjective meaning attached to it by the acting individual (or individuals), it takes account of the behavior of others and is thereby oriented in its course" (Weber, 1964, p. 88). Verstehen is used to analyze intentional and meaningful social action (Munch, 1991; Tucker, 1991).

Types of Verstahen

Weber distinguished between two kinds of verstehen: aktuelles Verstehen and erklarendes Verstehen. Aktuelles verstehen is usually translated as "observational" (Weber, 1964, pp. 94-95) and refers to an understanding of motive and action that can be gleaned from simple observation. In his examples, observational understanding includes the processes found in the basic comprehension of a simple math equation or the ability to read a basic emotion like anger on the face of another. We understand that 1+1=2, or that John's facial expression indicates wrath. In contrast, erklarendes Verstehen, 'explanatory' understanding, refers to the understanding of the motive or meaning behind an act. For example, when seeking an explanatory understanding of a person writing a math equation, we have reached our goal if "we understand what makes him do this at precisely this moment and in these circumstances. Understanding in this sense is attained if we know that he is engaged in balancing a ledger or in making a scientific demonstration, or is engaged in some other task of which this particular act would be an appropriate part" (Weber, 1964, p. 95).

Interpretive understanding (erklarendes Verstehen) was not the ultimate goal of Weber's analysis. Instead, he believed that sociologists should move from interpretive explanations to causal explanations, passing from detailed description, to theorizing and categorizing, to comparison and generalization, to causal explanation. As he put it, "Sociology… is a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its course [sic] and effects" (Weber, 1964, p. 88). Verstehen was a first step in his methodology; without this step he thought the sociological project was meaningless.

Ideal Types

To move from verstehen to causal explanation, Weber created another tool—the ideal type. An ideal type is an abstraction that describes an object in terms of its essential qualities and its most typical characteristics. Ideal types are not meant to describe reality; instead, they are used as a basis of comparison. For example, when Weber wrote about the ideal type bureaucracy, he described qualities that are generally found in most bureaucracies as a starting point for analyzing bureaucratic dynamics; ultimately he explained the relationship between bureaucracies and the modern trend toward rationalization.

By ideal Weber did not mean the best or most perfect type; he meant the most typical, most common, or most expected type. Sometimes these are called "pure" types. There can be ideal types of action, ideal types of institutions, and ideal types of processes, historical configurations, and so on.

Social action becomes meaningful when it is understood in context. Sociologists can grasp a particular context through the use of ideal types. Returning to the example above of a professor writing 1+1=2 on the board: to arrive at an interpretive understanding of this social action, it might be necessary to create an ideal type professor, an ideal type classroom, an ideal type mathematics, or an ideal type scientific proposal. By creating these ideal types and using them as a basis from which to understand and interpret the meaning of this one specific act, a sociologist could create an explanation that linked the subjective meanings placed on the action with larger social institutions such as the educational system. The broad statements made about professors or equations in such a context would be ideal types: they would not describe every professor or equation, but they would be useful constructs with which to link typical behaviors and motivations to broader patterns.

It is the use of ideal types that keeps verstehen from being too narrowly focused on the individual. Ideal types provide context, and context provides an understanding of motivation, linking the individual's subjective meanings with broad social structures and processes (Tucker, 1991).

Applications

Verstehen & Antipositivism in Weber's Work

There were many facets to Weber's methodology. He usually began by defining his concepts closely, searched for subjective meanings of events, created ideal types, and then used these tools to create causal explanations of social dynamics. To move from concept to explanation, he used massive amounts of historical data, reaching across centuries and cultures for comparisons. For example, in his best-known works he investigated the rise and fall of religions and economic systems, the rationalization of modern society, traditional, charismatic and rational authority, and class, status and power. Because of his use of verstehen, though, he treated historical change as the result of individual actions that were arranged into meaningful patterns (Hall, 1991).

His insistence on understanding large social dynamics through the lens of individuals' subjective understandings of their actions can be seen in his best-known work, "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism." In this work, Weber explored how modern life was defined by an increasing rationalization, a turning away from traditional ways of thought and a new emphasis on economic, ends-driven behavior. One of the guiding questions of this work was why capitalism took root fastest in Protestant countries. Weber argued that much of the explanation could be found in the meaning that Protestants put on their actions. Calvinism placed a high value on hard work, thrift and sobriety; Calvinists believed that their work was a calling from God. Practitioners of Calvinism believed in predestination; that is, they believed that before they were born, their destinies as either one of God's elect or one of the eternally damned were already determined. This belief led them to look for signs of God's approval in their daily lives, to reassure themselves that they were among the saved. Success in worldly endeavors was taken to be a sign of God's love. Surely there could be no better recipe for a successful transition to capitalism than a people who worked hard, saved, reinvested, and took material success as a sign of God's favor (Weber, 1930).

In his analysis, Weber used verstehen to analyze the subjective meaning of work and success to early Protestants. He used ideal types to compare religious beliefs and economic systems. Putting these together with data that described the worldwide transformation of traditional agricultural societies to capitalist systems, he was able to connect individuals' subjective interpretations of their actions with large scale historical change.

Use by Other Theorists

Weber's interpretive methods in general, and verstehen in particular, have been influential in sociology since Weber first popularized his methods. Some sociologists have used the concept of verstehen in a strictly Weberian fashion. For example, Weber was a direct influence on American sociologist W.E.B. DuBois, who studied racial dynamics in the United States. While DuBois conducted massive empirical studies of the living conditions of African Americans in the United States, he also, in works such as "The Souls of Black Folk," drew connections between subjective interpretations of the color line and the historical and sociological forces that caused and maintained it (Collins & Makowsky, 1993).

Verstehen has also been adapted by many other sociologists and used in ways that differ from Weber's cross-cultural and historical focus. This adaptation began with phenomenology as espoused by Alfred Schutz. Like Weber, Schutz (1970) thought that because people create institutions such as the state, the market, or religions through subjectively driven action and then subjectively orient their actions to these phenomena, sociology should study what institutions and structures meant to people subjectively, as opposed to studying the institutions and structures themselves.

Schutz's phenomenology evolved into ethnomethodology in the hands of Harold Garfinkel. Ethnomethodologists continue on with Weber's goal of interpretive understanding, although they generally confine their analysis to small-scale interaction. Garfinkel believed that because human behavior was constantly subjectively reconstructed, the general smoothness of daily interaction should present a puzzle for researchers. To achieve understanding of social situations, ethnomethodologists tend to disrupt the commonly accepted definitions of what is happening. By treating friends as strangers, refusing to follow conversational conventions, standing backwards in elevators and the like, they disrupt normal understandings because they think that the taken-for-granted rules of society are best seen when they are broken; when they can no longer be taken for granted. Through his studies, Garfinkel asserted that the knowledge that an actor brings to a situation, the characteristics of this knowledge, how this knowledge is used by the individual, in short, all the factors that create the structure of society are subjectively founded. This places Weber's initial insistence on subjective interpretation in the center of ethnomethodology's program of research, albeit at a more micro-level of analysis (Collins & Makowsky, 1993).

The interpretive approach also contributed to the development of the symbolic interaction of Herbert Blumer and to Erving Goffman's studies of self-presentation. Interactionism is a micro-level study of the development of self, the social construction of reality, and the techniques humans use to create and sustain a shared definition of the situation through their daily encounters. Like ethnomethodology and phenomenology, it is heavily in debt to Weber's interpretive understanding.

Researchers are still finding new uses for Weber's methodology. For example, the concept of verstehen provides the basis for the case-oriented

quantification approach recent software used by qualitative researchers (Colins et al., 2008), and it turns up in fields from legal studies to psychology.

Viewpoints

Criticisms

By insisting that the subjective states of individuals were the proper subject matter for sociology, Weber took a stance midway between the empiricism of positivists on one side and the idealism of German historicists on the other (Coser, 1971).

The broadest criticism of verstehen and antipositivism as the basis for methodology comes from positivists, as could be expected. The main criticism from positivists is that because verstehen calls for the use of an empathetic, imaginative approach rather than strict empiricism, the findings it generates can be hard to test empirically and hard to replicate. Defenders of Weber's methods claim that this criticism is rooted in a misunderstanding of Weber's use of verstehen. To Weber, verstehen was not an end in itself; understanding and interpretation were supposed to then lead to causal explanations of widespread and repeated social phenomena. Granted, effective use of verstehen does rely on a particular observer's pre-existing knowledge; if the observer's ability to understand and create useful ideal types that correspond to reality is limited, the method will not generate useful explanation of action (Collins and Makowsky, 1993, p. 175; Tucker, 1991). However, Weber used verstehen to connect individuals to larger phenomena, maintaining a stance that was antipositivist, yet not anti-empirical.

Historicists and idealists criticized verstehen from another angle; they critiqued the idea that social science could be generalizable. Weber created his methodology in part as a reaction to the entrenched historical idealism that dominated the German academy in his youth. Historicists did not believe that it was possible to generalize about human behavior because it was too variable across eras; broad explanations and general theories were not considered possible (Parsons, 1965). Weber rejected the idea that explanation of human behavior had to stop at an idiographic level.

Some sociologists have criticized Weber's methodological writing for being unclear, for not clarifying the distinction between intention, motive

and purpose. Others defend him by claiming that some of the confusion over the use of verstehen comes from mistranslations of Weber's work. Since Weber wrote in German, and since some of the concepts he used are difficult to translate precisely into English, there is bound to be ambiguity about what exactly he meant (Munch, 1991, p. 15). For example, the early translation of his economic works by Henderson and Parsons (Weber, 1947) is seen as having a more psychological and functionalist spin than later translations. The works later translated by Gerth and Mills (Weber, 1946) sound more related to conflict theory and less psychological.

Weber has also been criticized for not spelling out his methodology more clearly. While he did write a few articles outlining his techniques, he preferred doing research and writing to talking about his methods, so much of what is known about his methodological beliefs has been distilled from careful study of his various works (Hall, 1991).

Conclusion

Verstehen refers to a methodological tool, the interpretive understanding of individual action. The emphasis on verstehen is an emphasis on content and interpretation. Weber was not content with discovering historical patterns and social regularities; he was interested in what such patterns meant to the people whose daily lives formed the larger patterns that create what humans experience as immutable social structure (Smelser and Warner, 1976). In Weber's sociology, society is not idiographic, but is also cannot by simplified and captured in a few general laws of human dynamics. Verstehen allowed him to reject positivism and unify individual meaning with patterned behavior.

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Modern Sociology

Simone I. Flynn

Overview

This essay encompasses the sociological theory and practice of the first half of the twentieth century. While nineteenth century sociology, also know as classical sociology, developed primarily in Europe, early twentieth century sociology emerged and developed as an influential discipline primarily in North America. The early modern American tradition of sociology was characterized by a focus on individualistic perspectives rather than social classes as a whole. European sociology, on the other hand, remained rather static during the early twentieth century due to the control exerted by Europe's totalitarian regimes and conservative universities. In the early twentieth century, communist rule in Europe labeled sociology as a bourgeois discipline and banned it in order to institute the study of Marxist ideology. For example, during the 1920s and 1930s at many universities and institutes in Russia, Belarus, and the Ukraine, sociology courses were replaced by courses on historical materialism and scientific communism (Keen & Mucha 2004).

The history of modern sociology, including the socio-political influences and key theorists that shaped the field's development, is vital background knowledge for all those interested in the discipline of sociology, as well as social theory as a whole. This article explains the history of modern sociology in three parts:

- An overview of developments in modern sociology.
- A description of the ways in which twentieth century social theorists influenced the development of modern sociology.
- A discussion of the influence of classical sociology on modern sociology.

Developments in Modern Sociology

The first half of the twentieth century was marked by war and urbanization. In the global context, World War I (1914-1918) and World War II (1939-1945) caused millions of casualties, the refiguring of national boundaries and national identities, and the development of international governing bodies to promote diplomatic solutions over warfare. While the world wars stalled the development of classical sociology in European academies, the discipline developed at a rapid pace in North America.

Modern sociology began in North America in the late nineteenth century, and North American sociology was quickly institutionalized and incorporated into academic departments. Sociology became a recognized academic disciple in the late 1890s when American universities began teaching sociology and sociology departments were established. Sociology books, courses, and university departments became common in America during late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Sorokin 1929). The establishment of the American Sociological Society in 1905 marked the beginning of a uniquely North American sociology, which was characterized by individualism and a focus on individual behavior rather than social classes as a whole. This concern for the individual facilitated the collection of statistical data on individuals and subsequent quantitative analysis.

In the 1890s, sociologist Albion Small established the sociology program at the University of Chicago, and, five years later, the university began publishing, the American Journal of Sociology. The University of Chicago's sociology program, known as the Chicago School of Sociology, was popular for its studies of urban-life, minorities, and conflict. With its qualitative focus, the Chicago School was the center of American sociology for much of the early twentieth century. Its urban focus was a continuation of the European sociology tradition that emerged largely as a response to nineteenth century industrialization and urbanization.

Similarly, sociologist Franklin Giddings established the sociology department at Columbia University in the 1890s. The Columbia program, with its quantitative focus, is credited with training the first generation of sociological statisticians and demographers. Statistics became a central sociological methodology during the modern period, and statistics, along with other quantitative methods, bolstered the scientific nature of early American sociology.

By the early twentieth century both reformist sociology, lead by sociologist Lester Ward, and a conservative, classically-inspired branch of sociological thought had emerged. Social reformers began using sociological perspectives and applied research methods to promote social change and social justice. They embraced the field of sociology and came to depend on sociological research, such as urban and rural community studies, to illustrate and prove the existence and scope of social problems. This movement, which was coupled very closely with social work and social reform, had as its mission the improvement of social ethics for all individuals and social progress for all societies. At the same time, other sociologists focused on developing new research methodologies.

