

Part 2 continued. Economy

- Institutions are not created equal
 - Economy is the most important institution of any society.
 - Through economic activity basic needs are met
 - Economy is characterized by its activities (hunting, farming) and by its social relationships and rules in it.
 - This forms the economic infrastructure, foundation of society.
- “Greasing the wheels” of the economy
 - other institutions of society
 - government, legal system, religion, family education serve one primary function:
 - to facilitate the smooth operation of the economy (to grease the wheels of the economy)
 - society’s ideological superstructure
 - every society has an economic infrastructure and ideological superstructure, best suited to its needs.
- Infrastructure and Superstructure of capitalism
 - Economic infrastructure
 - Private manufacture and sale of goods and services
 - Economically- productive property (land, buildings...) Privately owned.
 - Laborers are free to sell their labor power to highest bidder in exchange for wages.
 - Profits generated by workers’ labor are privately expropriated by the capitalist.
- Ideological superstructure
 - All the other institutions of society are aligned with the needs of economic infrastructure.
 - Legal system recognizes right to own property and right to make profits, family needs take 2nd place to that of the economy, religion, education, all support the workings of the capitalist economy.
 - How could it be otherwise?
 - Could capitalism function to its fullest capacity if private property was not permitted or if people made making time for family a greater priority.
- Weberian Conflict Theory
 - Weber agreed with Marx Conflict was central to the workings of human societies
 - He disagreed with the idea that the economic realm was the main source of social conflict
 - Disputes over economic interests were important, but so too were conflicts over ideas and power.

- o Marx focused on ownership of economic resources. Weber focused on power and domination.
- Power and Domination
 - o Weber- importance of Power
 - o Power- ability to get your way despite others will or even their resistance. Different from influence.
 - o Domination- "the probability" that certain specific commands (or all) will be obeyed by a given group of persons.
 - o Domination implies minimum amount of voluntary/ compliance.
 - Ex: parent-child, teacher-student... priest-church member. Political rule that is generally accepted and obeyed.
- Legitimacy and Authority
 - o Naked exercise of power (relies on usually a threat or force) is not sustainable in the long term. You can exercise your power more effectively and with fewer costs, if others view your power as legitimate.
 - o Authority is a legitimate form of domination; a domination which follows or subordinates consider to be legitimate (legitimate doesn't necessarily imply its right)
 - Domination is legitimate when sub accept, obey and consider domination desirable or bearable and not worth challenging.
- Power and Conflict
 - o People with power want to keep it
 - o People without power want to find it
 - o Distribution of power and authority = basis of social conflict
 - o If sub believe in authority, conflict is avoided.
 - o If authority is not recognition as leg. conflict ensues.
- Criticisms of conflict/power
 - o It ignores the degree to which consensus exists in society.
 - o It over emphasizes the importance of economic based disputes to the exclusion of other sources of conflict applies mostly to Marxian strand.
 - o It has a bias in favor of those in society who are powerless.