

Philosophical Foundations of Social Research
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Week 2 (Emile Durkheim): Lecture No. 05
Religion and Division of Labor in Society

Hello everyone. Welcome to this Massive Open Online Course on Philosophical Foundations of Social Research. We are in the second week of the lecture. I am in the third lecture of the second week, last lecture of the second week, and overall fifth lecture of this course.

Emile Durkheim

□ Commonsense and science

- Theory of scientific knowledge and the distinction between science and ideology.
 - We cannot live in an environment without forming some ideas about it according to which we regulate our behaviour.
 - In attempting to gain scientific knowledge, the temptation is to substitute certain 'practically adequate' ideas for reality, and to elaborate these ideas instead of investigating reality. This is what Durkheim calls the 'ideological method'.
 - Pre-notions constitute a veil between us and reality.
 - All concepts – scientific or ideological – have their basis in sense experience.
 - The method of science then is to return to nature, devoid of preconceptions and to classify phenomena on the basis of their immediately perceived external characteristics.
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Emile Durkheim

• Social realism:

- Durkheim makes an **ontological** claim concerning the '*sui generis*' reality of social facts.
 - Durkheim makes an **epistemological** and **methodological** claim, emphasising that social facts are to be treated as real objects, with an external existence vis a vis to the researchers mind, which can be determined by their ability to coerce behaviour.
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Sociology of Knowledge

- To examine how an individual's social milieu affects the way that individual perceives the world
 - SoK: Individual's thought and conception of the world are influenced by society
 - Not only our common beliefs, ideas, and language determined by our social milieu, but even the concepts and categories necessary for logical thought have their source in society
 - To order and interpret the world ensuring for a more or less homogeneous understanding of the world and its operationalization, without which human society would not be possible
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Representations Collectives

- No knowledge of the world is possible without humanity in some way representing it
 - Rejects the ideal of the transcendent thing in itself, meaning that the world exists only as far as it is represented and that all knowledge of the world necessarily refers back to its representation. The central tenet of Durkheim's theory of knowledge is his concept of *representations collectives*, translated as collective representation in English (which in his work can mean both a mental representation or copy of something or an idea about something)
 - *Representations collectives*:
 - Body of representations used by society to represent to itself things in reality, as these things relate to and affect society.
 - Representations collectives refer to things in reality, they are not simple images that reflect reality as it is projected onto the intellect from the outside, rather they are the resultant of interactions between the external world and society; in being represented by the society, things infused with elements of a society's collective experience. Rendering the things with meaning and value.
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The Classification of Knowledge

- ❑ Society plays a vital role in the construction of human knowledge, a fact that it actively organizes objects of experience into a coherent classificatory system encompassing the entire universe
 - ❑ Through religion the very first cosmologies/ classificatory systems of the universe came into being in the form of religious myths.
 - ❑ Religion thus being the first place where humans could attempt to rationally explain and understand their surrounding world.
 - ❑ While modern science might claim to have no kinship with religion, in fact claim to be opposed to religion, it is in effect through religion that the conceptual and logical thought necessary for scientific thinking originated and first elaborated.
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Cultural Relativism versus Scientific Truth

- ❑ Each culture has a network of self-referential logic and concepts that creates truths that are legitimate
 - ❑ Defends scientific rationalism and the idea that there exists scientific truths, that are not dependent on cultural context and expresses reality "as it is"
 - ❑ Scientific truths/representations are subject to stringent verification and methodological control
 - ❑ Deals with same subject matter as mythological truths (nature, man, society) and like *representations collectives* serve to reinforce and unify the collective conscience around one idea. These truths are also *representations* to which society has added knowledge accumulated historically through collaborative effort
 - ❑ Scientific *representations* reflect collective experience, expressing the relationship a society has with the world around it
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And what we have discussed in the last lecture? We have discussed Emile Durkheim's common sense and science, Emile Durkheim's social realism from the vantage points of the ontological claim on the one hand and epistemological and methodological claim on the other concerning the sui generis reality of social facts- sui generis means unique and independent of particular phenomenon. And then we have discussed sociology of knowledge, collective representations, the classification of knowledge and cultural relativism versus scientific truth.