Modern sociology moved into mainstream American thought and practice in the early twentieth century; the American government even incorporated sociological research methods into its census and criminology operations. For example, in the 1920s the United States Department of Agriculture undertook sociological research in rural communities throughout the US, and the US Census borrowed sociological methods to learn more about the population through interviews, questionnaires, and data analysis. The US government also hired sociologists during the New Deal era to expand knowledge about social needs and behaviors across sections of society. Additionally, sociologists worked for the US government during World War II to strengthen military performance, as well as develop plans to integrate troops back into society after the war was over (Turner, 1990).

Further Insights

Early Twentieth Century Intellectuals & Their Influence on Sociology

Social theorists of the early twentieth century studied the effects of urbanization, the impact of capitalism, the centralization of authority, the impact

of inequality, changes in production methods, and factors in population growth. Four theorist are recognized as the founders of American sociology: Lester Ward, Albion Small, William Sumner, and Franklin Giddings. These theorists, along with other notable sociologists including Robert Park, Louis Wirth, Edward C. Hayes, Ferdinand Tonnies, Pitirim A. Sorokin, Ernest W. Burgess, and William F. Ogburn, shaped the theories, methodologies, and direction of modern sociology.

Lester F. Ward

Lester Ward (1841-1913) was the first president of the American Sociological Association. Ward's best-known work, Dynamic Sociology (1883), encouraged sociologists to embrace experimentation and the scientific method in their research. Later works included Pure Sociology (1902) and Applied Sociology (1906). Ward's sociology was based on a theory of social change. He opposed Herbert Spencer's theory of social Darwinism and his "survival of the fittest" doctrine. According to Ward, and his three laws of social dynamics, people and races could rise above the cultural position into which they were born. And, in opposition to Spencer, he promoted the idea that a science of society could and should be used to address social ills like poverty and foster individuals' happiness and freedom. He was also a strong proponent for equal rights for women.

For much of his life, Ward worked as a civil servant at institutions such as the Federal Bureau of Statistics, the Bureau of Standards, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Immigration. He held positions such as Chief of the Division of Navigation and Immigration in the Treasury Department, and Assistant Geologist, Chief Geologist, and Paleontologist at the United States Geological Survey. He also served as a Union soldier in the Civil War, and held academic posts at Brown University. Throughout his life, Ward called for an increase in the state's role in society, arguing that the state represented society and society's interest and was charged with protecting the needs of all of social classes, not just those of the ruling class (Alexander, 1968).

Albion W. Small

Albion Small (1854-1926) founded the first accredited department of sociology in an American university at the University of Chicago, as well as

the American Journal of Sociology. The "Chicago School of Sociology," as the University of Chicago sociology department became known, was the center of North American sociology during the first half of the twentieth century. Through the works of its various faculty, it developed a theoretical basis for the systematic study of society. Small is also notable for using the American Journal of Sociology to, in part, promote the work of progressive feminists such as Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, despite these women's lack of sociological credentials.

Small's best-known works were Origins of Sociology (1924) and General Sociology (1905). He focused his research on the social economy, or the relationship between the new industrial economy and moral, political, and social life, and the role of religion in social reform. Small's contributions to the Chicago School of Sociology and the American Journal of Sociology strengthened and defined the field of sociology and affirmed its status as a respected social science (Eisenach, 2007).

William G. Sumner

William G. Sumner (1840-1910) was an ordained an Episcopal minister and professor of political and social science at Yale. He is best known as one of Herbert Spencer's disciples, and worked to bring Spencer's social Darwinism to a North American audience. Much of his work sought to order and chart the evolution of human customs, folkways, and mores, which he believed developed naturally through the course of social evolution. As a social Darwinist, Sumner felt that social reform was a useless pursuit. In his opinion, social reform could not change the pace of social evolution for groups or races. His most well-known work Folkways (1907) discussed his views on the natural laws of social development ("William Graham Sumner," n.d.).

Franklin H. Giddings

Franklin Giddings (1855-1931), an influential quantitative sociologist, is considered to be one of the four founders of American sociology. He began teaching at Columbia University in 1894 and, while he carried out very little original research, his support for quantitative research methods legitimized and popularized quantitative sociology (McFraland 2004). He also developed his theory of "consciousness of kind," which sought to explain how societies come together and experience internal conflict.

Robert E. Park

Robert Park (1864-1944) brought journalistic experience and perspective to his sociological practice. According to Park, sociologists were "super-reporters" who gathered layers of social information and data. He studied with Georg Simmel in Europe before joining the University of Chicago's sociology department in 1914. Park studied collective behavior and interaction in Chicago's most urban neighborhoods, and much of his research centered on the lives of African-Americans. Park developed a theory of human ecology (a theory of social interaction and dynamic mobility) that was based on the scientific principles of symbiosis, invasion, succession, dominance, and growth. His work contributed to the prominence and reputation of the Chicago School of Sociology (Beauregard 1997).

Louis Wirth

Louis Wirth (1857-1952) was one of the key urban sociologists at the Chicago School. He served as president of the American Sociological Society and the International Sociological Association, and his work on the theory of social order, urban life, and minority groups influenced the direction of modern sociology. Wirth's most influential work, The Ghetto (1930), described and analyzed the lives of individuals and groups in the urban Jewish population, and is considered a classic in both community history and Jewish life studies. The urban planning movement and the applied field of housing have both used Wirth's sociological studies of urban life to direct resource allocation and identify needs in urban environments (Vance, 1952).

Edward C. Hayes

Edward C. Hayes (1868-1928) was a founder of the American Sociological Association. Hayes, who wrote Introduction to the Study of Sociology (1915) and Sociology and Ethics (1921), was an influential force in the American college and university system's adoption of sociology courses and departments ("Edward C. Hayes" 2006).

Ferdinand Tonnies

Ferdinand Tonnies (1855-1936), a German sociologist, was inspired by the work of Hobbes, Spencer, Marx, and Comte. As a major force behind classical German sociology, he influenced the direction of modern sociology

worldwide. He was one of the founders of the German Society for Sociology, and held the society's presidency from 1909 to 1933.

Tonnies most well-known book, Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft (1887), explained his theory of social groups. According to Tonnies, there are two types of social groups: gemeinschaft and gesellschaft. Gemeinschaft, which can be represented as a family, is a community with shared values and beliefs. Gesellschaft, which can be represented as a business, is a group in which people associate with one another to meet their individual, rather than communal, interests. It is characterized by self-interest and diverse values and mores. Tonnies associated gemeinschaft with communism and gesellschaft with socialism. Though he drew sharp distinctions between the two, Tonnies believed that all cultures contained elements of both gemeinschaft and gesellschaft (Thurnwald & Eubank 1936).

Pitirim A. Sorokin

Pitirim A. Sorokin (1889-1968) was a Russian sociologist who served as a professor of sociology at Harvard University in the 1930s. Sorokin used quantitative methods to study the variables of social change, and sought to integrate Western and Eastern approaches to knowing in an effort to better understand reality and the human condition. In 1944, he was asked to leave his post at Harvard in due to departmental change and turmoil, but in 1963 he was elected served as the president of the American Sociological Association. In this role, he tried to unite sociologists as the field fractured and diversified as a result of new social problems, agendas, and challenges (McMahon 1996).

Ernest W. Burgess

Ernest Burgess (1886-1966) served as the president of numerous professional sociology organizations including the American Sociological Society, the Sociological Research Association, and the Social Science Research Council. Burgess dedicated his career to developing a reliable tool for the prediction of social phenomena such as delinquency, parole violation, divorce, and population growth. He also worked to popularize the field of family relationship studies. His work on American marriages described how, during the twentieth century, the culture's attitudes about marriage shifted to highlight its emotional, or companionate aspects and downplay its role as a unit of social organization (Cherlin 2004).

William F. Ogburn

William F. Ogburn (1886-1959) served as the president of the American Sociological Society and of the Social Science Research Council. In addition, Ogburn was chairman of the United States Census Advisory Committee, director of the Consumers Advisory Board of the National Recovery Administration, and adviser to the Resettlement Administration. Ogburn's work focused on research methods, technology's impact on society, the family, and population studies. He promoted the idea that research should only be undertaken on subjects which would allow the collection of statistical data for objective measurement and analysis. Ogburn's best-known work, Social Change with Respect to Culture and Original Nature (1922), discussed the effects of technology, invention, and material culture on social and cultural change (Volti 2004).

Ultimately, the early twentieth century sociologists, a diverse group of thinkers and researchers responding to social changes brought on by urbanization and two world wars, promoted individualistic sociological agendas such as social reform and quantitative research methods. With backgrounds in wide-ranging fields such as journalism, religion, and social justice, the four founders of American sociology along with other influential theorists brought creativity and new vision to the problem and project of understanding society and social interaction. They were responsible for defining the discipline of sociology as a modern science that was distinct from anthropology, psychology, and history, and capable of both engaging in scientific analysis and bringing about both social reform.

Further Discourse

The Classical Roots of Modern Sociology

While early twentieth century sociology developed new paradigms, theories, and methods in response to the socio-political events of the day (i.e. urbanization, industrialization, social reform, World War I, and World War II), it also remained deeply rooted in the ideas of nineteenth century classical sociology. Marx's conflict perspective, Durkheim's functionalism, Spencer's social Darwinism, and Simmel's microsoiology all weighed heavily on the theoretical and methodological developments of the period (Turner, 1990).

Classical sociology influenced modern sociology in two important ways. First, the nineteenth century's concern for universal laws persisted into the twentieth century. For example, Auguste Comte (1798-1857), considered to be the father of sociology, influenced modern sociologists' efforts to generate universal laws. He developed the theory of positivism to create a procedure for understanding the social world through a scientific approach and scientific reason. Comte believed that a socio-political system founded on positivism had the potential to restore social consensus and order, and he proposed that social progress was dependent upon the formulation of universal social laws (Ferrarotti, 1990; Black, 2000). This search for the universal laws and principles of society influenced the direction of the Chicago School of Sociology as it sought to develop a holistic, theoretical basis for the systematic study of society.

Second, classical sociology's scientific and empirical leanings underpinned much of modern sociology. Evolutionary thought, as expressed by Herbert Spencer, continued to influence sociology during the first half of twentieth century (Turner, 1990). His conception of society as an organism was echoed in both Sumner's and Park's works. However, it must be noted that some modern sociologists, such as Lester Ward, who were committed to social reform opposed Spencer's theory of Social Darwinism as elitist and racist (Alexander, 1968).

Conclusion

In the final analysis, early twentieth century sociology's development was influenced by numerous factors including World War I and World War II; the urbanization of US cities; the American ethic of individualism; the social reform movement; the US government's adoption of sociological methods, theories and practices; and the European classical tradition. The spread of sociological theory from Europe to America at the end of the nineteenth century, along with political upheaval in Europe that suppressed the continued development of European sociology for decades, positioned American universities to become the center for sociological thought and practice for the first half of the twentieth century. During this time, the US was undergoing extreme social and political change due to urbanization, immigration, industrialization, and regionalism. Modern sociology's studies of urban and rural communities, as well as its studies of minorities, influenced the growth and integration of American cities and institutions, and laid the foundation for late twentieth century sociology.

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Contemporary Sociology

Simone I. Flynn

Overview

Contemporary sociology encompasses the period in sociological thought and practice from after the Second World War through to the present day. The field's subject matter, theoretical paradigms, funding opportunities, and methodologies changed in significant ways during this period (Turner, 1990).Topics of inquiry in contemporary sociology include family relationships, problems of overpopulation, social movements, the self, social change, poverty, business and industry, group solidarity, identity, group conflict, and violence.

Understanding contemporary sociology, including the socio-political influences and key theorists, is vital background for all those interested in the field of sociology as well as social theory as a whole. This article explains the history of contemporary sociology in three parts:

- An overview of developments in contemporary sociology. Differences between modern and contemporary sociology will be highlighted.
- A description of the ways in which social theorist like Talcott Parsons, Immanuel Wallerstein, Anthony Giddens, Herbert Blumer, Erving Goffman, Pierre Bourdieu, Marvin Harris, Robert Merton, Craig Calhoun, Gerhard Lenski,

Michel Foucault, and Jurgen Habermas, influenced the development of sociology after WWII.

- A discussion of the links between post-World War II socio-political movements and trends in contemporary sociological theory. The socially and politically responsive nature of sociology will also be explored.

Developments in Post World War II Sociology

Following World War II, the field of sociology grew in North America and Western Europe as the US government and Western corporations began adopting sociological tools, theories, and research methods. The main topics of sociological inquiry included: marriage and family; social stratification; politics; work; corporations and other large organizations; and gender roles and gender relations. In the late twentieth century, the discipline entered a post-modern phase during which sociologists concerned themselves with the deconstruction and reanalysis of previously held assumptions about society, race, gender, and identity The tensions between subjective and objective stances were also studied. The field became increasingly specialized with specialty journals and conferences, and critics of contemporary sociology charge that the field has become more fragmented than diverse or complex.

Following WWII, sociology grew in its uses and popularity. In the post-war years, the discipline, an increasingly popular department at colleges and universities, began to be applied to industry, government, and family life. In contrast to pre-war sociology, contemporary sociology has been less concerned with social ethics and progress, and shifted its focus away from urban and rural studies. Though sociologists still study regional issues, they tend not to be defined by geographic place so much as by the issues they study. Urban issues such as poverty and race relations were also taken up. Studies of minorities decreased following World War II only to begin again in the 1960s with the civil rights movement (Turner, 1990).

Sociological method changed after World War II as sophisticated quantitative and qualitative methods were developed. Mathematical measurement of relationships replaced descriptive statistics, and surveys conducted over the phone or Internet have largely replaced self-administered questionnaires. Other key components of research like sampling have been greatly

refined. Case studies, popular during the first half of the twentieth century, have been eclipsed by participant observation, and hypothesis testing has replaced scientific empiricism (Turner, 1990).

Sociological theory also changed following World War II, as well. For example, theoretical propositions, or statements of how changes in one or more independent variables could affect a dependent variable, replaced concepts. Propositional systems and theoretical models have also become popular (Turner, 1990).

