

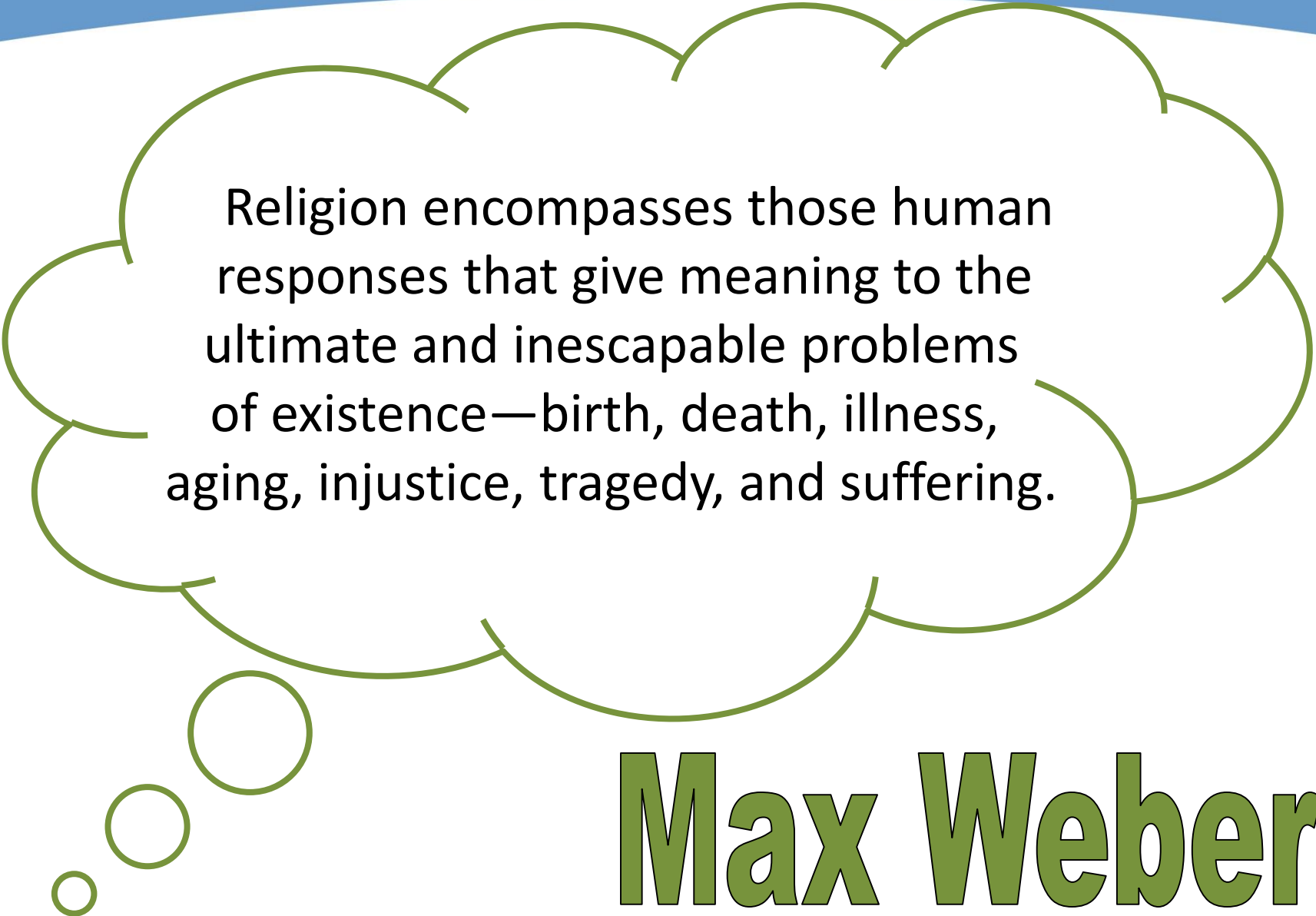
Religion

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

14

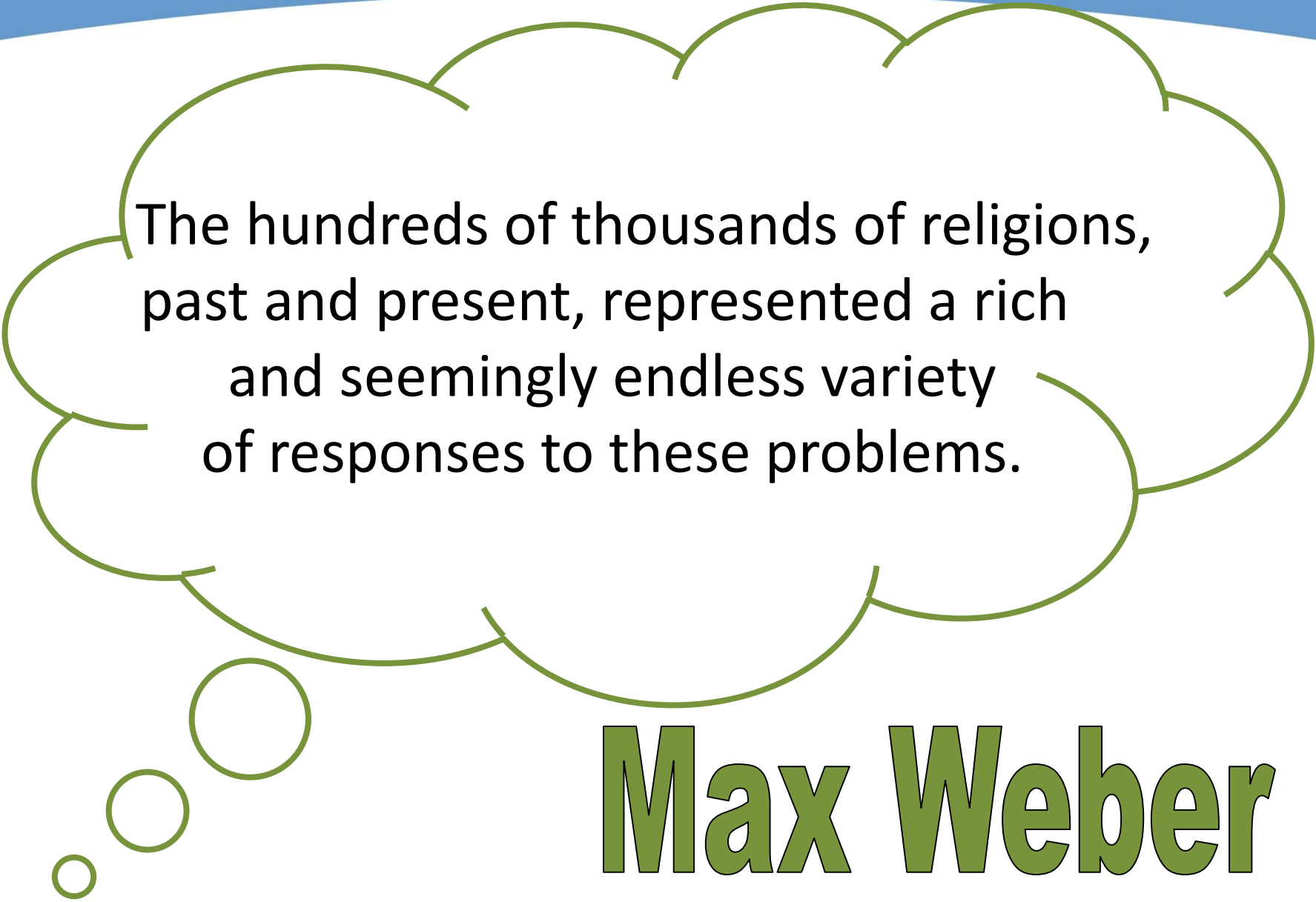
Why Focus On the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan?





