1

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

Enlightenment and French Revolution Ideals of Saint Simon
Auguste Comte - Law of Three Stages,Positive
Herbert Spencer – Organismic Model

Unit Structure :

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1.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To introduce the historical context of sociological theory.
- To study Enlightenment and French Revolution and the influence on sociological theory.
- To understand the Ideal of Saint Simon.
- To introduce August Comte’s theory of positivism and law of three stages.
- To understand Herbert Spencer’s Organismic Model (Organic analogy) and theory of evolution.

1.1 INTRODUCTION :

From the earliest times, thinking about human activity, of theorizing about social life and human community has sought of understand “what” and “why” of human endeavours. From the earliest records of the Assyrians and Egyptians, the Chinese and the Greeks. There has been an effort to understand human actions. Sociology is a science that addresses these ancient concerns of how to explain human relationships in a scientific way.

Thinking and theorizing emerge within a social framework and at a given time. Thoughts come from people, people who live at a particular time, in a particular place and under specific circumstances. Since all social theories were thought by social thinkers. We need to study the intellectual, social and cultural environment within which they did their thinking.

One can not really establish the exact date when sociological theory began. Developing theories of social life has been going on and is still taking place. Now theories have been emerging within the social and political contexts of every epoch. This chapter focuses on the early sociological theoretical writings within the context of Enlightenment and the French Revolution.

The early theorists discussed in this chapter are Henri Saint Simon, Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer.

1.2 ENLIGHTENMENT AND FRENCH REVOLUTION :

Presenting a history of Sociological theory is a difficult talk as theories are the product of intellectual social and political climate within which they were developed. In this section we will discuss Enlightenment and the French Revolution.

1.2.1 The Enlightenment :

It is the view of many observers that the Enlightenment constitutes a critical development especially in the later development of sociology. The Enlightenment was a period of remarkable intellectual development and change in philosophical thought. A number of ideas and beliefs, some of which were related to social life were overthrown and replaced during the Enlightenment. The most prominent thinkers associated with Enlightenment were the French philosophers Charles Montesquieu (1689 – 1755) and Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778).

The thinkers associated with Enlightenment were influenced by two intellectual currents – seventeenth century philosophy and science. Seventeenth century philosophy was associated with the work of Rene Descartes, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. The emphasis was on producing grand and very abstract systems of ideas that made rational sense. The later thinkers associated with Enlightenment made effort to derive their ideas from the real world and to test them. In other words, they tried to combine empirical research with reason. The model for this was science. And we see the emergence of the application of the scientific method to social issues. Moreover, the Enlightenment thinkers wanted their ideas of least in part, to be derived from the real world. They also wanted them to be useful to the social world, especially in the critical analysis.

The Enlightenment was characterized by the belief that people could comprehend and control the universe by means of reason and empirical research. The physical world was dominated by natural laws, and it was likely that the social world was also. Thus, it was upto the philosophers to use reason and research to discover these social bus. Once the philosophers understood how the social world worked, the Enlightenment thinkers could work for the creation of a better and more rational world.

With an emphasis on reason, the Enlightenment philosophers were inclined to reject beliefs in traditional authority. When these thinkers examined traditional values institutions, they often found them to be irrational, that is, contrary to human nature and an obstacle to human growth and development. The mission of the philosophers of Enlightenment was to overcome these irrational systems.

The most extreme form of opposition to Enlightenment ideas was French Catholic counter revolutionary philosophy, represented by the ideas of Louis de Bonald (1753 – 1821). Their reaction was against Enlightenment and the French Revolution. De Bonald was distributed by the revolutionary changes and wanted a return to the peace and harmony of the Middle Ages. In this view, God was the source of society. Reason which was so important to the Enlightenment philosophers, was seen as inferior to traditional religious beliefs. They believed that since God had created society, man should not try to change the holy creation. De Bonald opposed anything that undermined traditional institutions such as patriarchy, monarchy monogamous family and the Catholic Church.

De Bonald represented an extreme form of conservative reaction. The conservatives turned away from what they considered to be the “naïve” rationalism of the Enlightenment. They regarded ‘tradition’, ‘imagination’, ‘emotionalism’ and ‘religion’ as necessary and useful components of social life. They opposed upheaval and sought to relation the existing order. They saw the French Revolution and Industrial Revolution as disruptive forces.

The theorists who were directly and positively influenced by Enlightenment thinking was Karl Marx (though he formed his early theoretical ideas in Germany) and the French classical sociological theorists. The conservatives tended to emphasis social order, an emphasis that became one of the central themes of the work of several sociological theorists. We see, sociology in general and

French sociology in particular is mix of Enlightenment and counter Enlightenment (conservative) ideas.

French Revolution :

The causes of French Revolution was the subject of endless debate. The French Revolution plunged Europe into a most profound crisis. From the epicentre in Paris, it sent shock waves into the furthest recesses of the continent.

In 1789 there was reason to believe that the changes taking place affected people beyond France and for beyond mere politics. The revolutionaries had inherited the Enlightenments belief in the universal abstraction of man. They felt they were acting on behalf of people everywhere, pitting themselves against universal tyranny. **Their most noble movement was the declaration of the Rights of Man.**

Beyond everyday politics, there were indications that deep forces invisible on the ordered surface of late 18th century. Europe were somehow getting out of control. One source of anxiety was technological, the appearance of power driven machines with immense destructive as well as constructive potential. The second source was social, a growing awareness of the masses, the realization that the teeming millions excluded from society, might take their fate into their own hands. The third source was intellectual, a rising concern both in literature and in philosophy with the irrational in human conduct.

The French Revolution changed. The structure of society, and created new ideologies to explain its course when nothing could be adopted from the past produced the modern doctrine of nationalism, and spread it directly throughout Western Europe. It had an enormous indirect consequence upto the present. The European wars of 1792 – 1815, sparked off by the French Revolution spread both revolutionary ideas and nationalism. The French Revolution also provided the empirical origin of modern theories of revolution. Interpretations of the French Revolution have enormously varied depending upon the political position and the historical views of the writers.

The relationship between Enlightenment and French Revolution is very complex while Enlightenment spread a skeptical rationalism, it did not propose the extremism or the political solutions adopted during the revolution.

Check Your Progress :

In this section you must become familiar with influence of Enlightenment and the French Revolution on social theorizing.

1.3 IDEALS OF SAINT SIMON :

Claude Henri Saint Simon (1760 – 1825) was born into an old noble family in 1760. He fought in the American Revolution and wrote to his father that when his ideas were anchored, he would achieve a scientific work useful to humanity. With the outbreak of the French Revolution, he renounced his noble titles. During the Revolutionary period he was chiefly engaged in financial dealings in national lands. He was one of the revolutions great speculators and during this time he lived lavishly. After a major quarrel with his business partner over his extravagance and reckless ventures, he turned to scientific self-education and surrounded himself with scientists and artists. He took a house opposite the Ecole Polytechnique and invited outstanding physicists and mathematicians to dinner. Then he took a house opposite the Ecole de Medicine where he studied physiology in a similar fashion. Journeys to England and Germany completed his education.

