

Philosophical Foundations of Social Research
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Week 2 (Emile Durkheim) : Lecture No. 04
Sociology of Knowledge

Hello everyone. Welcome to the fourth lecture of this Massive Open Online Course on Philosophical Foundations of Social Research. We are going to have the fourth lecture. I am in the second week, and the second lecture of the second week, in toto it is the fourth lecture.

Emile Durkheim

□ Durkheim's *The Rules of Sociological Method*

- To establish the status of sociology as an autonomous discipline, distinct from its closest relatives, biology and psychology. For Durkheim, this demonstration takes the form of establishing the prior existence of a realm or aspect of reality, distinct and autonomous from the orders of reality of which the other sciences constitute knowledge.
- Indispensable role of argument by analogy with aspects of other sciences, at least in the early phases of development of a new science.
- A third objective in the *Rules* is the demonstration, against certain of Durkheim's philosophical opponents, of both the possibility and the necessity of a specific scientific knowledge of the social order.
- Finally, the attempt to construct a conception of the methods and forms of scientific explanation in their application to the new domain.

What we have discussed in the third lecture? That we have discussed in Emile Durkheim's, the rules of sociological method, what are the intellectual influences on Durkheim to go ahead with his theory of scientific method? How he tried to make sociology a science? How he tried to establish the status of sociology as an autonomous discipline distinct from its closest relatives namely biological and psychology?

How Durkheim acknowledges the indispensable role of argument by analogy with aspects of other sciences at least in the early phases of development of a new science? An objective in the rules of the sociological method is the demonstration of certain of Durkheim's philosophical opponents of both, the possibility and the necessity of a specific scientific knowledge of the social order? And how there is an attempt to construct a conception of the methods and forms of scientific explanation in terms of their application to the new domain?

Emile Durkheim

□ Social facts and the autonomy of sociology

- To demarcate a particular class of facts having its own homogeneity and distinctive characteristics in relation to other classes of facts in the order of nature.
- The contrast here then is between social facts, on the one hand, and biological and psychological facts specifically, on the other.
- Psychological and sociological facts together are distinguished from biological facts in that they consist of 'representations' whereas biological facts do not.
- By 'representations', Durkheim refers at least to the symbolic, normative, and generally 'mental' or 'spiritual' nature of the subject-matter of both sociology and psychology.
- This leaves the question of how to distinguish the orders of reality dealt with respectively by these disciplines.
- In one case (sociological), Durkheim argues, the phenomena or 'facts' are

Emile Durkheim

□ Social facts and the necessity of science

- Consists of principally in the premises of illustrative material, drawn from social life, and the attempt to demonstrate that in each case the phenomena selected satisfy certain criteria. These criteria turn out to be quite general criteria for the status of "reality" or "existence", which in turn is conceptually connected for Durkheim with being a fit object for scientific knowledge, and no other type of knowledge.
- The appearance that Durkheim achieves both tasks by the application of these criteria derives from the ambiguous status of the notion of the individual subject in the *Rules*. Of the many functions of this term, two are most relevant to the present argument.
- Individual consciousness: internal and external
- Social facts are to be recognized by their externality to the individual subject and by their coercive power.

We have also discussed in the third lecture, social facts and the autonomy of sociology as a discipline, as a disciplinary formation. We have discussed autonomy of knowledge. And then we have discussed social facts and the necessity of science.