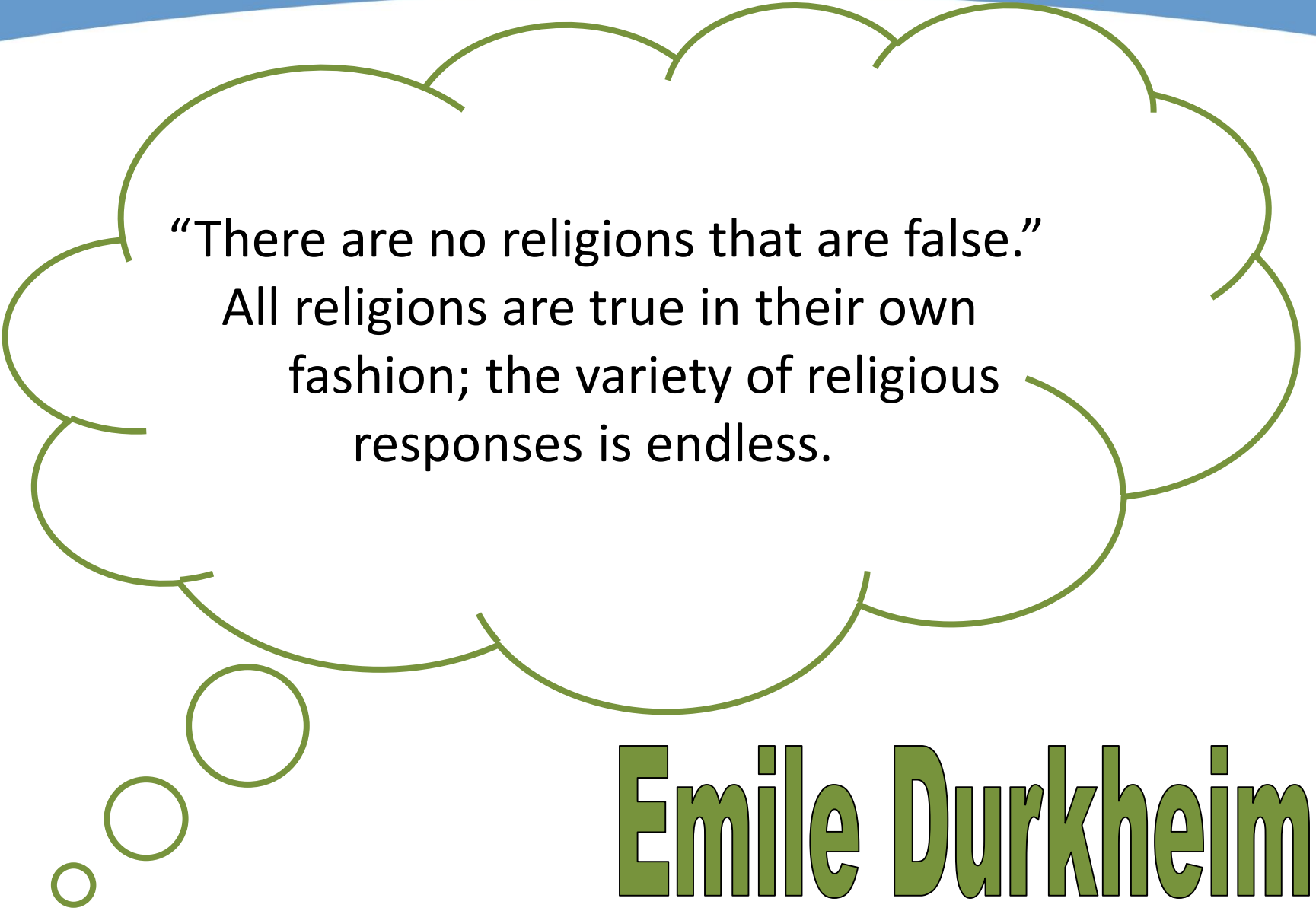
Religion encompasses those human responses that give meaning to the ultimate and inescapable problems of existence—birth, death, illness, aging, injustice, tragedy, and suffering.