Philosophy of Religion

- In *Division* Durkheim argued about human societies could exist on secular basis without religion. The passage of time made Durkheim see religion as the fundamental element of social life.
- While writing *Forms*, Durkheim saw religion as a part of the human condition, while content of religion may vary from society to society over time, however religion will in some form or another always be a part of social life.
- Religion is the most fundamental social institution from which all other social institutions were born.
- Religion is a product of human activity and not divine intervention, thus treating religion as a *sui generis* social fact analysed sociologically.

And in today's lecture we are going to discuss the elementary forms of religious life and the division of labor in society of Durkheim and how they have significant implications for organic analogy and precursor to functionalism so far as the methodology of Durkheim is concerned. We have already discussed the rules of sociological method. We may come back to the rules of sociological method while discussing Durkheim's philosophy of religion, the elementary forms of religious life and the division of labor in society and so on.

During, Durkheim's life, his thinking about religion changed in important ways. How? Early in his life when he was writing the *Division of Labor in Society* he argued that human societies could exist on secular basis without religion. But as time went on Durkheim saw religion as a more fundamental element of social life. And by the time he started writing the elementary forms of religious life- elementary forms of religious life came much later in his life- when Durkheim saw a religion as a part of the human condition.

And while the content of religion might be different from society to society over time, religion will, some form or another, always be a part of social life. The religion is a part of the human condition. And religion is and will be always a part of social life. Durkheim argues that religion is the most fundamental social institution, with almost all other social institutions, at some point in human history, being born from it. For these reasons Durkheim gave a special analysis to this

phenomenon providing a philosophy of religion, that is perhaps as provocative as it is rich with insights.

According to Durkheim, religion is a product of human activity and not divine intervention. That is why religion is also a social creation. It is a byproduct of human action. And thus Durkheim treats religion as a sui generis social fact that can be analyzed sociologically. What is this sui generis? Sui generis is nothing but a unique attribute of social fact, of a particular phenomenon, of a particular instance and so on. Durkheim elaborates his theory of religion at length and in detail in his most important work in the *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*.

Philosophy of Religion *Totemic*

- The starting point of Durkheim's analysis defines religion as: "*A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite in one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them*" (Durkheim 1995:44).
- Three fundamental elements to every religion:

The diagram consists of three circles arranged horizontally, each containing a number and a description. The first circle contains the number '1' and the text 'Sacred objects'. The second circle contains the number '2' and the text 'A set of beliefs and practices'. The third circle contains the number '3' and the text 'Existence of a moral community'. Each circle is surrounded by a red hand-drawn outline.

In the *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* Durkheim uses the ethnographic data that was available at that time, particularly in French society and as a whole European society to focus his analysis on the most primitive religion that at the time was known, the Totemic religion of Australian aborigines. This was done for simply methodological purposes since Durkheim wished to study the simplest form of religion possible in which the essential elements of religious life would be easier to ascertain.

In a specific sense, then Durkheim was trying to investigate the old question though in a new way of the origin of religion. It is important to note nevertheless, that Durkheim was not searching for an absolute origin of religion or the radical instant where religion first came into being. It was not Durkheim's objective of his method to study religion; rather he was trying to study religion for methodological purposes. Such an investigation would be impossible and

prone to speculation. In this metaphysical sense of origin, religion like every other social institution begins nowhere.

Durkheim was trying to investigate the social forces and causes which are always, already present in the social milieu and that lead the emergence of social, religious life and thought at different points in time under different conditions, under different contexts. Durkheim's analysis is not of course without its detractors who criticize, among other things, his methodology, his interpretation of ethnographic data. Ethnography it refers to the deep-rooted field study, participant observation and so on.

