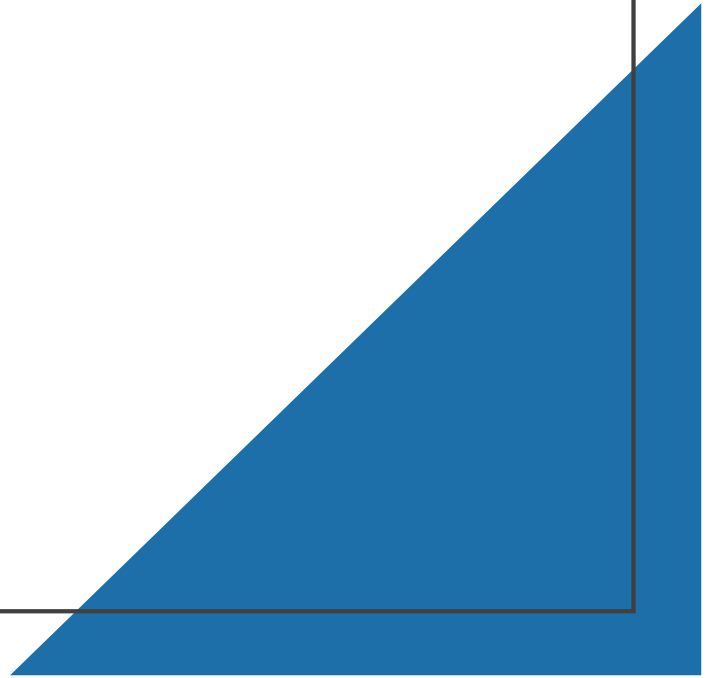


SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

Max Weber

WINTER TERM 2023



What is sociology according to Weber?

What is *Verstehen*?

How we should approach social reality?

What is social action?

The role of interpretation in sociology?



MAX WEBER

(1864-1920)

how did Weber become a sociologist?

He studied Polish poor migrants coming from Wielkopolska region to Berlin (rural areas)

The question he posed: why does some of the young men come back to their homes, after work season and other stay in Berlin?

The answer he came up with: boys from a bigger and richer farms valued more their personal freedom than economic duty towards their families.

