

Philosophical Foundations of Social Research
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Week 8 : Lecture No. 21
End of the Philosophy of the Social Sciences

Hello everyone, welcome to this Massive Open Online Course on Philosophical Foundation of Social Research. We are in the last week of this course.

Course outline

Week 7 (2 Lectures)

- **Positivism versus hermeneutics**
- Natural sciences versus social sciences
- Objectivity and subjectivity in social sciences
- Quantitative and qualitative research traditions

Week 8 (2 Lectures)

- **Conclusion**
- Beginning of the end of philosophy of social sciences
- Overview of the course

If you slightly recall, in the last lecture, we have started with beginning of the end of the Philosophy of Social Sciences. in the last lecture, we discussed.

Philosophy of the Social Sciences

- Descriptive: rational reconstruction of social sciences
 - Prescriptive or normative: critique of social sciences
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How philosophy of the social sciences, seeks to provide a rational reconstruction of social sciences, and the critique of social sciences: they are descriptive and prescriptive or normative in nature respectively.

Philosophy of the Social Sciences

Naturalism and the unity of scientific method

Critiques of naturalism

Methodological individualism versus holism

What do social sciences do?

Methodological pluralism

Then, we have tried to locate philosophy of the social sciences in terms of naturalism, and the unity of scientific methods. Critiques of naturalism. Methodological individualism versus Holism. What do social science do? And methodological pluralism.

Naturalism and the unity of scientific method

Critiques of naturalism

Absence of social laws

Interpretivism and the meaningfulness of the social world

Descriptivism

Hermeneutics

Hidden ideology of value-neutrality

Critical theory

Postmodernism

Methodological individualism versus holism

What do social sciences do?

Uncovering facts

Correlation analysis

Identifying mechanisms

Methodological pluralism

Against these 5 parameters, we have discussed in the last lecture, not only philosophy of the social sciences but, a sort of critique of philosophy of the social sciences. And in this lecture, what we are going to do?

Philosophy of the Social Sciences

- C. Wright Mills' *The Sociological Imagination* (1959)
- Two major theoretical traditions: inimical to the effective development of *The Sociological Imagination*
 - ① ■ Comte, Spencer, Weber and Marx: to manipulate the evidence of history in such a way as to manufacture 'a trans-historical strait-jacket' (Wright Mills 1959: 22)
 - ② ■ Grand Theory: the primary goal of the social disciplines should be that of seeking to construct 'a systematic theory of "the nature of man and society" (Wright Mills 1959: 23).

We are going to discuss through the works of C. Wright Mills' "sociological imagination" through the writings of Quentin Skinner's, "the return of grand theory in the human sciences" through the works of Daniel Bells', "the end of ideology", and so on- we will discuss this to what extent and in what ways one attempts to interrogate the philosophy of the social sciences.

In this sense writing almost 60 years back in 1959 about the state of the human sciences in the English-speaking world, the American sociologist Charles Wright Mills isolated and castigated

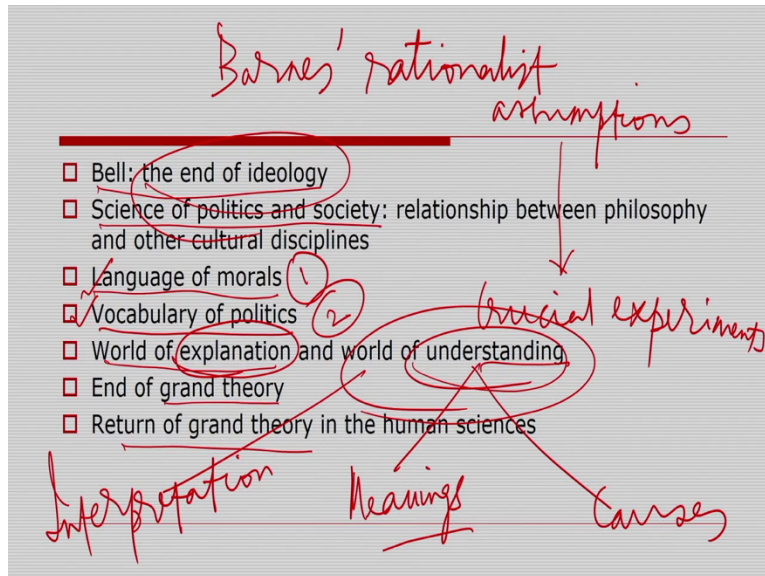
he tried to isolate and castigate two major theoretical traditions which he saw as inimical to the effective development of the sociological imagination.