However, his assertion that religion has a essentially social foundation as well as other elements of his theory have been reaffirmed and reappropriated over the years by a number of different thinkers from right to left. It is important to look at the starting point of Durkheim's analysis that is his definition of religion in the *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Durkheim defined religion as a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden beliefs and practices which unite in one single moral community called a church and all those who adhere to them.

There are the 3 fundamental elements according to Durkheim to every religion. One, sacred objects. Two, a set of beliefs and practices. And three, the existence of a moral community. And out of these 3, perhaps the most important would be the notion of the sacred objects for Emile Durkheim, which is the point around which any religious system revolves. It is that which inspires. It is the sacred objects, they inspire great respect and admiration on the part of society and which is set apart and, and keeps believers at a distance.

Philosophy of Religion

social element

- Sacred / Profane distinction ✓
- Interpretation of phenomena is socially learned, and could only be an effect of an already established religion (not its cause)
- A religion comes into being and is legitimated through moments of what he calls "collective effervescence."
- **Collective effervescence:** moments in societal life when the group of individuals that make up a society comes together in order to perform a religious ritual. During these moments, the groups comes together and communicates in the same thought and participates in the same action, serving to unify a group of individuals.

collective

Durkheim contrasts the sacred with the notion of profane or that which desecrates the sacred and from which the sacred must be protected, making the opposition between sacred and profane a central element of Durkheim's theory. This is important. The distinction between sacred and profane, how they are, sacred and profane may constitute a binary, at the same time there is a relationship between sacred and profane which, which Durkheim tried to forge.

That is why when Durkheim tried to compare and contrast sacred with the notion of profane, or that which desecrates the sacred and from which the sacred must be protected and the profane must be discarded, making the opposition between sacred and profane a central element of Durkheim's theory.

With this definition Durkheim also puts an emphasis on the social element of religion. This is because religion also is based on certain social, cultural foundations. This is important because he spends a great deal of time while writing the elementary forms of religious life arguing against theorists like Herbert Spencer, I mean organic analogy, Edward Taylor, culture and, or James Frazer who looked at the origin of religion in psychological phenomena such as dreams, the animistic view of Spencer or natural phenomena such as storms, the naturalistic view of Taylor or Frazer so on.

We have discussed naturalism in the context of positivism and so on. Durkheim argues that such an interpretation of phenomena is socially learnt and could only be an effect of an already

established religion, not its cause. And in this sense it is now time to examine how Durkheim believes a religion originates and operates.

According to Durkheim, a religion comes into being and is legitimated through movements of what he calls collective effervescence. What does it mean? Collective effervescence, according to Durkheim refers to movements in social life when the group of individuals that make up a society comes together in order to perform a religious ritual. And during these movements the groups come together and communicate in the same thought and participate in the same action serving to unify a group of individuals.

When individuals come into close contact with one another by participating in the same action which serves to unify a group of individuals and when they are assembled in such a fashion, a certain electricity is created and released leading participants to a high degree of collective emotional excitement or delirium. This collectivity is collective solidarity or collective consciousness is very important in, in Durkheim's schema.

And this impersonal, extra-individual force which is a core element of religion transports the individuals into a new ideal realm, lift them up outside of themselves and makes them feel as if they are in contact with an extraordinary energy, the collective spirit.

Philosophy of Religion

- The genesis of religion is followed by projecting this collective energy onto an external symbol.
- Society can only become conscious of these forces circulating in the social world by its representations.
- The sacred object receives the collective force and is thereby infused with the power of the community. Thus a society gains a tangible idea/ representation of itself. In discussing these matters Durkheim carefully uses the word "sacred object" to describe what is traditionally understood in West as a god, it is so because these sacred objects are very diverse not necessarily referring to supernatural deities.

Handwritten annotations in red:

- group solidarity
- inter-personal relationships
- collective
- collective force

Durkheim's next step in the genesis of religion is the projecting of this collective energy, collective spirit, collective solidarity onto an external symbol.

