

Lecture 1:

Introduction to Sociology

Course: Introduction to Human Sciences

What *is* Sociology?

- Study of societies.
- Study of individuals and groups.
- Understanding/theorising society. Role of social structures, institutions, cultures.
- Understanding the relationship between individuals and the larger society around them.

Do we all *do* sociology in our everyday conversations and interactions? Is sociology merely 'common sense'?

What is Sociology?

Sociology is the study of how people live together and how their lives are structured by social institutions, culture, and history. How does sociology impact your life? It is the study of why your marriage is 50% likely to end in divorce, how protests erupt and destruct, why glass ceilings still exist, and why children are using school grounds as battlegrounds. Sociology is all around you and you are all sociology

Alpha Kappa Delta/Sociology Society
The University of Texas at Austin

Some Concerns/Issues...

➤ Social Institutions/Structures

- ☐ Caste

- ☐ Class

- ☐ Tribe/Ethnicity

- ☐ Gender

- ☐ Religion

- ☐ Family

➤ Social Processes

- ☐ Exercise of Power, Authority

- ☐ Urbanisation/Migration

- ☐ Development/Industrialization

- ☐ Society and Ecological change

➤ Change, Resistance and Mobility. Social Movements

What is the '*Sociological Imagination*'?

How does a sociologist think?

Peter Berger first used the term "*sociological perspective*".

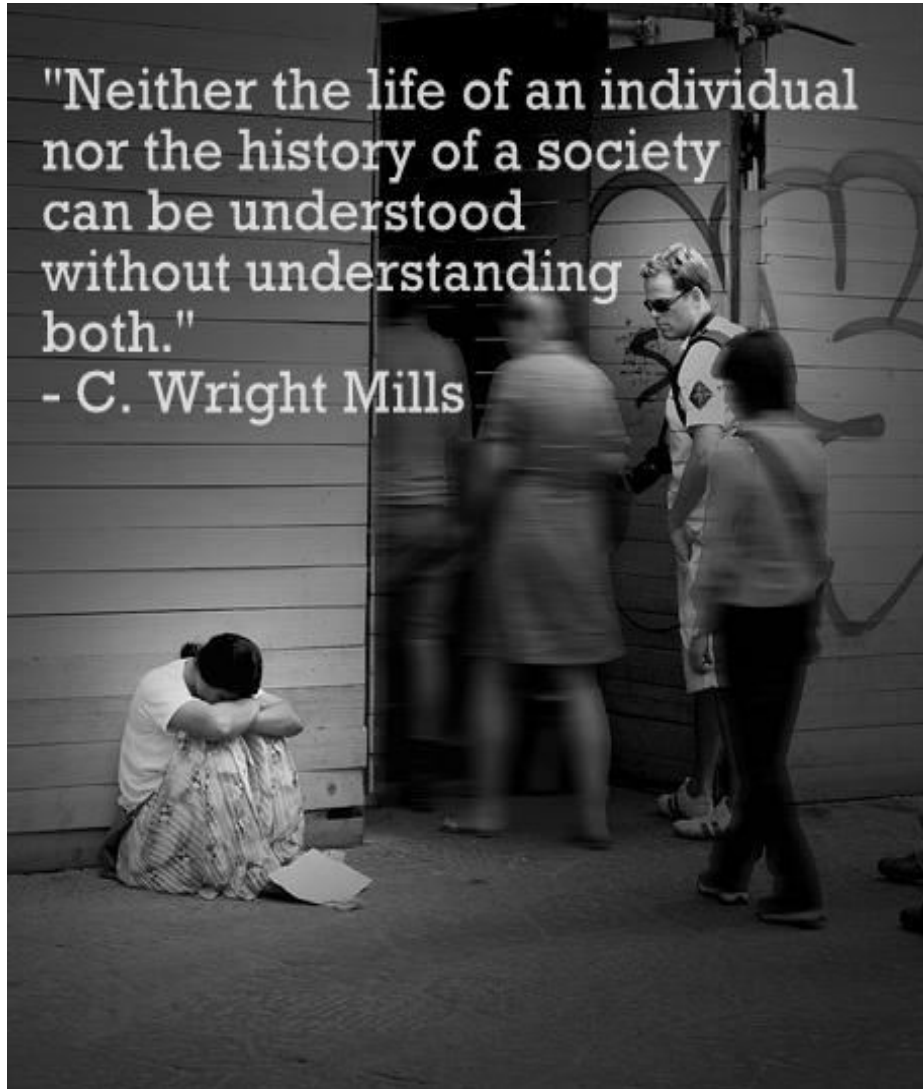
- Seeing "the general in the particular".
- Locating *general patterns* in the behavior of specific individuals. Ex. Hurricane Katrina and its response, caste in India, patriarchy.

We are always participating in something larger than ourselves, and if we want to understand social life and what happens to people in it, we have to understand what it is we're participating in and how we participate....

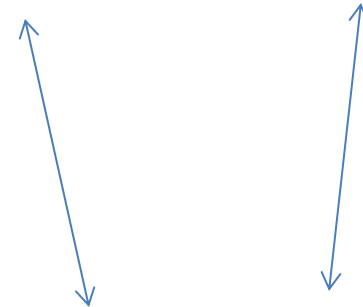
- **Allan Johnson** in *The Forests and Trees: Sociology as Life Practice*

A sociological perspective helps us to understand how personal choice is shaped by society, social structures, institutions and social norms.

‘Sociological Imagination’



Social Systems



Individuals

- *As we participate in systems, our lives are shaped by socialization, and paths of least resistance.*
- *We make social systems happen.*

The sociological imagination enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society.

(C. Wright Mills)

Looking for 'sociological imagination'

Drinking Coffee

- Coffee as refreshment, something to energize the self.
- Coffee as 'symbol': Social world of 'drinking' coffee.
- Coffee as routine: The *ritual* of coffee drinking.
Coffee/marijuana.
- Coffee as product: The social/economic world of coffee.
- Coffee in societies. The process of 'naturalisation' of coffee.



Looking for 'sociological imagination'

Education in a college/University

- College as spaces to produce/disseminate knowledge.
- College as tool for social mobility.
- College as a meeting ground/melting pot of diverse cultures.
- College as symbols/spaces of dissent. Speaking truth to power.

Lecture 2:

Development of Sociology in India

Course: Introduction to Human Sciences

Development of 'modern', academic Sociology

The roots of Sociology as a modern discipline:

European Enlightenment and Scientific Revolution

- Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Newton
- Emergence of the 'scientific method'
- Evidence, observation, experimentation, measurement, hypothesis
- Erosion in the influence of 'faith' and religion
- New ways of thinking, producing knowledge

Development of 'modern', academic Sociology

European exploration/colonisation

- Spread of European colonisation, 'discovery' of new land masses.
- Growth of capitalism, huge wealth transferred from the colonies to Europe
- Understanding the 'other'. Sociology/Anthropology.

Development of 'modern', academic Sociology

Industrial revolution, development of large-scale markets, capitalism

- Structural change in the economy. Lesser role for the agrarian sector. Increased industrialization and commercialization.
- Use of new sources of power which revolutionized production.
- Shift to large-scale manufacturing.
- Technological innovations .
- Rapid urbanization, migration to cities. From 10% of population living in cities before the industrial revolution, by 1850 this increased to 52% in England, 25% in France, 36% in Germany.
- DEFINITIVE break from feudalism.
- Family structures changed. Modes of production changed. Class structures changed.