Institutional and financial support for research has changed, too, since the mid-twentieth century. Public funding for social science research grew during the decades immediately following WWII. During the 1960s public funding especially increased for research that could produce strategies for controlling crime. Funding for criminology and social deviance research has stayed strong since that time. By and large, criminology research focused on studying the effectiveness of crime control strategies rather than understanding the meaning of crime and deviance. Federal support for sociological research waned in 1970s and 1980s. While money for applied research remains, funding for basic research is scarce. Secondary analysis of existing data, a less expensive research venture, has become more common as a result of this shrinkage (Turner, 1990).

Sociology's relationships with other disciples have changed, too. The field's early twentieth century goal of social reform facilitated a close connection with the applied social work. Since that time, however, sociology has separated from social work and is more closely tied to political science, anthropology, history, and psychology (Turner, 1990).

Additionally, sociology is no longer an exclusively American venture. The fall of Communism allowed Eastern European nations to rebuild their sociological communities, and the field has also established itself in South America and Asia (Keen & Mucha, 2004). With this internationalization, comparative research has grown common as a means of exploring the universal dynamics of social systems.

Further Insights

Post-World War II Intellectuals & Their Influence on Sociology

While objective and empirical thought continued to influence sociology in the first half of twentieth century, contemporary sociology is characterized by its subjective orientation. The subjective orientation that developed in the late twentieth century was in large part a reaction to the scientific empiricism of much classical and modern sociology.

Contemporary sociology, though diverse and subjective in nature, still has shared goals and intellectual pursuits. For example, contemporary sociologists develop general analytical tools; synthesize diverse theoretical approaches; encourage and facilitate dialogue among different theoretical perspectives; expand the conceptual, political, and methodological boundaries of current theory; analyze past theoretical ideas; diagnose and address contemporary social conditions; and challenge the notion of fixed sociological theory (Camic & Gross 1998).

The key social theorists, Talcott Parsons, Immanuel Wallerstein, Anthony Giddens, Herbert Blumer, Erving Goffman, Pierre Bourdieu, Marvin Harris, Robert Merton, Craig Calhoun, Gerhard Lenski, Michel Foucault, and Jurgen Habermas described below have all shaped the theories, methodologies, and direction of contemporary sociology.

Talcott Parsons

Talcott Parsons (1902-1979) is best known for his contributions to and association with structural functionalism. Structural functionalism is a theory which holds that a society's particular social institutions, norms, and more all serve to maintain that society's social system. In effect, Parsons sought to develop a grand theory for the social sciences. For example, he posited that societal action is based on four interrelated subsystems: the behavioral systems of its members, the personality systems of those members, the society as a system of social organization, and the cultural system of that society. Parsons was one of the preeminent American sociological theorists during the decades after World War II as his functionalist perspective was taken up as a means of analyzing the Nazi regime (Barber & Gerhardt, 1999). However, functionalism fell out of favor during the 1970s as other

theories gained ascendancy (Brick, 2004). Two of Parsons' well-known works are The Social System (1951) and Essays in Sociological Theory, Pure and Applied (1949).

Immanuel Wallerstein

Immanuel Wallerstein (b. 1930) has dedicated his work to understanding historical global practices and realities, developing his world-systems theory to analyze the reality and the history of the modern world. The world-systems theory is an approach for studying the activities and realities of actors including individuals, states, and firms. The spread of economic globalization at the end of the twentieth century made Wallerstein's ideas popular with those seeking to understand the relationship between economic and social processes. Wallerstein's best well-known work is The Modern World-System (1970) (Eckhart, 2005).

Anthony Giddens

Anthony Giddens (b. 1938) is most well known for his theory of structuration, which looks for meaning in social practices ordered across space and time rather than in the actions of individual actors, and thus mediates the micro/macro and structure/agent dichotomies that characterize much of contemporary social theory. Giddens was critical of classical functionalism and structuralism for overlooking the role of actors in society, as well as of phenomenology and ethnomethodology for overlooking the effect of the structural constraints of systems and organizations. Giddens predicted that a new synthesis would occur in sociology to replace the competing sociological theories of the past century (Camic & Gross, 1998).

Herbert Blumer

Herbert Blumer (1900-1987) developed the theory of symbolic interactionism. Building on the work of his teacher George Herbert Mead, Blumer's symbolic interactionism locates meaning in social interactions. According to Blumer, social actors ascribe meaning to things based on their experiences and social interactions. Meaning, in this theoretical system, is an interpretive and evolving process. Symbolic interactionism, along with ethnomethodology, emerged as a leading paradigm of qualitative sociology (Snow, 2001).

Erving Goffman

Erving Goffman (1922-1982) developed interpretive sociology, a theory asserting that similar words, deeds, and experiences have different meanings to different people in different situations. Interpretive sociologists, also known as microsociologists, practice a grounded theory approach. In this approach, investigators attempt to derive theory by approaching their data with minimal preconceptions instead of designing their research to test their hypotheses. Goffman used observations from life to explain contemporary society and is considered a leader in the sociology of everyday life. Goffman's best-known works are The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (1959), Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates (1961), and Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity (1963) (Scheff, 2006).

Pierre Bourdieu

Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) was a French sociologist who worked to construct general analytical tools for empirical social research such as concepts, explanatory propositions, and interpretive guidelines. For example, Bourdieu worked to develop conceptual tools and procedures for constructing objects and transferring knowledge. His theory of habitus, a term used to describe the dispositions toward action and perception that operate from within social actors, strongly influenced contemporary social thought and discourse. His best-known work is Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste (1984) (Camic & Gross, 1998).

Marvin Harris

Marvin Harris (1927-2001), an anthropologist by training, influenced the direction of twentieth century sociology with his work on cultural materialism. His theory of cultural materialism, which asserts that the problems of society result from pressures within the relationships between a population, its economy, its technology, and its environment, lead sociologists to analyze the role that social infrastructures play in social actions and relationships (Harris, 1999).

Robert Merton

Robert Merton (1910-2003) made significant contributions to the sociology of deviance and his work is often used in the field of criminology. Merton's

version of strain theory, which posits that social structures may encourage actors to commit criminal acts, preserves the theoretical link between culture and social structure. Merton was heavily influenced by the work of Pitirim Sorokin, a Russian sociologist who used quantitative methods to study the variables of social change (Rosenfeld, 1989).

Craig Calhoun

Craig Calhoun, who has served as the president of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) since 1999, has worked to make sociology into an instrument for diagnosing contemporary social conditions and developing ways to understand the differences in categories of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, language, class, region, and nation. Calhoun's theory of the perspective of difference concerns morality, subjectivity, and positioning. His work is representative of sociology's increased concern with social theory as a moral and political enterprise (Camic & Gross, 1998).

Gerhard Lenski

Gerhard Lenski, born in 1924, contributed to the sociological study of religion, inequality, and ecological-evolutionary theory. According to Lenski, technology is the key factor influencing socio-cultural evolution. Technological change, as seen by Lenski, is both the primary engine of social evolution and the source of the expansion of human knowledge. Lenski developed an evolutionary classification of human societies (including hunter gatherers, simple farmers, advanced farmers, and industrial societies) and ranked the major determinants of social evolution. He applied his ecological-evolutionary theory to studies of ancient Israel, Third World developments, and the end of Communism in Europe. Lenski's most well-known works are Power and Privilege (1966) and Human Societies: An Introduction to Macrosociology (1974) (Lenski, 2005).

Michel Foucault

Michel Foucault (1926-1984) was a sociologist, social critic, historian, and philosopher. His studies of the construction of modern power, knowledge, and discourse led to the reworking of sociological categories of thought. According to Foucault, power relations are omnipresent. In other words, social actors can never step outside of their power relations. He wrote critical studies of the social institutions of medicine and prison systems. Drawing on both structuralism and postmodernism, Foucault was an in-

terdisciplinary scholar who wrote philosophical reflections on actual conditions of existence. He grounded his philosophical reflections in historical investigations and details to give weight and credibility to his assertions (Takacs, 2004). Foucault's best-known works are The Order of Things (1966), The Archaeology of Knowledge (1969), and Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison (1977).

Jurgen Habermas

Jurgen Habermas (b. 1929) is a sociologist and philosopher who developed the concept of communicative action to explain situations in which the actions of the agents involved are coordinated not through goal-directed activity, but rather through acts of reaching cooperative understanding and interpretation. According to Habermas, the theory of communicative action allows theorists to reconceptualize rationality and the organization of the social world (Camic & Gross, 1998).

Discourse

Links Between Post-World War II Society & Sociology

Contemporary sociology focuses on social structures as well as the social conceptions of the self, emotion, and even irrational behavior. Much of current contemporary sociology is concerned with understanding the categorical differences of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, language, class, region, and nation. These topics and trends have developed largely in response to socio-political events and movements. World wars, economics depressions, totalitarian movements, urbanization and industrialization have all shaped contemporary sociological thought and practice (Camic & Gross, 1998).

In the decades immediately following World War II, the United States and Europe were involved with the postwar project of rebuilding, strengthening, and revitalizing society and the economy. Sociology's concern with authoritarianism as an object of study in the 1940s and 1950s has roots in World War II Nazism and fascism. The field's concomitant concern with functionalism can be explained by the stability of postwar American society. Sociology's focus on the radical reform of society and union of sociology and public policy research during the 1960s may be attributed to the decade's civil unrest and calls for large-scale change. Starting in the

1960s, sociology's evaluation research on subjects such as capital punishment studied whether expensive federal programs were achieving their intended goals. Sociology's large-scale, publicly-funded research on social programs such as Negative Income Tax, Housing Allowance, and Transitional Aid to Released Prisoners, helped government and society determine where to invest its resources.

The field's critical theory of the 1970s can be explained by lack of social consensus and stability following racial protest and Vietnam War, and its commitment to gender studies in the 1970s was related to the women's movement. Sociology's focus on historical antecedents and answers, starting in the 1980s, may be explained by sociologists' desire for answers about their own discipline (Turner, 1990). Sociology's reemergence in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s can be related to the independence of Central and Eastern Europe and the collapse of the Soviet Union (Keen & Mucha, 2004).

Conclusion

Contemporary sociology began in the years following World War II. After World War II, American society was consumed first with rebuilding and incorporating soldiers back into society, and then later with civil rights. Contemporary sociologist, such as Talcott Parsons, Immanuel Wallerstein, Anthony Giddens, Herbert Blumer, Erving Goffman, Pierre Bourdieu, Marvin Harris, Robert Merton, Craig Calhoun, Gerhard Lenski, Michel Foucault, and Jurgen Habermas, responded to the social climate during the postwar years onward (1945-today) by developing theories and tools to promote social cohesion and tolerance. Structuralism and functionalism characterized sociology of the 1960s and 1970s. The subjective and qualitative approaches of phenomenology and ethnomethodology characterized the sociology of the 1980s and 1990s (Camic & Gross 1998).

Contemporary sociology is characterized by specialized fields, including demography, criminology, political sociology, and public sociology, rather than by any unifying paradigms or laws as classical and modern sociology were. Ultimately, much of contemporary sociological theory, such as notions of social roles and mores, has entered public domain and public understanding. Today, the methodologies, terms, and approaches of contemporary sociology are used, often in an applied way, in law, politics, business, and social medicine (Turner, 1990).

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Habermas & Communicative Actions

PD Casteel

Overview

Jurgen Habermas is a German sociologist and philosopher most closely associated with the Frankfurt School, critical theory, and pragmatism. His theory of communicative action is detailed in two volumes, The Theory of Communicative Actions: Reason and the Rationalization of Society and The Theory of Communicative Actions: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason. The basic premise of these works is that language, and more specifically, communication between competent speakers, is the mechanism people use to understand the world, the people around them, and their own intentions, feelings, and desires (McCarthy, 1984). Habermas believes that through conversations, individuals participate in a process that constructs rationality, validates truth, and criticizes formal structures or institutions of power in our society. At his most hopeful, Habermas believes that communicative actions strengthen the democratic process and a rational scientific understanding of the world he terms the 'project of modernity.' One of the key things to understand about Habermas and his theory of communicative actions is that the ideas and methodologies he lays in this theory have remained influential, if not a key building block, for almost everything he has written since. To understand communicative actions is to take a grand step forward in understanding one of the most prolific and influential social theorists of the last fifty years.

Rationality

Habermas opens his first book on communicative actions by stating that from its inception, philosophy has attempted to describe the world as a whole, despite its myriad fragmented appearances, and subject it to discoverability through reason. Habermas believes this totalizing of knowledge (knowledge of nature, history, or society) is no longer feasible. Advances in science and the "reflective consciousness" that accompanies science have devalued the approach to philosophy which constructs large theories about the world and history and then tries to fit everything into the theory. All the efforts to establish a first philosophy, which claims to explain the first causes of foundational truths, have broken down. An additional problem Habermas identifies is the subjugation of rationality to formal systems, or what Weber might call bureaucracies. In this context rationality is merely instrumental; that is to say that reason serves as a tool of the formal system and its goal. Habermas believes this changes rationalism and its approach to nature and individuals. Instrumental rationality serves formal systems by gaining understanding through objectifying nature and individuals (Habermas, 1970a). For a reflexive understanding of one another and the world, as well as a critical understanding of and ability to question coercive formal systems, there needs to be a different form of rationality. This form is Habermas's communicative actions.

Non-Foundational & Universal Instrumental Rationality

Habermas attacks rationality on two fronts. The first is an attack on the philosophical establishment. Philosophy can no longer be viewed as an autonomous discipline. Additionally, it cannot lay claim to universal truths or "First Philosophy" (Nielsen, 1993).

The critique of "First Philosophy" brings into question almost every philosophical construct from Plato to Kant and more specifically challenges elements of Marxist theory at the heart of the Frankfurt School and critical theory. Habermas's communicative action locates reason in language as opposed to history such as Marx and Hegel or in the mind as Kant (Alfred, 1996). Habermas believes philosophy cannot stand out from the world and the sciences. Rather, philosophy should "stand in" providing science with foundations and logic as well as to integrate science back into the world of morals, politics, and art (Nielson, 1993).