The first was the tendency one that he associated in particular with the philosophy of Comte, Spencer, Weber and Marx to manipulate the evidence of history in such a way as to manufacture a trans-historical strait-jacket. But the other and the larger impediment to the progress of the human sciences he labeled, Grand Theory. By which, he meant the belief that the primary goal of the social disciplines should be that of seeking to construct a systematic theory of the nature of individual and society; that is what he discussed in “the sociological imagination” of 1959.

C. Wright Mills was unusual among sociologists of his generation in attacking the pretensions of Grand Theory in the name of imagination rather than science. But his hostility towards the construction of abstract and normative theories about human nature and conduct was an attitude that C. Wright Mills shared with most of the leading practitioners not merely of sociology but of all the human sciences in the English-speaking world at that time in late 1950’s, early 1960’s, and so on. Many of the same suspicions were echoed for example, by students of history, political science, economics, and so on.

For Sir Lewis Namier -the leading English historian of the times- he was not only at his happiest when chronicling the detailed maneuvers of individual political actors, individual political stakeholders at the centers of political power, Namier was also, a sarcastic critique of the belief, that any general social theories could possibly be relevant to the explanation of political behavior or the processes of social change.

We even encountered, a similar skepticism among moral and political theorists of the same generation. Skepticism was expressed in the form of two related claims that enjoyed widespread support. What were those two claims?



One was that to cite Daniel Bells’ “the end of ideology”. The attempt to formulate general social and or political philosophies thus came to be treated as little better than a confused and old-fashioned failure to keep up with the scientific times. Connected with this was the positive injunction to abandon the study of the grand philosophical systems of the past with their unsatisfactory mixture of descriptive and evaluative elements. In order to get on with the truly scientific and purportedly value neutral task of constructing what came to be called empirical theories. Empirical theories of what? Empirical theory of social behavior and development. The effect of all this was to make it appear that two millennia of philosophizing about the social world had suddenly come to an end. That is how we tend to question the ideology, the grand theory, the philosophy of the social sciences, so on.

This drive towards a science of politics and society was in turn encouraged by the view then prevailing as to the proper relationship between philosophy on the one hand and other cultural disciplines on the other. A philosopher was taken to be someone whose basic concern is to explicate general concepts by way of analyzing the meanings of the terms used to express them. One implication of this commitment was that it must simply be a mistake to suppose that the true business of moral, social and political philosophy can never be to provide us with reasoned defenses of particular ideals or practices.

Let me, give you two important examples: the aim was held to be that of studying not morality itself but, merely language of morals. Secondly, not politics itself but, merely the vocabulary of politics. With philosophers themselves proclaiming that there was nothing systematic for them to

tell us about the substantive moral and political issues of the day, the burgeoning of a purely empirical science of society seemed assured.

Further, support of such scientific aspirations came from some of the leading philosophical doctrines, even dogmas of the same period 50's, 60's, and so on. Within the philosophy of science, a positivist account of what constitutes an explanation largely held sway - to explain a puzzling set of facts was taken to be a matter of demonstrating that their occurrence can be deduced and hence predicted from a known natural or at least statistical law. We have discussed positivism, we have discussed the central tenets of positivism: methodological monism, inductivism, systematic verifiability, fact value dichotomy, uni-linear relationship between observation and theory, and so on.

The prestige of this analysis not only served to direct social scientists to look for regularities as the only acceptable basis for explaining social phenomena. It also required them to believe that there was no reason in principle why human actions should not be viewed and explained in just the same way as natural effects. The result was that, "individual as a subject for science" to cite the title of a well-known essay by AJ Ayer, came to seem not just possible but only respectable goal for the social disciplines in 1967, Ayer wrote.