Development of 'modern', academic Sociology

The rise of individualism

- Decline of the Catholic Church. Rise of the Protestant Church. Interpreting the 'Word of God'
- Shift from inherited/acquired status to achieved status. Choices and decisions acquired importance

Development of 'modern', academic Sociology

Revolutions and the rise of nation states

- French Revolution, American revolution, challenge to monarchy
- The idea of an accountable government, which people/society could change
- Rise in the importance of role of people/society
- Montesquieu, Edmund Burke, Kant, Rousseau, Descartes, Locke, Tocqueville, Saint Simon and August Comte
- Emergence of a new 'science of society'...
- Finally, Comte (1798-1857) coined the term 'Sociology' in 1838. Sociology as science. That too as science that was more complex than mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology. Sociology was to be the queen of sciences.

Development of Sociology in India

- **Phase I:** Colonial Modernity and Anthropology
- **Phase II:** Nation-State and the formation of a 'national' sociology (social anthropology)
- **Phase III:** Post-1970s (period of multiple challenges)

Colonial Modernity and Anthropology

Practice of Sociology in Europe and the colonies: Sociology in Europe *versus* anthropology in the colonies.

Master narratives:

- 1) Superiority of 'Western' civilisation
- 2) Belief in the continuous growth of capitalism through modernisation, development, and the creation of new markets.

The 'West' was about 'history, reason, and science' and the 'East' was about 'nature, religion, and spirituality'

Spurious distinction between sociology and anthropology



Colonial Modernity and Anthropology

Anthropology as the handmaiden of colonialism

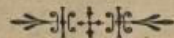
- Lack of knowledge of the colonies as an impediment.
- British records of the non-West, maintained by colonial officers, as well as by trained anthropologists.
- Attempts to understand the colonies as static, traditional, pre-modern, non-civilised...
- Categorization and classification of society in the colonies.
- Study of individual societies and communities. Detailed accounts of languages, behavior, social practices, customs.
- Region-wise analysis. Creation of *spatial-cultural* zones, to facilitate colonial rule.

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BALASORE

District Gazetteer.

Statistics, 1900-1901 to 1910-11.



Patna City:

PRINTED AT THE DARBAR PRESS,
FOR THE BIHAR AND ORISSA GOVERNMENT PRESS.

1915.

CENTRAL PROVINCES DISTRICT GAZETTEERS

(BILASPUR DISTRICT)

VOLUME A
DESCRIPTIVE

EDITED BY
A. E. NELSON, Gazetteer, SUPERINTENDENT.



PRINTED AT THE PIONEER PRESS,
ALLAHABAD

The forests of the State at one time had the reputation of being well filled with game, but the Wild animals... depredations of the aborigines have greatly reduced the stock. Armed with guns of sorts, bows and arrows, and spears, they turn out by whole parganas to organize hunting parties. The game is driven by firing the grass and any animal found is slaughtered, irrespective of its size or sex. Nets are used in these beats to stop the game which, once entangled, is speared. Pits and traps of various patterns are also used. Shooting by visitors is well regulated, but the local people (especially the village shikaris) will have to be restrained to save the game from being exterminated...

- Excerpts from the Bastar District Gazetteer

The palm civet cat {Paradoxurus musajtga) also occurs. The caracal and the civets are eaten, not being considered members of the cat-tribe by the aborigines. The hyaena {Hycena striata) is found throughout the western and southern parts of the State. Wild dogs are numerous, but they are not destroyed owing to the superstitious idea of the villagers that the killing of these animals will entail the destruction of their cattle....

- Excerpts from the Bastar District Gazetteer

About two-thirds of the people are Animists and one-third Hindus. There are very few Religions. Muhammadans and Christians. Hindus of the higher castes are scarce and the Brahmans, who mostly hail from Orissa, are now by no means orthodox in religious matters. Practically both Hindus and Gonds to a very great extent deify the spirits of the forests, hills, trees, soil, &c., and both worship the Danteshwari goddess. Next to her, Jagannath commands most respect. He owes this to the proximity of Orissa and the reverence paid to him by one of the Chiefs of the present line. But locally Danteshwari is far above all other deities and the Chief of Bastar, as her high priest, is esteemed above all other priests. Bhatra gods. The Bhatra Gonds, who have risen above their neighbours and respect the cow, worship, besides Danteshwari and other Hindu deities, Budhi-mata with offerings of goat, pig or fowl but not liquor. She averts small-pox ... Bhimsen and his twelve brothers are lords of the village lands and bring rain. Liquor, pigs and fowls are offered to them. Pardeshin-mata, Telangin-mata and the seven sisters are worshipped collectively with Budhi-mata.

- Excerpts from the Bastar District Gazetteer

Castes and Tribes of Southern India,
Volume III of VII

Edgar Thurston



Published by the Library of Alexandria

Made in the United States of America

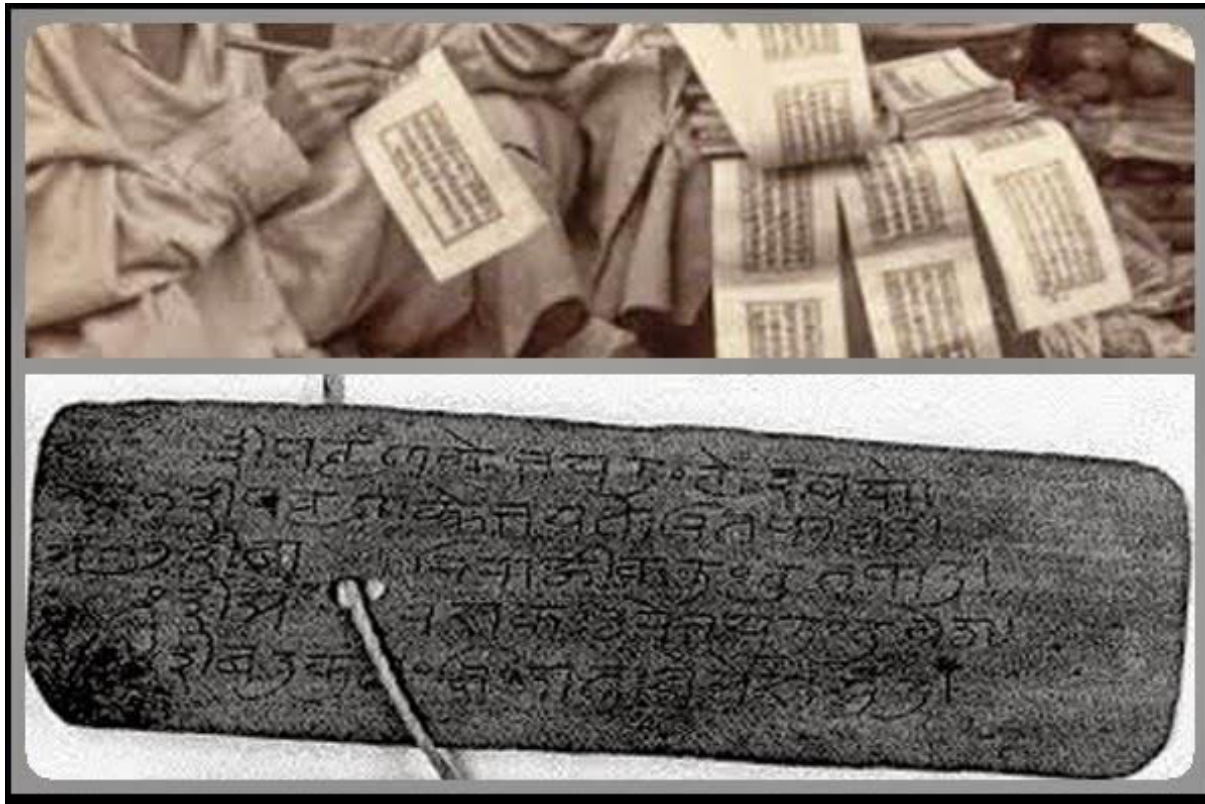
- This project was aided the theory of 'evolution' and the Aryan invasion theory.
- The result? Identification and distinction between 'castes' and 'tribes'. The idea of 'stock'/race was used to divide Indian society.
- Methods of categorisation, classification and documentation: Census, ethnographic methods, anthropometric tools which measured skull size, etc. in classifying stocks/ races were used.