Max Weber



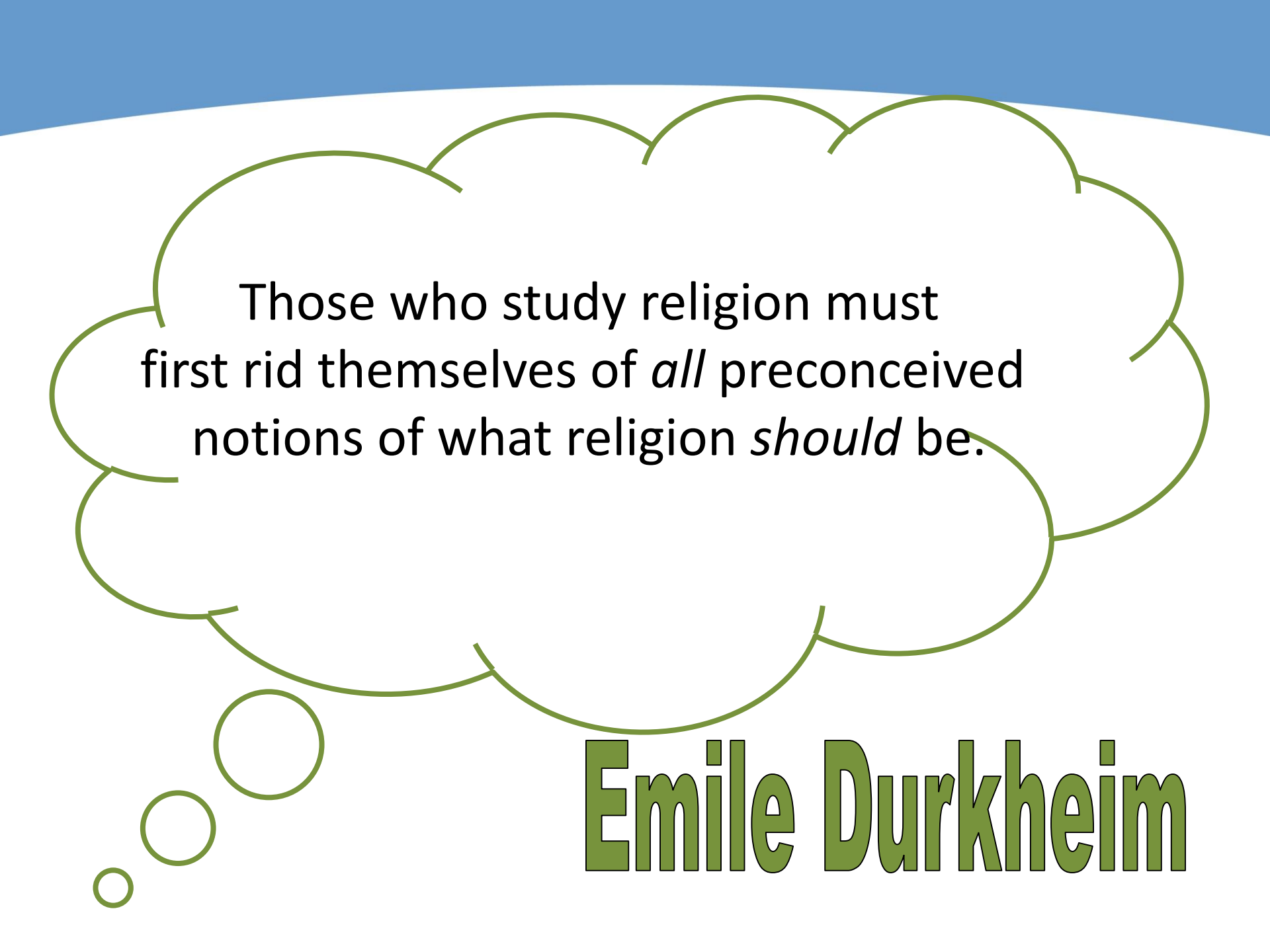
The hundreds of thousands of religions,
past and present, represented a rich
and seemingly endless variety
of responses to these problems.