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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Emile Durkheim

□ Durkheim strongly refutes these accusations:

- Social facts are both exterior and interior to individuals, with externality in this case meaning interior to individuals other than the individual subject
 - Social facts exist in a special substratum of the individual mind
 - Social facts, as products of the psyche, are wholly ideational lacking a material substratum, ideally observed through more or less systematized phenomenal reality (to be analysed as empirical data) that expresses them.
 - By stating the reality of the ideational realm of social facts in this way, treating them as observable things of the natural world while maintaining they are ideal.
 - An attempt to bridge diverging school of philosophical thoughts, such as realism and nominalism, or empiricism and idealism.
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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 though collaborative effort
- Scientific *representations* reflect collective experience, expressing the relationship a society has with the world around it

And today in the fourth lecture we are going to touch upon very important dimensions of the Durkheim's work which have significant implications for making arguments as well as which have significant methodological implications in social sciences in general and sociology in particular. We are going to discuss common sense and science, ideology and science. Then we will discuss social realism. I mean Durkheim's social realism, then Durkheim's sociology of knowledge, representation's collectives I mean collective representations, the classification of knowledge and cultural relativism versus scientific truth. We are going to discuss this.

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.

Let us start with how Durkheim looked at common sense and science. The core of Durkheim's theory of scientific knowledge and his distinction between science and ideology form the content

of methodology of Durkheim. Theory of scientific knowledge is one and the distinction between science and ideology. According to Durkheim, human beings cannot live in an environment without forming some ideas about it, according to which human beings regulate their behavior.

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. Then, to further my ideology I do not want to look at reality. In research I want to strengthen the case of my ideology. I do not want to look at reality. This is what Durkheim calls the ideological method. Then why ideology becomes an obstacle in the way that we produce knowledge? Precisely because of our preconceived notions.

What the Durkheim suggests they are called pre-notions. Pre-notions constitute a cover while between us and reality; between that which represents ideology and the real world phenomena. Our ideology, our ideological inclination may be different from the real-world phenomena. As our real world phenomena undergo changes, our inclination towards ideology should also change. But ideologies, if ideology has become static, then it hinders the tradition of the cumulative knowledge production.

Durkheim holds to the empiricist thesis that all concepts whether scientific or ideological, have their base in sense experience. When I say sense experience it is an empiricist argument. The method of science then is to return to nature devoid of preconceptions or prenotions, preconceived notions and to classify phenomena on the basis of their immediately perceived external characteristics. This is, of course the procedure which Durkheim claims to have followed in the definition of social facts.

Again Durkheim takes refuge of a defective empiricist conception of concept construction. How he takes refuge in that? Durkheim hence transcends a positivistic theory of knowledge in certain respects. I mean, when I say positivistic theories of knowledge, in the sense of Comte, in the sense of Spencer, Durkheim tries to go beyond that. He tries to go beyond positivism because positivism not only is synonymous with scientism, naturalism, physicalism and so on, but it also constitutes an ideology. And in this sense when positivism becomes an ideology, Durkheim tries to transcend such positivistic theories of knowledge in certain respects.

In particular, Durkheim advocates a realist model of explanation together with a sketch of the conceptual and epistemological differences between science and ideology. I mean, a realist model of explanation was sketched together with a sketch of the conceptual and epistemological differences between the scientific and ideological thought which goes beyond the simple empiricist contrast between truth and falsity.

Now the way we had discussed in positivism that observation leads to theory but theory does not lead to observation in the empiricist schema or inductivistic schema and positivist schema, the way fact-value dichotomy was construed, science and ideology perhaps may not be construed that way for Durkheim. We will discuss this in detail when we will discuss Marx. That is very important. I mean when I say Marx as a theoretician and Marx as an ideologue of the communist party, what are the methodological implications?

Emile Durkheim *social facts - things*

- **Social realism:**
- 1) Durkheim makes an **ontological** claim concerning the '*sui generis*' reality of social facts.
- 2) 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.

society: objectively real entity

In this sense, particularly Durkheim advocates a realist model of providing an explanation together with a sketch of the conceptual and epistemological differences between scientific and ideological thought which goes beyond the simple empiricist contrast between, or differences between truth and falsity. By his own criterion Durkheim's use of the normal and the pathological distinction is also ideological. If you look at this, then we come to a realist model of explanation by Durkheim's social realism.