Anthropometric
method

Colonial Modernity and Anthropology

- Ethnographic studies created spatial-cultural zones.
- With revenue settlements, additional spatial categories of villages, estates and properties with zamindars, rajas, chiefs, nawabs, etc. were created.
- Villages depicted as self-sustaining units, where castes lived harmoniously.
- Emphasizing caste and tribe, overlooking other social groups which were interdependent and ever-changing...
- Teaching of Sociology started in 1919 at the University of Bombay...In 1947, just three universities (Bombay, Calcutta and Lucknow) taught sociology and/or anthropology together with small centers in Poona, Mysore and Hyderabad.



Indological approach:

Study of societies through the 'scriptures'. Benefited the Brahmins, who held a monopoly over possession, access and interpretation of scriptures. Sociology/anthropology came to reproduce the knowledge of Brahmins who were given the privileged status of 'indigenous intellectuals'.

Colonial Modernity and Anthropology

- The Indological approach attempted to rationalise caste hierarchies with Brahmins at the top of the hierarchy, followed by Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras. Those outside the four-fold varna system were the untouchables (Dalits).
- Normalised Brahminical power, undermined other sources of power (based on region, village or neighbourhood communities, kinship groups, factional parties, chiefly authority, political affiliations).
- Castes and tribes were placed hierarchically.
- Caste thus became the 'essence' of Indian society and civilisation.

Colonial Modernity and Anthropology

The Bombay School

Main PROPONENTS: Govind Sadashiv Ghurye.

Ghurye headed the first Department of Sociology in India at Bombay. Used the indological approach.

Main IDEAS:

- All those who lived in the territory of 'India' possess a distinct, cohesive 'Indian' identity defined by Hindu religion and Hindu civilisation.
- Indian society is organised by structures of caste, kinship and family.
- Study of Hindu civilisation lead to empirical studies. Lack of theoretical perspectives. Cementing of 'Hindu' values and a certain form of cultural nationalism.
- This school employed Eurocentric categories and conceptual frameworks.

Colonial Modernity and Anthropology

The Lucknow School

Main PROPONENTS: Radhakamal Mukherjee and D.P. Mukherji.

Main IDEAS:

- Did not identify sociology as anthropology.
- Did not emphasize the methods and methodologies which came with colonial modernity.
- Was analytical, empirical and interdisciplinary.
- Oriented to the present and future unlike the Bombay School which looked at the past.

Phase II: Nationalist Sociology

Main THINKERS: M.N. Srinivas and A.R. Desai

M.N. Srinivas:

- Taking forward Ghurye's tradition, emphasizing 'civilisational' continuity, focussing on the caste system.
- Studying and rationalising 'traditional structure' in the village.
- Re-emphasizing the disciplinary identity of sociology as anthropology, using functionalist social anthropology.
- While Ghurye used Indology to define caste, Srinivas used the field view – the empirical method of ethnography – to study the caste system. Used the village as the setting.

Phase II: Nationalist Sociology

- Divided the population of the village by castes and by occupation.
- Examined the relationship of various castes and their occupations in the Indian agricultural system. Result? A 'harmonious' village system, which is seen as the 'defining' feature of Indian society.
- Methodological confusion between 'caste' and 'village'.
- Exclusion of tribes, religious, ethnic groups (other than caste), emerging interest groups.
- Srinivas distinguished between the subject (the ethnographer-researcher) and the object (the researched). But refused to see the relationship between the two.
- Analysed general changes in caste system. Sanskritisation and Westernisation.
- Naturalised 'traditional' character of Indian society.
- Institutionalisation of the 'Savarna' idea of the nation.

Phase II: Nationalist Sociology

A.R. Desai and the Marxist Approach

- Desai analysed contemporary social change to assess how it benefitted only a few.
- Critiqued mainstream 'nationalism' and its political projects. Looked at the nature of the ruling class .
- Assessed 'nation' and class. Development planning , and emergence of new classes in agricultural and urban industrial sector.
- Emergence of social movements against these dominant classes.
- Included those who were left out by the dominant Savarna, upper class culturist interpretations of society.
- Interdisciplinary approach. Brought the historical method and questions of political economy into sociology.

Phase III: Post-1970s, the period of multiple challenges

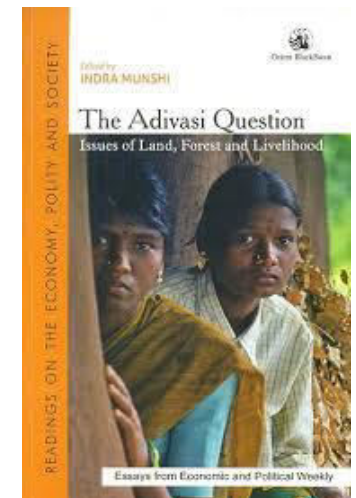
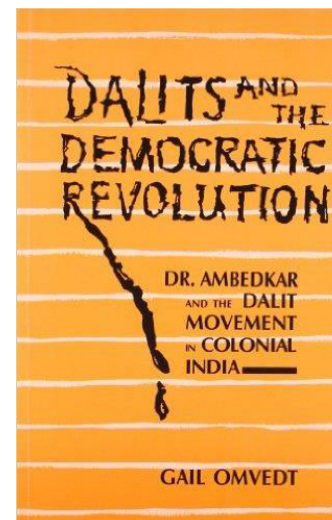
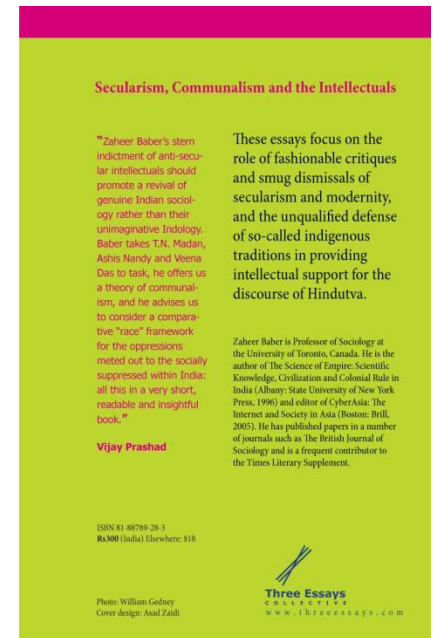
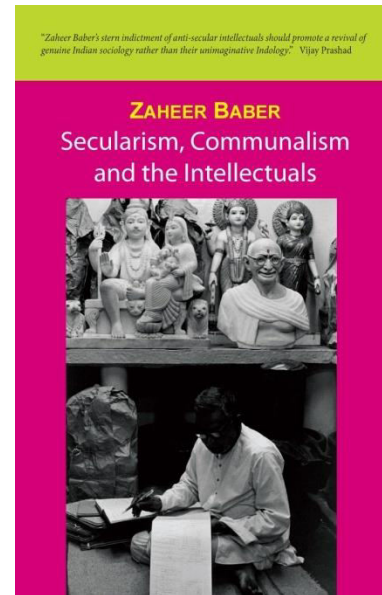
- **Crisis in higher education since late 1960s:** Coping with regional diversity, new entrants into the educational system.
- **Social Movements of the 1970s and 1980s**