The second front Habermas attacks is modern rationality. Habermas believes modern rationality is ambiguous and a distortion of reason (Bernstein, 1989) and ultimately becomes subjected to formal systems that reduce rationality to a means to an end. Habermas's fear is that scientific, economic, and governmental formal systems practice a form of instrumental rationality, or goal oriented value-free reasoning, which accomplishes a goal but does not take into account the rightness of such acts or their effects upon individuals (Habermas, 1970A). Instead of rationality guiding the actions of formal system, formal systems guide the use of rationality. Habermas believes this is just one of the negative results that arose from Enlightenment thinking, or what he calls the 'project of modernity.' However, unlike some critical theorists, Habermas believes there have been many good results from the project of modernity and a few worthy ideas that can be reclaimed from the Enlightenment. Habermas sees communicative actions, or communicative rationality, as the mechanism to reclaim the positive aspects of the project of modernity.

Communicative actions leverage the non-foundational universal rationalism located within language. By "non-foundational universal" Habermas means two things. First, the rational mechanisms in language are pragmatic. That is to say they can be observed in the every day and that they work. Second, they are not based in some sort of Aristotelian or Platonic "form" or philosophical or theological first principle (Meadwell, 1994). This pragmatic approach to language and philosophy is at the core of Habermas's work.

Communicative Rationality

What makes this form of rationality so valuable is that it can be accessed by virtually everyone through conversations. Additionally, this very democratic form of rationality is powerful. It provides the competent speakers with the ability to validate truth claims concerning rightness, appropriateness, and legitimacy in relation to our shared values and norms (McCarthy, 1984). When brought into a public sphere, communicative rationality is the foundation of democracy allowing conversationalists to contest, defend, and revise truth claims.

Habermas also viewed communicative rationality as an integrative force. He believed that once the walls of philosophy were torn down that philos-

ophy, through communicative actions, could integrate itself into science, providing science with the ideas for its hypotheses. Habermas termed this the "philosophization" of science. He also imagined communicative rationality eventually integrating science back into the everyday world (McCarthy, 1984). This was an important issue to Habermas. He viewed instrumental rationality as one of the dangers of science, based in an objectification of nature and individuals, which could lead to harmful actions. Communicative rationality can supplant instrumental rationality and integrate science back into the world putting considerations of the effects of scientific actions on nature and individuals back into play.

Ideal Speech Situation

According to Habermas, the fundamental communicative action is the ideal speech situation. The ideal speech situation takes place in a public setting and is free from any coercive power or force. In other words, conversationalists meet openly and discuss freely. Each speaker must be competent on the subject being discussed and be willing to accept the validity of the stronger argument. Each argument serves to raise the validity claims of each conversationalist and allow each to recognize the others' validity claim. Thus each conversation begins with the assumption that the conditions for the ideal speech situation are sufficient and end when the stronger argument is validated by this interactive process of reason (Habermas, 1981).

Habermas's ideal speech situation assumes the existence of a public sphere that is closed to incompetent speakers. However, that does not mean that most speakers are incompetent to speak. Habermas believes that many speak competently within their own spheres. So, a parent unable to competently argue for structural reforms in local school system can speak competently on the type of education they feel their child is receiving under the current system. These competent speakers have local conversations among people, who have obtained the intuitive knowledge of a particular community and its background assumptions. Habermas recognized that a particular speaker with tenure and personal experience within a community can be a competent speaker (Habermas, 1987).

Universal Pragmatics

The mechanism in language that guides communicative rationality is what Habermas terms universal pragmatics. Habermas (1987) writes that

universal pragmatics is a detailed outline of presuppositions inherent in language, specifically in conversations, that provide communicative actions with a non-foundational universalism. For Habermas reason is in language (Alfred, 1996). Presupposed in conversations are the conditions necessary to bring about understanding. Conversations contain the norms to criticize and promote societal democratization (Kellner, 2004). This includes conversations that appear less than ideal. In conversations rich with conflict or strategic actions, there remains something universal; an effort to reach an understanding (Habermas, 1979). Even intentionally deceptive speech, no matter how distorted the interactivity of mutual understanding becomes, necessarily implies the ideal speech situation (Habermas, 1970b).

Universal pragmatics is more than just a reflection of the rules of conversation and the values of a community. Habermas believes that language, when employed in the ideal speech situation, is liberating. Not only do communicative actions create a basis for rationality, understanding, and the criticism of coercive formal systems, it also is the key to realizing some of the ideals of our most liberating visions of the project of modernity and democracy.

Applications

Habermas's theory of communicative actions has been influential beyond the world of sociology. His work has remained vibrant in philosophy, feminist theory, and the humanities. From a practical stand point communicative actions have been integrated into city planning and politics. The theoretical aspect of communicative actions provides a rich field of research and writing for scholars and its pragmatic aspect provides new guidelines for individual and community participation in the democratic and governing process.

Philosophy

Habermas's influence on philosophy, particularly Continental Philosophy, has been profound. In his book, Habermas: A Very Short Introduction, Gordon Finlayson (2005) writes that Habermas is one of the most widely read social theorists in the post-Second World War era. His influence on philosophy is due to the interdisciplinary style of his work and the sheer volume of it produced over the last fifty years (Finlayson, 2005). Habermas

focused much of his early writing on Kant. Over his career he has engaged the most influential philosophers of his times including Rawls, Rorty, and Derrida. In his book The Liberating Power of Symbols, an important extension of his work on communicative actions, Habermas addresses the philosophical ideas of Jaspers, Apel, Cassirer, Wittgenstien, Rorty, and Rawls. In his first treaties on communicative actions he addressed philosophical writings by Popper, Pierce, Lukacs, Hegel, Feyerabend, Gadamer, Frege, and Condorcet; just to name a few. Philosophical academic journals of every sort routinely publish comparative essays on Habermas. Habermas has been and will remain a very influential figure in philosophy.

Feminist Theory

Habermas's communicative actions theory has been widely critiqued, reinterpreted, and reformulated in feminist theory (Pajnik, 2006). Perhaps what makes communicative actions so appealing to feminist theory is its liberating or emancipating element (Farganis, 1985). Part of the feminist critique is that formal systems are patriarchal, and communicative actions certainly provide a mechanism to address the inequity of these systems. The inter-subjective nature of communicative actions and the appeal to interactive understanding also make Habermas's work appealing to feminists (Meehan, 2000). That is not to say he is not without his feminist critics. Habermas's work can be reductive and his underlying assumptions about Western values, the public sphere, and the role of power in the communicative process either ignores issues important to feminist theorists or puts into play the very formal systems of culture and power that he is trying to eliminate.

Humanities

Habermas's work has also influenced many areas of the humanities. In law, communicative action deals extensively with the ideas of democracy and local participation making it a fertile area of study. In art, the idea of validating what is art through communicative rationality has been explored by scholars. Habermas has been criticized by scholars in religion for not supplying a viable form of democratic participation and reasoning for individuals who put forth validity claims based on their religion (Boettcher, 2009). Habermas's influence even reaches historians. Prominent historian Paul Ricoeur has written about how Habermas's work has influenced his own (Piercey, 2004).

The important thing to note here is that these scholars have to recognize the influence of Habermas's theory of communicative actions, even if they disagree with it.

City Planning

In city planning, Habermas's communicative actions theory has become one of the primary approaches. The approach allows planners to meet publically with people in communities and work cooperatively to do planning. The role of the planner who leverages the communicative approach is to listen to people's concerns, ideas, and stories, then work to provide a consensus of the differing views. The idea is not to move stakeholders to a particular idea, but rather to bring about agreement (Fainstein, 2003). Agreement is based on the strongest argument and validated among speakers. The planner should set aside any force that may influence the conversation, such as a speaker's position in the social hierarchy or the planner's own expertise and focus on what claims can be inter-subjectively validated. The involvement of city planners as communicative facilitators with community groups, schools, churches, and political groups is central to good city planning. The communicative process legitimizes the city planning and governing process and keeps local interests and the city working together.

Politics

The influence of Habermas's communicative actions on politics is profound. As the Third-World countries begin to move towards democratic governing, Habermas's ideas become more and more relevant. In his later writings Habermas has focused much of his work on "deliberative democracy." This is democracy anchored in communicative actions and rationality. This includes public deliberation, consensus building, and participation in order to validate legitimate governing and justice (Kapoor, 2002).

Another area of Habermasian influence is in international relations theory. Communicative actions have influenced international relations theory for more than twenty-five years. Communicative actions provide a model that sets aside power differentials between nations and engages them in conversations that allow each nation to put forth validity claims with hope of each claim being redeemed or rejected on the basis of the strongest argument. Additionally, communicative rationality attempts to set aside instrumental and technical rationality of the dominant nation. Communicative action

provides an effect approach that allows both sides to evaluate and either understand or contest the dialogue of the other (Dietz & Stearns, n.d.).

Viewpoints

Habermas is not without his critics. From the beginning his work has been criticized for ignoring various post-modern critiques (Delanty, 1997; Ku, 2000; McCarthy, 1993) and for being constructed within the hierarchy of Western culture and philosophy and virtually ignoring other narratives (Cohen, 1990). Yet, post-modern theorists, multi-cultural theorists, feminist theorists who battle the vestiges of Western culture, and theorists all over the world continue to integrate communicative actions into their work, writings, and theories. It shows that in many cases even his critics find lasting value in Habermas's most enduring and influential theory.

As Habermas continues to broaden the scope of his writing he keeps the idea of communicative rationality at the core of each new idea. As globalization takes hold and world leaders grapple with new opportunities and challenges, Habermas's work appears to be more important than ever. His latest work has addressed terrorism, a post-national world, the future of Europe, and the relationship between reason and religion. These topics reflect many of the world's concerns as globalism seems to shrink the distance between nations, sects, and ideas presenting each of us with a greater awareness of the other as well as with new problems. At the core of all of Habermas's responses to these great issues are communicative rationality, and a hope for greater global democracy.

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Mills & the Sociological Imagination

PD Casteel

Overview

C. Wright Mills (1916–1962) was an American sociologist who is best known for his work, The Sociological Imagination. Mills' personal style and flair was uniquely American. A native Texan who energetically defended the scholar's right to academic freedom, Mills' image was iconic. His round strong Hemingway-like build, his black leather jacket, and his motorcycle rides to the Columbia University campus embodied American independence. Mills' work was uniquely influenced by Weber, Marx, and pragmatism. Despite the uniqueness of being an intellectual influenced by both Weber and Marx, Mills insisted that it was only natural since Weber, developed much of his work in dialogue with Marx (Mills, 2000). Mills' association with American pragmatism influenced his ideas on how the biographical relates to the historical, the role of the public intellectual, and the role of power and stratification in society. The Sociological Imagination was Mill's attempt to make evident the intersection between personal biography and history and in doing so, to define a role for sociology and intellectuals. Mills insisted that an individual's values and actions do not occur in a vacuum. Rather, these values and actions are situated in a particular society at a particular time in history (Kaufman, 1997). That an individual needs to understand how they are situated is within a larger universe is what he called the sociological imagination.

The Sociological Imagination was C. Wright Mills' attempt to present a humanist approach to sociology. Mills argued that the dilemma many individuals face is one of feeling that their private everyday lives are a series of traps that they are ill equipped to overcome. Wars, economic cycles, and social change have dramatic determining effects on the private lives of individuals. It is impossible to understand one's own life without understanding the society and history in which one is situated. Yet, people rarely define their troubles by historical change and institutional contradiction.

Today, the rapid changes in society and reshaping of history outpace people's ability to orient themselves in accordance with their values. Individuals find themselves unable to defend their private lives and maintain a morally sensible approach. What they need is a quality of mind that will help them use the information available to them in order to achieve an understanding of the world they live in how it affects their private lives (Mills, 2000). This quality of mind could be provided by intellectuals who, properly trained, could analyze the connections between the individual and the forces that shape their world. The sociological imagination was not only a frame of mind, but a sociological approach that held out a promise.

The promise of the sociological imagination is that it allows us to understand history and biography. It allows the sociologist to study the relationship between the two. It is the promise that people will be able to understand the forces of politics, business, and culture that intersect with their lives. It is when we begin to understand this that we can begin to take action and make changes. The promise is that people will be able to move from one perspective—biographical--to the other, historical. To be cognizant of these connections is to finally be able to understand and act.

Further Insights

The Influence of Weber

Value Neutrality

One of Mills' (along with Hans H. Gerth) lasting contributions to sociology in English speaking countries was the selection and translation of Max Weber's works. Despite this landmark contribution, Mills had an awkward love/hate relationship with the writings of Weber. While Mills

embraced many of Weber's ideas, he also was deeply troubled by Weber's notion of intellectual value neutrality. Weber's value neutrality in the social sciences meant setting aside one's personal biases and beliefs when conducting scientific research. Mills believed (in the case of Weber) such an approach gave institutional support for Imperial Germany. Additionally, value neutrality denied the policy considerations created by social research (Horowitz, 1985). Another concern Mills had was that Weber's writings had become far too influential to American sociologists looking for an answer to Marx and the old Left. Yet despite these differences, Weber had a great influence on Mills.

Stratification

Weber's greatest influence on Mills, and perhaps all of sociology, was his concept of stratification. Weber conceives of class as an economic interest group and a function of the market. Unlike Marx, Weber emphasized economic distribution, not production, and described people sharing the same class as having the same economic situation (Cox, 1950). On one hand, Weber makes a simple argument that class is about the property one has or doesn't have. On the other hand, he makes an argument that class has a relationship with the market. Weber believed that people of a similar class have similar "life chances" in a market; that is, there are certain things in the market that they would have a chance to compete for and other things that would simply be beyond their reach. Those who own more have greater life chances because they can afford the chance to compete for more things (Weber, 1978). Throughout his book The Sociological Imagination, Mills comes across issues of stratification and refers to Weber having providing a sufficient understanding of the issue for the purpose of the particular topic being addressed (Mills, 2000).