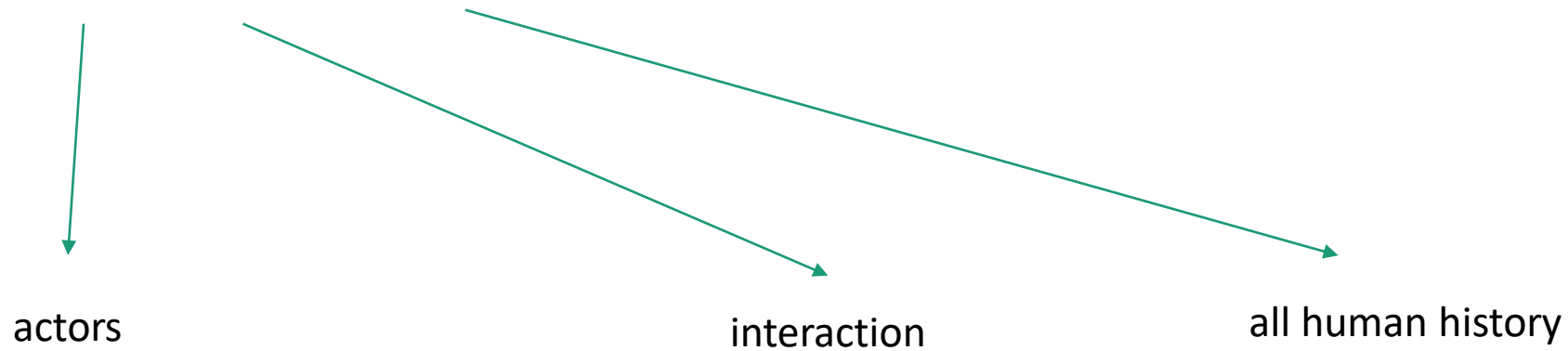
HIGHER ASPIRATIONS

SUBJECTIVE MEANING OF SOCIAL
ACTION

Verstehen

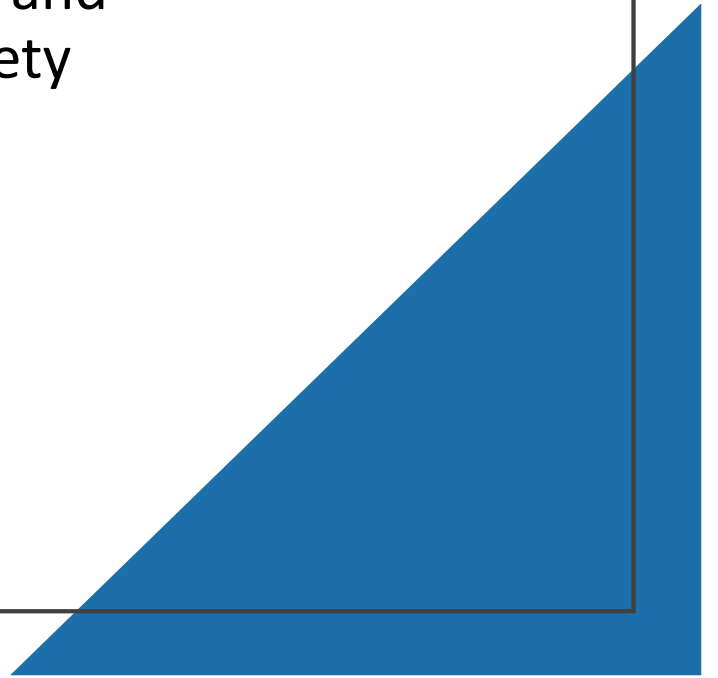
- to understand the social phenomena

hermeneutics = to understand:



Verstehen

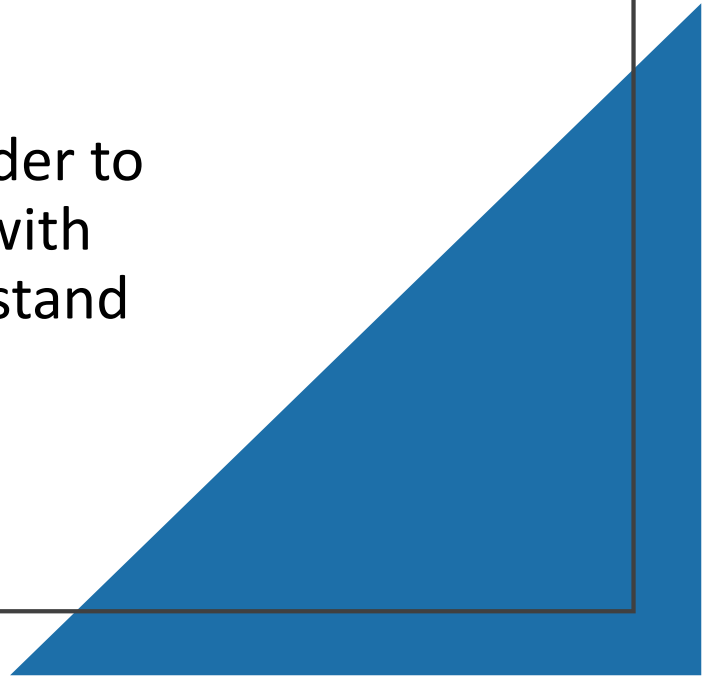
- intersubjective meaning
- a tool for learning culture and „language“ of a given society
- interpersonal intuition