T.K. Oommen: “ After independence, several movements were kept in suspended animation... from the mid-1970s, the centrality of the Indian state came in for interrogation... post emergency, the State lost legitimacy as the prime mover of economic development... by the 1980s, the very idea of state-sponsored, capital intensive, high-technology driven model of modernization came to be questioned...”

Phase III: Post-1970s, the period of multiple challenges

Globalization and Communalization

- Growth of communalism and globalisation towards the end of the 1980s.
- Emergence of new perspectives in sociology. Subaltern studies, post-colonial studies. Feminist, adivasi and Dalit critiques.
- Growth of interdisciplinary research and teaching such as those of media and cultural studies.



Lecture 3:

Marx, Weber, Durkheim

Course: Introduction to Human Sciences

Karl Marx

(but also Fredrick Engels)

SOCIAL FORMATION

*“A social formation refers to a society (a social structure at any level such as a nation, city, business, university, or even a family) with all its complexities, as it is **historically constituted**. It includes all the internal **contradictions** that exist in a society, all emerging and disappearing tendencies in the economy and superstructure, in the social relationships that comprise these.”*

- Stratification is result of specific historical processes.
- Stratification is conflict-ridden, and thus has the inherent potential to change shape.

Primitive communism ---- Feudalism -----
Capitalism ----- Socialism ----- Communism

The Marxist Approach

MAIN IDEAS:

Materialism

- “According to the materialistic conception, the determining factor is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of the immediate essentials of life.” ~ Fredrick Engels

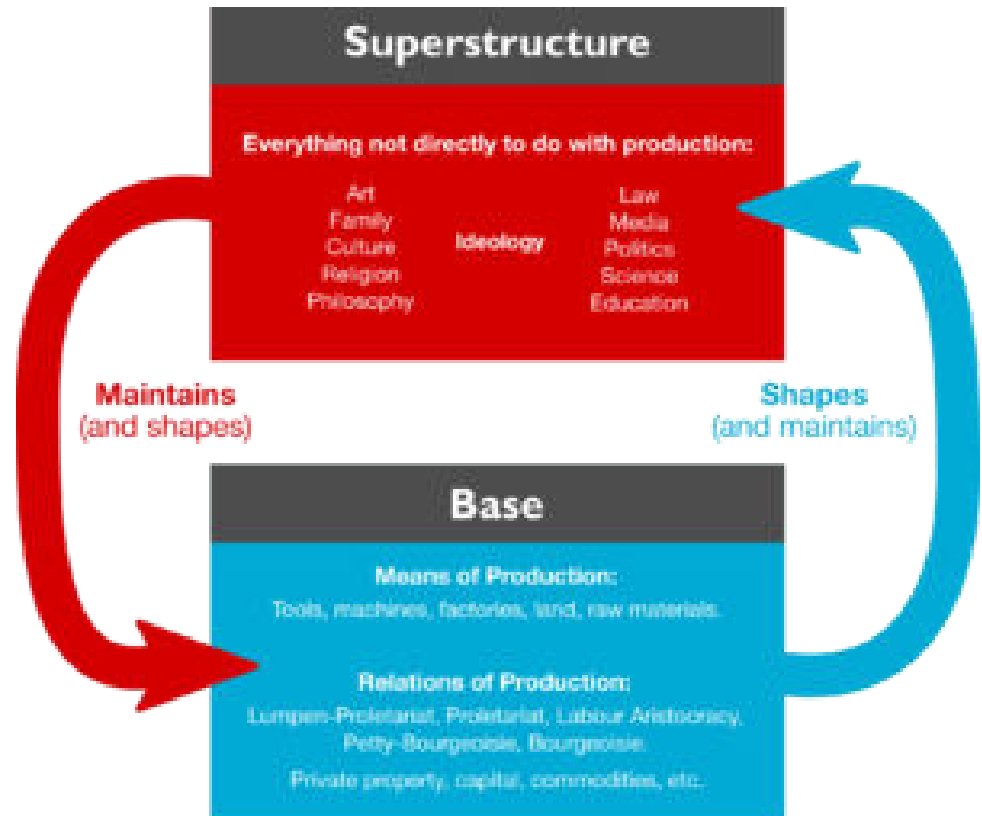
Marx asks:

- What are the ‘productive forces’? Labour, as well as means of production (equipments, buildings, land, technologies, information etc...).
- What the social relations of production? Ownership patterns, patterns of power and control...

TOGETHER, they make up the ‘MODES OF PRODUCTION’.

The Marxist Approach

- Family structure is linked to form of property ownership
 - Which itself is linked to the mode and relations of production
- Property ownership is linked to form of State
 - Clear causal link between the smallest social unit (emotional base of society) with social relations and State form



This moves in a spiral pattern.
The base is generally dominant.

Karl Marx

(but also Fredrick Engels)

ALIENATION

- Special feature of capitalist society
- Humans alienated from product of their own labour
- Creates alienation between humans
- Alienation from self
- Alienation from nature
- Affects culture and family

Émile Durkheim

- Established sociology as an academic discipline
- Drew on Auguste Comte
- Wanted to understand how society sustains itself; how it maintains its coherence and integrity
- Scientific methods for study of society
 - Identify and define different parts of society by their function in maintaining social order
- Society is more than a sum of its parts
 - Society is formed of individuals but each person can be seen as an individual only when society is formed

What IS a Social Fact?

A social fact is any way of acting, whether fixed or not, capable of exerting over the individual an external constraint

– Durkheim

- Include social institutions and social activities. Statuses, roles, laws, beliefs.
- External to every individual.
- Coercive.

Social facts CANNOT be explained by reducing them to the level of the individual.

Examples: Divorce rate, economic growth rate, population distribution, urbanization, religious structures, caste divisions.

Explaining Cultural Change

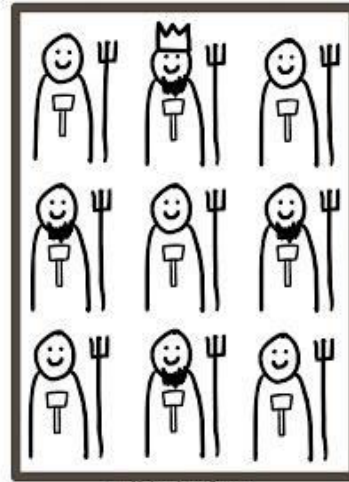
“Old order is being swept away...loss of security and predictability”

- ❑ Pre-industrial societies: Simple, unsegmented, homogenous clans. MECHANICAL solidarity based on religious beliefs, “collective consensus/conscience”, individuals SIMILAR in behavior/moral respects.