Max Weber



“There are no religions that are false.”
All religions are true in their own
fashion; the variety of religious
responses is endless.

Emile Durkheim



Those who study religion must first rid themselves of *all* preconceived notions of what religion *should* be.

Emile Durkheim

According to Durkheim, there are three essential features of religion.

1. beliefs about the sacred and the profane
2. rituals
3. a community of worshippers

Sacred

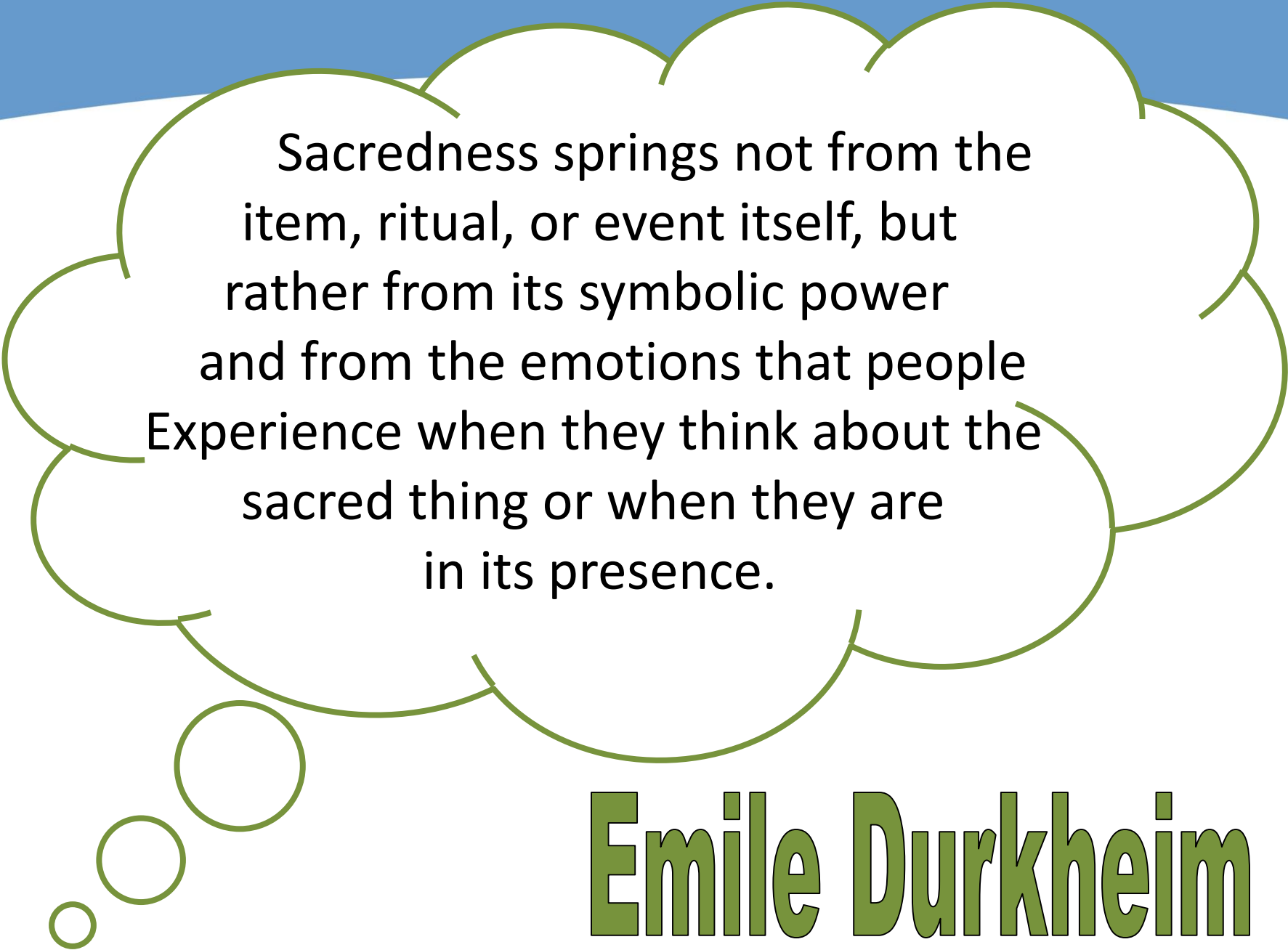
everything regarded as extraordinary and that inspires in believers deep and absorbing sentiments of awe, respect, mystery, and reverence











Sacredness springs not from the item, ritual, or event itself, but rather from its symbolic power and from the emotions that people Experience when they think about the sacred thing or when they are in its presence.