Finally the idea of for science of society gained specific direction as well as general encouragement from the widespread endorsement of what Barry Barnes' describes as rationalist assumptions. Rationalistic assumptions about what? Rationalist assumptions about the practice of science itself.

Among philosophers of science who adopted a generally rationalist stance, Karl Popper and his numerous disciples probably exercised the most powerful influence upon the conduct of the social disciplines. Popper's most important contribution was to put into currency a particular view of what can properly be said to count as a scientifically respectable belief: a belief is rationally grounded and hence scientifically respectable if and only if, it has been submitted to a crucial experiment designed to falsify it and has succeeded in passing that test. If a statement or a body of statements in a theory fails the test of falsifiability nor proves incapable of submitting to it, we have a clear indication that nonsense is being talked. That is what Popper said.

With this suggestion the social disciplines found themselves provided with a ready and easy way of separating purportedly factual from merely normative or metaphysical assertions and thereby placing themselves on the straight and narrow path towards becoming genuine sciences. Popper himself urged these distinctions with passionate conviction throughout his polemic in the “open society and its enemies.”

Piecemeal empirical research in the human sciences was alone commended while Marxism, psychoanalysis and all forms of utopian social philosophy were together consigned to the dustbin of history. That is how he brought about a critique of Marxism or Freudian psychoanalysis- that the way they claim that they have become grand theories must be rejected.

Times have certainly changed. During the past generation utopian social philosophies have once again been practiced as well as preached. Marxism has revived and flourished in an almost bewildering variety of forms. Freudian psychoanalysis has gained a new theoretical orientation with the work of Lacan and his followers. Jurgen Habermas and other members of the Frankfurt school have continued to reflect on the parallels between the theories of Marx and Freud.

The women’s movement has added a whole range of previously neglected insights and arguments and amidst all these turmoil the empiricist and positivist citadels of English speaking social philosophy have been threatened and undermined by successive waves of hermeneuticists, structuralists, post-empiricists, deconstructionists and other schools.

By now with the dust of battle subsiding, it seems possible to take stock of a number of individual positions which have played a role of exceptional importance in helping us bring about these changes of theoretical allegiance and also methodological allegiance. But, at the same time we have tried to place them in a wider intellectual context: our aim being to illuminate more general character of the upheavals and transformation that have served to restructure the human sciences over the last 50-60 years or so on.

Among these general transformations, now, the Grand Theory is being challenged by scholars done from feminism post structure religion, post-modernism, Marxism, and the Frankfurt school theorists namely Habermas and so on. Among these general transformations perhaps, the most significant has been the widespread reaction against the assumption that the natural sciences offer an adequate or even a relevant model for the practice of the social disciplines; that natural

sciences generally, offer an adequate theoretical and methodological model for social sciences that perhaps has to be challenged.

The clearest reflection of this doubt has been the revival of the suggestion that the explanation of human behavior and explanation of natural events are logically distinct undertakings; that explanation of human behavior-world of understanding- and explanation of natural events -world of explanation- are logically distinct forms of knowledge distinct undertakings. And thus, the positivist contention that all successful explanations must conform to the same deductive model must be fundamentally misconceived.

And if you look at this that when I said from different directions the cry has instead gone up for the development of a hermeneutic approach to the human sciences- an approach that will do justice to the claim that the explanation of human action must always include and perhaps even take the form of an attempt to recover and interpret the meanings of social actions from the point of view of the agents performing them.

And, we go back to Weberian meaningful social action - which sought to reconcile these two traditions two worlds, world of explanation represented by positivists and the world of understanding represented by phenomenological sociologists; these two traditions of research are very much in the spirit of Max Weber by arguing that a satisfactory theory of social explanation must take into a count, both meanings, and causes of social phenomena.

But, others have rejected the possibility of such an accommodation reverting instead to the far more radical suggestion -we have discussed this through the works of Dilthey and others- that we should view the task of the historian and the sociologist in purely interpretative terms. Because, this world of understanding itself involves interpretation; whether it is led by a historian or it is led by a sociologist the world of understanding involves interpretation because it has different meanings different causes and so on.

