



İSTANBUL
GELİŞİM
ÜNİVERSİTESİ

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

WEEK 3

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WHY THERE IS A COMPLEXITY TO SIMPLIFY?

What would you say if I tell you that we are still living in the 19th century?





WHY THERE IS A COMPLEXITY TO SIMPLIFY?

The important social forces in the birth of sociology are:

- Political revolutions
- Changes in religion
- Development of science
- Industrial revolution and the rise of capitalism
- Urbanization
- The rise of socialism.



First Theoreticians of Sociology

- It is hard to trace back when scrutiny on society has begun!
- When we check the times before modernity, we see that social matters, societies, groupings, social mechanisms and society itself were analyzed.



First Theoreticians of Sociology

- We can see many explanations and ideas developed on society in Ancient Greek, Rome, Islam Geography before colonization.
- In recent ages, the social thought developed by the impact on Enlightenment and French Revolution has been important for classical sociology.
- It is important to notice that in the beginning, classical sociology deals with the complexity occurred as a result of Enlightenment and French Revolution.



First Theoreticians of Sociology

- 19. Century: Sociology's being a positivist science is a result of great transformations.
 - Development of positive sciences: led to the adoption of a rational and empirical scientific model which resembles sociology to physics or biology.



First Theoreticians of Sociology

Saint-Simon (1760-1825):

- Thinks that social facts are to be investigated by scientific methods such as in the natural sciences..
- Believes that positive sciences would only be completed by the development of a positive social science.
- He thought of sociology as a modern science which would organize the society and solve its problems.
- Emphasizes the necessity of socialist reforms and thought that economic system and relations of production should be organized by keeping the production in the center.
- He supports that society should be protected and crisis should be solved by reforms.



First Theoreticians of Sociology

• Auguste Comte (1798-1857)

- Influenced by Saint-Simon as his former apprentice and he is counted as the founder of sociology together with Saint-Simon.
- Defines sociology as a positive science that would improve the social evolution and bring an order to the social world.
- According to Comte sociology should apply the methods of natural sciences and discover the law of social life as physics finds the law of nature.
- Sociology is the science of **order** and **progress**.
- To discover the law of social life, Comte divides the focus of sociological research into two:
 1. **Social statics**, the stable relations in society and social structure
 2. **Social dynamics**, transformation in society
- Comte is an **evolutionist**.



- The positivist approach developed by Comte assumes that social life has an objective reality such as the natural life. From this respect his approach defends that sociology should use the **quantitative** scientific methods resembling natural sciences.
- This method defines facts as **observable and measurable**. We can classify them. He claims that the reality about society can be discovered and analyzed only through scientific methods.
- Comte believed that there were laws in the social world as there are laws in the physical world such as law of gravity. That is why he supported that this method does not only discover these laws but also lead society to a better condition.
- In this frame Auguste Comte used the term Social Physics.



- Auguste Comte explains society from an evolutionist perspective. He develops a model that claims human societies progress through 3 basic stages which is called **Comte's Three Stages of Social Development**.

1-) **Theological Stage:** human thought explains everything with supernatural powers.

2-) **Metaphysical Stage:** human thought explains all the social and physical facts with abstract powers.



3-) Positivist Stage: human thought evolves to an explanation of social facts and realities in a scientific way (based on international law). According to Comte, at this stage human thought denies supernatural and abstract powers and aims for discovering the existing relations between facts and systematizing these relations under universal law.

Positivist Stage is the highest stage to be reached. It takes the former place of religion and metaphysics.



First Theoreticians of Sociology

- **Emile Durkheim (1858-1917):**
- Durkheim thinks society as a biological organism composed of different parts. All these parts have a different function. That is why he thinks that society cannot be reduced the parts it is composed of. It is something greater than its parts; society is greater than the combination of individuals; it also has an independent reality.
- He emphasizes that society has sanctions over the individuals through collective social facts.
- That is why he sets the duty of sociology to search social facts.



- Example:

Think of a football team: 11 individuals playing football does not cover the entire existence of a team. What makes it a team is the relations between individuals. Players individually do not contribute to it but the relations between 11 people have a sociological meaning. Therefore, a team cannot be reduced to individuals in terms of social facts, but a football team has a reality that is above the sum of individuals.



- Durkheim adopts a functionalist model of society. For him social order and solidarity is a priority in terms of society's needs. He sets the main area of interest in sociology is to search the facts analyzing the order, solidarity and progress.
 - According to him social facts are divided into two:
 - **Materialistic** social facts (bureaucracy or legislation)
 - **Non-materialistic** social facts (Culture).
- His work **Division of Labor in Society** depends on the comparative analysis of this fact in different types of societies.



- According to him social order and solidarity is rooted in **division of labor** and **specialization**. As division of labor increases the dependency of individuals to each other increases as well.
- In “Division of Labor” Durkheim adopts a evolutionist functionalist perspective. He mentions two different types of solidarity: **mechanic solidarity** and **organic solidarity**.



- **Mechanic Solidarity:**

- It is the type of solidarity in the traditional societies in which the division of labor is simple and based on similarity
- In this type of order and solidarity the **collective consciousness** and **collective identity** is stronger than the individual consciousness and identity.
- **Organic Solidarity:** It is the type of solidarity seen in modern societies in which there is a complex division of labor and specialization (it is the type of solidarity that created the industrial society).



• Durkheim's Research on Suicide:

- Durkheim posed the social dimension of the fact of suicide by comparing the suicide rates in different societies. Suicide was seen before his analysis as an individual act.
- According to this analysis different groups having different social circumstances have different suicide rates and these rates change especially in times of great social change which shows that suicide has social reasons.