Emile Durkheim

Profane

everything that is not considered sacred, including things opposed to the sacred (such as the unholy, the irreverent, and the blasphemous) and things that stand apart from it (the ordinary, commonplace, unconsecrated and the bodily)

Rituals

rules that govern how people must behave in the presence of the sacred to achieve an acceptable state of being















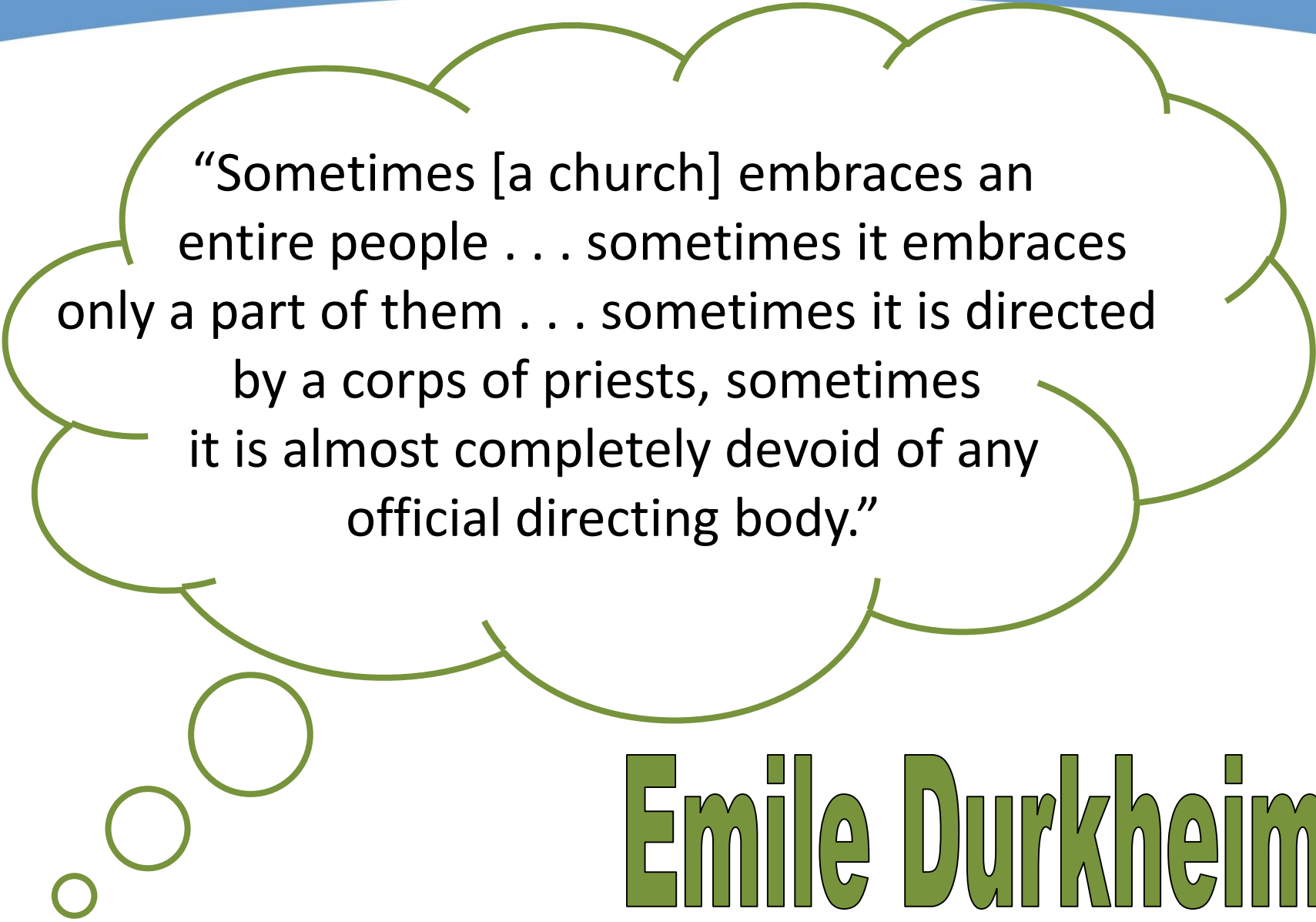
Community of Worshipers (or church)*

A group whose members hold the same beliefs about the sacred and the profane, who behave in the same way in the presence of the sacred, and who gather in body or spirit at agreed-on times to reaffirm their commitment to those beliefs and practices.

* Durkheim used word church not mean a building where people gather, but to designate a community of worshipers.