The rest of his life was spent in writings amid increasing poverty. From 1803 to 1813 he was concerned primarily with the reconstruction of the intellectual realm, as a precondition for reorganizing society. In 1805 his money ran out. For a time he was a copyist in a pawn shop. For several years he lived in great poverty and fell dangerously ill. But his fortunes improved with the fall of Napoleon. He acquired a secretary in Augustin Thierry, the future historian, who was succeeded by Auguste Comte in 1817. These young men enabled the ideas of Saint Simon to acquire some coherence.

With the restoration of French monarchy, he turned his attention to the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, to whom he addressed himself in a series of periodicals and pamphlets on the reorganization of society. He wrote on science, economics and politics. The capitalists and liberals, especially the financial aristocracy supported him, as he argued for the primary of industry and government non interference. However, in the publication of the third volume of the periodical L industries the constitutional monarchy and the sanctity of property were mildly criticized, his supporters deserted him. Subsequently there was a trial for subversion in which he was acquitted, but this gave him the much needed publicity.

Saint Simon and Comte continued to publish further periodicals, exploring in detail the features of the emerging industrial society of the future and exhorting the industrial class, and in particular the leaders of the bourgeoisie, to bring it into being and demolish the theological feudal order of the past.

In a sudden crisis of demoralization due to lack of support for his ideas Saint Simon attempted suicide in 1823, but survived for two years. In his last years, he turned his attention to the role of religion in the industrial society and became concerned with the condition of the working class. He also quarreled with Comte. He died in 1825.

Saint Simon maintained that it was possible to study the structure of society and uncover its laws. In his work, Saint Simon wrote about the necessity of creating a science of social organization. The very term organization meant organic structure. He maintained that a society like an organism was born and grew. Therefore it was necessary to understand such growth (social change) and the forces behind social stability (social order). He believed that laws exist to explain. These issues of organization and social stability.

Saint Simon saw historical development as a result of increasing use of scientific knowledge, each stage of development embodied some degree of rationality. He regarded development and progress as the struggle of opposing forces. When the social system comes into being, it continues till it reaches maturity, than the system beings to decline. The feudal system for example, reached its maturity in the tenth century and from that time till the end of the Revolution showed a decline, leading to the emergence of the new social system. The new organic society would be built exclusively on positive principles.

Saint Simon viewed the historical transformation of European society as the result of forces that were maturing in the womb of the older order. The growth of science and the emergence of an industrial commercial bourgeoisie, the protestant ethic and the critical philosophical movement to the Enlightenment had all contributed to undermine the Catholic Church and the unity of the medieval society. The philosophers with their insistence on the principles of equality and natural rights had led to the destruction of the old society, but the same principles did not give any guidance to the successful reconstructor of the new society. The new social order rests on the unity in the realm of thought of intellectual principles.

According to Saint Simon human knowledge and human society passed through three stages in its development principles from the theological stage of the medieval period to the metaphysical stage of the eighteenth century and finally to the scientific stage. In the modern society, scientific knowledge would replace religious dogmas. Scientists and industrialists would replace clergy and nobility. The new elite will bring about change with the application of scientific principles to all natural and human phenomena. Saint Simon chose to call the scientists, the spiritual elite, and the industrialists the temporal elite'.

Ideologically, Saint Simon envisioned the transformation of society, an international community. Therefore, he was in favour of technological growth and industrialization. He believed that all societies would unite, forming a world wide community. He felt that the ideas of science should be introduced to the masses through artists and their works.

Saint Simon had great faith in the power of reason to change the world. He viewed the new elements of his age potentially as part of an organic whole.

The most lasting and important influence of Saint Simon lies with his former pupil and one time personal secretary Auguste Comte. Comte successfully transformed many of Saint Simon's ideal and formulated them into a new discipline called sociology.

Check your progress :

You must familiarize yourself with Henri Saint Simon's writing of an human society and his influence on Auguste Comte.

1.4 AUGUSTE COMTE :

Auguste Comte was a product of Enlightement carrying on the tradition of the philosophers of progress of the late eighteenth century. Comte was a thinker in the tradition of Bonald and de Maistre, a resolute antagonist of the individualistic approach to human society that had predominated throughout the eighteenth century. Appalled by the breakdown of social order of his days he called for the reconstruction of a moral community. However, later commentators do not see this aspect of Comte work as his link to the tradition of Enlightenment.

Comte lived in the aftermath of the French Revolution. He was distributed and distressed by the disorder of his time and by the material and cultural poverty of the people. His fundamental and life long preoccupation was how to replace disorder by order, how to accomplish the total reconstruction of society. He saw the French Revolution as the crucial turning point is the history of human affairs. The old order had gone which was totally inadequate for the new trends and conditions of scientific knowledge and industrialization. A new polity was necessary for the complex industrial society.

Comte was one of the greatest thinkers of his times. The problems of his times confronted and preoccupied him. The works of Comte was thus a great synthesis in the history of human thought, brining together contributions in Moral and Political Philosophy, Philosophy of History Epistemology and the history and methods of particular sciences.

Auguste Comte was born on January 19, 1798, in the Southern France city of Montpellier. His father a fervent Catholic and a discreet Royalist was a petty government official who despised the revolution and decried the persecution of Catholicism. In August 1814 Comte entered the Ecole Polytechnique, but in 1816 had to leave the Ecole for his behaviour Comte went home to Montpellier. Later he returned to Paris and supported himself by tutoring. He gave private lesions in Mathematics and the future looked bleak.

In the summer of 1817 Comte was introduced to Henri Saint Simon who was the then director of the periodical 'Industrie' Saint Simon was creative and fertile and had a lasting influence on Comte's life and works. Saint Simon who was nearly sixty years old was attracted to the brilliant young man who possessed a trained and methodical capacity for work. Comte became his secretary and close collaborator. The two men worked for a while in intimate conjunction. Member of scholars have argued the question who benefited the most from the close collaboration, Comte or Saint Simon. However, it is generally accepted that Comte was influenced in a major way by his patron. The association with Saint Simon may have brought to fruition ideas that had already germinated in Comte's mind. The essays that Comte wrote during the years of close association with Saint Simon between 1819 and 1824 contain the nuclear of all his later major ideas.

In 1824 Comte finally brake with his master. The quarrel had intellectual as well as material causes. Comte had begun to make a name for himself in the world of liberal journalism and among an elite of scientists. The received letters of admiration and encouragement from eminent academicians. However, Comte stood alone a marginal intellectual, he was without position or office or salary.

