Areas of Sociology

1. **Social Organization** - study of social groups, social institutions, social stratification and mobility, ethnic relations and bureaucracy

2. **Social Psychology** - study of human nature as the outcome of group life, personality formation, and collective behavior

3. **Social Change** - social organization and disorganization

4. **Human Ecology** - behavior of a given population and its relationship to the study of change and ongoing social problems
Forerunners of Sociology
Max Weber
- His works focused on the subjective meanings people give to their interactions with others
- Pointed out the importance of ‘verstehen’ (emphatic understanding of what people think, feel or their subjective experiences.
- Introduced concept of bureaucracy
Definition of Terms

• **Theory** - a statement of how and why scientific facts are related. It refers to an organized body of ideas as to the truth of something.
  
  Ex. “A high risk of suicide stems from a low level of social integration” - Durkheim

• **Theoretical Paradigm** - basic image of society that guides thinking and research
  
  Ex. Dimensions of society - “a stable system; a changing system; system in conflict; social interaction”