As Durkheim argues that society can only become conscious of these forces circulating in the social world by its representations. What kind of representations? The collective representations. These representations are always collective for Durkheim. Society can only become conscious of these forces circulating in the world by representing them somehow. And the power of religion must therefore be objectified.

And once the power of religion is being objectified or somehow made visible and the object onto which this force is projected becomes sacred. And this sacred object receives the collective force and is therefore infused with the power of the community. It is in this way that a society gains a tangible idea or representation of itself. While discussing these matters Durkheim is careful to use the word sacred object to describe what is traditionally understood in the Western nations as a God and this is because sacred objects can be very diverse and do not necessarily refer to supernatural deities.

For example God is a sacred object in almost all religious structures, and such views on religion allow Durkheim to make the radical claim that society's sacred object is nothing but the collective forces of the group transfigured. Religion is society worship itself and through religion individuals represent to themselves society and their relationship to it.

With this, Durkheim lays bare the inner workings of a society's symbolic network, with Durkheim's rejection of the thing in itself. He always treated social facts as things. The meaning and value that he attaches to these social facts or an object or a thing are not intrinsic to it but are to be found in that object's relationship to it. I mean, in other words, the status of an object is determined by the meaning that society attributes to it or by its status as a collective representation.

Importantly such analysis goes beyond what is strictly considered the religious realm since all socially derived meaning operates in the same way. For instance, a stamp. As in the last lecture I gave you the, the example of our national flag. It carries certain meaning, right, certain value. It is a symbol. It is a sign. And these signs are not only symbolic but material in nature. That is why for example a stamp, a flag or the sport or football or any sports, are by themselves just a

piece of paper or a piece of cloth or a group of pedant individual sportspersons chasing a leather ball, they all have no value in themselves and derive their value from the sui generis of the collective forces process that they represent and embody.

That sui generis, that is the unique characteristic, and the important a society determines an object to be, the more a group infuses an object with prestige, the more valuable it will be in the eyes of an individual. And if these movements of collective effervescence, are the origin of religious feelings, religious rituals must be repeated in order to reaffirm the collective unity of the society. Otherwise its existence will be at risk. And Durkheim remarks that if the societal forces central to the religious life of a society are not reanimated, they will be forgotten leaving individuals with no knowledge of the ties that exist between them and no concept of the society to which they belong.

And in this sense this is why religious ritual is necessary for the continued existence of a society. This is very important. Religion cannot exist through belief alone. It periodically requires the reality of the force behind the belief to be regenerated. Religion cannot stand the litmus test with changing times. It cannot be based on belief alone. That belief also must be associated with kind of material basis. That is why as Durkheim argues that religion cannot exist through belief alone. It periodically needs the reality of the force behind the belief to be regenerated.

And this takes place through various religious rituals in which collective beliefs are reaffirmed and the individual express their solidarity with the sacred object of society or with society itself. That solidarity, assemblies of people in the performance of rituals. And in this case it is a religious ritual, it may be an economic ritual, it may be a political ritual, it may be a cultural ritual and so on. The, and the form that the specific ritual takes can vary greatly from funerals to rain dances to patriotic national holidays but its goal is always the same.

Through these rituals, society maintains its existence and integrates individuals into the social fold, exerting pressure on them to act and think alike. While Durkheim's analysis is of explicitly religious contexts it is important to note that the ritual interaction processes that Durkheim describes takes place in different and less formal context as well. Ritual processes can be considered a part of daily life and are instrumental in regulating group solidarities and interpersonal relationships.

When I say solidarity, one is group solidarity and interpersonal relationships. That is why, such ritual processes, can be considered a part of our daily life and are instrumental- they must have a objective, a goal, an aim in regulating group solidarities as well as interpersonal relationships in different social institutions and at different levels of formality. When I say formality I do not mean being formal or informal, not in that sense but they have some kind of structure, form. From form we are using we are using formal and formality and so on.