An important and often misunderstood, misrepresented, misinterpreted, dubbed element of Durkheim's sociological method is to be found in what can be termed as Durkheim's social

realism or the idea that society is an objectively real entity that exists independently and anonymously of any particular individual: a view that is epitomized by Durkheim's prescription or Durkheim's normative approach towards treating social facts as things. We have always mentioned, for Durkheim social facts must be treated as things in themselves. That is why he tried to look at reality.

And his social realism encapsulates social facts as things. And within this realist position there are two important claims that Durkheim wants to make. What are these two claims? First, Durkheim makes an ontological claim concerning sui generis reality of social facts. And secondly, Durkheim makes an epistemological and methodological claim arguing that social facts should be treated as real objects. I mean things in the world of reality, existing external to the researcher's mind that can be determined by their ability to coerce behavior.

Hence, Durkheim through these two claims, Durkheim argues that social facts are particular properties, characteristics, features of being and, or properties of existing. What are the central questions that ontology addresses? What is being? What is existing? That is why when Durkheim tries to make these two claims, Durkheim argues that social facts have particular properties of being or existence and that they can be discovered and analyzed when the sociologist, when the researcher, treats them in the proper scientific way. And these elements of Durkheim's sociology have led to some confusion.

Some critiques claim that Durkheim is guilty of saying that social facts exist in outside of all individuals which leads them to think that Durkheim hypostatizes some sort of metaphysical group point. And other critics argue that Durkheim is guilty of an ontologism reduced to the nature of existence. Everything is reduced to ontology. Or a realism in which he considers social facts to be material properties of social life.

Emile Durkheim

□ Durkheim strongly refutes these accusations:

- Social facts are both exterior and interior to individuals, with externality in this case meaning interior to individuals other than the individual subject
- Social facts exist in a special substratum of the individual mind
- Social facts, as products of the psyche, are wholly ideational lacking a material substratum, ideally observed through more or less systematized phenomenal reality (to be analysed as empirical data) that expresses them.
- By stating the reality of the ideational realm of social facts in this way, treating them as observable things of the natural world while maintaining they are ideal.
- An attempt to bridge diverging school of philosophical thoughts, such as realism and nominalism, or empiricism and idealism.

And how Durkheim tries to refute these accusations? Durkheim strongly refutes these accusations. Durkheim, while refuting these accusations in response to the first critique, that social facts exist independent and outside of all individuals which leads the critics to think that Durkheim hypostatizes some sort of metaphysical group mind. In response to this first critique Durkheim emphasizes that social facts are both exterior and interior to individuals with externality. In this case meaning interior to individuals other than individual subject.

Durkheim further argues that social facts exist in a special substratum of the individual mind. Durkheim's position then ultimately is that while the social fact is unmistakably a sui generis product of social interaction, it is produced and resides exclusively in this special substratum of the individual mind. To say that social facts exist independent of all individuals is an absurd position; even Durkheim admits. Durkheim does not advocate that social facts exist independent and outside all individuals. The critics dub him. The critic suggests that.

Only on a methodological level, in order to study social facts from the outside as they present themselves to individuals does the social scientist abstract social facts from the individual consciences in which they are present.

What was the second critique? Durkheim is guilty of ontologism. I mean everything is reduced to ontology is the study of existence and so on. Now, in response to the second critique Durkheim maintains that social facts as products of the psyche are wholly ideational and lacking a material

substratum ideally observed through more or less systematized phenomenal reality to be analyzed as empirical data that expresses them.

By stating the reality of the ideational realm of social facts in this way, treating them as observable things of the natural world while maintaining their ideal, Durkheim's social realism can be seen as an attempt to bridge the diverging schools of philosophical thought such as realism and nominalism or empiricism and idealism. Durkheim tries to look at reality not by subscribing to any viewpoint, not subscribing to any ideological vantage point, whether it is empiricism or rationalism or inductivism or hypothesisism or nominalism or realism; reality must be looked that as they are.

Now we are going to discuss Durkheim's reflection or rather Durkheim's philosopher foundations of social research, Durkheim's methodological contributions, how they are significant to the way sociology of knowledge has been constituted. If you look broadly, let me tell you that sociology of knowledge, Karl Mannheim is considered one of the founders of sociology of knowledge.