- ❑ Western industrialization: BREAKDOWN of collective conscience.

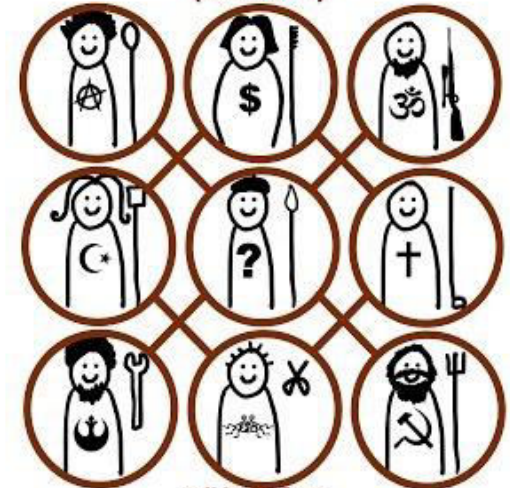
WHAT holds society together?

mechanical solidarity
(pre-modern)



solidarity from
collective conscience

organic solidarity
(modern)



solidarity from
inter-dependence

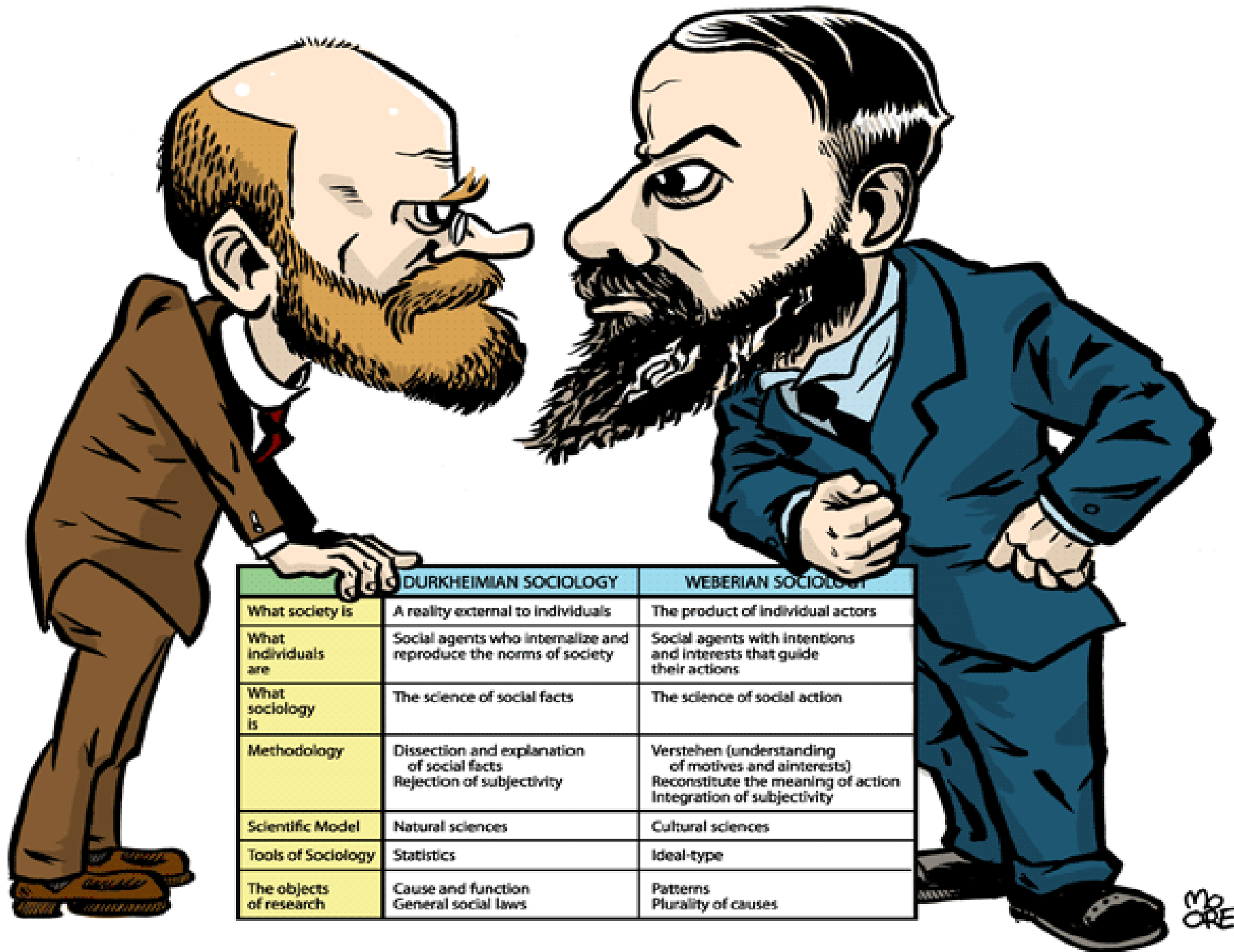
Explaining Cultural Change

ROOTS of EVOLUTIONALISM:

- ❑ Western industrialization: BREAKDOWN of collective conscience. DIVISION of LABOUR → Increasing individualism, heterogeneity, interdependence
- ❑ NEW MORAL ORDER: Social solidarity was ORGANIC rather than MECHANICAL.
- ❑ BUT, the move from mechanical to organic solidarity was NOT AUTOMATIC. ABNORMALITIES arose.
- ❑ ANOMIE: Rootlessness, lack of regulation, lack of moral discipline.
- ❑ NEED to develop moral code/order based on occupational associations, which would provide sense of belonging/solidarity/mutual assistance.

Max Weber

- Extended Marx and Durkheim in engagement and contestation
- Focus on Capitalism and its society
- Ideal-type
- Method of identifying actions and interpreting their meaning
- Finding patterns and locating subjectivity



	DURKHEIMIAN SOCIOLOGY	WEBERIAN SOCIOLOGY
What society is	A reality external to individuals	The product of individual actors
What individuals are	Social agents who internalize and reproduce the norms of society	Social agents with intentions and interests that guide their actions
What sociology is	The science of social facts	The science of social action
Methodology	Dissection and explanation of social facts Rejection of subjectivity	Verstehen (understanding of motives and interests) Reconstitute the meaning of action Integration of subjectivity
Scientific Model	Natural sciences	Cultural sciences
Tools of Sociology	Statistics	Ideal-type
The objects of research	Cause and function General social laws	Patterns Plurality of causes

Weberian Approach

Weber founded 'interpretive' sociology. Argued that study of social action should not be purely empirical. It should try and understand ('interpret') the *meanings* and *purposes* that individuals attach to their actions. *Rejected* monocausality.

INTERPRETATIVE SOCIOLOGY

- There is NO objectively "correct" meaning. Meaning depends on Context and Subjectivity, unlike empirical 'truth'.
- The dividing line between 'objective' (understandable) and 'subjective' (non-understandable) action is hazy. They are bound up together.
- 'Motives' have to be identified.