Bureaucracy & Power

Weber also influenced Mills on his ideas bureaucracy and power. While many understood Weber's concept as a descriptive of the everyday bureaucratic world, Mills took from Weber the concept of bureaucracy as power and clearly power that is managed by the elite. Weber noted that individuals do not surrender authority to people in positions of authority, but rather to the impersonal order, or bureaucracy, which has delegated the authority to this person (Hilbert, 1987). This power was preserved by

the institutional rationality that Mills called the "ethos of bureaucracy" (Mills, 2000). Though it took some extrapolation on the part of Mills, a particular reading of Weber could surrender the idea that the bureaucratic state sacrificed the intellect involved in outfitting the scientific soul for its bureaucratic needs. Mills took this reading and became a public voice championing the intellectual commitment needed to combat state authority (Horowitz, 1985).

Mills was also influenced by Weber's idea that the social sciences were anchored in a historical context (Horowitz, 1985). Weber's work usually started with the analysis of a historical development of structural and/or cultural significance that had led to the emergence of a historical individual (Cohen, 1981). Mills would take this idea and apply it directly to his understanding of the frustration experienced by individuals caught in the series of traps experienced in their private everyday lives.

Finally, Weber is the sociologist who championed academic freedom. America found no greater expression of freedom in academia then rogue motorcycle riding C. Wright Mills.

The Influence of Marx

In a 1959 letter to the editor of the Commentary, Mills wrote that he was not a Marxist. However, he noted that Marx was one of the most astute students of modern civilization and an essential part of an adequate training in social science. If people heard echoes of Marx in Mills' work it was only because he was properly educated (Mills, 2001). Mills understood that being a Marxist had a broader political and social implication in America beyond Marx's sociological observations. The rise of communism in Russia and China had been ideologically tied back to the writing of Marx, but the actual practice of communism in Russia and China resembled little that Marx championed. However, given the political tensions between the United States and Russian and China at the time, a scholar had to choose his or her words carefully. Such a careful explanation would not have been necessary for a Weberian. The truth is Mills held Marx in high esteem, but he never wrote on Marx with the ease that he did other influential theorists (Horowitz, 1985). In the book, Character and Social Structures, Mills writes that all social psychology done in the area of social structure works within the tradition of Marx (Gerth & Mills, 1970).

In his early writings, Marx noted an organic connection between mental and social processes (Horowitz, 1985). This connection is at the core of Mills' call for the need of a sociological imagination. If people can understand this connection and how it influences the problems in their lives then they can begin to address correcting these problems. Where Mills differs from Marx in this area is that Marx believed knowledge and social class was inseparable. Mills believed the individual had more choice in this matter; that individuals could choose their approach to knowledge.

Mills' political thought was also influenced by Marx. Though not in favor of social Marxism, Mills found Marx's work on class and power in a capitalistic society useful. These forces are present in The Sociological Imagination as well as his books, White Collar and The Power Elite. Additionally, Mills credited Marx for anchoring the individual life in historical specificity. Along with Weber, Marx is the essential influence of Mills' political sociology (Horowitz, 1985). Mills was greatly influenced by Marx, but never was considered a Marxist.

The Influence of Pragmatism

As a graduate student, Mills became interested in pragmatism as a methodology to sociology (Geary, 2004). His introduction to pragmatism included John Dewey, William Janes, George Herbert Mead and Charles Sanders Peirce. Of these Mead proved to be the most influential (Horowitz, 1985). Mills adapted Mead's concept of the "generalized other" to construct a theory of mind which takes into account the mental and the social. The power of Mead's idea is that an individual is not the product of social forces, but rather interacts with the social and then internalizes the debate and reasons. This process gives the intellect the opportunity to reformulate debate and take action.

From Peirce, Mills adapted ideas of language and argument. Language mediates behavior; it connects us and stands between us a filter for understanding events, it constitutes the individual and shared values, and reveals cultural values. Through Mead and Peirce Mills comes to understand that it is the study of language of the intellectual that offers the public an opportunity to understand the problems that vex them. Mills champions the intellectual's responsibility to work with words and concepts to advance discourse and debate on matters of policy and in civil society (Sawchuk,

2001). The sociological imagination is a pragmatic construct brought to the forefront by intellectuals.

Mills' Influences on Sociology

The New Left

In 1960 Mills penned a letter to the New Left which popularized the term New Left and influenced the movement on its break from the "Old Left." At the time, the New Left was a movement scattered over a number of college campuses. The most prominent group within the New Left was the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). In his letter, Mills encouraged the New Left not to get bogged down with facts that can be duly weighed, carefully balanced, always hedged and used to outrage, blunt, and destroy. He warned that reasoning collapses under reasonableness. Instead of examining the isolated and fragmentary facts, people need to connect facts to the changing institutions of society. It was the power and the authority of these institutions that needed to be challenged. He encouraged the movement to step away from labor issues and focus more on issues of authority. He also called for the movement to realize that Communism had failed and the United States was not the enemy. Echoing Eisenhower's warning about the military-industrial complex, Mills believed that the enemy was the structure of authority that he referred to as the 'system' or 'establishment' (Mills, 2001).

Mills' advice was embraced by the New Left particularly the leaders of SDS. Not only did the movement step away from issues of labor, but also carefully framed its language to exclude Marxist terminology. In 1963 Tom Hayden penned the Port Huron Statement of the Students for a Democratic Society. The ideas and language in the movement's manifesto closely held to the letter Mill wrote just a couple of years prior.

Teaching Sociology

Mills work, and most importantly The Sociological Imagination, remains most relevant today in the classroom. The American Sociological Association (ASA) has recognized the link between private troubles and public issues, between individual experience and larger social forces as one of the very few aspects of the sociological perspective on which sociologists today generally agree (McKinney, et al, 2004). His work on the sociologi-

cal imagination is a critical element of what constitutes sociological education and in the view of the ASA the proper teaching of sociology includes teaching students to develop their own sociological imagination (Scanlan, & Grauerholz, 2009).

C. Wright Mills' work, The Sociological Imagination has remained a fundamental element of a proper sociological education. One of the primary goals of teaching sociology is to get the students to see the connections between their every day lives and the large scale social forces that influence what they think, do, and consume. The fact that Mills work brings together such divergent traditions as Weber, Marx, and pragmatism only adds to the richness and possibilities of the sociological imagination.

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George Herbert Mead: Taking the Role of the Other

Jennifer Kretchmar

Overview

George Herbert Mead, whose work provided the foundation for the sociological theory known as symbolic interactionism, is most well known for emphasizing the social over the personal. As Ritzer (2008) explains, "A thinking, self-conscious individual is…logically impossible in Mead's theory without a prior social group. The social group comes first, and it leads to the development of self-conscious mental states" (p. 351). Mead viewed the development of the self as a process, and one that was dependent on taking the role of the 'other,' or as he called it, the generalized other. Although the concept of the generalized other is frequently cited and footnoted, many argue it has been both underutilized and often misunderstood (Holdsworth & Morgan, 2007; Dodds, Lawrence, & Valsiner, 1997).

Some of the misunderstanding surrounding Mead's work is due, in part, to the way in which it was communicated. Whereas most academics share their ideas through publication, Mead relied primarily on his teaching. One of his students noted, "Conversation was his best medium; writing was a poor second" (Smith, 1931, as cited in Ritzer, 2008). Even Mead himself once remarked "I am vastly depressed by my inability to write what I want to" (quoted in Cook, 1993, as cited in Ritzer, 2008). Despite Mead's difficulty writing, a record of his work exists in several forms – posthumously published student notes and public lectures, unpublished and undated

works, and published papers. Mind, Self, and Society, a 1934 posthumous compilation of student notes, is arguably Mead's best known work.

Although many claim that Mead's early work was lost to everyone but his students (Deegan, 2001), a recently discovered manuscript suggests Mead wrote more than many thought. Why the manuscript for his first book was never published remains a mystery, but Deegan (2001) argues that its discovery is important for putting Mead's career in proper perspective. The title of his book was to be "Essays on Psychology" but as Deegan (2001) writes, modern day psychologists would find this label misleading. The essays demonstrate, she argues, that he was transitioning from psychology to what would later become known as social psychology. The essays, and the date of their intended publication, also demonstrate that he was a founding father of the field of sociology. Deegan (2001) writes, "Mead's 'first book' clearly locates him as a major figure in the classical, founding years of the [sociological] profession" (p. xv).

Mead's influence, and the ideas and people who influenced him, were far-ranging. Part psychologist, philosopher, sociologist, educator, Mead studied under and with many people. As a graduate student, Mead left Harvard to study in Germany with Wilhelm Wundt, the founder of experimental psychology. Many of the concepts that formed the bedrock of Mead's theory – play, gesture, consciousness – can be traced to Wundt's influence (Deegan, 2001). Shortly after beginning his teaching career, Mead was invited to the University of Chicago by John Dewey. The core beliefs of philosophical pragmatists – that the mind is not a static thing but a thinking process, reality is not 'out there' but is created by our interactions with the world – greatly shaped Mead and symbolic interactionists more generally (Ritzer, 2008). Finally, Mead is indebted to John Watson and the behaviorist tradition. Like behaviorists, Mead believed in the fundamental relationship between stimulus and response. Unlike behaviorists, however, Mead viewed people as thinking, interpreting subjects (Farganis, 2000).

Whether we think of Mead as an outstanding lecturer, author, sociologist, or social psychologist, his contribution to the humanities is undeniable. More specifically, his work was especially important in helping resolve a persistent tendency to dichotomize the social and the personal. Dodds, Lawrence, and Valsiner (1997) believe Mead's notion of the generalized

other and related conceptual work should be more often revisited by contemporary developmental psychologists who seek to understand how the personal and social can exist simultaneously.

Theoretical Work

At its core, much of Mead's work is an attempt to better understand the 'self' – how it should be defined, how it arises, whether it is constituted individually or in interaction with others. In general, Mead defined the self as the ability to be both subject and object (Ritzer, 2008). He traced the origin of the self developmentally, and suggested it could arise only in social interaction, and only as the individual develops the ability to take the role of the other. He wrote, "It is only by taking the role of the others that we have been able to come back to ourselves" (as cited in Ritzer, 2008, p. 360). A fuller understanding of Mead's self, however, requires us to investigate other aspects of his theory, beginning with the act and evolving toward the notion of the generalized other.

The Act & the Gesture

The basic unit of Mead's theory is 'the act.' Mead identified four stages of the act – impulse, perception, manipulation, and consummation – and investigated the ways in which the act differed for humans and lower animals (Ritzer, 2008). While the basis of Mead's act is the stimulus-response unit of the behaviorist tradition, Mead believed thinking occurred in between stimulus and response. In other words, humans could choose a response, rather than react mechanically. The act, however, describes one individual's interaction with the environment; because Mead's theory emphasizes the social over the personal, he needed a concept to describe interaction between people as well.

For Mead, communication between two or more beings occurs through the gesture, which can be either conscious or unconscious (Farganis, 2006). He defines gestures specifically as "movements of the first organism which act as specific stimuli calling forth (socially) appropriate responses of the second organism" (as cited in Ritzer, 2008, p. 356). Lower order animals, and sometimes humans as well, communicate via unconscious gestures, or gestures that elicit automatic, unthinking responses. Screaming in response to being frightened unexpectedly by another person is an uncon-

scious gesture. What differentiates humans from other animals, however, is our ability to think and act intentionally through the use of conscious gestures (Farganis, 2006).

Mead, like others, identified the vocal gesture – and more specifically language – as the most influential conscious gesture in the development of human society and knowledge (Ritzer, 2008). He believed the vocal gesture, as distinct from other conscious gestures such as facial grimaces, had two distinguishing features – the ability for the speaker to hear and understand the gesture in the same way as the listener, and the ability for the speaker to control it (Ritzer, 2008). More specifically, Mead defined language as a particular kind of gesture, a significant symbol, which arouses the same (or similar) response in both speaker and listener. Uttering the word 'car', for example, evokes similar mental images for both people. As Ritzer (2008) explains, "only when we have significant symbols can we truly have communication" (p. 357). Or as Mead might say, it is only through the social act of exchanging significant gestures that meaning arises (Dodds, Lawrence, & Valsiner, 1997).

The Role of the Other

How do the social act and the use of gestures give rise to a sense of self? The second half of Mead's theoretical equation relies on the notion of taking the role of the 'other.' For Mead, the ability to take on the role of the other developed in stages – first the play stage, and then in the game stage.

The Play Stage

In the play stage, children learn to take the attitude of particular others toward themselves, such as the attitude of teachers, doctors, parents, or siblings (Ritzer, 2008; Farganis, 2000). In this instance, children learn to use stimuli – such as writing on the chalkboard, homework, reading from a textbook – that evoke in them the reactions teachers might evoke from their students. In other words, the child becomes student and teacher, subject and object, at the same time. By taking the attitude of another person toward themselves, the child begins to develop a sense of self. Because they are only taking on the role of particular individuals, however, they lack a more generalized, complete sense of self. Or as Mead writes, play is "the simplest form of being another to one's self" (as cited in Farganis, 2000, p. 165).

The Game Stage

Mead distinguishes play from games, the major distinction being that "in the latter the child must have the attitude of all the others involved in that game" (as cited in Farganis, 2000, p. 166). Mead uses the game of baseball to illustrate his point, suggesting that any one player must have in mind the roles of all the other players on the field in order successfully participate. More specifically, he must take their attitude not just toward himself, but toward the activities and goals of the entire group. Mead writes, "Only in so far as he takes the attitude of the organized social group to which he belongs toward the organized, co-operative social activity or set of such activities in which that group is engaged, does he develop a complete self" (as cited in Ritzer, 2008, p. 361). In this stage, the attitude of the entire group – whether a baseball team, a community, or a classroom – is known as the generalized other.