Mannheim in the 1930s and 1940s maintained that all knowledge except scientific knowledge is socially and culturally conditioned. I mean he gave primacy to sciences over non-sciences. He considered sciences to be independent of our economy, culture and polity. He suggested that science is objective, science is neutral, science is invariant, science is atemporal and so on.

On the contrary, the world then witnessed the Second World War and the changing conceptualization of our relations between basic research and applied research has significant implications or the ways in which we construe science today. And the debates between Popper and Kuhn, they also determined what may be the possible nature of science today. David Bloor in 1970s, he said that, Mannheim was wrong. All knowledge except scientific knowledge cannot be socially and culturally conditioned. In fact in knowledge and social imagery, Bloor pointed out that no all knowledge including scientific knowledge is socially caused.

Kuhn, for example, he said science must be seen in terms of its historical integrity. Marx, a long back he said, what is science? Science is a social creation. That is why it is very important to look at sociology of knowledge, sociology of science and so on. I am not going to look at sociology of science here but I am just trying to look at sociology of knowledge. If somebody wants to look at sociology of science, please you can refer to the course, Science, Technology

and Society which I developed almost 3 years back under this MOOC's NPTEL portal, can look at that.

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

The Elementary forms of Religious life

When I said Durkheim's sociology of knowledge, Durkheim was one of the first thinkers in the Western tradition to examine how individual social milieu affects the way that an individual perceives the world. His most definitive statement on the subject can be found in the elementary forms of religious life, in the elementary forms of religious life. The elementary forms of religious life is only about religion or so. Durkheim's reflections on sociology of knowledge, how an individual social milieu affects the way that individual perceives the world. Durkheim's most definitive statement on the subject can be found in the elementary forms of religious life. A book dedicated to not only studying religion but also understanding how logical thought arises out of society, arises out of our economy, our culture, our polity and so on.

Other work such as pragmatism and sociology, a posthumous lecture series given late in his life elaborate his views. Durkheim's sociology of knowledge argues that many if not all, many facets of an individual's thought and conception of the world are influenced by society. Not only are our common beliefs, ideas and language determined by our social milieu, but even the concepts and categories necessary for logical thought such as time, space, causality and number and so on have their source in society.

Not only common beliefs, ideas, language determined by our social milieu, they are subjective but even the concepts and categories like time, space, causality, numbers, these are also

conditioned. They are also determined by our economy, our culture and polity. How? This logical structure helps us order and interpret the world ensuring that individuals have a more or less homogenous understanding of the world and how it operates without which human society would not be possible.

To begin to understand Durkheim's analysis of fundamental concept of his sociology of knowledge, that is representations collectives, needs to be discussed here. What is this representations collectives?

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.

In French people use representations collectives in English it is collective representations or collective conscience, collective consciousness and so on. According to Durkheim, no knowledge of the world is possible without humanity in some way representing it. Furthermore, Durkheim rejects the idea of the Ding an sich in French. It means the transcendent thing in itself, the way Durkheim furthermore rejects the idea of the transcendent thing in itself.

It implies that the world exists only as far as it is represented and that all knowledge of the world necessarily refers back to its representation. It may be a sign; it may be a symbol. What does it represent? What does our national flag represent? There must be and symbolic and material representations. Durkheim was more interested in this that. This implies that world exists only as far as it is represented and that all knowledge of the world necessarily refers back to how it is represented.

Accordingly, the central tenet of Durkheim's theory of knowledge is his concept of representations collectives, translated in English as collective representation which in his work can mean both as a mental representation or copy of something or an idea about something.

