1. **Social Interaction and Everyday Life**

Sociology is the study of societies, groups, and human behavior. What is meant by “society”?

Societies evolved throughout time from Hunting and Gathering societies, to Pastoral/Horticultural societies, to Agrarian societies, to Non-Industrial societies, to Modern Industrial societies and what is considered today Post Industrial/Post Modern societies.

In parallel, they shifted from being traditional to becoming modern, from what is called a Gemeinschaft to a Gesellschaft (F.Toennies). People belonging to primary groups started having allegiance to many secondary groups (C.H.Cooley) and societies went through the process of differentiation (T.Parsons) and rationalization (M.Weber).

Interaction is an important element of our social life. It does not happen randomly. There is a certain social structure whereby we learn how to behave socially, in groups, according to a certain role we play depending on the status we occupy in that group at that time.

In this topic, we start by highlighting some of the important elements of that social structure. What constitutes a group? What are the positions people occupy within a group and the role(s) they play within it. What is the difference between role conflict and role strain? What do we mean by ascribed, achieved, master status and status set.

What are the main characteristics of social groups? How are groups organized? Do they differ according to certain criteria such as membership, identity, size, normative structure and cohesion? What do we mean when we talk about social networks within groups? What is sociometry?  How do groups evolve, become organized, connect with other groups to form an organization? How do large scale organizations become bureaucratic and why? What is the difference between an organization and an institution?

Max Weber devised an "ideal type" of what a formal organization should be like. He was very concerned with efficiency. Do bureaucracies always have a positive effect on society? Is his model still applicable today or are there different types of large scale organizations that are more flexible and fit better in modern societies? Is H.Mintzberg's adhocracy a better alternative or are we rather moving to the "McDonaldization" of society as described by G.Ritzer?

To illustrate all those points, we will have a glimpse at political institutions within a society, discuss issues related to power, authority and coercion; and differentiate between traditional/charismatic/ and legal types of authority. We will also differentiate between what is considered collective behavior and social movements

Hunting and gathering societies: main aim is to survive, no competition

Agrarian societies: settling down, starting to acquire material things, inequality, differences, who does what, competition

Pre industrial societies: manufacturing basic things, emergence of culture, civilization, differentiation, kings, empires

Industrial: steam engines, differentiation of tasks, gender, classes, technology, science, more competition, conflict, tension between people.

Post Industrial: services: ideas, innovation, marketing, designing.

Post-modern societies: mass consumption, media, very complex.

F. Toennies: change from Gemeinschaft to Gezelschaft

Gemeinschaft: family extended, male workers, abuse of power

Gezelschaft: nuclear

-Roles come with expectations from other people. As societies evolve, roles grow.

Conflict between 2 roles: role conflict

Problem with many roles: role strain

-A status can be ascribed or achieved

Master status: ex Barack Obama first black president

Status set: many statuses depending on the group I am interacting with.

-Social network E. Bott

-Institutions, social capital P. Bourdieu

-Groups: G. Summel, triad/biad cohesiveness, membership, in-group/out group (belonging), reference groups, boundaries.

-Identity: normative structure (well-designed or not) type primary/secondary, formal/informal CH Cooley

-Sizes of group differ, the larger the group is, and the less cohesiveness there is.

Reference groups: people you admire, aspire to become like

Primary group: intimate, regular, information shared

Secondary group: not regular, not intimate

Valence: relationship between 2 people of the group

Collective behavior taking unplanned action is different than social movements.

Institution: set of rules within a group of people with roles and statuses

3 types of authority according to M Weber:

-traditional: very difficult to change, legitimate, generation to generation

-charismatic: person can make you do something, dangerous

-rational, legal: related to law

Functions can be manifest (intended) or latent (unintended)

Groups:

Institutions

Organizations

Formal organisations with values, roles and structure

Bureaucracy: have to be bureaucratic in order to be efficient

Weber: ‘’ideal type’’

1. Division of labor: too specialized, trained
2. Hierarchy of authority, bureau mania, democracy
3. Written rules and regulations, red tape
4. Impersonality: too cold/no fluidity/flexibility
5. Employment based on technical qualifications, no favoritism: Peter principle

According to De Gourmey, bureau mania brings goodies that come with power.

-With time, we are starting to have decentralization of power. Critics of Weber call it a DE bureaucratization

H. Mintzberg: Adhocracy

M Castles: social networks

P Blau: Fluidity and flexibility in societies due to change

G. Ritzier: MacDonaldization of society

-efficacy

-calculability

-uniformity

-control through automation: things are done through technology

Through the shift from a traditional society to a modern one:

Weber: disenchanted workers with job

Marx: alienation

Durkheim: Anomie, rationalization, division of labor

T Parsons: Differentiation

Human relations approach: corporate culture, motivating people in doing well.