The Weberian Approach

“In the great majority of cases actual action goes on in a state of inarticulate half-consciousness or actual unconsciousness of its subjective meaning. The actor is more likely to “be aware” of it in a vague sense than he is to “know” what he is doing or to explicitly self-conscious about it. In most cases his action is governed by impulse or habit. Only occasionally and, in the uniform action of large numbers, often only in the case of a few individuals, is the subjective meaning of the action, whether rational or irrational, brought clearly into consciousness. The ideal type of meaningful action where the meaning is fully conscious and explicit is a marginal case...”

– Max Weber

The Weberian Approach

Types of social action:

- *Instrumentally rational*: Expects/anticipates behavior of others, and acts accordingly. 'Rational', logical, towards one's goals.
- *Value rational*: Believes and acts upon a value for religious, ethical, aesthetic reason. Even if success is not anticipated.
- *Emotional*: Follows feelings and emotions.
- *Traditional*: Follows deeply ingrained habits.

Weber: These are PATTERNS in behavior. Modern society is moving towards more 'instrumental rational' behavior, in both personal and social spheres.

Conscious	Unconscious
Functional rational (calculating)	Emotional (spontaneous)
Substantial rational (from principles)	Traditional (habitual)

Max Weber

RATIONALITY

- Modern society marked by universalisation of rationality
- Both individual and social actions
- Personal
 - rational efforts aimed at achieving economic gain
- Social
 - Bureaucracy (rational – legal)
 - instrumental rational action

Behaviour in modern societies comes to be dictated more by goal-oriented rationality and less and less by tradition, values or emotions. Mechanisation and division of labour are also other features of this process of rationalisation.

Max Weber

BUREAUCRACY

- Division of labour with chains of command
- Duties assigned and strictly demarcated
- Impersonal authority
- Abstract rules
- Politically neutral

“BUREAUCRATIC ADMINISTRATION MEANS FUNDAMENTALLY
DOMINATION THROUGH KNOWLEDGE”

Max Weber

Bureaucracy “...results is the development of an iron cage,
A technically ordered, rigid, dehumanised society.”

specialists without
spirit, sensualists
without heart; this
nullity imagines that it
has attained a level of
civilization never before
achieved.

Max Weber

Videos

- Karl Marx's idea of alienation
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZ4VzhluKCQ&feature=youtu.be>
- Emile Durkheim's idea of Social Fact
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uBKAaAmXY2g>
- Max Weber's idea of religion as a source of capitalism
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbcClUEFG3c>

Lecture 4:

Streams of Sociology

Course: Introduction to Human Sciences

Sociology: Grappling with 'Modernity'

Modernity was supposed to transform religion, kinship-based, feudal societies.

- Religion ----- Secularism
- Feudal economies ----- modern, capitalist, industrial mass production, along with planning
- Kinship ----- individualised, nuclear families
- Feudal and princely rule ----- democratic societies
- Resources harnessed for development.
- Primordial ties ----- citizenship in a modern state

Robert Merton: 'unintended consequences'.

Studying contradictions and 'unintended consequences'

Religion and Sociology

The study of beliefs, practices and value systems of religions, religious/spiritual traditions.



Religion and Sociology

DIFFERENT from THEOLOGY.

WHAT questions to ask?

- What is RELIGION/role in society?
- Has the idea of 'religion' remained constant? If not, what are the changes in the CONCEPT of religion?
- What is the relationship between RELIGION, MAGIC, SCIENCE/LOGIC/RATIONALITY?

What NOT to do?

- Judge the ultimate 'truth' value of religion(s)
- Reduce religion to 'social structure'
- Reduce religion to 'psychic condition'
- Use an 'evolutionary' scheme to 'rate' various religions

Some themes in the study of religions

- Studying 'beliefs' and 'rites'.
 - ❑ Beliefs: States of opinion (THINKING)
 - ❑ Rites: Modes of action (DOING)
 - 'PROFANE' and the 'SACRED'. TWO DIFFERENT worlds. Needs rites of initiation.
 - ❑ Sacred: Beliefs, myths, dogmas, legends. Protected and isolated BY prohibitions.
 - ❑ Profane: Things on which the prohibitions are APPLIED.
 - Notion of the 'SUPERNATURAL' (anything that is BEYOND our understanding). Speculation on ALL that escapes science/rational thinking.
 - CHANGING beliefs/meanings and RITES associated with religions. COMMUNALISATION/SECULARISATION of society.
- EXAMPLES: Study of the rise of 'Hindutva', Zionism, Political Islam...

Major ideas on religion

DURKHEIM:

- Beyond rational/irrational debate
 - ❑ Religious ideas are NOT the 'last resort', sign of 'despair', lack of knowledge. They are a way of understanding the world.
 - ❑ 'Natural' and 'Supernatural': Supernatural is NOT a world where 'reason' does not operate. Religion aims to explain what is constant and regular. NOT what is exceptional and abnormal.
- Religion as a means for SOCIAL COHESION

Major ideas on religion

WEBER

- Religion as a source of social/economic structures
- Calvinists and the capitalistic spirit
 - Protestantism: concept of the worldly "calling". Worldly activity has a religious purpose
 - Calvinism: Belief in predestination. Who is 'saved' and who is 'damned'?
 - Calvinism paved the way for/contributed to modern capitalism
 - Emphasis on ascetic behavior, less consumption, more saving

Similarly:

Protestant Reformation and the Scientific Revolution:

Connections with mass education, utilitarianism, *mundane* interests, empiricism, questioning of authority

"the deep rooted religious interests of the day demanded in their forceful implications the systematic, rational, and empirical study of Nature for the glorification of God in His works and the control of the corrupt world"

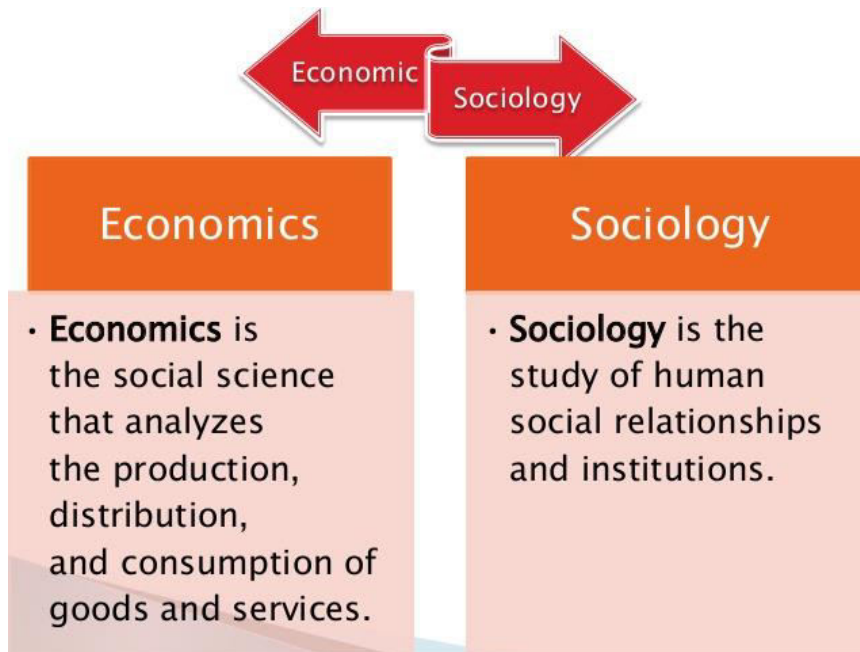
Major ideas on religion

Marx and RELIGION

“Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people”

Economic Sociology

Study of the social cause and effects of various economic phenomenon.