One prominent influence on these developments has been exercised by Wittgenstein's later philosophy with an anti-positivist insistence that the meaning of an utterance is a matter of its use and thus, that the understanding of any meaningful episode whether an action or an utterance always involve us in placing it within its appropriate forms of life. Of even more direct relevance however, to the practice of human sciences has been the adoption of a similar viewpoint by

Gadamer. Gadamer has argued in his major treatise, *truth and method*, that the one appropriate model to invoke in seeking to understand the social action is that of interpreting a text. A model in which we are not in the least concerned with the search for causes or the framing of laws. But, entirely with the circular process of seeking to understand the whole in terms of its parts and its parts in terms of the contribution they make to the meaning of the whole; that is what Gadamer wrote in *truth and method* of 1975.

At the same time however, Gadamer has injected a new element of skepticism into the long-standing debate by emphasizing the limitations of our own horizons, the prejudices and preconceptions we inevitably bring to bear upon the task of understanding another form of life. Gadamer has cast doubt on whether we can ever hope to reach the traditional goal of interpretation that of grasping an alien action, utterance or text 'objectively in its own terms'.

The most we can ever hope for that, is what Gadamer concludes, is a fusion of horizons- a partial reproachment between our present world from which we can never hope to detach ourselves and the different world we are seeking to apprise. From such doubts, from such interrogations and so on, it has proved a short step into the anachronistic in conclusion that we ought not to think of interpretation as method of attaining truths at all, but ought rather in the words of Paul Feyerabend's title to be 'against method'.

Feyerabend has mainly applied his insight into scientific theories arguing that we ought to remain an unconstrained and imaginative as possible in dreaming up alternatives to existing bodies of alleged knowledge. Even more unsettling nevertheless has been the growing refusal even in the case of literary interpretation to treat the recovery of an intended meaning as any part of the interpreter's task.

Here, the leading iconoclast has been Jacques Derrida. Derrida is fond of pointing to examples in which due to the presence of some semantic ambiguity together with the absence of any context that tells us how to take what has been said the result is an utterance we cannot hope to interpret with any certainty at all. Then we are becoming more uncertain about the words precisely because of varying interpretations, varying meanings, varying causes and so on.

And then Derrida generalizes this insight to entire texts insisting that we never have adequate authority to privilege any one interpretation over another. The hermeneutic enterprise that

Derrida concludes is actually a mistake; what is needed instead is what he calls dissemination- The activity of illustrating with more and more examples ultimate illegibility of texts.

Along with these proliferating philosophical doubts about the possibility of modeling the social disciplines on a traditional image of the natural sciences a series of moral objections have been raised of recent years against the positivist ambition to construct a science of society. One of the first victims of this development proved to be the 'end of ideology argument' that you will find. For example, Habermas went on to emphasize a deeper level of moral bankruptcy encouraged by this vision of political life. What Habermas did?

Habermas was referring to McIntyre and others who quickly pointed out that the end of ideology thesis itself amounted to little more than an ideological reading of consensus politics in which silence was taken for agreement. Habermas subsequently went on to emphasize a deeper level of moral bankruptcy encouraged by this vision of political life. As Habermas argued in 'legitimation crisis' to claim that politics is a purely technological affair and thus, that ideology must have come to an end has the effect to grounding the stability and even the legitimacy of the state on its capacity to maintain a high level of technological success above all by delivering sustained rate of economic growth.

If politics is a matter of technological behavior, then the danger is obvious in times of economic recession- Such states will be unable to call on any wider or more traditional loyalties on the part of their citizens with the result that economic difficulties will readily and dangerously mutate into crisis of legitimacy. It is a striking fact that although Habermas presents this diagnosis from a Marxist perspective, a number of political writers from the so-called new right have lately developed a remarkably similar attack on the moral limitations of Laissez-Faire capitalism- Laissez-Faire means, non-interventionist state non-interventionist government- defending a form of conservatism founded not on free markets and the minimalist state, but rather on an almost Hegelian sense that the values of community, loyalty and difference must be prized and cultivated everywhere.