ideal types

- a heuristic device

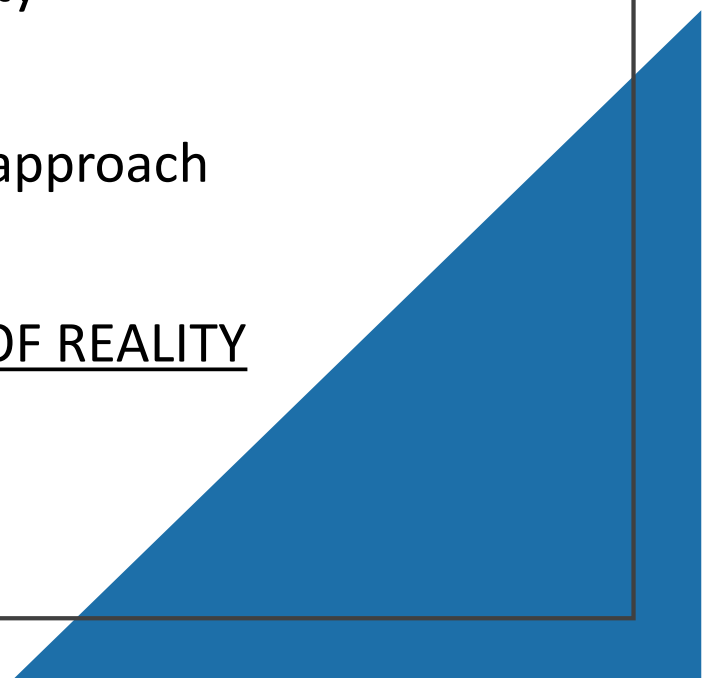
„Its function is the comparison with empirical reality in order to establish its divergences or similarities, to describe them with the most unambiguously intelligible concepts and to understand and explain them casually“ Weber 1903



what is sociology?

1. A science
2. Concerned with causality
3. Utilizing interpretative approach

SCIENCE IS NOT A MIRROR OF REALITY



value- free sociology

the interpretation
of action in terms
of its subjective
meaning

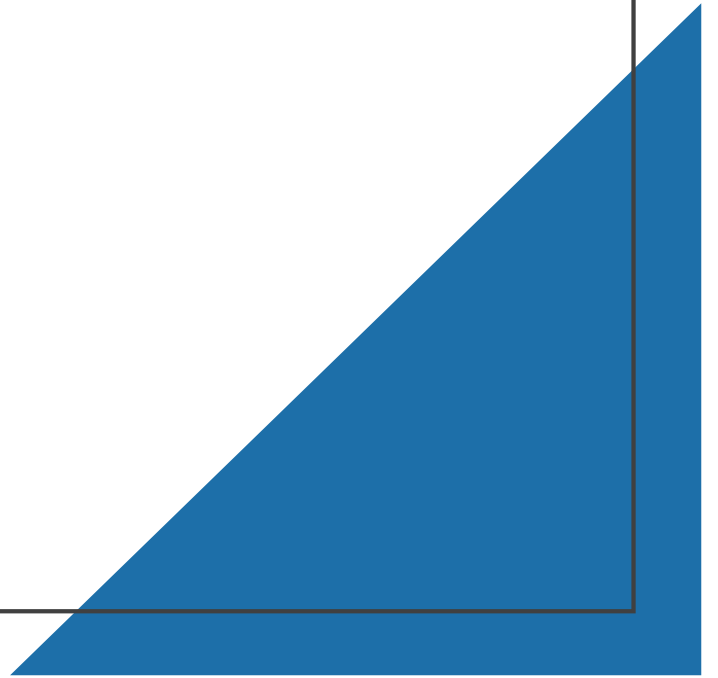
value-free
approach towards
the object of study

social action

action aimed at others, intentional

4 kinds of social actions:

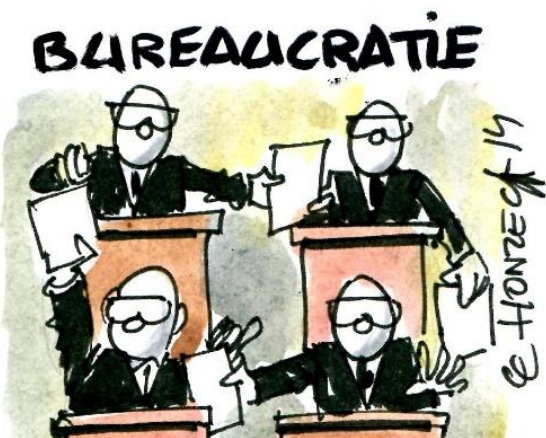
1. means-end rationality
2. value rationality
3. affectual
4. traditional





authority

- legal authority
- traditional authority
- charismatic authority



*The Protestant Ethic
and the Spirit of
Capitalism (1905)*