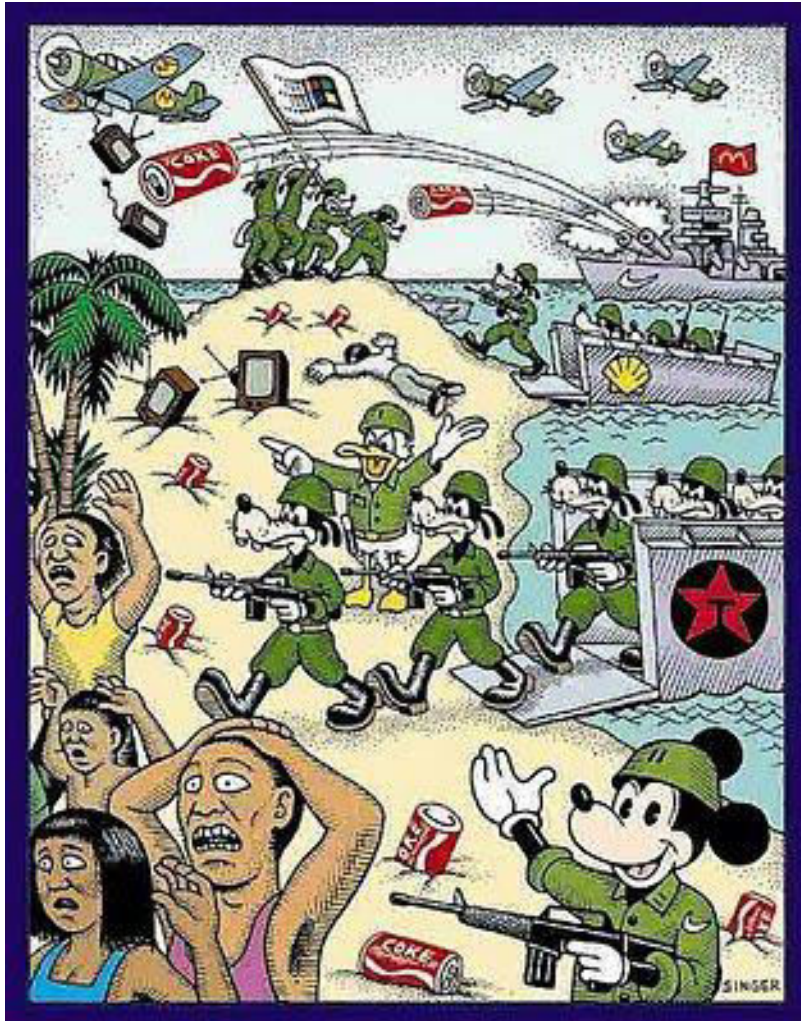


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Economic Sociology

- Systems of production, circulation and consumption:
 - ☐ Hunting and gathering
 - ☐ Domestic mode of production
 - ☐ Peasant mode of agriculture
 - ☐ Capitalist mode of production (mass production, private ownership etc.)
 - ☐ Socialist mode of production
- Impacts of various ECONOMIC MODELS on social structures
- Impacts of migration/urbanisation
- Impacts OF and ON stratification. Emergence of the 'NEW' middle class

Economic Sociology



ECONOMIC/CULTURAL
hegemonization

McDonaldisation of culture

HOMOGENISATION of cultures. DOMINANT characteristics of economy:

- **Efficiency:** Discourse concentrates on 'optimal', *fastest* and most economical way to do things.
- **Calculability:** Everything can be quantified/bought in the McDonald culture. QUANTITY becomes more important than QUALITY.
- **Predictability/standardisation:** Mass production, where one expects the same thing every time, everywhere. LESS creativity, LESS variety.
- **Control:** More mechanisation and replacement of human beings. More strict control over employees and the production process.



Sociology of Kinship

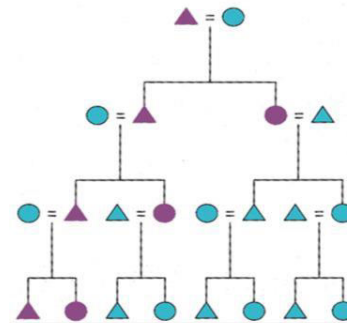
Kinship: Relation by the bond of blood, marriage etc.

Represents one of the basic social institutions.

Approaches:

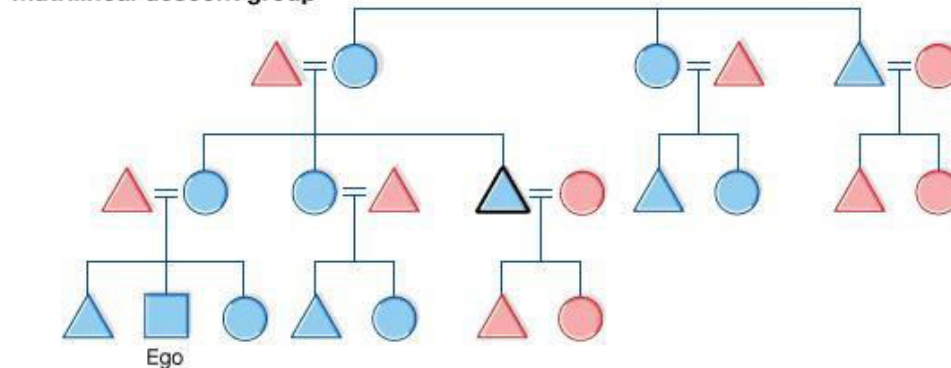
Study the process through which descent is drawn, the manner in which family trees are drawn, the manner in which inheritance is established.

Patrilineal Descent



- Found among 45% of all cultures
- Kinship is traced through the male line
- Males dominate status, power, and property
- Patriline = purple color in this diagram

Matrilineal descent group



- △ ● Members of Ego's matriline.
- △ ● Members of a different matriline.
- △ In cultures practicing the avunculate, Mother's Brother (outlined in black) has a special relationship with Ego.

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Sociology of Kinship

QUESTIONS:

- ❑ HOW is AUTHORITY exerted in different kinship patterns?
- ❑ HOW do authority/residence patterns change with time? WHY?
WHAT is the impact of these changes?
- ❑ HOW do kinship patterns change over time?
 - Reimagining FAMILIES/RELATIONSHIPS. Joint → Nuclear
 - NEW relationships? New forms of communication?