Even more vociferous doubts about the normative presuppositions of positivism have been voiced of recent years by the psychologists. To perceive all human behavior in law like causal terms- as R D Laing and his associates have especially protested - it presupposes that the question to ask about abnormal behavior must always be what malfunction is promoting it.

But, this is to overlook the possibility that the behavior in question maybe strategic, a way of trying to cope with the world and this oversight- Laing has argued- has the effect of reducing the agents involved to objects of manipulation when they deserve to be treated as subjects of consciousness. Behind this move towards an existential psychology can be discerned the authority of John Paul Sartre to whom Laing and his followers owe evident intellectual debt.

Among more recent theorists however undoubtedly the most influential of those who have come to think in these terms has been Michel Foucault. Foucault devoted himself to compiling historical case studies about the treatment of such issues as madness, sexuality, and criminality in our society- his aim being to demonstrate that aims to understand such phenomena have increasingly become associated with techniques of social control.

As a philosopher, Michel Foucault's central concern came to that of forging a link between such claims of knowledge on the one hand and the exercise of coercive power on the other. As a moral philosopher, Foucault aim became that of urging us to break out of the prison we have increasingly built around ourselves in the name of scientific under patch. He was an almost romantic protest- one with a long pedigree among critiques of industrial capitalism, against the routines and disciplines of our society, a protest which he combined with a call to resist and destroy the so-called human sciences in the name of our own humanity.

These various lines of attack on the very idea of social sciences have in part derived and have drawn great strength from increasing doubts as to whether the sciences themselves are truly capable of living up to their own images, paradigms of the rational pursuit of knowledge. Here, the most influential skepticism has been expressed by Thomas Kuhn that we have discussed in the sixth week of this course. Citing extensive evidence from the history of science Kuhn has argued in his classic study the structure of scientific revolutions of 1962 that scientific communities rarely if, ever espouse a Popperian ideal of seeking counter examples to existing hypothesis and accepting as knowledge only such propositions as survive such tests.

Normal science as Kuhn calls instead proceeds by seeking confirmation of existing theories, theories whose authority is generally invoked to dispose of awkward counter examples rather than being abandoned in the light of them. Whereas, Popper had sought to question the Humean analysis of rational belief, Kuhn's analysis reinstates it. To this account Kuhn adds that if we wish to explain the acceptance or rejection of particular scientific hypothesis, what we need to

invoke are the established customs of science as a profession, not merely the purportedly rational methods of disinterested scientists.

In a fascinating parallel with Foucault's thought the practice of sciences thus depicted as a means of controlling what is permitted to count as knowledge. Kuhn's most basic contention is that the reason why the sciences do not and cannot emulate a Popperian account of their practice is that our access of the facts in the light of which we test our beliefs is always filtered by what Kuhn has called our existing paradigms or frameworks of understanding. To put it succinctly, there are no facts independent of our theories about them and in consequence giving no one way of classifying and explaining the world that all rational persons are obliged to accept.

Rival theories can of course be compared but not against an objective scale. In the end they are simply incommensurable with the result that their exponents may be said -in Kuhn's idealist sounding metaphor- to be living and working in different worlds. Kuhn's attack on standard notions of scientific rationality bears some resemblance to Quine's celebrated onslaught on what he calls the empiricist dogma of supposing there to be a categorical distinction between concepts and facts. It is also somewhat reminiscent of Ludwig Wittgenstein's insistence that all our attempts to understand what we call the facts will always be relative to the framework of a particular form of life.

Where all these influences have flowed together as they have for example in Richard Rorty's remarkable book, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, the outcome has been nothing less than a disposition to question the place of philosophy as well as the sciences within our culture. If our access to reality is inevitably conditioned by local beliefs, about what is to count as knowledge, then the traditional claim of the sciences to be finding out more and more about the world as it really is, begins to look questionable or at least unduly simplified.