Of great significance to Durkheim's theory, is his insistence on the reality of these religious phenomena. As Durkheim argues that these social forces that animate society's religious life are real and really felt by its participants. Because these participants become active in participating in these rituals. While it is a mistake for an individual to believe that this power emanates directly from the sacred object or is somehow intrinsic to the sacred object, behind the symbol of manifesting the force is a living and concrete reality. And consequently, all religions are true, at least symbolically for they express a power that does exist. And the power of society, religion, religious belief and the religious experience cannot therefore be dismissed as mere fantasies or illusions because religion is based on certain social. economic, political and cultural foundations. Religion as a form of practice which is found in the world of reality because religion has not come in vacuum. Religion also has been created by human activity to meet different social, economic, political, cultural needs.

If this is so there are certain specialized categories within the religion, the way religion was questioned, the way the dominance of church in Western society was questioned, the way the dominance of religion has been questioned, including in Indian society, Indian economy, Indian culture, Indian polity. This interrogation is also one of the constituents of modernity. Modernity as a set of practices, as an ideology, as a set of beliefs has also guided much of our conceptualization of science, how science has been theorized.

Division of Labour, Modernity, Europe

- Specialization
- Individualism and importance of the individual within Western society
- Specialization of tasks
- Urbanization
- Creation of the individual in these ways perhaps is the defining characteristic of modernity.
- Rise in dynamic density and the division of labour had major impacts on economic, social and political institutions
- Birth of modern industrial state
- Cult of the individual

And from this, such kind of specialization, we come to one important reflection of Durkheim so far as modernity is concerned, Europe is concerned and more importantly, division of labor in society is concerned. Division of labor is alternately known as specialization.

The industrialization and urbanization of Western Europe had great effects on society in a number of different ways. One of the most important effects of such instance was the rise of individualism and the importance of the individual within Western society, which took place on different levels altogether. And with division of labor there was a specialization of tasks which gave the individual more freedom to develop their work and consequently specialization of tasks. And consequently individual autonomy increased since the rest of society was less and less capable of telling the individual how to do the work. At the same time, city life, urbanization was characterized by fewer and weaker intimate relationships and greater anonymity which granted greater personal freedoms.

As a result, the individual felt in a real way less acted upon by society and there were fewer and fewer collective experiences shared by all members of the group. And these changes in society had the effect of individuating the population and creating differences between individuals. For example, religious moral doctrine which places emphasis on individual's spirituality also had a role in shaping these changes and influencing Western individuality. The creation of the individual in these ways perhaps is the defining characteristic of modernity. When I say

modernity, I refer to questioning the dominance of Church, questioning the dominance of religion, Industrial Revolution, critical thinking, rationality, reasoning capacity and so on.

It is in this sense here that Durkheim's opposition to Social Contract theorists as well as the proponents of utilitarianism like Herbert Spencer who argue that society begins when individuals come together to form groups. In many ways Durkheim's book, *The Division of Labor in Society* is a refutation of such oversimplification that society begins only when individuals come together to form groups. Society for Durkheim is a *sui generis*; it is a unique entity independent of the individuals. And his reflection on the division of labor in society strives to show that collective life is not born from the individual but rather that, the individual is born out of the collective life.

Then, as Herbert Spencer, Auguste Comte and others, especially Spencer when they were mentioning that, it is the individuals who form the society or who form the collective, but on the contrary what Durkheim mentions that it is the collective which, from which the individual is born. It is the society that creates the individual. The increase in dynamic density and the division of labor also had major impacts on economic, social and political institutions.