'I' & 'Me"

In order to better understand the process by which taking the role of the other constitutes a self, one must understand Mead's distinction between the 'I' and the 'me.' According to Mead, the 'I' is the self that acts in present time; it is only available for observation by others with whom the individual interacts. As Dodd, Lawrence, and Valsiner (1997) explain, "I as subject creates meaning in social interaction, but I cannot be conscious of that meaning in the instant when the action is actually occurring. Self-inspection is dependent on memory…in memory there is both an observed 'I' and an observing 'me' (p. 490). The memory of our gesture – performed by the 'I' - and the attitude taken by the other, referred to as the 'me', persists after the gesture is completed, and is then available for reflection. By reflecting on the gesture, and the attitude of the other toward the gesture, we develop a sense of self.

The Role of the Generalized Other

At first glance, Mead's theory of self might seem deterministic. If sense of self is achieved by taking on the role of the generalized other, does his theory leave any room to explain creativity or change? In one sense, Mead did view the generalized other, or the 'me' as a mechanism of social control (Ritzer, 2008). Individuals dominated by the 'me' would likely be conformists and the 'me', according to Mead, is what makes a society function. On the other hand, as Morris (1934) writes, "If this were all that there is to

the self, the account would be an extreme and one-sided one, leaving no place for creative and reconstructive activity; the self would not merely reflect the social structure, but would be nothing beyond that reflection. The complete self, however, is conceived by Mead as being both 'I' and 'me' (p. xxv). And it is the "I" that makes change possible. The 'I' is unpredictable and every act it performs, Mead argues, changes the society to one degree or another. Because all selves emerge by taking on the role of the generalized other, some might question how Mead explains individuality. If the generalized other is the attitude of all others in a community, why are people not all the same? As Ritzer (2008) explains "Mead is clear that each self is different from all the others" (p. 362). According to Mead, there is no single overarching generalized other; each person belongs to many groups simultaneously, thus each individual has multiple generalized others, and therefore multiple selves.

Further Insights

Morris (1934), in the introduction to Mind, Self, and Society, argues that Mead contributes most to the development of theory, rather than the empirical verification of it. He writes, "It is true that the two aspects of science are ultimately inseparable…but the observations to which Mead appeals are for the most part open to anyone – they involve no special scientific technique. Not in figures and charts and instruments is his contribution to be found, but in insights as to the nature of minds and selves and society" (p. xii).

Mind-Body Dualism

As stated earlier, Mead was in many ways as much a philosopher as he was a sociologist or psychologist. As such, he grappled with the mind/body split – the idea that the mind and body are two separate entities – in the same way other philosophers did. Even as an undergraduate student, Miller (1982) writes, he "rebelled against the theological claim that the mind (or the soul) is a supernatural substance, that it can exist apart from the body" (p. 3). The solutions proposed by others such as Hegel, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume were unsatisfactory to Mead, so he came up with his own by "making a functional, not a substantive, distinction between mental (symbolic) processes and overt bodily behavior" (Miller, 1982, p. 4). For Mead, the mind could not be separated from the act - especially the social act – and the act itself is always physical, embodied.

Objective Relativism

According to Miller (1982), Mead made a second significant philosophical contribution, which he calls objective relativism. Many philosophers before Mead believed that things like color, odor, taste, and sound (what they called secondary qualities) required a perceiver in order to exist. They had no reality apart from the individual perceiving them, and thus were called subjective as opposed to objective. As a result, philosophers and psychologists had no way of explaining how knowledge could be shared, since it belonged to each individual subject independently. Mead, however, was able to provide a solution, and as he said "return these stolen goods to the world" (as cited in Miller, 1982, p. 5). According to Mead's theory "if one can evoke in himself, by his gesture, the same (functionally identical) response that he evokes in the other, then the gesture's meaning is relieved of its privacy, it is objective and also real" (Miller, 1982, p. 5).

Morality

Mead's theory also contributed to understanding of morality. He rejected the notion of absolutes – that there is a fixed, unchanging perspective known to God overarching all human perspectives. Instead, Mead believed morality, or the moral act, is the one that is governed by the perspective of the whole community. Thus, morality, like the development of the self, depends on role-taking. As Miller (1982) explains, "recently sociologists have rightfully argued that such emotions as shame, embarrassment, guilt, conscience, etc have powerful control over the moral behavior of the individual. None of these emotions would be possible apart from language and role-taking" (p. 19). Finally, Mead believed societies should continually "remake values…in terms of the best knowledge available" (Morris, 1934, p. xxxiii); for Mead, morality is closely related to the democratic ideal.

Viewpoints

Mead's contribution to the study of humanities - despite the relatively few publications in his name during his lifetime – was immense. Of his success in proving the social origin of the mind and self, Morris (1934) writes, "It is hardly necessary to say that a much smaller achievement would be sufficient to serve as a milestone in science and philosophy" (p. xv). And yet, as noted previously, many believe his work is underutilized and misunderstood (Holdsworth & Morgan, 2007; Dodds, Lawrence, & Valsiner, 1997).

In the end, the nature of Mead's publications – the fact that many were published posthumously, for example, and often based on student notes - may be both a blessing and a curse. Dodds, Lawrence, and Valsiner (1997) argue that researchers have relied too heavily on Self, Mind, and Society, for example, and that many of Mead's concepts were "lost in the translation" of student notes. On the other hand, the posthumous publication of his work – the most recent being the 2001 publication of his 'first' book – has given sociologists an expanded and changing view of Mead's contributions. Deegan (2001) argues, for example, that the lost manuscript demonstrates Mead's contribution to the study of emotion, childhood development, and political theory. Perhaps the man whose "genius best expressed itself in the lecture room" has not had his final word yet (Morris, 1934, vii).

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Marcuse & Administration

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Overview

Herbert Marcuse (1898 - 1979) was a German sociologist and philosopher. His work is most closely is associated with the Frankfurt School, critical theory, and The New Left. He is best known for his works Eros and Civilization and One-Dimensional Man. One of the primary ideas Marcuse developed in his work was that of administration, which he identified with the rise of the technological and consumer society that employed unopposed advance forms of planning and management. These same systems allowed for the luxuries and leisure time that advanced capitalistic societies enjoy. Marcuse understood this, but worried that these systems also created false needs and separated the individual from the ability to refuse the narrative from these advanced forms of planning and management and, ultimately, become unable to create or participate in acts that could bring about social change (Kellner, 1991). This may sound pessimistic; however, those who knew Marcuse and his work claimed that the strength of his ideas on the administered society was the hopefulness and optimism that came with understanding how an administered society functioned and how we could change it for the better (Pippen, 1988).

The Administered Society

Marcuse's idea of administration had a number of influences. Like many social theorists of his time he worked in the shadows of George Orwell

and Aldous Huxley. He was also directly influenced by his Frankfurt School predecessors, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer. This being the case, it should be no surprise that Marcuse developed a concept that included the intentional coercive actions found in Orwell's writings, the sedating pleasures outlined by Orwell, and the influence of a mass culture as imagined by Adorno and Horkheimer. Marcuse believed that the administered society both coerced and pleasured (although he would argue that the pleasure offered was less than authentic) as it separated individuals from their true needs.

The administered society has a number of key elements. First and foremost, administration requires an advanced capitalistic system. Advanced capitalistic systems have in place the forms of technology, planning, and management that make administration possible. This is true of other concepts that preceded Marcuse's including those from Marx, Orwell, and Huxley. The difference in Marcuse's idea was that administration included an expertise of consumer society that went beyond extracting work from a body, watching and directing the worker, or sedating the body. Administration also includes the mass gratification, market research, industrial psychology, polling, computer mathematics, and science of human relations that companies and governing institutions use to reach inside of the body and move the mind and soul (Bohm & Jones, 2009). In order to overcome the coercive nature of the administered society and still lay claim to its benefits, one must first understand how it functions.

Further Insights

Theoretical Influences

Orwell

The influence of George Orwell on Marcuse is evident is his use of the term "Orwellian language" in One-Dimensional Man (1990). Orwellian language is used by organizations, public and private, to define (or willfully mis-define) their activities and the nature of those activities. Marcuse also called this language one dimensional (as opposed to dialectical). By this he meant that language employed by dominant organizations was intended to go unchallenged and smooth over social contradictions and problems, and by doing so eliminate counter thoughts or actions (Kellner,

1990). A recent example of this type of language was used when a bill written to lessen the restrictions on industrial air pollution was called the Blue Sky Amendment. One dimensional language inverts meaning. The free is un-free, honorable is dishonorable, and the common is uncommon. At the core of Orwell's and Marcuse's theories are domination and the role that language plays in allowing it.

The difference between Orwell's "Big Brother" and Marcuse's administration ultimately is hope. Orwell fails to offer hope that the totalitarian state can be resisted and overthrown (Kellner, 1990). Marcuse believes the individual can refuse the dominant narrative of the consumer state, calling this the "Great Refusal." He believed that if people engage in dialectic with the past and with one another they can refuse the dominant or administered narrative and forge real social change. Marcuse saw this possibility of dialectic and refusal in art, philosophy, literature, student movements, and poor populations in third-world countries (Marcuse, 1991). This hope and belief in social change is what sets Marcuse apart from Orwell.

Huxley

At the heart of Aldous Huxley's Brave New World is Henry Ford's famous saying that "history is bunk" (Firchow, 2002). Huxley's dystopian vision of mass contentment is only possible in Brave New World because of the absence of a rational dialectic with the past. The sense of false satisfaction that makes possible the dismissal of such a dialectical engagement is manufactured by overt government programs that provide the masses drugs (soma). In Marcuse's administered society the administering fiat is much less centralized. The forms of delivering sedation are as dispersed as the forces managing one dimension language. Marcuse focuses much of his attention on the process of fostering false need through advertising, packaging, and novelty. He writes about the manipulation required to create such needs and the abundance, waste, and planned obsolescence that keeps the cycle moving (Kateb, 1970). The administered society is every bit as sedated and cut off from history as Huxley's Brave New World. It's difficult to read Marcuse and not associate his idea of false needs back to Huxley's soma.

Marcuse's administered society is driven by the market forces within the consumer capitalism, which he refers to as technological rationality

(Marcuse, 1991). Technological rationality is a form of instrumental rationality that is based on organizational goals. Technological rationality focuses on the "how" aspect of problem solving rather than addressing whether an action is right or just. Technological rationality does not need to be centrally managed. In fact what makes it so unnerving is that the same forces that brought an end to totalitarianism through the free market and technology can be every bit as authoritarian and, due to their dispersed nature, held less accountable. Where Huxley saw a centralized administration managing a mass of contented citizens, Marcuse saw market forces managing a mass of contented consumers.

Adorno & Horkheimer

Perhaps the greatest influence on Marcuse was from his Frankfurt School predecessors Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer. Like Marcuse, Adorno and Horkheimer worried about how technology served the forces of domination. Unlike Marcuse, their focus was on totalitarian and fascist regimes. In their book, Dialectic of Enlightenment, Adorno and Horkheimer make the case that the rationality of the Enlightenment combined with nationalism will over time revert to a form of myth built on all sorts of superstition and popular misunderstandings. One of the dynamics that made the rise of this type of reasoning possible was the development of popular culture. Radio, "pulp" paperback novels, and popular music all feed the beast. These types of popular culture (referred to as the cultural industry) did more to close off the mind than open it. Additionally, radio and printed matter could be used by fascist regimes to manipulate the minds that were already open to these forms of popular culture (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1972). It was the idea that culture played a significant role in the manipulation of the masses that Marcuse adopted.

Once again, while his predecessors feared the centralized manipulation of the masses (this being reflective of totalitarian regimes of their era), Marcuse focused his critique on consumer capitalism. Leveraging the concept of the cultural industry, Marcuse developed an idea of administration that included a dispersed form of coercion that conveys one dimensional language to negate dialectical rationality and replaces the true needs for a more free society with false, manufactured needs. The dominating forces in society were as much cultural as they were market or government driven. Alongside laws were the pressures to live and look a certain way.

The effect on the market place of goods was that individuals set aside the pursuit of true needs for a freer and better society in pursuit of the next model of a certain car or the latest fashion. The effect on the marketplace of ideas was that corporations and governing bodies learned to leverage the tools of the cultural industry to negate criticism and dialectic rationality. The result was mass contentment through one-dimensional rationality.

Freud

When writing about labor, Marcuse consistently utilized the language of dominance and oppression in his writings. This was not unusual among critical theorists who addressed social issues by leveraging the terms and concepts of Karl Marx. However, when Marcuse turned his focus to the greater society he employed the language of dominance and repression. These terms and concepts were derived from another influential psychological theorist, Sigmund Freud. In Eros and Civilization Marcuse looked to extend his concept of the administered society through the exploration of sex and the idea of freedom. Marcuse's basic argument is that in the administered society, sex becomes located in the genitals. In a free society sex flows through one's entire being and psyche.

The problem is one of replacing the idea of progress, as measured quantitatively, with the idea of freedom. Instead of pursuing real freedom and pleasure we are given administered happiness which can only be satisfied by the technology of the cultural industry. Administered happiness is all about creating and satisfying false needs. The result is a loss of understanding or connection with real needs. This is along the lines of Freud's claim that humans have learned to repress the pleasure principle and adhere instead to a reality principle (Bovone, 1985).

It is important to note that Eros and Civilization was a critique of Freud. Marcuse believed many of the elements of Freud's theory were no longer relevant to an administered society. Freudian categories, like the Oedipus complex, didn't reflect the current reality. Rather, children were socialized by the administered society. The father, when compared to the state or society as a whole, was largely ineffectual (Alford, 1987). Though Marcuse agreed with Freud's critique of civilization the underlying issues, as Marcuse understood them, were significantly different.

Elements of Marcuse's Theory

One-Dimensional Thought

One-dimensional thought is something that has evolved alongside modern society. In the beginning, rights and liberties were vital factors in creating the industrial society. The individual possessed unfettered access to the rational consideration of these rights and liberties. However, in time these rights and liberties were taken up by large organizations and replaced with a more productive or efficient rationality. Large organizations, private and public, integrated these rights and liberties, as well as their own narratives, into the whole of society. Once institutionalized, these rights and liberties were subject to the constraints imposed on society by the large organizations. Independent thought and autonomy had been replaced by the one-dimensional thought of the organizations. Only the ideas that large organizations could impose on a society were available for individuals to consider (Marcuse, 1991).