Then what did Durkheim mean by representations collectives or collective representations? Collective representations for Durkheim are the body of representations use by society to represent to itself things in reality as these things relate to and affect society. It is important to note that while 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 result of an interaction between the external world and society in being represented by the society things infused with the elements of the society's collective experience and rendering with things with meaning and value. What I mean here that it is important to note that collective representations are nothing but 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 result of the interaction between external world on the one hand, and economy, culture and polity on the other. In being represented by society things are infused with element of a society's collective experience providing those things with a meaning and value. Collective representations thus are the repositories and transmitters of collective experience and thereby embody an experience the reality of the society's collective existence.

Thus, collective representations can make many forms including group symbols, language and conceptual thought. Considering the central importance attributed to collective representations to collective life it is no surprise that Durkheim dedicated so much time to their study later in his career so far as the elementary forms of religious life is concerned, the division of labor in society is concerned and so on.

Now within sociology of knowledge, we have discussed Durkheim's fundamental concept of his sociology of knowledge namely representations collectives and collective representations. And then we will discuss two more important things in this lecture that is the classification of knowledge and cultural relativism versus scientific truth.

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.

In this section another vital role that society plays in the construction of human knowledge is the fact that society actively organizes objects of experiencing into coherent classificatory system encompassing the entire universe. With these classificatory systems it becomes possible to attach things one to another and to establish relations between them. This allows us to see things as functions of each other as if they were following an interior law that was founded in their nature and provides order to an otherwise chaotic world.

What is more? Durkheim argues that it was through religion the very first cosmologies or 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. I mean the religion thus became the first place where human beings could attempt to rationally explain and understand the world around them.

As a result, Durkheim argues that the evolution of logic is strongly linked to or is strongly related with the claim that religion is at the origin. Though both ultimately depend on social conditions, this leads to the claim that religion is at the origin of much, if not all, of human knowledge, I mean, whether it is religion or modern science or logic. They have roots in our economy, culture and polity.

And this leads to the claim that religion is at the origin of much, if not all of human knowledge. This argument has a far reach affecting even the way in which modern science views itself. Following Durkheim, while modern science might claim to have no kinship with religion and 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 was first elaborated.

This component of Durkheim's sociology of knowledge and subsequently the classification of knowledge in terms of science and ideology, in terms of science and religion and so on 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. And this component of Durkheim's sociology of knowledge has been highly procreative and influential not simply in sociology but also in broader social sciences, humanities and so on.

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

collectivity

And such relationship between common sense and science, between science and religion, between science and ideology and so on, what we generally find that there is always a conflict between cultural relativism and scientific truth. With such delineation of sociology or theory of knowledge, Durkheim reveals himself to be a cultural relativist. Because science also is a cultural product. Science also is relative. It is not absolute. Nothing is absolute in this world.

And such relative position that Durkheim was subscribing to and then Durkheim went on to argue that each culture has a network of self-referential logic and concepts that creates truths that are legitimate while not necessarily grounded in the reality of the physical world, are grounded within the reality of their respective social framework.

Truths of this nature Durkheim calls mythological truths which are based on myths. In opposition to this relativistic view of your truth however, Durkheim also defends scientific rationalism, scientific truth and the idea that there exists scientific truths that are not dependent on cultural context and that express reality as it is because of his commitment to social realism. And these the scientific truths or representations are subjected to stringent verification and methodological control. And while they express these truths through inadequate symbols, signs, representations and so on and in approximated way, they are more perfect and more reliable than their representations collectives.

Despite the fact that they are fundamentally different nature expressing reality as it is and not the reality of society, scientific representations operate in the same way and are just as instrumental to society as other collective representations. Why I am telling you, why Durkheim suggested instrumental because it must have some kind of goal, objective, instrumental in nature.

In Weber we will discuss instrumental rationality in goal-oriented social action; I mean which is instrumental in nature, it must have an objective, it must have a goal. It must have an aim. Scientific truths deal with the same subject matter as mythological truths namely, maybe nature, human beings and society and like other collective representations, they serve to reinforce and unify the collective conscience around one idea. And thus, scientific truths are also representations to which society has added knowledge, accumulated historically through collaborative effort.

