

Social Theory Notes 2/16
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Weber on method and sociology
How is a science of the social possible?

Durkheim Central Problem

- *social cohesion in the face of specialization
- *shared common values

Epistemology

*objectivist (facts as things), positivist (social world like natural world), social realist (social world is real and consequential)

Privileged actor/agent

- *industrialists
- *moderns

History of Social Change

- *transition from traditional to industrial society
- *evolution (long duration) Not revolution (short duration)

Idiom

- *holistic
- *positivist
- *functionalism
- *casual explanation

Goals

- *rational recognition of
- *collective interests → organic
- *solidarity

Possible?

Weber's definition of Sociology (pp. 178)

Interpretive (intentional) ***understanding of social*** (taking account of others behaviors) ***action*** (subjective meaning – individual attached to behaviors)

Pp. 185-186 – types of social action

4 Types of social action

- 1.) Instrumentally rational – expectations are used as “means” for the attainment of the actor's own rationally pursued and calculated ends
- 2.) Value rations – do something because it is the right thing to do.(most effective mean to an end
- 3.) Affectual – action because of self-benefit
Ex.) Cheating on a test because stressed out, but not thinking of the consequences of actions
- 4.) Traditional – most borderline habit – determined by embedded habituation

How Marx, Durkheim, and Weber categorize sociology

Marx: industrial, capitalist through materialism and criticism

Durkheim: organized/industrial

Weber: organized, capitalist (not Marxist type)