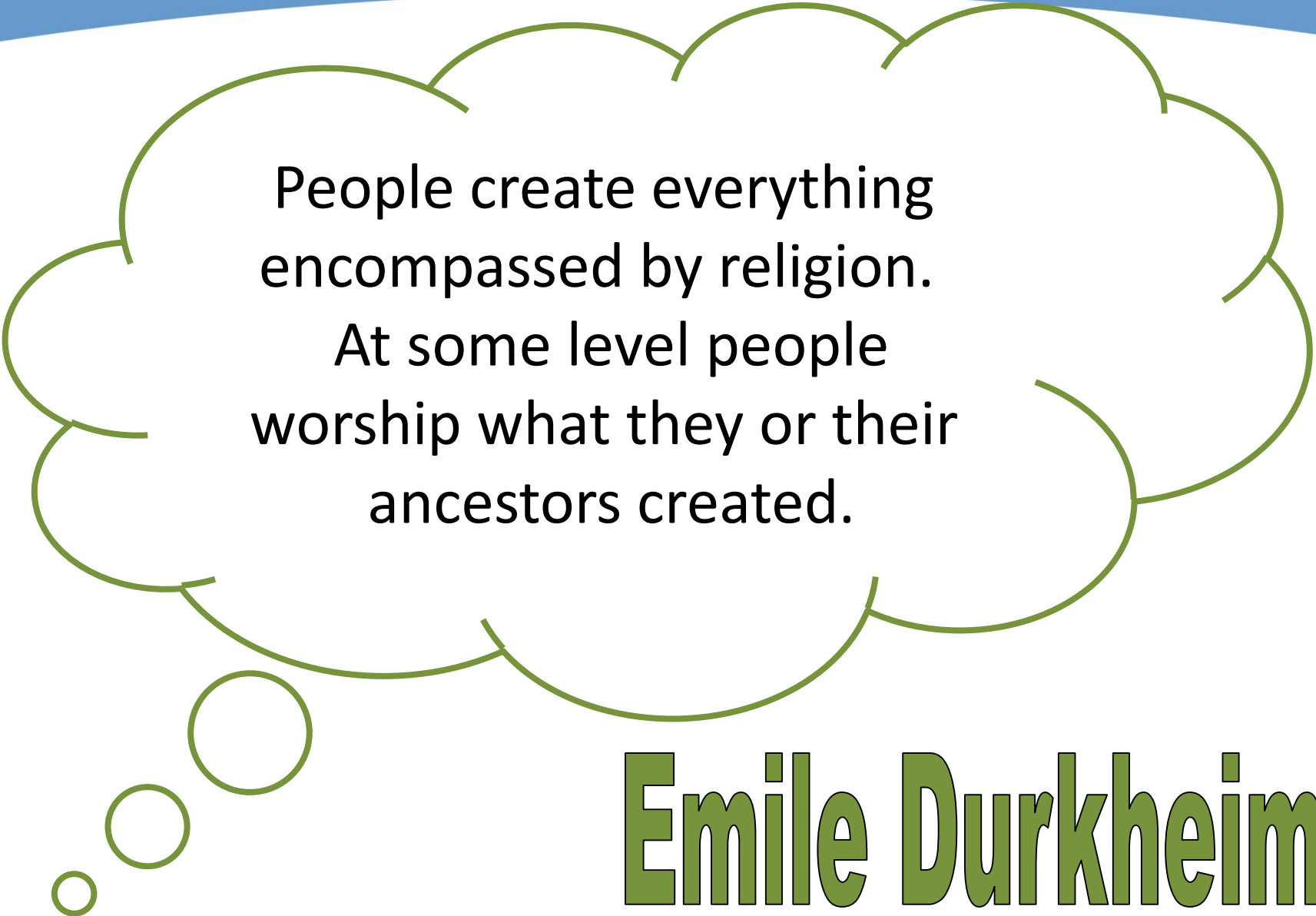






“Sometimes [a church] embraces an entire people . . . sometimes it embraces only a part of them . . . sometimes it is directed by a corps of priests, sometimes it is almost completely devoid of any official directing body.”