During the years 1830 – 1842, he wrote his masterwork cours de philosophie positive. He continued to live on the margin of the academic world. In the year 1844, Comte met Clothilde de Vaux, an upper class woman who had been abandoned by her husband at a young disciple's house. He fell passionately in love with her Clothilde was stricker by tuberculosis and died a year after the beginning of the affair. Comte devoted the rest of his life to her memory. He wrote his neat book 'Systeme de politique positive' which finally appeared between 1851 and 1854. He wrote on the religion of humanity of which Comte proclaimed himself the High Priest. Many followers who were not ready to accept that universal love could solve all the problems of age. Comte travelled and wrote till his illness. He died in 1857.

Comte's work can be seen at least in part, as a reaction against the French Revolution and the Enlightenment. He was greatly disturbed by the anarchy that pervaded society and was critical of those French thinkers who had spawned both the Enlightenment and the Revolution. Comte developed his scientific view, "positivism" or "positive philosophy", to combat what he considered to be the negative and destructive philosophy of the Enlightenment. Comte was in live with, and influenced by, the French counter revolutionary Catholics (especially de Bonald and de Maistre).

Comte developed social physics, or what in 1822 he called sociology, to combat the negative philosophies and the anarchy which in his view pervaded French society. The use of the term social physics made it clear that Comte sought to model sociology after the 'hard sciences'. This new science (Sociology) in Comte's view would ultimately become the dominant science. The new science of society (sociology) was concerned with both social statics (existing social structures) and social dynamics (social change). Both involved the search for laws of social life, Comte felt that social dynamics was more important than social statics. Comte did not urge any revolutionary changes, because he felt the natural evolution of society would take place.

Law of Three Stages :

Comte believed that the individual mind, human activity and society pass through successive stages of historical evolution leading to some final stage of perfection. Being a true science, sociology is in search of laws, social laws to be applied to society such that society's past can be understood and future predicted. Comte considered the law of three stages based on the belief of social evolution to be important societies develops from primitive religion to more advanced philosophical idealism to modern scientific mentalities.

1. **Theological Stage :** This stage is characterized by the fact that feeling and imagination dominate in man's search for the nature, causes and end of things. Explanations take the form of myths concerning spirits and supernatural beings. In this stage, Comte discussed three levels of development.

i) **Fetishism :** When everything in nature is thought to have life analogous to our own and becomes sacred.

ii) **Polytheism :** When due to imagination of peoples there are innumerable gods and spirits.

iii) **Monotheism :** When there is one god, which is due to the awakening of reason which constraint imagination.

In the theological stage, social organization is predominantly of a military nature. It is military power which provides the basis of social stability and conquest was common. Once society experienced the philosophical tendencies leading to monotheism, society moved to the second stage of critical thought which is transitional.

2. Metaphysical Stage : In this stage men pursue meaning and explanation of the world in terms of 'essences', 'ideals', 'forms', in short, in conceptions of some 'ultimate reality'. The institutional changes correlated with this stage of thought are chiefly. The development of defensive militarism and the extension of established law which lays down a move secure basis for cooperation. This stage is dominated by the military, churchmen and lawyer, a stage in which mind presupposes abstract forces. "It forms a link and is transitional". The Metaphysical stage started about 1300 AD and was a short period.

3. The Positive or Scientific Stage : The down of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of the positive stage in which "observation predominates over imagination", and all theoretical concepts become positive. This stage is dominated by industrial administrators and scientists. The nature of human mind has given up the vain search for Absolute notions and origins but seeks to establish scientific principles governing phenomena.

Corresponding to the three stages of mental progress there are three stages of society. The theological and metaphysical stages are dominated by military values; however, the former is characterized by conquest and the latter by Defence. The positive stage heralds the advent of the industrial society. Thus Comte identified two types of societies, the Theological – Military society, which is dying and the scientific Industrial Society which was emerging. The former is characterized by the predominance of theological thinking and military activity. Priests were endowed with intellectual and spiritual power while the military exercised temporal authority. In the scientific industrial society, priest were replaced by scientists who represent the new moral and intellectual power. With the growth of scientific thinking, the industrialists dominated the major activities of society.

Comte believed that the new scientific industrial society will become the society of all mankind. The positive or scientific stage is the ultimate stage in a series of successive transformations the human race goes through and each stage is superior to the previous one. The new system is built upon the destruction of the old, and with evolution comes progress and the emancipation of the human mind. Thus, Comte's theory of progress often referred to as the unilinear theory of evolution involved development of the individual mind, the human mind and the human society in an ultimate state of positivism. Comte stated that human history is the history of a simple people because the progress of the human mind gives unity to the entire history of society.

Positive Science and Positive Philosophy :

According to Comte positive science confines itself to seeking the laws of phenomena statements of the ways in which facts are linked. These are :

1. Laws of coexistence – statements about the universally found interdependence of elements which distinctively comprise the phenomena being studied (e.g. planetary systems, biological species, human societies, etc.) and
2. Laws of Succession – statements about concrete historical changes or about facts as they are connected in temporal sequence. Every subject thus has its 'statical' and 'dynamical' aspect. Both are necessary and closely dependent upon each other.

In stating these laws of positive science Comte was careful to explain the limitations of science. He did not claim positive science as comprehensive or certainity. We now turn to the dimensions of his conception of science in general and the new science of society.

a) Feeling and imagination in science : Comte stated the importance of feeling and imagination in science. However, feeling and imagination become 'necessarily subordinate to observation' in positive science.

b) Role of hypothesis in Science : Comte stated that "every theory must be based upon observed facts, it is equally true that facts can not be observed without the guidance of some theory."

c) Nature and importance of prediction : Comte wrote on the nature of prevision or prediction. He maintained that scientific prevision or prediction is the firmest basis for our actions and policies in dealing with either the material world or institutions of society. "From Science comes prevision : from prevision comes action."

Hierarchy of Sciences :

Comte maintained that the growth of several established sciences showed that not only human thought in general had passed through the three stages, but also that particular subjects had developed in the same way. Therefore, it was possible to arrange the sciences systematically with :

1. The order of their historical emergence and development,
2. The order of their dependence upon each other.
3. Their decreasing degree of generality and the increasing degree of complexity of their subject matter.

Comte's arrangement of sciences on this basis was : Mathematics, Astronomy, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Sociology.

Mathematics was the first science as it was the most general of all sciences, while he regarded sociology as the most complex of all sciences.

Sociology was the new science of society with a distinctive subject matter. The subject matter of sociology was the 'social system'. A society was a system of interconnected parts. Individuals could be understood only within the context of societies of which they were members, 'Sociology', wrote Comte "consists in the investigation of the action and reaction of the different parts of the social system…" Sociology, was then, the scientific study of the nature and the different forms of societies, of social system.

Sociology, like the other sciences must use the methods of observation and experiment. Sociology must also use both the comparative method and the historical method because of the peculiar nature of social life.