One-dimensional thought does not engage in a consideration of history, alternative ideas, or new possibilities. One-dimensional thought is promoted by politicians and purveyors of mass information to replace dialectic thought, public criticism, and protest with self-validating hypotheses which are repeated over and over again until they become hypnotic definitions (Marcuse, 1991). It doesn't matter if these arguments are true. What matters is that they work. One-dimensional thought presents an unchallenged statement that is intended to cut of discussion and reflection on the issue. Such a statement can do this by superficially appealing to common sense, strongly held values, or fear. The aim of the one-dimensional statement is to negate argument.

So why have we as a society accepted one-dimensional thought? Marcuse believed we accepted administration and one dimensional thinking because the way of life since the rise of industrialization, technology, and management is so much better than it was before. We have more things and more leisure time. We have more comfort and less pain. We accept administration and one dimensional thought because life is good (Marcuse, 1991).

Consumerism & False Needs

At the heart of Marcuse's work is a subtle shift away from the core of critical theory and the Marxist critique. Marcuse isn't writing about labor

and society. He's writing about consumers and society. It isn't capitalists and labor stabilizing the means of production. Rather, it is the consumer society that is analyzed, interpreted, manipulated, and made part of a mass culture that stabilizes the capitalist mode of production (Kellner, 1984).

Marcuse was one of the first to identify the shift to consumer capitalism. For the student of history this shift can be seen in the historic speeches of 20th century American presidents. The first is from the State of the Union address by Franklin D. Roosevelt just after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. The second is from the State of the Union Address by George W. Bush just after the September 11 attacks. These two speeches reflect how large economies were understood at each particular point in history.

> Our workers stand ready to work long hours; to turn out more in a day's work; to keep the wheels turning and the fires burning twenty-four hours a day, and seven days a week. They realize well that on the speed and efficiency of their work depend the lives of their sons and their brothers on the fighting fronts….
>
> *Franklin D. Roosevelt, January 6, 1942 State of the Union Address.*

> The way out of this recession, the way to create jobs, is to grow the economy by encouraging investment in factories and equipment and by speeding up tax relief so people have more money to spend.
>
> *George W. Bush, January 29, 2002 State of the Union Address.*

Marcuse believed that consumer capitalism operated in such a fashion as to contain any forces that might rebel, refute, or reject the system. Containment had to be ensured. One of the ways this could be done was by cultivating "false needs" among consumers (Butterfield, 2004). False needs are manufactured by large organizations. This is done through market research, advertising, and planned obsolescence. This keeps the consumer focused on obtaining the next new thing that adheres to the cultural ideal manufactured by the same large companies. False needs keep people engaged in the administered society. Marcuse called the manufacturing of false needs warfare on liberation (Marcuse, 1991). This warfare kept people from realizing that the vital, or real, needs of food, shelter, and clothing could be sufficient (Butterfield, 2004).

Absorption

Absorption is a very important function of the administered society. Marcuse believes that everything is absorbed into the culture of a society; that culture provides messaging that maintains or sustains administration. Advertising is not only advertising for a particular product or company, but also advertising that supports the entire administered society. In order for a society to remain stable it must be able to absorb the elements that become critical of the administration.

A good example of this is rap music. At a certain point in the rise of rap music, the art form was primarily a rebellious critique of White domination. The culture was able to absorb rap music and make it part of the mainstream culture and economic system. Today rap music is part of the administered society and even the music's most offensive and critical stars have found their ways into television and film. Even the rebellious critique of the administered society found in rap music has been absorbed and accessorized with flashy cars, clothes lines, preferred alcoholic spirits and fragrances. Marcuse wrote that the absorbent power of society depletes the artistic dimension by assimilating its antagonistic elements (Marcuse, 1991).

The Great Refusal

Marcuse feared that the administered society was one that sedated people with false needs and absorbed antagonistic critiques leaving individuals unable to refuse the culture of one-dimensional thinking. He believed that administration and one dimensional thought could only be overcome by refusing to accept things as is (Marcuse, 1991). When this is done en mass, he called it the Great Refusal. Refusal was the first step to changing the administered society. He saw hope in the marches and protests of African-Americans and students in the 1960's. The one thing he feared was that administration could negate refusal by absorbing it. Like rap music, what is discontent and refusal today can be a marketable part of the mainstream marketplace and culture tomorrow.

Viewpoints

Marcuse's Influence on Later Theory

It's hard to look at America today and imagine a social order without administration. The constant barrage of advertising and political sound bites

leaves little room for reflective thought or dialectic discourse. Many feel the daily pressure to keep up with the Jones's and buy the latest gadget. Many more feel the pressure to buy goods and services that are required if they are to be good parents, lovers, or friends. Each new thing we buy requires us to engage in work that will allow us to pay for that item and the next item we are told we need. The post-scarcity economy that exists in most administered societies allows us to live the good life. For most, the good life is a sufficient trade off for setting aside critical thinking. Marcuse's concept of administration seems less of a theory than a reflection of the world we now inhabit.

Marcuse is considered one of the more influential intellectuals of the Sixties. His work deeply influenced the New Left. Though he doesn't enjoy the same standing today as he did in the 60's and 70's, his influence can be seen in the work of one of the world's most influential philosophers and social theorist, Jurgen Habermas, and in sharp criticism of business known as McDonaldization.

The New Left

Although the term New Left is often associated with the protest movements of the 1960's, it in fact refers to an intellectual core that included sociologist C. Wright Mills, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), Noam Chomsky, Marcuse, and the more colorful Youth International Party (aka Yippies).

Marcuse was a champion of the New Left. His ideas were eerily similar to the Port Huron Statement and influenced both the Free Speech and Feminist Movements. Marcuse rejected violence as a solution and in this manner added his voice to those of the Civil Rights Movement. Marcuse's message went beyond addressing the political and economic forces that were the bread and butter of the "Old Left." His message was about a new form of responsible revolution and understanding the connection between the domination anchored in individual unconsciousness and the one-dimensional thought of the social conscious (Herf, 1979). Some have referred to Marcuse as the "Father of the New Left" (Gennaro & Kellner, 2009).

Habermas & Communicative Actions

Jurgen Habermas is one of the most prolific and influential philosophers and social theorist living today, and his work has been deeply influenced

Marcuse. Habermas's most influential theory, that of communicative actions, has many Marcusean elements. Communicative action theory is based on individuals entering into discourse with an attitude towards gaining an understanding without employing force, having sufficient knowledge of the topic, having knowledge of local presuppositions and rules, and the ability to effectively communicate in the particular language or dialect being employed. These conversations form the basis of understanding and a democratic society. Habermas believes that instrumental rationality is propagated by formal systems that effectively undermine these conversations and reasoned understanding. Habermas's instrumental rationality operates much like Marcuse's technological rationality and one dimensional thought. Habermas's concept of formal systems continues Marcuse's critique of administration. Though Habermas and Marcuse offer different solutions to the problem, i.e. discourse instead of revolt, that they define with the modern social order is very similar. This is due in no uncertain terms to Habermas viewing his work as providing new solutions to the problems identified by his predecessors, also in the Frankfurt School.

Perhaps Habermas offers the most concise critique of Marcuse. Habermas believed that Marcuse held too closely to the Marxist critique of capitalism and offered little more than utopian imaginings of revolt. He believed that Marcuse had given up on the possibility of deliberative democracy being sufficient to cure the ills of society (Alford, 1987). Habermas' treatment of Marcuse work is to adapt the ideas of administration and consumer capitalism and reject of Marcuse's proposed solutions. This approach recognizes that Marcuse, at a very early stage, understood and described elements of the administered society that remain very relevant today.

McDonaldization

McDonaldization, also referred to as post-Fordism, is a form of instrumental rationality based on efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control. The concept was developed by George Ritzer. Ritzer's concern was that such instrumental rationality leads to an irrational rationality. Ritzer believes that what individuals do to fulfill the McDonaldized rationality of work and society is often in conflict with their own best interests and values. In this sense McDonaldization is a form of irrational rationality. The idea is one of the more vibrant and well discussed topics in understanding globalism and consumerism today. Ritzer was deeply influenced

by Marcuse idea of the consumer administered society, false needs, and technological rationality (Patterson, 2005).

The work of Herbert Marcuse, particularly his work on administration, has had a profound historical influence on social theory. But his work is not without its critics. Of course there are those who simply assign his work to a particular era and give little thought to how his work has influenced others. Yet it's hard to ignore the vibrancy of Marcuse's ideas which continue to influence social theory and can be heard in the speeches of presidents, songs like the Black Eyed Peas' Where is the Love, and the social criticism of writers like George Ritzer.

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Terms & Concepts

Absorption: Marcuse's idea that protests and critiques antagonistic to the dominant culture could be absorbed into the greater culture and made a harmless part of the mainstream.

Administration: Marcuse's description of the consumer based capitalistic economy and culture. The administered society developed with the rise of technology, consumerism, and advance forms of planning, advertising, and management after industrialization. The administered society managed the masses by sedating them with the "good life" of consumer goods and services.

Affectual Action: An ideal-type of social action originating in spontaneous emotion; impulsiveness.

Anomie: Instability in modern economic societies caused by a collective sense of alienation and purposelessness brought on by erosion of standards and values and a conflation of wants and desires with needs.

Asceticism: Fulfilling the obligation toward a sober, steadfast, and relentlessly constructive life.

Base: The forces and relations of production.

Bourgeoisie: The owners of the means of production, i.e. capitalists.

Bureaucracy: An organizational structure studied extensively by Weber. Its main features include the compartmentalization of labor by functional

expertise, hierarchic authority, and impersonal rules and regulations that are uniformly applied.

Calvinism: Calvinists, or the Puritan denominational sect of Protestant Christianity, possessed a diligent work ethic and abstemious lifestyles.

Capitalism: An economic system based on private ownership. Production is centralized, rationalized and typically large–scale; decision-making is calculated and efficiency and economies of scale are highly prized

Categorical Imperative: Kant's moral philosophy that asserts that all people have one central imperative which dictates all duties and obligations.

Charismatic Authority: Power that accrues to a leader by dent of his or her forceful, magnetic public personality which emotionally resonates with followers and cements their personal loyalty to him or her.

Circulating Capital: Workers' wages.

Class-for-Itself: A class that is conscious of its collective relationship to the means of production within a society and politically organizes itself in its own interest.

Class Situation: One's place in the economic order according one's income, assets, investments, and other economic resources.

Class Struggle: The ongoing conflict between the workers, or proletariat, and the owners of the means of production, or bourgeoisie, rooted in opposing economic interests. Driven by purely economic forces, Marx believed these irreconcilable differences would eventually lead to the violent overthrow of the ruling class in favor of a truly egalitarian state.

Collective Conscience: Collective conscience refers to the belief system of a society – the shared understandings, norms, and values. According to Durkheim, traditional primitive societies have a strong collective conscience, often religious in content. In modern societies, however, which are characterized by diversity and plurality of thought, the conscience weakens. The one way in which the conscience survives, he argued, is with respect to the individual. Modern societies' belief in the worth of the individual becomes a new kind of secular religion.

Commodity-Fetishism: A complex concept originating with Marx which describes how cash economies obscure the social relationships underlying the processes of production. Essentially, consumers acquire commodities to hold them as private property because of their exchange value rather than for their use value per se. Commodities' labor value is largely irrelevant. Over time, as a result, consumers become fixated on acquiring objects for their own sake.

Communicative Actions: Jurgen Habermas's theory of communication interaction that outlines the process for sharing of validity claims, understanding, and criticism. Habermas believes communicative actions are a fundamental element to creating a vibrant participatory democracy.

Competent Speaker: Someone who enters into a conversation with the attitude towards gaining an understanding without employing force, sufficient knowledge of the topic, knowledge of local presuppositions and rules, and able to effectively communicate in the particular language or dialect being employed.

Comte, Auguste: A French philosopher, known as the "father of sociology," who first used the term sociology to mean a natural science of society.

Deliberative Theory of Democracy: A form of democracy based on public consultations, debate, deliberation, and voting. Legitimation comes from the public's participation in the process of deciding and governing.

Denomination: A religious institution tolerant of varying points of view on matters of faith and doctrine. Attendance is voluntary.

Deviance: For Durkheim, a necessary and functional component of society that helps clarify moral behavior.

Dialectic: A process through which ostensibly opposite ideas, the thesis and antithesis, are pitted against one another and resolved within the synthesis, which unifies them.

Dialectical Materialism: Marx's underlying philosophy, it understands material life to be in a state of constant change as opposing forces conflict and are synthesized.

Dictatorship of the Proletariat: The civil and political superstructure that Marx believed would emerge when the workers took full control of the means of production. Despite its title, Marx conceived of it as a democracy.

Division of Labor: The division of labor refers to the specialization and differentiation of jobs and skills in modern societies. According to Durkheim, the division of labor performed an important function. As cities became more populous, and resources more scarce, the division of labor allowed people to complement, rather than conflict, with one another. In this way, modern society fostered individualism, but strengthened social bonds as well.

Durkheim, Emile: A French sociologist concerned with the problem of the relationship between the individual and society, as well as issues of solidarity and social cohesion.

Ecciesia: A formal religious institution with a professional priesthood and that teaches a strict dogma, practices ceremonial rites, and claims moral authority over all matters secular and spiritual. It is also typically intolerant of other religious beliefs, and requires all adherents to regularly attend worship services.

Efficiency: A measure of what is produced with what can be produced, or has been produced, with the same consumption of resources (capital, materials, time, and labor). The assumption is that technology will ever increase efficiency in the use of resources.

Empiricism: The style of sociology that emphasizes the collection and analysis of data generated from direct observation of the world. It sometimes implies a preference for quantification.