And thus, scientific representations reflect collective experience expressing the relationship that a society has with the world around it. Durkheim suggested that scientific truths are also representations to which society has added knowledge accumulated historically through collaborative effort.

So far as Durkheim is concerned, for the time being in this lecture, that scientific representations reflect collective experience expressing the relationship that a society has, or the society forges with the world around it. Thus, while there are objective truths about the world to be discovered, it would be mistaken to think that reality exists independently or is logically antecedent of it being represented through our economy, our culture, our polity, I mean society as a whole. Since

it is only through collective effort, collaborative effort and so on that these scientific truths are discovered and then thus come into being and or existing and then they get justified.

And scientific truths, while of a special nature are also in an important way bound by the limits of our economy, culture and polity. That is why this collective effort is very important in Durkheim's schema. One might wonder how Durkheim can claim that both sets of truths are true or in some way reflect reality? As WSF Pickering has noted that this issue is resolved when one understands that Durkheim is a multi realist. Meaning reality is complex and operates on multiple levels.

And therefore, Durkheim is able to maintain that mythological truths are true to the extent that a group holds them to be true while also claiming that scientific truths reflect the true nature of reality. In the end, Durkheim strives to account for a total sociology of knowledge society creates for itself through its collective representations of vast network of, of language and logical thought that is instrumental in allowing its individuals to understand and think the world.

And since the world exist only as for as it is thought, and since the world is totally thought only by our economy, our culture and polity, the world takes shape in society. In other words, society establishes from the outset the limits of possibility for rationality, possibility for linguistic expression, possibility for knowledge production in general.

Now if you look at this, what we have discussed in this lecture? We started with Durkheim's methodological reflections on common sense and science, methodological reflections on science and ideology, methodological reflections on science and religion and so on. And his theory of scientific knowledge and the distinction between science and ideology constitute the core of Durkheim's methodology and how he tried to make a distinction or demarcation between science and ideology in terms of the existence of prenotions, preconceived notions in the case of ideology, not in the case of science.

Then as he was trying to look at reality through the lens of science not through the realm of ideology, he tried to point out two important dimensions that how he makes an ontological claim concerning the sui generis reality of social facts and how he makes epistemological and methodological claim that emphasizes that social facts are to be traced as real objects with an external existence vis-à-vis the researcher's mind which can be determined by their ability to

coerce behavior. He treats social facts as things and how society is an objectively real entity for Durkheim.

And then we have discussed Durkheim's Theory of Knowledge, Sociology of Knowledge how individuals thought and conception of the world are influenced by our economy, culture and polity. And in this very importantly you will find that not simply common beliefs, ideas and languages are determined by our social milieu but even the concepts and categories such as time, space, causality, numbers, you will find that they are also influenced, they are also determined, there are also shaped by our socio-cultural milieu. We have discussed this.

And then we have discussed a very important methodological component within Durkheim's Theory of Knowledge, Durkheim's Sociology of Knowledge that is collective representations; how collective representations are body of representations used by society to represent to itself things in reality as these things relate to and affect society, and how collective representations refer to things in reality as they are not simple images that reflect reality as it is projected onto the intellect from the outside. Rather, they are the resultant of, as they are the results of the interactions between the external world and society.

And in being represented by society things infused with elements of society's collective experience, providing the things with meaning and value. And then we have discussed the classification of knowledge, science and ideology, science and religion, the classification, the distinction between, the demarcation between ideology and science, between religion and science. And then how Durkheim places himself under the realm of cultural relativism and at times he shifts to scientific truth but principally he is a cultural relativist and he tries to go beyond crude distinction between cultural relativism on the one hand and scientific truth on the other.

And in the next lecture, in the fifth lecture, what we are going to do? We are going to discuss Durkheim's philosophy of religion through the work of the elementary forms of religious life and the division of labor and the emergence of modernity in Europe and, his overall reflections on the relationship between the individual and society which have significant implications for methods or set of methods in social science research. Thank you.