Social Statistics and Social Dynamics :

In the study of social progress and human development, Comte saw two components at work – social statics and social dynamics. Social statics is the study of the conditions of society's existence at any given moment which is analyzed by the means of the "Theory of Social order'. Comte stated. "The statical study of Sociology consists in the investigation of the laws of action and reaction of the different parts of the social system – apart for the occasion, from the fundamental movement which is always gradually modifying them."

Social dynamics is the study of continuous movement in social phenomena through time by means of a 'Theory of social progress'. Throughout his writings, Comte saw diatectical tension in the socio – political activities of his time between order and progress within society. As a true science, sociology must discover those laws making both order and progress possible. In his book positive philosophy volume II, Comte wrote, “The distinction is between two aspects of theory. It corresponds with the double conception of order and progress : for order consists in a permanent harmony among the conditions of social existence and progress consists in social development.” By studying order sociologists came to a better understanding of those components necessary to the existence of society, by studying progress, a better understanding of social movement is made. Both are essential.

‘Statistics’ in sociology consisted of clarifying the interconnections between those social facts which appear to be universally necessary for the existence of a society of any kind the nature of and connections between the family, the division of labour, property, government, religion, morality and so on. “Dynamics” consisted of studying and tracing the interconnections between these many aspects of society as they actually existed and changed in the many types of society in the cumulative processes of history. It was a study of the actual varieties of societies existing in the world. ‘Statics’ is therefore chiefly ‘analytical’, ‘Dynamics’ was chiefly empirical. ‘Dynamics’ applies the analysis of ‘Statics’ to the study of actual societies.

In a conclusion, we see that Comte’s efforts were in constructing a positive science of society. His science was meant to resolve the crisis of the modern world, to provide a system of scientific ideas which would help in the reorganization of society and the emergence of social engineers.

For a long time Comte was ignored as an eccentric with a few good ideas. Today, Comte has become the focus of attention as the study of the history of Sociology has become important. More and more historians of social theory are acknowledging the tremendous impact of his writings upon the masters of Sociological thought. His definitions of the legitimate dominion of the new science (Sociology) are acknowledged. His methodology – observation, comparison, experimentation and historical analysis are the corner stones of sociological method.

Comte must be assessed within the social and historical context within which his thought took place. The influence of his works on later sociologists like Durkheim is evident. While he made some mistakes, Auguste Comte set the stage for the development and emergence of the science of sociology.

Check your progress :

You must be familiar with Auguste Comte Theory, the laws of three stages and positivism.

1.5 HERBERT SPENCER :

Herbert Spencer's work is similar to Auguste Comte's, as he sought to achieve and present a unified scheme of knowledge resting upon a clear philosophical position and embracing all the sciences. His book **first principles** provided the philosophical basis for all this work the other works. Principles of Sociology, Principles of Ethics were very voluminous. He published a separate book on **the study of sociology** on many themes – moral and political theory, on education, changing nature of political parties, the purpose of arts, the origin of music, dying, gymnastics and so on. Some argue that Spencer borrowed from the works of Comte, while others do not accept this argument.

Organic Analogy and Theory of Evolution :

Spencer elaborated in great detail the organic analogy which is the identification of society with the biological organism. He regarded the similarity between society and biological organism as the first step towards a general theory of evolution.

The organic analogy was reformulated by Spencer as "It is also a character of Social bodies as of living bodies, that while they increase in size they increase in structure. Like a low animal, the embryo of a high one has few distinguishable parts, but while it is acquiring greater mass, it parts multiply and differentiate. It is thus with a society. At first the unlikenesses among its groups of units are inconspicuous in number and degree; but as population arguments, divisions and sub-divisions become more numerous and more decided. Further, in the social organism as in the individual organism, differentiation ceases only with the completion of the type which marks maturity and precedes decay." Society is thus viewed as being essentially analogous to an organism, with its interdependent parts or organ making up the body of society. Both society and organism undergo growth. Their parts are interrelated and their functions reciprocal. As they grow in size, they increase in complexity to structure and their parts become more differentiated. Just as a living organism has many units, so also society.

Spencer established the similarities between the biological organism and society, at the same time he also brought out the differences between them. Spencer wrote, "the parts of an animal form a concrete whole, the parts of a society form a whole which is discrete…" in other words, the organism is a concrete integrated whole whereas society is a whole composed of discrete and dispersed elements.

Secondly, "in the (biological organism) consciousness is concentrated in a small part of the aggregate. In the (Social organism) it is diffused throughout the aggregate : all the units posses the capacity for happiness and misery…"

We see that Spencer established the similarities and differences between the organism and society, in his later writings Spencer claimed that "the analogy was used only as a scaffolding to help in building up a coherent body of sociological induction." The fact is that Spencer used the analogy as a scientific premise to build his theory of evolution.

Spencer argued that the evolution of human societies is similar to other evolutionary phenomena. He established the parallelism between organic and social evolution. All universal phenomena – in organic, organic, supra-organic were subject to natural law of evolution. Spencer explained, the advance from simple to complex through a process of successive differentiations, is seen alike in the earliest changes of the universe… it is seen in the geologic and climatic evolution of the Earth; it is seen in the unfolding of every single organism on its surface… it is seen in the evolution of Humanity, whether contemplated in the civilized individual or in the aggregate of races, it is seen in the evolution of society… and in all those endless concrete and abstract products of human activity…"

Spencer's theory of evolution has two different but inter related strains of thought.

1. **The movement from simple societies to various levels of compound societies :** Spencer identified four types of societies in terms of their evolutionary stages – simple, compound, doubly, compound and trebly compound, each being distinguishable on the basis of complexity of their social structures and functions. There is a tendency for the homogeneous to become heterogeneous, and for uniform to become multiform. Simple societies consist of families give rise to compound societies. Compound societies which consists of families unified into clan, give rise to doubly compound societies. The doubly compound societies which consist of clans unified into tribes led to trebly compound societies where tribes are organized into nation states. In this process of evolution there is increased differentiation of social structures

into specialized functional systems which leads to better integration and adaptation to environment.

2. **Change from military to industrial society :** This classification system is based on the type of internal regulation within societies. In this system of universal evolution from military to industrial societies, the former is characterized by “compulsory cooperation”, while the latter is characterized by “voluntary co-operation”. The military society is characterized by a centralized government, a rigid system of stratification, economic autonomy and state domination of all social organizations. The industrial society is characterized by tree trade, loss of economic autonomy, independent voluntary organization, a relatively open system of stratification and a decentralized government.

Spencer believed that societies do not develop irreversibly through pre determined stages but in direct response to their social and natural environment. Spencer was one of the most outspoken advocates of social Darwinism. Spencer’s social Darwinism is centred around two principles.

1. **The principle of the Survival of the Fittest :** Spencer endorsed the conception of a natural process of conflict and survival which operates as a kind of biologically purifying process. Spencer stated that nature is endowed with a tendency to get rid of the unfit and to make room for the better. It is the law of nature that weak should be eliminated for the sake of the strong. The rapid elimination of unfit individuals from society through natural selection would benefit the race biologically and therefore the state should do nothing to relieve the condition of the poor who Spencer felt were less fit.