- Durkheim believed that people whose objectives and interests are organized by **norms** and who are strongly identify themselves as social groups have lower possibility of suicide.
- The suicide research is important in the history of social research for both its comparative structure and the use of secondary resources.



First Theoreticians of Sociology

- **Karl Marx (1818-1883)**
- Theory of **historical materialism** developed by Marx in 19th century has an important influence on sociology.
- Marx has a critical scientific approach which aims to reveal the social dynamics behind the visible facts.



- According to the historical materialist philosophy of Marx, consciousness does not determine their being; their social being determines their consciousness.
- According to him people have to produce food, clothes and shelter for themselves. They can achieve that only in social (collective) labor.
- Human is a social being creating both himself and the society.



Social Change in Marx:

According to Marx societies passed 4 stages until the Industrial Revolution which would lead them to Communist stage. These are;

- 1-) Primitive Communal Society
- 2-) Slave Society
- 3-) feudal Society
- 4-) Capitalist Society
- 5-) Communist Society





- **Primitive Communal Society:** Is a communist egalitarian society. There is no private property in this type of society and it does not have social classes.
- **Slave Society:** The social order is composed of slave owners and slaves. They have the first version of private property.
- **Feudal Society:** The society is composed of land owners and serfs .



Capitalist Society:

Appears after the feudal Society whose end came with the rise of merchants and tradesmen (Bourgeois).

In this society of capitalist mode of production the dynamics in the society are divided between those who have the means of production (Bourgeois) and who lack them (Proletariat).



- **Communist Society:** The final type of society that human groups would access with the revolution of the workers' class against the bourgeois. The economic system in this society offers everyone to produce according to their abilities and take their share from the economy as much as their needs.
- *** The social transformation in Marx can happen through evolution as happened in the passage from the primitive society to slave society or with revolution as seen in the passage from the capitalist society to communist society.



- Marx defines the initial reason of social change as economy rather than belief.
- Except the primitive communist societies, all societies have classes. Therefore, according to Marx, the entire history of humanity is the history of class conflict.



- **Analysis of Social Class:**
- Social change follows a dialectical route; therefore social history is a conflicting process. Every social change is characterized with different modes of production. Due to the internal conflicts every mode of production gave its place to a different mode of production. For Marx the last conflicting mode of production in the process of historical materialism is the capitalist mode of production.



- In the capitalist mode of production, the natural bond between people and their products collapses. People alienate to the product they produce, their own lives and nature.
- **Alienation** ends when the means of production are collectively shared in a society.



First Theoreticians of Sociology

- **Max Weber (1864-1920):**
- Weber **does not** adopt the same methods and concepts with positivists.
- According to him human is a cultural being who has the capacity to think and human behavior in society involves consideration of other people's thoughts and reactions.
- People as cultural beings act in society according to certain values. In other words we pose actions which is meaningful to other people living in our society.



- That is why human behavior is **social** for Weber and that is why every study that aims to explain social behavior is to make clear the **meaning** lying under the social behavior.
- Weber **does not** adopt historical materialism.
- According to Weber economic factors are important but **thoughts** and **beliefs** have an impact on social change.



- An important component of Weber's sociological perspective is the idea of **ideal type**. Ideal types are concepts or analytic models to understand the world; they function as analytical reference points.
- Weber sees ideal types as the root of sociological analysis. Therefore this is in a way his methodology.



- He applies this reference point to social behaviors and social relations.
- Among his typologies related with society he emphasizes different types of authority and organizations. These are **traditional authority, charismatic authority and legal-rational authority.**



- **Traditional Authority:**

- It is a type of authority where the values and beliefs define authority.
- The beliefs of leaders are considered to be sacred. Loyalty is essential for traditional authority. In most cases it passes from father to child.



- **Charismatic Authority:**

- Takes its power from extraordinary events and his charisma. The fact that the leader has charismatic features increases the loyalty. In times of crisis charismatic leaders are followed to be saved from this conflicting period.
- Charismatic leader ends the ongoing order and tries to create new ways of life. By ending the old system, the leader wants to bring a new system. When he dies, people following him keep the new system as a sacred thing and therefore acting against the system becomes impossible.



- **Legal/Rational Authority**

- What is important for legal authority is the status of people rather than people themselves.
- Status gives people duties to be fulfilled. The structure of the authority changes according to the legal rules. Any kind of work is tied to the rules designed by regulations. Work positions are determined according to the rules. Rules aim to set the authority.
- This type of authority is the one we see in modern societies.



- **Rationalization in Weber:**

- According to Weber rational behavior is the type of behavior that has an objective determined by an organized process of thinking.
- The development of science, modern technology and bureaucracy brings us **rationalization** which organizes the social and economic life according to the principles of modern life and technical knowledge.



- In industrial societies people favor reason instead of traditional thinking.
- Weber sees that if the same reason is applied on bureaucracy it leads people to adopt more rational behavior.



- In such a society of industrialization and capitalism what is occurred is not class conflict as Marx supports but it is the development of science and bureaucracy.
- However, for Weber if strict rules are developed in modern societies it would harm democracy.
- He also criticizes the modern society because the system neglects the human soul.



First Theoreticians of Sociology

- Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)
- Believed that society is a set of interdependent parts that work together to maintain the system over time.
- He used Darwin's theory of the evolution of biological organisms.
- He developed the term Social Darwinism.
- Social change and unrest are natural occurrences during society's evolution towards stability and perfection.
- No steps should be taken to correct social ills.
- Only the fittest societies would survive over time, leading to a general upgrading of the world as a whole.
- He supported the Functionalist Perspective.