G. S. Ghurye, Patricia Uberoi



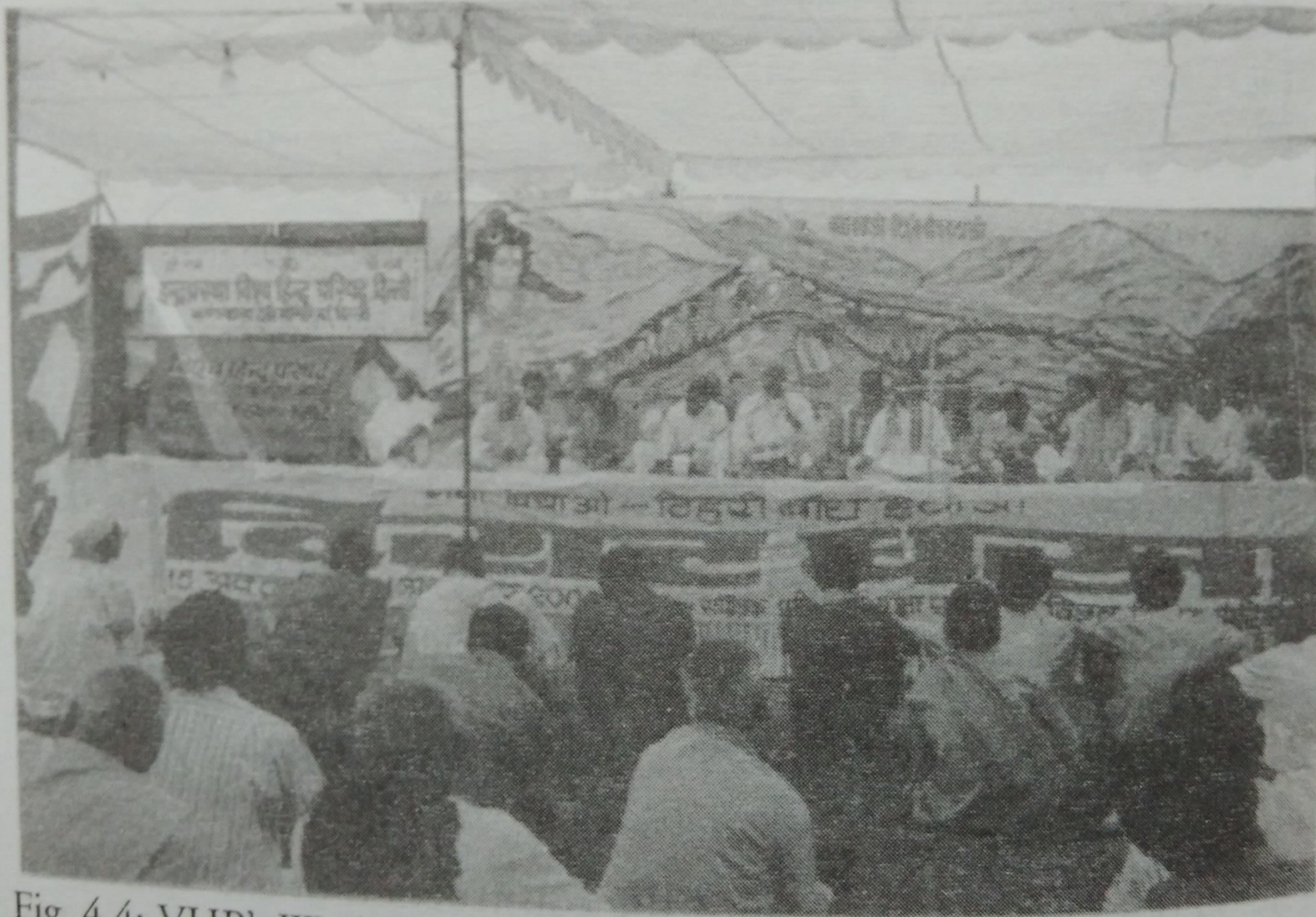


Fig. 4.4: VHP's Week-Long Protest Against the Dam at Ramlila Grounds, Delhi, October 2000

Environment and Sociology

Study of relations between human societies and biophysical environments.

Ecological Change:

- Agrarian Change/Forest Transformation
- Impact of 'Development' projects

QUESTIONS:

- WHAT does ecological change (-> Urbanization/Migration) do to:
 - ☐ Social structures
 - ☐ Community/Support Networks, family relationships
 - ☐ Access to natural resources and LOCAL power relations
- WHAT does the study of 'environmental' movements tell us about:
 - ☐ WHO and WHAT is being mobilized? Relationship between environmental/political/cultural mobilization.
 - ☐ 'Identity' being constructed/reinforced.

Environment and Sociology

QUESTIONS:

- Who participates in environmental movements?
Social/political/economic profile? WHY?
- HOW do environmental 'problems' emerge? WHAT are the forces/situations/factors which establish an 'ecological' problem?
ROLE of role of activists, ecological movements, media etc.
- Who is seen as an environmental defender and who is NOT? WHY?

Ramachandra Guha - The Unquiet Woods, Varieties of Environmentalism

Amita Baviskar - In the Belly of the River

Nandini Sundar - Legal Grounds: Natural Resources, Identity and the Law in Jharkhand

Sociology of Gender

QUESTIONS:

- HOW is 'masculinity' and 'femininity' constructed?
- WHY is there a UNIVERSAL secondary status of women in society?
- WHY are there HUGE differences in cultural conceptions of women and men?

Sex

Biological traits that society associates with being male or female



Gender

Cultural meanings attached to being masculine & feminine, which influence personal identities

E.g. Man, Woman, Transgender, Intersex, Gender Queer, among others



Sexuality

Sexual attraction, practices & identity which may or may not align with sex and gender

E.g. Heterosexual, Homosexual (Gay or Lesbian), Bisexual, Queer, among others



OTHER
Sociologist



Gender and Sociology

- ❑ Portrayal of the ideal (deified) woman as the pure virgin, the loyal and obedient wife, the mother (Mother/Whore, Wife/Vamp)
- ❑ TROPICISATION of women (Read Patricia Oberoi). As symbols/signifiers of caste/race status, religious pride, national honour etc.

Features common to ALL women, across class, caste, marital status:

- Violence and harassment.
 - Discrimination in the workplace.
 - Limited access to rights. e.g. political participation, legal rights.
-
- ❑ Class and Gender. Women as STATUS groups, housewives as an economic CLASS?
 - ❑ How do women play a role in constructing/maintaining/reproducing the caste structure? GREATER pressure on women.
 - ❑ What is the interplay between gender and caste? Dalits as ONLY male, women as ONLY 'upper caste'.

Urban Sociology

Study of life and human interactions in urban areas, in cities.

- Structures, processes and changes of an urban area
- Urbanisation. Social alienation, shift in the structure/role of families?
Urban-rural continuum, globalisation

CULTURAL and ECOLOGICAL aspects:

- ☐ The 'culture' of urban areas, impact on stratification, class, caste and gender.
- ☐ Built environment and its impacts
- ☐ Migration
- ☐ Slums
- ☐ Specific cultures

Political Sociology

❑ Study of POWER

- Different WAYS of exerting authority.
RATIONAL/TRADITIONAL/CHARISMATIC
- Different forms of power in different political SYSTEMS.
Authoritarianism/Democracy. Nature of participation/internal working of institutions/Internal structures.

❑ Study of the relationship between communities, societies and power structures

- Political elites and non-elites. Composition and recruitment.
Changing profile of political elites?
- Power elites. Composition and nature of power.
- Methods of political mobilisation. WHAT sentiment is tapped?
EXAMPLE: AAP/BJP/Patidar movement

Political Sociology

Conflict and change

- Challenges to power
 - ☐ Nature and compositions of social movements.
 - ☐ Questions raised by social movements.
 - ☐ Impact of social movements.
- Challenges to DOMINANT ideas. Questions of nation-state, citizenship, state violence, etc.

Bimol Akoijam, Neera Chandoke, MSS Pandian, Nivedita Menon, Zoya Hasan