Enlightenment: The eighteenth century philosophical movement in Europe that developed the belief that reason would lead to objective and universal truths about humanity.

Exchange Value: The amount of labor time it takes to make a commodity one wishes to acquire. For convenience sake, it is expressed in monetary terms.

Factors of Production: In classical economics, land, labor, and physical capital are all considered necessary prerequisites for the manufacture of goods or the provision of services. Contemporary economics considers entrepreneurship and human capital to also be full-fledged factors.

Factual Judgment: Perception of material and social events in which the rules of logic and scientific experimentation establish that an observation is clearly more objective than subjective.

False Needs: Needs manufactured by the administered society through market research, advertising, and planned obsolescence. False needs keep consumers focused on obtaining the next new thing that adheres to the constructed cultural ideal. False needs keep people engaged in the administered society and keep people from realizing that vital needs of food, shelter and clothing are sufficient.

First Philosophy: A term used by Aristotle concerned with first causes and principles. The term has become synonymous with metaphysics.

Fixed Capital: The amount of labor-time it takes to make the machines and other materials needed in production.

Forces of Production: Labor, its technical expertise, and the organization of the work-flow that optimizes both.

Fordism: A named after Henry Ford, Fordism is the process of breaking down complicated jobs into several smaller uncomplicated tasks and then assigning unskilled workers to perform that task over and over again. The assembly line and mass production are closely identified with Fordism.

Great Refusal: The ability of the masses to simply refuse to accept things as they are in the administered society.

Habitus: Term used to describe the dispositions toward action and perception that operates from within social actors, strongly influenced contemporary social thought and discourse.

Historical Materialism: Marx's most central concept, it states that a given economic base created by the forces and relations of production gives rise to a civil, political, and social superstructure that promulgates and protects it.

Idealism: In sociology, the idea that reality is rooted in human interpretation. Reality is not independent of individual experience. People construct reality through daily interactions.

Ideal Speech Situation: Habermas's concept of the ideal situation where competent speakers can reach understanding. The ideal speech situa-

tion requires competent speakers, an openness that allows all speakers to question validity claims and introduce new claims into the discourse, the absence of force or coercion, and the agreement that each claim is validated based on the strongest argument.

Ideal Type: The reduction of generalized traits that large groups of people possess into a sole representation.

Industrial Era: A period in the Western history characterized by the replacement of manual labor with industrialized and mechanized labor.

Industrial Revolution: The technical, cultural, and social changes that occurred in the Western world in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Instrumental Rationality: Rationality that is based on organizational goals and often determined by what is most expeditious, efficient, or cost effective. This rationality focuses on the "how" aspect of problem solving rather than addressing whether an action is right or just.

Interpretive Sociology: Sociological theory asserting that similar words, deeds, and experiences have different meanings to different people in different situations.

Iron Cage: A concept coined by Weber. The constant extension of rationality in the economic, social, and religious lives of people eventually leads to an "iron cage" of rules and regulations. The feeling that is associated with the "iron cage" is disenchantment.

Labor Theory of Value: Contends that the economic worth of a commodity is solely determined by the amount of physical and mental effort required to manufacture it. Included here is the effort expended to make any machinery used in a commodity's production.

Labor Time: The average amount of socially necessary labor needed to produce a commodity.

Labor-Power: The physical and mental effort expended to produce a good.

Life Chances: A phrase used by Max Weber to describe the circumstances of those who share a common economic class or 'class situation.' Similar life chances in the marketplace correspond with similar property and income. Outcomes of distribution determine the chances to obtain personal goals.

Lumpenproletariat: The unemployed, the unemployable, the criminals of a society who together have the most tenuous, removed relation to the means of production

Macro-level Analysis: The study of society at the level of institutions and broad social structure

Marxism: A political and economic point of view derived from the ideas and writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. In practice more closely related to the political governments of Vladimir Lenin and Mao Zedong as opposed to Karl Marx.

Marx, Karl: A German philosopher and economist who was one of the first scholars to identify society as a system of social relationships.

Materialism: The philosophic view that all meaning is derived exclusively from the physical world.

McDonaldization: A form of instrumental rationality based on efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control developed by George Ritzer. McDonaldization is a phenomenon that saturates all of society and leads individuals to act in ways that are in conflict with their own best interests and values. In this sense McDonaldization is a form of irrational rationality.

Means of Production: The tools, machines, plant, and related infrastructure necessary to production. Under capitalism these are privately owned, under socialism they are all publically owned.

Mechanical Societies: Durkheim believed older societies were mechanical in that they were held together by homogeneous individuals. Basic solidarity makes society an organism rather than just the sum of its parts.

Mechanical Solidarity: Durkheim described the type of social bond found in primitive, traditional societies as a form of mechanical solidarity. In primitive, agrarian communities, people perform the same functions (e.g. they all grow their own food) and families are self-sufficient. In addition to their shared experience, such communities also have a strong, uniform belief system, or collective conscience. The shared experiences and belief create a sense of solidarity.

Methodology: Systematic research techniques. Methodology refers to the manner in which a sociologist gathers data, processes it, and interprets it.

Micro-level Analysis: The study of society on the level of individual and small scale interaction

Mode of Production: A distinct economic system and the supporting social and legal institutions unique to it.

Naturalism: A philosophy based on the notion that is the view that the scientific method is the only effective way to investigate reality.

New Left: A description often associated with most protest movements of the 1960's, but in fact refers to an intellectual core that included sociologist C. Wright Mills, Student for a Democratic Society (SDS), Noam Chomsky, Marcuse, and the more colorful Youth International Party (Yippies).

Occupational Groups: Durkheim believed he was witnessing a modern crisis, in which society was characterized by too little integration and too little regulation. Because he felt religion and politics were losing their ability to bring people together, Durkheim proposed occupational groups as a solution to social ills. Such groups would serve economic, social, and moral functions.

One-dimensional Thinking: A cultural phenomenon that provides a one-sided narrative championed by powerful organizations as the social and cultural ideal. Independent thought and autonomy are replaced by the ideas that dominant organizations integrate into the culture.

Organic Solidarity: Durkheim described the type of social bond found in urban, industrial societies as a form of organic solidarity. In modern societies, the individual's jobs and skills become more specialized. No longer self-sufficient, the family unit must depend on other people in the community for their survival. Durkheim argued that such societies are held together by their interdependency, but by their shared belief in the dignity and worth of the individual as well. This shared belief forms the core of the collective conscience in organic societies.

Permanent Revolution: The conviction that revolutionary action must continue until all the means of production are fully in the hands of workers and private property is abolished. What is more, to maintain their militancy the proletariat's political agenda should always be autonomously arrived at and never compromised.

Petty Bourgeoisie: Self-employed artisans, shopkeepers, independent farmers, etc., who own their means of production.

Positivism: An approach to science, developed by Auguste Comte, that seeks to understand phenomena by empirically observing and describing them, asking not "why" a phenomenon occurs, but simply "how." Comte hoped that such an approach would enable a scientific understanding of the social world.

Pragmatism: A philosophical movement that claims an idea of proposition is true if it works. Pragmatism is anti-Cartesian and philosopher George Mead took this to mean that consciousness and action are fully integrated.

Predestination: The belief that people's fate had been scripted before birth.

Project of Modernity: A vision of what humanity can achieve, originating in the Enlightenment. The project of modernity is vision of a more egalitarian and just society built upon the continued advances in reason and science.

Proletariat: Anyone who exchanges his labor power for a wage, i.e. a worker.

Public Sphere: A place where people can freely come together. For Habermas the public sphere is where people meet and discuss the important issues of the day and validate or reject one another's validity claims.

Rate of Exploitation: The proportion of daily output a worker is not directly compensated for because he is compensated only for his time, not his productivity.

Rationality: The idea that all beliefs and phenomena can be explained in accordance with logical principles.

Rationalization: The historical movement away from institutional structures that engender actions based on the emotional, mystical, traditional, and religious to institutional structures that produce actions based on reason, calculability, predictability, and efficiency.

Rational-Legal Authority: Governance based on law wherein power is exercised by politicians and bureaucrats.

Reification: A process whereby a human quality or relationship is objectified and devalued as just another thing or commodity.

Relations of Production: The social and political relations that arise from the division of labor on the one hand and, more generally, from the ownership of the means of production on the other. The latter includes the social and political system that buttresses capitalist economies.

Repressive Laws: According to Durkheim, primitive societies characterized by mechanical solidarity are governed by repressive laws. People in such societies have a strong, uniform belief system such that violations of the collective conscience are viewed as violations against the community as a whole. Wrongdoers are typically punished severely.

Restitutive Laws: According to Durkheim, modern societies characterized by organic solidarity are governed by restitutive laws. Such societies have a less uniform collective conscience, thus violations of shared values and norms are typically viewed as violations against specific individuals and not the society as a whole. Wrongdoers make amends – or restitution – by paying back the people they harmed.

Scientific Method: A formula for research, developed during the scientific revolution, intended to obtain reliable, reproducible data.

Scientific Revolution: A period of extreme growth in scientific knowledge during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Secondary Exploitation: Excessive rents and interest the petty bourgeoisie, peasantry, and artisans must pay to the capitalists, or the bourgeoisie.

Simmel, Georg: A German sociologist who studied social structure and sociability.

Social Action: Action that is intended, meaningful, and oriented toward others

Social Contract: The implicit or explicit agreement between government and society.

Social Facts: Durkheim argued that society should be studied empirically - in much the same way as the natural sciences - by measuring and observing what he called social facts. Defined as "social structures and cultural

norms and values that are external to, and coercive of, actors" Durkheim categorized social facts into two broad groups – material and nonmaterial (Ritzer, 2008, p. 75). The division of labor is an example of a material social fact, while the collective conscience of a society is nonmaterial.

Social Science: A general concept that includes academic disciplines with social content, including anthropology, economics, human geography, politics, psychology, and management.

Society: A group of individuals united by values, norms, culture, or organizational affiliation.

Sociological Imagination: The ability of individuals to distinguish between their personal situation and the large scale historical, global, social, and cultural forces that complicate their lives.

Sociology: The scientific study of human societies and human social behavior with society.

Spencer, Herbert: An English sociologist and philosopher who developed the theory of social Darwinism, and coined the related phrase "survival of the fittest," which argued that only the fittest members of society survive and succeed.

Stratification: The classification of society into groups based on power and socioeconomic status

Strongest Argument: According to Habermas the strongest argument should settle all arguments. The strongest argument is the most reasonable and pragmatic based on knowledge of the topic and local presuppositions and rules.

Structural Functionalism: A sociological theory based on the notion that social structures in society function to maintain the operations of the system as a whole.

Structuration: A sociological theory that looks for meaning in social practices ordered across space and time rather than in the actions of individual actors.

Structure: The social facts that surround and mark people, including race, class, sex, gender, institutions, organizational hierarchies, roles, and geographical location.

Subjective: Interpretation from the point view of the individual

Suicide: A social phenomenon that Durkheim explored at tremendous depth. He formulated a theoretical framework that contained four types of suicide (i.e., egoistic, altruistic, anomic, and fatalistic).

Superstructure: The legal, political, and social systems along with the familial, cultural, and religious values that collectively buttress the forces and relations of production necessary to sustain life.

Surplus Value: Essentially, the value added to goods when a laborer works his or her usual number of hours but, because of machinery and the division of labor, produces more. Owners selling goods produced in such a manner earn higher profits and keep this additional sales revenue for themselves.

Symbolic Interactionism: A sociological theory that locates meaning in social interactions.

Taylorism: Named after Frederick Winslow Taylor. Also called scientific management. Taylorism called for a vanguard of engineers to lead the process of using job observation, reengineering of job tasks, teaching workers the standard method, and use rewards to drive efficiency to breakdown the willful loafing and lagging of workers.

Technological Rationality: Rationality that is based on goals of technology, namely production, efficiency, costs, and return on investment. This rationality focuses on the "how" aspect of problem solving rather than addressing whether an action is right or just.

Theoretical Model: Several propositions that are linked together on the basis of more abstract conceptions of underlying causal principles.

Traditional Action: Social actions based on habit or cultural custom.

Universal Pragmatics: The mechanics in language that necessarily provide the conditions for validating truth claims, criticizing formal systems, and reaching an understanding.

Use Value: The judgment made by the consumer that a particular purchase will be personally helpful or otherwise beneficial.

Utilitarianism: An ethical philosophy which holds that the moral worth of an action ought to judged according to how it contributes to the happiness of the greatest number of people.

Value Judgments: Perceptual, cultural, and social biases by which we unthinkingly interpret raw experience.

Value Neutrality: Max Weber's idea that the social scientist must approach his work only after striving to set aside all personal values and biases.

Value-Rational Action: Social actions solely motivated by some underlying set of often rigid beliefs wherein little if any consideration is given to their appropriateness or their actual consequences.

Verstehen: A German term Weber used to convey the search for understanding that is at the root of all sociological inquiry.

Weber, Max: A German politician, historian, economist, and sociologist who studied religion, bureaucracy, and rural populations. He is considered to be one of the founders of sociology.

World-Systems Theory: An approach for studying the activities and realities of actors including individuals, states, and firms.

Contributors

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Cynthia Vejar received her Doctorate from Virginia Tech in 2003, and has had extensive experience within the realm of academia. She has taught at both the undergraduate and graduate levels at several universities, and has functioned as a clinical supervisor for counselors-in-training. For five years, Dr. Vejar worked as a school counselor in a specialized behavioral modification program that targeted at-risk adolescents and their families.

She has also worked as a grief and career counselor. Moreover, Dr. Vejar firmly believes in contributing to the research community. She has published in professional journals, served on editorial boards, and has written book reviews.

Katherine Walker received her Doctorate in Sociology from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and currently teaches in the University College at Virginia Commonwealth University. Her current research concerns race, memory, and controversial commemoration, and she is wrapping up a study of public debates over Confederate memorials. She has also studied the impact of the Internet on identity and relationships.

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