2. **The Principle of Non-interference :** As a logical corollary of the ideology of Social Darwinism, Spencer advocated individualism and Laissez-faire politics. Spencer opposed any form of state interference with private activity. He believed that the state should have no role in education, health and sanitation, postal services money and banking, regulation of housing conditions or in the elimination of poverty. Money used for such activities should be spent to support labourers in works such as land drainage, machine buildings etc. Spencer argued that Nature was more intelligent than Man and “once you begin to interfere with the order of nature there is no knowing where the result will end.”

Spencer enjoyed acceptance and recognition during his lifetime. His essays became the topic of discussion among political liberals and Laissez-faire intellectuals. His evolutionary theory provided the answer for the many dilemma faced by intellectuals at that time.

Spencer's theory satisfied the guest for an explanation in terms of the new found theory of natural laws of evolution. Spencer's influence remained strong until about the First World War. After the war his works became less and less important in sociological circles. Among the giants, Spencer influenced Durkheim name is prominent.

Check your progress :

You must be familiar with Spencer's works, his organic analogy and theory of social evolution.

1.6 SUMMARY :

Developing theories of social life has been going on since the earliest times and still continuous. Sociological theorizing was to a great extent influenced by Enlightenment and French Revolution.

Among the earliest social theorists is Henri Saint Simon (1760 – 1825). He maintained that it was possible to study the structure of society and to uncover its laws the stated, that the historical development of societies was the result of the increasing use of scientific knowledge and each stage of development embodied some degree of rationality. Ideologically, Saint Simon envisioned the transformation of society, an international community. He had great faith in the power of reason to change the world. The most lasting influence of Saint Simon was on a former pupil and collaborator Auguste Comte.

Auguste Comte was one of the greatest thinkers of his times Comte's close association with Henri Saint Simon helped to formulate ideas in the mind of Comte. He put forth the theory of positivism and the law of three stages. Comte's efforts were in developing a positive science of society. His writings had a tremendous impact on masters of Sociological thought.

Herbert Spencer's work is similar to Auguste Comte. Spencer argued that the evolution of human societies is similar to other evolutionary phenomena. He developed an analogy between the biological organism and society (social organism) and the theory of evolution. Spencer's theory satisfied the quest for an explanation in terms of the new found theories of natural laws of evolution.

1.7 QUESTIONS :

1. Explain the influence of Enlightenment and French Revolution on Sociological Theorizing.
2. Write a brief essay on the writings of Henri Saint Simon and his influence on Auguste Comte.
3. Discuss Auguste Comte's contribution to sociological theory.
4. Elaborate on Herbert Spencer's organic analogy and theory of evolution.

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2

KARL MARX
DIALECTICAL AND HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

Unit Structure:

2.0 Objectives
2.1 Introduction
2.2 Karl Marx – Life Sketch
2.3 Influence of Hegal on Marx
2.4 Influence of Henri-Saint Sinon on Marx
2.5 Questions for self study
2.6 Dialectical and historical materialism
2.7 Summary
2.8 Questions
2.9 References

2.0 OBJECTIVES:

- To study briefly the life of Karl Marx.
- To examine the Marx identification with revolutionary movement antagonism and complications involved in his thought.

2.1 INTRODUCTION :

No other thinker in the 19th century had direct and powerful influence upon mankind as Karl Marx. He was not a popular writer nor an orator, Karl Marx, a social scientist, a political philosopher and was involved with revolutionary movement.

2.2 KARL MARX – LIFE SKETCH :

Karl Marx was born in Trior, Rhenish city on May 5, 1818, of Jewish parents. His father was a successful lawyer while his mother was a home and family centred woman.

Marx began his education in Trior. His earliest friends were Jenny (who later became his wife) and Edgar von west phalen. Marx's father introduced him to the Enlightenment writers and Greek and German Classics. An intellectual bond developed between father and son their next door neighbor ludwing west phalen was attracted to young Marx. he encouraged Marx to read and talked to him about Home and Shakes speare and the romantic school West phalen also introduced Marx to the new social doctrine of Saint Simonian's the bond between the two was close and Westphalen became his mention.

In April 1843, he married his childhood, sweetheart Jenney von Westpahalen later the same year with his wife he left for the liberal atmosphere of Paris.

During his Paris years 1843-1845, Marx continued to grapple with Hegel and his ideas. He read various reformist and socialist theories that had been in accessible in Germany. His intellectual training took a new turn in Paris. He encountered two new sets of ideas French socialism and English political Economy. It was the unique way in which he combined Hegelianism, Socialism and Political Economy that shaped his intellectual orientation.

2.3 INFLUENCE OF HEGEL ON MARX :

Hegel dominated German intellectual thought in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Educated Germans and discussed history, politics and culture within the framework of Hegel's philosophy. Marx's education in the University of Berlin was shaped by Hegel's philosophy and by the split among Hegel's followers after his death. The "Old Hegelians" accepted the great master's ideas while the "young Hegelians" were critical of many aspects of Hegel's philosophy. Among the young Hegelians was Ludwig. Feuerbach who tried to revise Hegel's ideas. Marx was influenced by Hegel's philosophy as well as by Feuerbach's revisions. Hegel's philosophy focused on 'dialectic'. Marx adopted Hegel's dialectic. Hegel applied dialectic only to ideas. Marx felt it applied to material aspects of life as well for example economy.

Marx extracted Hegel's dialectic and Feuerbach's materialism and developed his own "dialectual materialism" which focuses on the dialectical relationship within the material world.

Ludwig Feuerbach was an important bridge between Hegel and Marx Feuerbach criticized Hegel for his excessive emphases on subjective idealism and focus on 'ideas Feuerbach argued that analysis of society must begin with the material reality" of human beings.

Feuerbach's criticism of Hegel focuses on religion. In his essence of Christianity (1841) Feuerbach defined religious beliefs as the sum total of human experiences into objects of worship. Man sets god above himself and attributes to God such characteristics as he is perfect, he is holy, he is almight man reduces himself to powerless, imperfect and sinful beings.

Using Hegelian philosophy, Feuerbach regards religion as ‘alienated reification’. Feuerbach says that religion originated is social relations and must be analysed in social terms.

According to Feuerbach religion alienates man from himself i.e. through religion men are ruled and oppressed by their own. “Unconscious creations”. A complete change in such thinking was necessary. Man must act in relation to their fellow human beings and not to an alien being. God this would bring liberation of man with this liberation man would be in control of all things. According to Feuerbach defeat of religious ideas could be achieved with the help of materialistic philosophy and people would be in control of their destiny and not religion. Marx was influenced by Feuerbach’s analysis of religion and God centered world and unhappy social conditions which led men to find consolation which led men to find consolation in a world of religious entities (i.e. God) of their own creation.