For example in the mediaeval society there were well-defined social institutions in the realms of religions, politics and educational institutions that were each distinct from rise in dynamic density and the division of labor which had major impacts on economic, social and political institutions. The organization of the economic sector was especially important, which guilds developing into strong independent institutions that were at the heart of our social life and these institutions regulated prices and production and maintained good relations with members of the same craft and therein lies the significance of the birth of the modern industrial state. And these institutions and structures of society ensured that individuals were integrated into the social fold properly, promoting social solidarity.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, a large growth in population was coupled with a large demographic shift which was aided by technological innovation such as the railroad, the steam-ship; the steam engine and various manufacturing techniques. Without the previous restrictions on mobility of, our production capabilities, cities grew. I mean, we encountered urbanization. Cities grew in size, production of goods, centralized and the economic and social

equilibrium that existed in the mediaeval period was ruptured. The ever-greater mobility of, of goods and people extended the reach of economic, political and social institutions.

As a result, the guild system disappeared and the regional trading interdependence gave way to international interdependence. Large scale institutions in politics, education, shipping, manufacturing, arts, banking and so forth, that were free from regional limitations developed in cities and extended their influence to greater portions in society. This is important. In essence Durkheim is describing the birth of modern industrial state, and when social and political institutions emerged in the context of modernity, they failed to examine the nature of the state itself.

They failed to locate the state within the matrix of a class-divided society. They failed to examine the relationship of the state with various other contending social forces, maybe women, may be blacks, maybe Dalits, various marginalized sections, marginalized communities, marginalized sections of society. That is why I said- in essence Durkheim was describing the birth of the modern industrial state, the concentration of the population and the centralization of the means of production created and enormous shift in the way of life for large parts of European society.

It also changed the way the people related to one another, that from collective to some kind of individual-centric life was envisaged with the emergence of modern industrial state. It also changed the way that people related to one another- the way life that corresponded to mediaeval society no longer corresponded to the way of life in the modern industrial world. It was impossible for new generations to live in the same wage as their predecessors and European society witnessed awakening of all its previous traditions, particularly its religious traditions, religious institutions and so on.

It brings us to the significant methodological implications for the cult of the individual and the kind of political turmoil that Durkheim was in. For Durkheim, religion is part of the human condition and as long as humans are grouped in collective life they will probably form a religion of some sort. And Europe could thus be characterized as in a state of transition out of the assays of religion. A new religion would eventually emerge and this new religion would form around sacred object of the human person as it is represented in the individual, the only element

common to all in a society that is becoming more and more diverse and individualized. Appropriately Durkheim calls this new religion the cult of the individual.

But how does this religion begin? What is its conception of individual? How is an individual conceptualized? And what kind of society or religion does the cult of the individual create? The cult of the individual begins like all religions, according to Durkheim, with collective effervescence, the first moments of which can be found in the democratic revolutions taking place in Europe and elsewhere at the end of 18 century and during the nineteenth centuries. If you look at Durkheim, Weber, Marx, they have left behind the great philosophical foundations of social research. I mean if you look at that, they were byproducts of the Industrial Revolution of Western Europe as well as the French Revolution of 1789. And the first movements of collective effervescence can be found in democratic revolutions and Durkheim identifies the French Revolution of 1789 as an example of such a release of collective energy, collective spirit. And the concept of individual that these democratic revolutions were embracing follows strongly the line of thinking established during the enlightenment. It is based on a general idea of human dignity and does not lead to narcissistic, egoistical worship of the self.

As Durkheim argued, the individualism or importance of the individual within Western society of the cult of the individual is that of Kant and Rousseau. It is what the declaration of rights of man and of the citizen the document produced where revolutionaries during the French revolution attempted to codify more or less successfully. The cult of the individual thus presupposes an autonomous individual endowed with rationality born both free and equal all other individuals in these respects.

Belief in this abstract conception of individual creates the ideal around which the cult revolves and influences both the society's morality and its notion of truth. Then we go back to sacred-profane, truth-falsity, objectivity-subjectivity, science and ideology, science and common sense, science and religion and so on. With this sacred object at its core, the cult of the individual also contains moral ideals to pursue. And these moral ideals that define society include the ideals of equality, freedom and justice.