Moreover, if there is no canonical grid of concepts in terms of which the world is best divided up and classified into, then the traditional role of philosophy as the discipline that analyzes such concepts is also thrown into doubt. Epistemology conceived in Kantian terms as the study of what can be known with certainty begins to appear to us as an impossibility. Instead we appear to be threatened with the specter of epistemological relativism. That is what David Bloor suggested in knowledge and social imagery; what Bloor wrote that all knowledge including scientific

knowledge is socially caused and that is why epistemological relativism assumes greater significance through the works of Barry Barnes and David Bloor.

Among those who have argued in this way the study of history has increasingly proved to be a fertile source of inspiration and evidence. Foucault's writings constantly seek to confront our sense of how the world needs to be seen with the different record of how it has in fact been seen at different times. Kuhn similarly presents himself as a historian seeking to investigate the actual behavior of scientific communities in such a way as to undermine by reference to the historical record some of the a priori commitments of contemporary philosophers of science.

Partly in consequence of these developments, a number of historians as well as ethnographers have in turn become quite explicit in presenting their own studies as further ammunition in the fight against naïve realism and associated normative views about human nature and rationality. Among historians of science, historians of moral and political philosophy and above all among cultural anthropologists, the study of the alien and the exotic has increasingly been held to take its point from the capacity of other ages and other cultures to offer us counter examples to some of our most cherished presuppositions and beliefs.

By this stage nevertheless, it may begin to sound paradoxical to speak of these skeptical strands of thoughts as contributions to a return a grand theory, return of the epistemology in the human sciences. That is what Quentin Skinner wrote in "the return of Grand Theory in the human sciences". If there is one feature common to all the thinkers that we have discussed till now, it is willingness to emphasize the importance of the local and the contingent a desire to underline the extent to which our own concepts and attitudes have been shaped by particular historical circumstances.

And a correspondingly strong dislike amounting almost to hatred in the case of Wittgenstein of all overarching theories and singular schemes of explanation. With some of the theoretical vantage points that we have tried to reflect upon, this has led implicitly with Foucault, quite explicitly with Feyerabend, to a norm of conceptual relativism so strong as to seem almost self-defeating and to something like the project of seeking to demolish the claims of theory and method to organize the materials of experience.

To describe such skeptics as grand theorists may well sound dangerously like missing the point. To this apparent paradox, however, there are two responses to be made; one is that the joke, so to speak, is on the skeptics themselves. Although they have given reasons for repudiating the activity of theorizing, they have of course been engaged in theorizing at the same time and there is no denying that Foucault has articulated general view about the nature of knowledge, that Wittgenstein presents us with an abstract account of meaning and understanding.

Feyerabend has preferred an almost Popperian method of judging scientific hypothesis and even Derrida presupposes the possibility of constructing interpretations when he tells us that our next task should be that of deconstructing them. There can be no doubt nevertheless and that all these anti theorists have had a decisive impact of redirecting the efforts of social philosophers in the present generation if only by exposing the inadequacies of received beliefs. And there is a paradox of sort: in giving a pride of place to the iconoclasts almost in spite of themselves, they have proved to be among the grandest theorists of current practice throughout a wide range of the social disciplines.

Quentin Skinner's second and main response is that after surveying the contributions made by this all-purpose subversives, we next need to note that during the past 40 years or 50 years or so on, there has also been an unassumed return to the deliberate construction of precisely those grand theories of human nature and conduct which C Wright Mills and his generation had hoped to outlaw from any central place in the human sciences.

Now, there is a tendency we can also interrogate this. This can be seen most obviously in the case of moral and political philosophy. Here somewhat ironically the destructive work of the skeptics has served to clear the ground on which the grandest theoretical structures have since been raised to understand. How this has come about? We need only recall the strong emphasis placed by most of the writers we have so far been considering on the idea that concepts are not timeless entities with fixed meanings, concepts are also dynamic. Because, when our real world phenomena undergo changes concepts are bound to change. Concepts should be thought of as weapons for Heidegger, or as tools for Wittgenstein, the understanding of which is always in part a matter of seeing who is wielding them and for what purposes? But if this is granted then the orthodoxy that Quentin skinner initially cited that the task of moral and or political philosophy is

to analyze the language of morals or the vocabulary of politics, is automatically discredited. Then we go back to morality itself, politics itself and so on.