2.4 INFLUENCE OF HENRI SAINI-SIMON ON MARX :

Marx used certain aspects of contemporary French social thought in faming his own views of history and society. Marx shared saint-Simon’s basic assumption that the most fundamental aspect of human existence is the absolute necessity to ‘produce’ the means of subsistence (food and shelter). From Henri Saint-Simon he also took the view that human society is largely the history of wars between classes.

The ideas of class struggle importance of the working class in the modern industrial world, importance of property relations to an understanding of history are all elements that Marx derived from his reading of saint-Simon.

To conclude, Marx thought was a confluence of European streams of thought of French and German. Enlightenment of German idealism as represented by Hegel and the critical tradition of young Hegelians; of French social thought especially Saint-Simon and British political economy.

2.5 QUESTIONS FOR SELF-STUDY

1. Give a brief biographical account of Karl Marx.
2. Discuss the major influences on the life and writings of Karl Marx.

2.6 DIALECTICAL AND HISTORICAL MATERIALISM :

The Hegelian notion of dialectic holds that all matter (or the thesis) always and inevitably creates its own opposite (or antithesis) from the contradiction between the thesis and antithesis results the ‘synthesis’. But this is not the end as the synthesis for the dialectical continues transforms to became the new thesis, which creates its own antithesis and so the dialectical process goes on change results from contradiction, and the human effort to overcome contradiction.

Marx applied the dialectical scheme to the analysis of the mode of production. The central point of Marx's thought is the dialectical between the material world and the people in the society people create the material world to. Fulfill their needs. In this process they change their needs and new needs are generated. This requires a change of relationships to the material world. Thus the material world which was to fulfill man's need turns into a constraint. There is a contradiction between the material world and the people in the society.

So Marx, in his early works, in a famous people "turned Hegal on the head", ideas argued that Marx were a 'product' of society rather than the other way round. This simple inversion of Hegal is the starting point for Marx's 'dialectical materialism'. According to Marx dialectical materialism enables society to be studied empirically and scientifically rather than on speculation and metaphysical deductions.

Marx further shows how materialism is more important than ideas. The most fundamental aspect of human existence is the absolute necessity to produce the man's of subsistence. Marx states that the production of the means of subsistence is prior to all other human activities: society can function only when it can organize the means of production of its basic needs. Therefore, Marx's philosophy of human history has become his historical materialism'.

Marx regards man as both the producer and the product of society. Man makes society and himself by his own actions. History is therefore the process of man's self creation. Yet man is also a product of society. He is shaped and moulded by the social relationships and systems of thought which he creates. An understanding of society therefore involves an historical perspective which examines the process whereby man both produces and is produced by social reality. A society forms a totality of which the various parts are interconnected and influence each other. Thus economic political, legal and religious institutions can only be understood in terms of their mutual effect. Economic factors, however, exert the primary influence and largely shape other aspects of society. The mode of production of economic goods determine the relationships between and among men. Thus society is patterned according to economic organization. The history of society is a process of tension and conflict. Social change progresses out of contradictions built into society which become source of tension and ultimately the source of open conflict and radical change.

It is often argued that Marx's view of history is based on the idea of the dialectic. From this view point any process of change involves tension between incompatible forces. Dialectical movement therefore represents a struggle of opposites, a conflict of contradictions. Conflict provides the dynamic principle, the source of change. The struggle between incompatible forces grows in intensity until there is a final collision. The result is a sudden leap forward which creates a new set of forces on a higher level of development. The dialectical process then begins again as the contradiction between new set of forces interact and conflict and propel change.

The idea of dialectical change was developed by the German philosopher Hegel. He applied it to the history of human society and in particular to the realm of ideas. He believed strongly that society is an expression of man's ideas and thought. Hegel saw historical change as a dialectical movement of men's ideas and thoughts. Marx rejects the priority Hegel gave to thoughts and ideas. Hegel was an idealist who asserted the primacy of 'mind' while Marx was a 'materialist' who asserted the primacy of 'matter'. For him 'matter' gives birth to ideals. He argues that the source of change lies in contradictions in the economic system in particular and in society in general. As a result of the priority he gave to economic factor, to 'material life', Marx's view of history is often referred to as ‘dialectical materialism'. For Marx 'ideal' is nothing, but the maters work reflected by human mind and translated into forms of thought. He wanted to say ideas emerge from the material world.

‘Dialectic', he says, means dual existence. To every order or reality, there is opposite or contradictory phenomenon e.g. if there are rich, there must be poor, landowners must face landless, the rulers have ruled', high status is compared with low status. Thus basic sharp contrasting features of social reality give rise to inherent contradictions, i.e. Master - servants, powerful - powerless, happy - angry. For Marx, everything has opposite thing to match. Some people have, while some others do not have, thus there is conflict between haves and have nots. Marx turned idealism to materialism and made successful use of the concept dialect in what came to be called "dialectical materialism" or "historical materialism”. He analysed history by using this method.

This adaptation of Hegelian idealism to historical materialism coupled with his acceptance of British economic theory led Marx to believe that the motivating factor in human existence was not ideas about religion and society but a materialistic realism having to do with survival. Every man tries to survive and for this he has to produce. This survival or the necessity to produce the means of subsistence was basic to human life and human action in community and society. It was a basic fact underlying all human interactions.

“The first historical act” wrote Marx, "is the production of material life itself”. This is indeed a historical act, a fundamental condition of all history". Having accepted the evolutionary perspective on human development popular in the 19th century European thought, Marx thought of society as an arena within which the struggle and strife between groups of people, competing forces for survival and improved livelihood, generated social change. Marx thought of struggle and contention (argument), strife and competition as the mechanism for social advancement in community.

History, for Hegel and Marx and for most European intellectuals, was the focus of their theories of human existence. For him, human history was the record of human struggle amongst men and human efforts to dominate and control the environment, physical and social. "Men make their own history" Marx says. When man produces their means of subsistence, they indirectly produce actual material life. For Marx, whenever there is struggle or contradiction between two strong forces in society, there is bound to be change. This may be change in order, system or mode of production and this has led society to progress was broken further in material life. e.g. struggle between landowners and landless led to change in mode of production i.e. bondage system was broken.

Just as Comte distinguished three phases of human evolution, on the basis of ways of thinking, Marx identified four stages of human history on the basis of production : (a) primitive communism, (b) ancient slave production, (c) feudalism and (d) capitalism.

For Marx, materialism is the natural or real aspect of life. People survive only due to material production so this is reality in life. The relationship which men have with one another varies with the mode of production. Primitive communism signified communal ownership whereas ancient mode of production was characterised by slavery, the pattern of relationships was of master and slaves; the feudal mode of production by serfdom, and the capitalist system by the bourgeois exploitation of wage earners. Each of these stages, except primitive communism constituted a distinct mode of man's exploitation by man and his struggle for freedom. Earlier, through slave system many developments took place e.g. Agriculture was much developed but slaves were also highly exploited. They opposed strongly and unitedly then the change in their conditions took place and a new system came to existence.