The specific moral code that translates these ideals is built around the inalienable rights of the individual. Any disenfranchisement of an individual's human rights or any violation of

individual's human dignity is considered sacrilege and is a moral offence of the highest order. When equality, freedom and justice are not maintained, they are not considered sacred then. They become profane. This is very important. And with society becoming more diverse, the respect, tolerance and promotion of individual differences become important social virtues. It is by protecting the rights of the individual in this way somewhat paradoxically that society is best preserved.

Modern democracy, according to Durkheim which encodes institutionalizes and protects the rights of the individual is the form of government whereby Western societies best express their collective belief in the dignity of the individual. Rationality is also of primary importance to this religion, the cult of the individual has as a first dogma, the autonomy of reason, and as a first right, free inquiry.

Authority can and must be rationally grounded in order for the critically rational individual to have respect for social institutions. In line with importance of rationality, modern science provides the cosmology for the cult of the individual. And scientific truths have come to be accepted by society as a whole. And Durkheim even says that modern society has faith in science in a way similar to how past societies had faith in religion. Despite that most individuals do not participate in or fully understand the scientific experiments taking place, the general population trusts scientific findings and accept them as true.

And modern science, of course has an advantage, according to Durkheim, nevertheless in that unlike other religious cosmologies it avoids dogmatizing about reality and permits individuals to challenge scientific theories through rational inquiry fitting with the doctrine of the cult of the individual perfectly. And in this sense Durkheim tried to forge the relationship between the individual on one hand and our economy, culture and polity, society on the other.

And then in this lecture then what we have discussed? We have discussed Durkheim's philosophy of religion, through his *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, and subsequently the division of labor in society. We have discussed division of labor in society and the elementary forms of religious life in the context of Western modernity or European modernity, modern institutions.

Course outline

Week 1 (Two Lectures)

History of philosophy of social sciences

- Empiricism and rationalism
- Comte and positivism
- Epistemology and ontology

Week 2 (Three Lectures)

Emile Durkheim

- Rules of sociological method
- Influence of sciences on sociology
- Objectivity in social sciences
- Social facts, autonomy of knowledge and the necessity of science
- Commonsense and science
- Comparative social sciences
- Organic analogy and precursor to functionalism

Then in this week what we have discussed? Emile Durkheim's rules of sociological method, influences of science on sociology, whether social sciences can have absolute objectivity or not, social facts and the autonomy of knowledge and the necessity of science, common sense and science, science and ideology, science and religion within comparative social science frameworks and organic analogy of Spencer, and how at times Durkheim tried to follow organic analogy of Spencer. And at times he gives nice rebuttal to Spencer so far as organic analogy and the precursor to functionalism as we have already discussed. How functionalism is nothing but reciprocity and complementarity of roles in the social division of labor, specialization and so on. And we have, we have completed 5 lectures of this course which, which has 15 more lectures to follow. In the next week third week we will have two lectures.

Course outline

Week 3 (Two Lectures)

Max Weber, Part 1

- Positivism and neo-Kantianism
- Methodology of social sciences

Week 4 (Three Lectures)

Max Weber, Part 2

- Methodological individualism
- (Meaningful) social action
- Interpretative understanding (*Verstehen*) of social action: observatory and explanatory understanding
- Ideal types

In the third week we will have 2 lectures. It will constitute the first part of Weberian model of methods in social sciences, Weberian philosophical foundations of social research. We will start with how Weber's theoretical and methodological positions are a reconciliation between positivism on the one hand and neo-Kantianism on the other. We will discuss in the sixth lecture, the first lecture of the third week, how Weber's theoretical positions are reconciliation between positivism and Neo-Kantianism. And in, in the second lecture of the third week, I mean in the seventh lecture we will discuss the methodology of social sciences as propounded by Max Weber. And in the lectures to follow we will discuss the second part of Max Weber, methodological individualism, social action; I mean direct understanding and indirect understanding of social action, ideal types and so on. But we have completed the lectures of two weeks and in the third week we are going to discuss the first part of Max Weber on positivism and Neo-Kantianism. Thank you.