To cite Foucault's way of putting the objection, there is simply no such changeless grid of concepts and meanings awaiting neutral analysis. The void thus created at the center of analytical moral and political philosophy has now been filled by a revision of two most time honored objectives of these disciplines. What are those two?

One has been a renewed willingness directly to address the most pressing evaluative issues of the day. As a result such topics as the justice of war, the social causes of famine, the responsibility of individual for nature, the welfare of animals, the limits of political obligation, the rights of the unborn future generations, and above all the risks of being defended to death; all these and many other what Quentin Skinner in the return of grand theory in the human sciences argues that all these and many other kindred questions of obvious urgency have again become the staples of philosophical debate.

But, the other and even more startling development has been a return to grand theory in the most traditional and architectonic style -clinical arrangement- the style employed by the great normative system builders of earlier centuries, moral and political philosophers have ceased to be in the least shy of telling us their task is that of helping us understand how best to live our lives. Throwing off their purely and linguistic preoccupations they have gone on to receive a heady and a recognizably platonic view of their discipline as essentially concerned with elucidating the character of the good life and the boundaries of a free and just society.

So much high seriousness has this generated indeed that there are even some signs that the charge of triviality regularly levelled at the subject in its meta ethical days may be replaced by a no less justified accusation of undue self-importance. It is of course true that such lofty aspirations had never been completely repudiated at least in German and hence to some extent in American social philosophy.

The effect has been to initiate an energetic and profound debate between the rival theories of social and political life, each of which has now become highly systematic in structure as well as ambitious in scale. Of these two schools of thought the one that has enjoyed more prominence in

recent years has been based on emphasizing in Kantian vein when the absolute separateness of persons and individuals and the alleged sanctity of their individual rights.

Among legal theorists, Donald Dworkin in particular has invoked these principles to question the assumptions of legal positivism in his “Taking Rights Seriously” in 1978. Even more influentially, a number of political theorists have employed a similar approach to challenge the tenets of utilitarianism, Bentham’s utilitarianism for example, thereby seeking to restore the idea of distributive justice to the center of our political thought. When we talk about distributive justice we must also talk about cognitive justice: term coined by Shiv Visvanathan.

Then, what we are trying to do here that if we turn to the wider fields of sociology and social philosophy, we find similar signs of return to grand theory even more in evidence. You may find the works of Skinner you may find the works of Michael Boroway and others that the return of grand theory has brought with it many clashes of Titans: Gadamer has debated with Heidegger, Levi Strauss with John Paul Sartre, Thomas Kuhn with Paul Feyerabend, Dworkin with Hart, Nozick with Rawls, Foucault with Derrida and Jurgen Habermas with almost everyone.

For example, Quentin Skinner in the return of grand theory in the human sciences tries to look at these debates and we have not tried to smooth out these differences in the name of producing a neat account. All I have tried, to situate a number of leading figures roughly in their appropriate places in the current intellectual landscape, theoretical constructs and and methodological devices.

It is obvious however, that what I have produced is the merest sketch and that what is needed if we wish to familiarize ourselves with the somewhat rugged terrain that I have been surveying is a series of more detailed and more expert guides.

Then what we are going to do in the next lecture is that we will discuss further on the account of return of grand theory in the human sciences as a response to beginning of the end of philosophy of the social sciences.

Then what we have discussed today?

In this lecture that we started with C. Wright Mills the sociological imagination of 1959. There are two major theoretical traditions which impede the development of sociological imagination

according to C. Wright Mills. Then we have discussed Bell's the end of ideology idiom and science of politics and society, the relationship between philosophy on the one hand and other cultural disciplines on the other.

We do not talk about morality today; we are merely engaged in the language of morals. We do not talk about politics today; rather we are merely engaged in the vocabulary of politics. Then we tried to reflect on the distinctions as well as the relationship between the world of explanation and the world of understanding. Then how Quentin Skinner in his the return of grand theory in the social sciences tries to reflect on the end of grand theory and in turn return of grand theory in the human sciences.

That is what we have discussed and in the next lecture we are particularly concerned about the return of grand theory in the human sciences. Thank you.