Emile Durkheim

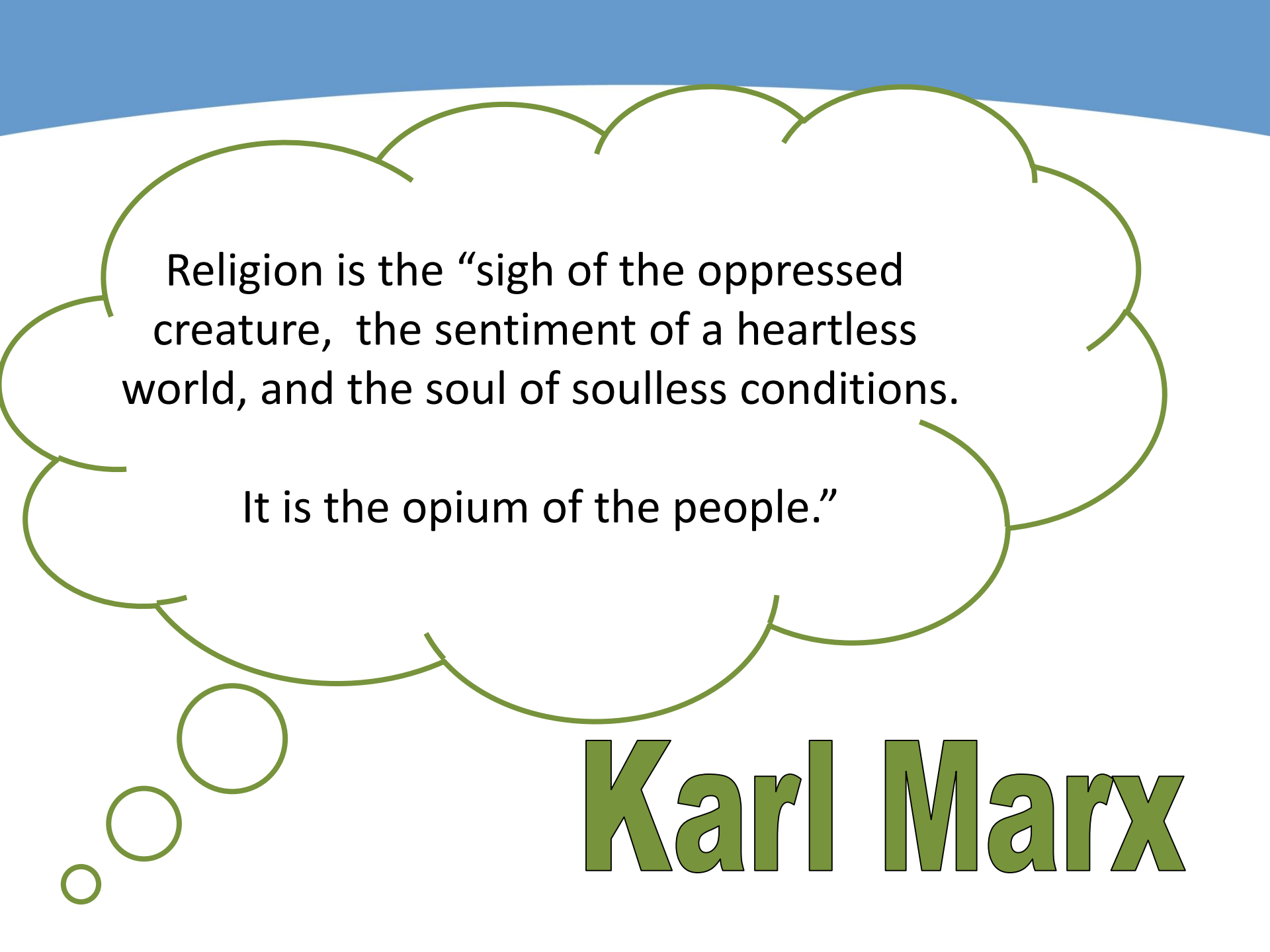


People create everything
encompassed by religion.
At some level people
worship what they or their
ancestors created.

Emile Durkheim



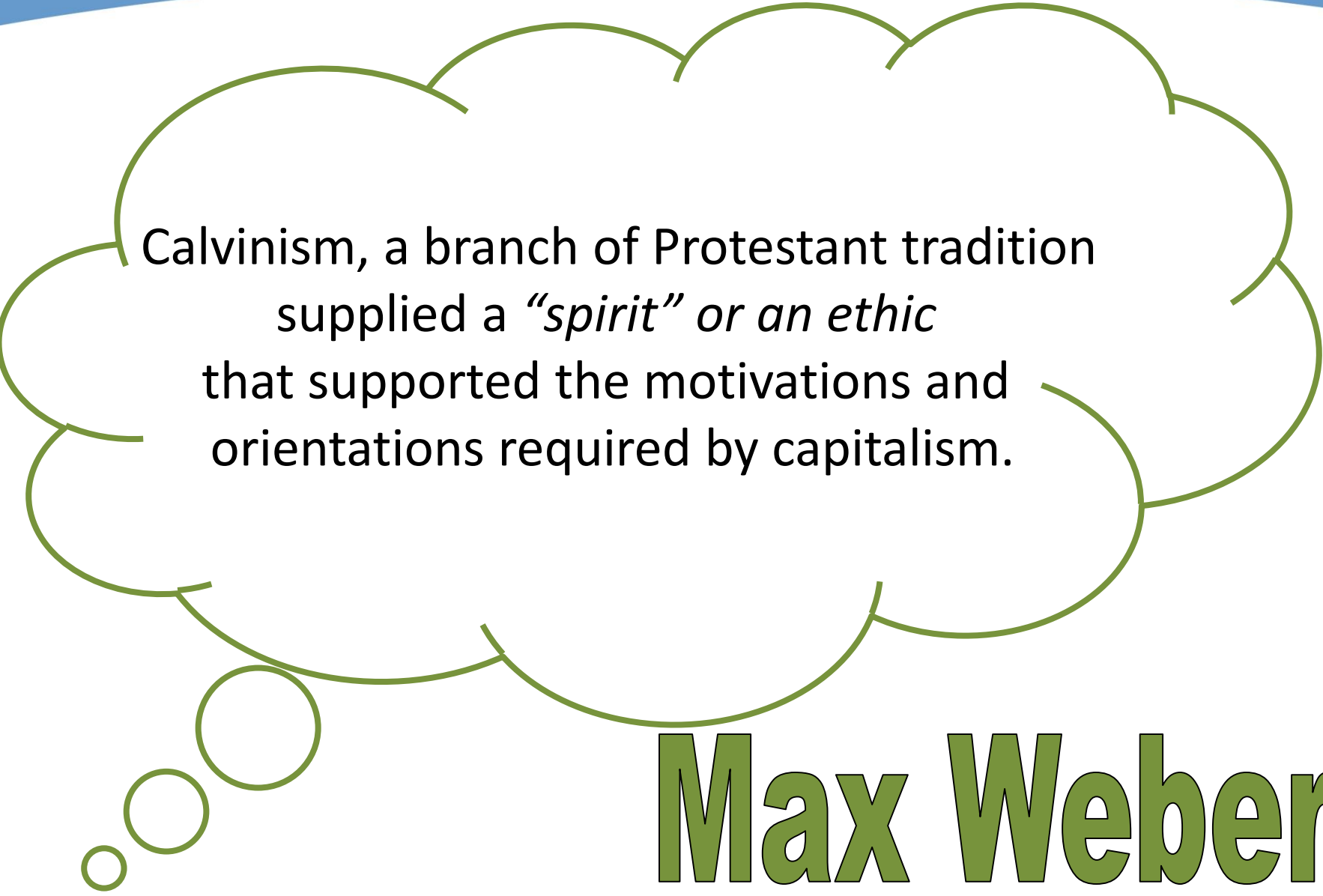
Search “Google images”
for images of Jesus to
help illustrate
Durkheim’s point made
in previous slide.



