

Insights of marx, durkheim, weber and simmel on the nature of social life



Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Max Weber and Simmel made more contributions than all other philosophers on the nature of social than other philosophers in the 19th century. It is from their contribution that nature of the social was regarded as the phenomenon. Each and every one of these philosophers made developed a philosophical construct that locates the pivot of social fabric. This social fabric defines phenomenon in the relation between people and their economic conditions especially the component called division of labor which is rapidly growing. The three philosophers based their ideas on the subject of division of labor which came in handy as they developed these ideas in the midway of industrial revolution.

All these four great social observers had a taste of the world within which capitalism grew widely and drastically to become dominant and the only system that controlled the economics. All these three individuals developed separate and gave unique explanations on how different individuals react towards the social contexts of the economics. They too gave an insight on how societies come to being from the reactions. Emphasis on materialism and modernization played a crucial part during the formation of their socialization theories. A close review of each the writer's works reveals that the same cohesiveness of the society largely depends on the construction and streamlining of the labor mechanism.

Even though the theoretical constructs of the three philosophers diverge to a large extent, the focal point from which they draw their constructs is the same. Division of labor between the owners and the workers is the central point in the theories related to nature of social as stipulated in the works of the philosophers; Durkheim, Marx and Weber. It is important to note that the <https://assignbuster.com/insights-of-marx-durkheim-weber-and-simmel-on-the-nature-of-social-life/>

disagreement that may arise from the three philosophers is not from the fact that divisions exist. The disagreement can only arise from the theoretical variances which spring from the fact that societies may respond and react differently to the idea of division of labor. Simmel on the other hand holds on the concept that the society comprises a web of naturally patterned interactions.

In order to get an inner understanding of the social nature as stipulated by Durkheim and Weber, then it is vital to first understand Karl Marx's theories. Marx saw that division of labor was the origins of almost all conflicts in the entire history. Emile Durkheim however, views division of labor as a normative state which the society cannot function effectively without it. Marx Weber on the other side subscribes to the ideas that competition which is inherent in the capitalist form of system is not only the key to societal progress but also to the individual progress too. The nature of the social of all the three philosopher therefore lies in between the production relations, although that nature is different for all the three philosophers.

In order to make an analysis of the how Max Weber and Emile Durkheim came up with their theories relating to nature of the social and its correspondence to the economic determinism, it is important to get an understanding of the Marxist theories which precede and make a reference to it. Karl Marx argues that division of labor can be likened an unnatural occurrence that has to be made in order to seem natural. As Marx discusses the formation of consciousness, he invokes an idea of economic determinism which leaves the actual consciousness shrouded in veil. Division of labor in other words between the owner and the workers should no longer be taken

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as the natural state of the economic affairs but it should be viewed as a feudal system. Since this idea has constantly been reproduced, it has become normal in many nations attaining the status of unquestionable status quo. All aspects of the society are shaped by the economic systems which attempt to coerce and reinforce acceptance of the system not only as the best method but also as a natural method.

Reproducing the idea of division of labor will only continue if all the components of the society from education through religion to entertainment should adopt the same belief of division of labor and shape it in such a way that it can conform to already prevailing ideologies. Though the original idea of reproduction of works is Karl Marx's, it is Louis Althusser a neo-Marxist philosopher who attempts to make a clear illustration of the idea. Ideological State Apparatus theory as forwarded by Althusser functions by uncalculating within the people specific manner of thinking on their relations on the ideology; churches, movies, schools, music, books and television shows and any other way of delivering information which reproduces the concept of capitalism being natural and any other economic structure is regarded as a threat towards the ongoing cohesiveness of the society.

Though Durkheim agrees with both Marx and Althusser on the reproduction of the existing ideologies, he disagrees with the Marxist ideology on the point where Marxist hold that the acceptance of division of labor will result into conflicts. Durkheim sees this division of labor as a vital tool for any system to continue functioning. Durkheim has a complete different view on the division of labor from that held by Karl Marx. Marx holds that division of labor is focused on benefitting the owners at the expense of the workers.

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Durkheim view on division of labor is more natural as compared to that of Karl. He sees the concept as an organic outgrowth in any society whereby different individuals have different skills and interests. Marx's economic vision mainly sees a labor force whereby talent is killed due to lack of resources whereas Durkheim's economic vision sees the very situation as a functioning and integrated organism which serves to bring the social order to a level.

Durkheim's views on the natural organic can be contrasted to the views of both Max and Marx. Both Max and Marx agree on one point on the division of labor that competition is important in the formation of any society. As Marx refers competition as just any aspect of the many unnatural needs to reproduce, Weber makes a consideration on the various societal aspects as they may relate to competition. As Marx views labor division in capitalist mode as being the cause of deepening stratification among classes, Weber makes a theory of it by saying that the stratification has been relaxed by capitalism. Weber postulates that economic revolution has resulted in same scope of redefining work whereby peasant and master have been replaced by employee and boss. To Marx, this was merely semantics but Weber makes an extension of the language to the relationship too. Simmel insist that there are social forms which are not similar to sociological inquiry. He agrees that historical events are different in terms of sociology.

In spite of the positive view, Weber finds an aspect of economic condition as a result of modernization which he views with suspicion. Weber's sociological theories hold their back on the rise of materialism. As Karl acknowledges economic acquisition in counts of deviant fetishism, Weber however, <https://assignbuster.com/insights-of-marx-durkheim-weber-and-simmel-on-the-nature-of-social-life/>

contends that it has certain elements of spiritual. The society has been changed from that that worships abstractions to the one that is worship concrete goods. Weber was keenly observant on the dangers that could come along with the freedom of afterlife. Karl concurs with him and says that such a systematic structure only work by rationalization. Durkheim also becomes worried on the reaction of the society as it change values and as it shifts from traditional moral values towards codified morals by the religious beliefs.

Therefore, the social nature according to Durkheim, Weber and Marx is greatly influenced by economic factors more those attached to division of labor. The four postulate theories that would never have been constructed in a similar way if they would not have into being during the transformation from feudal economics based society to the one that had the need to change to change due to industrialization and modernization. The fights that have been witnessed between the owners and the workers as a result of worker inequality is a clear indication that Karl was right in his concluding remarks that the relationships of production could alienate workers to an extent of sparking a revolution. Both Weber and Durkheim focused on the extreme effects on morals and values which capitalism could have on the society. Simmel developed a kind geometry of social life which though are empirical they are given some material content. His models in social life are vital up to date.