History begins when men actually produce their means of subsistence, and when they begin to control nature. At a minimum, this involves the production of food and shelter. At the dawn of human history, when men supposedly live in a state of primitive communism, these contradictions did not exist. The forces of production and the products of labour were communally owned. Since each member of society produced both for himself and for society as a whole, there were no conflict of interests between individuals and groups. However with the emergence of private property and in particular private ownership of the forces of production, the basic contradiction of human society was created. Through its ownership of the forces of production, a minority is able to control command and enjoy the fruits of the labour of the majority. Since one group gains at the expense of the other, a conflict of interest exists between the minority who own the forces of production and the majority who perform labour. The tension and conflict generated by this contradiction is the major dynamic of social change.

Marx believed strongly that **forces of production** i.e. technology determines the **relations of production** i.e. the type of economic organisation. In each stage of historical development, there was distinct mode of production which determined and patterned relationships between and among the people. In the second stage there were masters or owners and slaves - bought from the markets to work. Owners exploited the physical and mental abilities of slaves for increasing production. In the third stage the landowners controlled landless labourers and made them work throughout their lives. In the last stage, there is a class of capitalists - owners of the means of production i.e. factories who exploited workers. Thus in every stage there were two classes - one is the class of owners of means of production - the exploiters and the second - the exploited one who had to work for survival. The position of the former class is determined by the level of **technology.** Technology however is constantly developing and changing. In time, the existing economic order is no longer suitable to the newly developed technological level, or in fact it becomes a hindrance to further development then for Marx, there is need of change. The class of the exploited one always unitedly fought against the powerful owners of the means of production as no one can forever accept torture or inhuman sort of living. The 'ruled[1] class being in majority always got success and this led to a new stage or mode of production which determined new relations of production. The technological development of society led to a new mode of production and with that history enters a new stage. Thus there were successive changes from the slavery mode of production to feudalism then from feudal lord and serfs system, capitalistic mode of production emerged. This change in economic system resulted in change in social patterns of relationships.

The struggle between the two powerful forces in each stage led to the next stage, Marx believed. The next stage developed when the old order or system was completely destroyed. Until the old pattern is completely removed, the new system cannot develop. Marx believed that no matter how well a society functions in terms of its own order and structure, it was destined to turmoil and revolution until the final breakdown of all class divisions. Even when a society exemplifies the best the mankind can establish in terms of harmony and cooperation, "in time" the established order becomes an obstacle to progress, and a new order (the antithesis) begins to arise. A struggle ensures between the class representing the old order and the class representing the new order. The emerging class is eventually victorious, creating a new order of production that is a synthesis of the old and the new. This new order, however contains the seeds of its eventual destruction and the dialectical process continues.

Marx believed that the struggle between the proletariat and the capitalists would end when the former be strong and conscious. The capitalists would be thrown and the fifth and final state will come. This would constitute a classless society with no private property, and no distinction between the controllers and the controlled. War and rebellion would vanish. "There in" as is commented, "lies the inherent notion of historical progress and idealism in Marxian thought, for human history is treated as an ' inevitable succession of stages."

2.7 SUMMARY :

The use of the dialectic in the analysis of society and history became a major characteristic of Marxism. Marx believed that "materialism in general recognizes objectively real being i.e. matter as independent of consciousness, sensation, experience. Consciousness is only the reflection of being, at best, an approximately true reflection of it". Marx was anti-idealistic and positive materialistic. Stalin who followed Marxism explains - "Marx's philosophical materialism holds that the world is by its very nature material, that the multifold phenomena of the world constitute different forms of matter in motion, their interconnectedness and interdependence as understood by the dialectical method, follow a law of movement and develop accordingly". For Marx, matter is the fact of life, essence of every economic activity. For him matter creates mind i.e. ideas and not the mind creating matter.

2.8 QUESTIONS :

1. Explain Karl Marx Dialectical Materialism.
2. Discuss Karl Marx Historical Materialism

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3

MODE OF PRODUCTION AND THEORY OF CLASS

Unit Structure:

3.0 Objectives
3.1 Introductions
3.2 Economic infrastructure and Socio-Economic superstructure
3.3 Class conflict and class struggle
3.4 The theory of class struggle
3.5 Criticism of Marx's theory
3.6 Summary
3.7 Questions for Self Study
3.8 References

3.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To introduce students to Marx's Economics infrastructure and Socio-economic super structure.
- To examine the role of the ruling class in Marx's theory of state
- To understand Marx's theory of proletariat Revolution
- To study Marx's views on the withering away of the state

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Marxian theory of state has generally been neglected in the social sciences. One of the reasons is that Marx himself never formulated a coherent theory of state. Elements of the theory of state are widely scattered in the works of both Marx and Engels.

In this unit an attempt is made to present the Marxian view of the state, the role of the ruling class and importance of the proletariat revolution. Lastly, this unit also discusses Marx's view on the withering away of the state.

3.2 ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SOCIO ECONOMIC SUPERSTRUCTURE :

Marx's historical materialism is incomplete without economic determinism. Although Marx did not consistently argue for a crude economic determinism, he left no doubt that he considered the economy to be the foundation of the whole socio cultural system. Throughout their study, Marx and Engles emphasized the primacy of economics in human relationships, and the centrality of the economic dimensions in political structures. The and distribution or the means and relations of production in the Marxian sense, constitute the basic structure of society on which are built all other social institutions, particularly the state and legal system. According to Engels - the production of immediate material means of subsistence and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given period, form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, the ideas on art and even on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved.

Marx has given importance to material production and growth. For him, as the human society moved from primitive stage to modern stage, they experienced improvement in techniques of production as a result of which they enjoyed better life. At the same time mode of production determined the level of living – the pattern of relationship, social hierarchy and cultural life. For example, in hunting society when man did not use any complicated technology or to say used very simple instruments, their material growth was very low. They led simple social and cultural life. Leadership was hereditary and the system of transmission of knowledge was very informal and simple. Kinship relations dominated every aspect of life. Their religious life patterned around nature. Then in agricultural society people led little complicated life,- formed class and caste hierarchy. Landowners exploited landless - the social pattern moved from group life to individual proprietorships. The life was centred around land and animals. People had individual possessions. Thus mode of production of essential goods and services determines the rest of society i.e. family system, polity structure, religious or recreational pattern. According to Karl Marx, economic system is the most dominating system, determines the mode of living in other areas. Thus he established economic determinism.

Social change is observed according to Marxists, when two groups economically differentiated i.e. one landowner and the other landless faced each other with opposition and conflict. As both have different interests and goals, they could never get along with each other. As a result of this struggle, the system changed to **Guild system** in urban areas and then later to capitalistic system. For Marx - a **mode of production** is both a method of performing labour and a method of exploiting labour.