Religion is the “sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions.

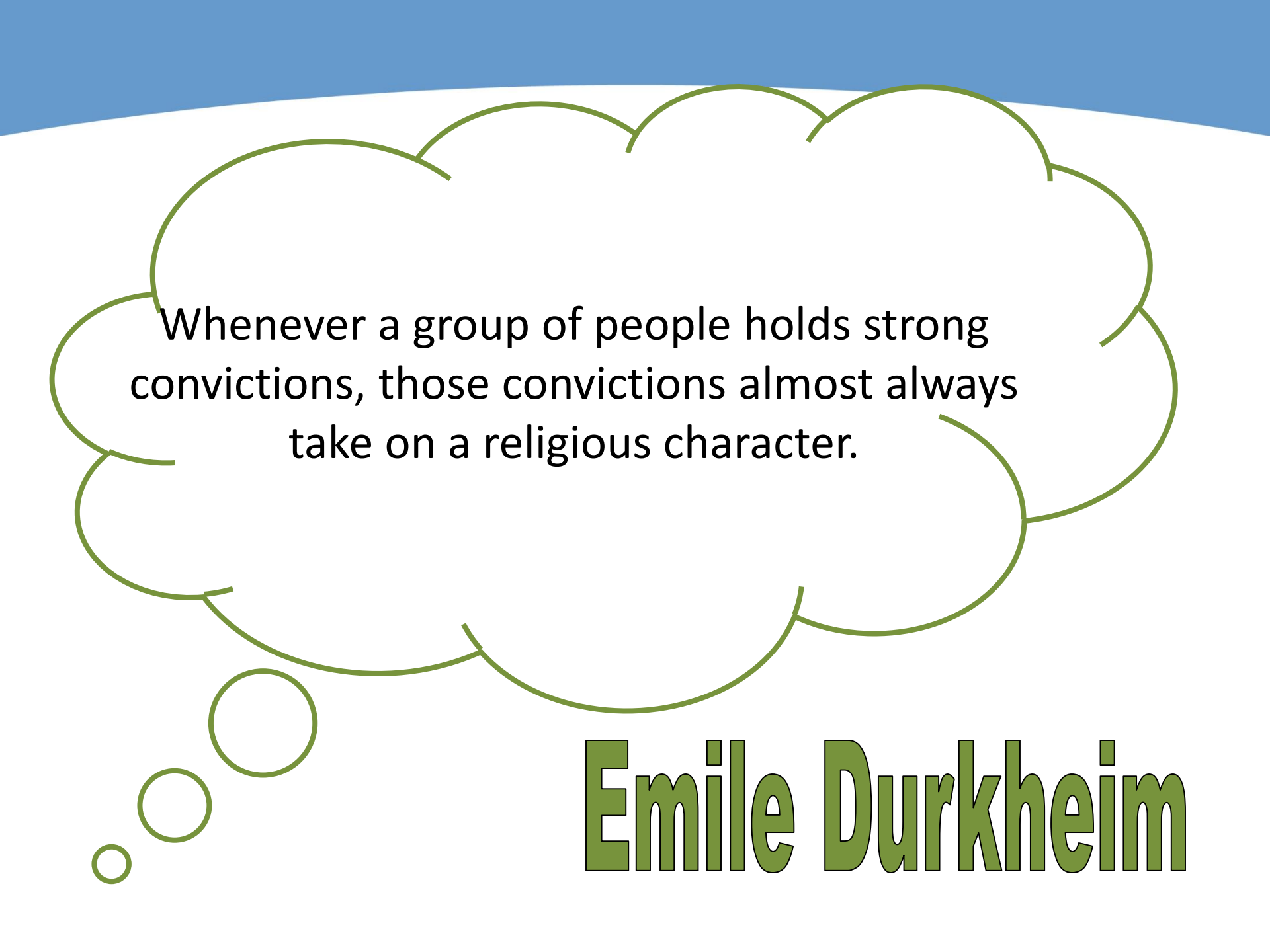
It is the opium of the people.”

Karl Marx



Calvinism, a branch of Protestant tradition
supplied a “*spirit*” or an *ethic*
that supported the motivations and
orientations required by capitalism.

Max Weber



Whenever a group of people holds strong convictions, those convictions almost always take on a religious character.

Emile Durkheim

Civil religion

any set of beliefs and rituals related to the past, present, or future of a people (or a nation) which are understood in some *transcendental* fashion