Originally in prehistoric times, the appropriation (i.e. taking from nature for survival) involved no more than the taking by man of the readymade consumer objects from nature i.e. fish, fruits etc. but since that prehistoric stage man's appropriation from nature has involved the process of labour in which a raw material is transformed into a product for consumption. In other words in Marx's theory history only begins when men produce for their reproduction. In this process of productive appropriation three elements (forces of production) are combined.

1. The personal activity of man himself (i.e. work/labour)
2. The object of work (i.e. land)
3. The instrument of work - This includes the means of production (chemical, mechanical and technical aids in production) e.g. assembly line microchips etc. It also includes science and technology generally and even the manner in which (1), (2) and (3) are combined technically in the process of production.

These forces of production are really important. They refer to the way in which man relates to his natural laboratory - the earth and nature - and to the way in which he takes from nature what he needs to produce and reproduce the objective conditions of his existence.

In the beginning, says Marx there is a natural unity between these three forces of production; there is a natural unity of labour with its material prerequisites, e.g. man works and gathers food. But being a social animal, men also have to divide labour, where the natural unity gets broken and three elements of production socially, at the same time increasingly more antagonistically combined. They became more and more negatively related to one another.

While the concept of "forces of production" refers to the three elements - land labour and the means of production including the manner of their technical combination, the concept of "relations of production' refers to the social organization of this combination. That is to say where the production is surplus and that surplus is distributed - people interact with one another in the process of production and distribution. Earlier the appropriation of surplus labour occurs by means of political domination (as in both feudal and slave based societies) or by means of ideological control (as in primitive or communal societies). The corresponding class relations are : bourgeois and proletariat, landlord and serf, free citizen and slave, zamindars and peasant.

People belonging to different stratum have different interests, goals and statuses. Therefore they always face each other in conflicting situation. Since they have opposed interests and goals this is termed as class conflict and class struggle.

3.3 CLASS CONFLICT AND CLASS STRUGGLE :

1. **Means of production :** This is a broad term covering instruments of production (tools, machines etc.), land, raw materials, building and the like. The ownership of the means of production is said by Marx, to determine the types of property relations : (a) Public or collective ownership in which the means of production are owned jointly by all the members of the community as was the case in the primitive communal society and (b) private ownership of the means of production as in the case of the capitalist system. In the Marxist theory, class relations arise out of the fact that when one segment of the population acquire ownership over the means of production, the other segment is deprived of this facility. Hence the other segment has to work for the first segment in order to survive. In the slave and feudal social systems, compulsion was of non-economic character including the use or threat of the use of violence and religious indoctrination.

2. **Basis and superstructure :** Productive relations are said to make up the economic structure of a society, which being regarded as primary, is referred to as basis. Out of 'basis' arises social institution, ideas religions and other social phenomena. These phenomena make up what is known as 'superstructure'.

3. **Mode of production :** This includes forces of production and their characteristic relations of production.

4. **Socio economic formation :** For Marx and Engels, the entire configuration of elements making up the mode of production, basis and superstructure is called socio economic formation or structure, e.g. primitive or communal, ancient or slave, feudal and capitalist.

Marx recognised that in the course of human social evolution each one of the structural levels of society (the ideological, the political and the economic) becomes dominant in turn (and in the same order) and that the most advanced stage to date is that in which the economic structure of society provides the organising principle for all human conduct and for the entire social fabric.

The essence of the conflict theory is that in any stage of material production when the existing mode of relations are found to be obsolete or inadequate to satisfy human needs, they are replaced by a new mode of production or a new set of relationships. As a result, there is quantitative growth and qualitative change in the forces of production. At each historical stage, haves and havenots - exploiting and exploited classes fight against each other due to the contradiction interest in the manner in which production is organised e.g. primitive community system was broken when there was surplus. The user of surplus then dominated the farmers for their survival. Further the concept of private ownership led to the creation of two groups - landowners and feudal lords and slaves. Groups of men who were more skilled in using tools or surplus for their own betterment made the other group entirely dependent on themselves. A new system of relationships between master and slaves was developed. Though, large construction, development of agriculture became possible due to this slavery system, a large section of men were deprived of basic human rights. Finally, the most oppressed classes - slave and poorest section of the free men led to class struggle - slave movements. The feudal system emerged in which 'land' was owned and controlled by feudal lords and the peasant masses were compelled to work for the feudal lords. Serfs (peasants) were under obligations to produce. In the city guild system was developed which deprived the journeymen of their basic rights to produce. They then moved to the other system of production i.e. capitalistic mode of production as the result of their conflict with the masters.

Finally in the capitalistic system where finer division of labour and machines were used to produce, two distinct groups were emerged - bourgeoise i.e. owner of the means of production and workers i.e. proletariat who worked for the bourgeois. The workers were interested in raising their wages improving their work condition and standard of living and ultimately ending the gap or exploitation but capitalists were interested more in making the profit thus increasing the gap by appropriating the surplus value created by the workers; thus exploiting the labour.

Though the capitalist system has resulted in tremendous progress in science and technology, the tendency to exploit workers has resulted in conflict between the bourgeoise and proletariats.

Marx has emphasized that workers must organize themselves to fight the injustice and exploitative tendencies in order to bridge the gap.

3.4 THE THEORY OF CLASS STRUGGLE :

Class struggle constitutes the central theme of Marx's theoretical scheme which is based on the following premises :

1. "The history of all so far existing society is the history of class struggles."

   Freeman and Slave, lord and serf, guild master and journeyman, in other words exploiter and exploited stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted fight - sometimes open sometimes latent - each time ending in a revolutionary restructure of society at large.

2. "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being determines their consciousness.” This means that the social standing makes a man aware of himself.

3. "The ideas of the ruling class are in every age the ruling ideas; i.e. the class which is the dominant material force in society is at the same time its dominant intellectual force." This means that powerful class makes the law and sees that others follow them.

Marx says that feudalism gave the way to the emergence of capitalism. Each stage, after its completion leads to other stage which determines different way of life.

Marx developed his theory of class conflict in his analysis and critique of the capitalist society. The main ingredients of the theory may be summarized as follows:

1. The development of the proletariat :

The capitalist economic system transformed the masses of people into two groups - one is bourgeoise - the capitalists and the other - workers or proletariat and created for them a common situation and inculcated in them an awareness of common interest. Through the development of class consciousness, the economic conditions of capitalism united the workers and constituted them into a class for itself i.e. proletariat.

2. The importance of property :

To Marx, the most important characteristic of any society is its structure of property, and the crucial determinant of an individual's behaviour is his relation to property. Classes are determined on the basis of individuals' relation to the means of production. It is not a man's work but his unique position in relation to the means of production that determines his position in society, e.g. if a man is the owner of the instruments of production he belongs to the upper class - bourgeoise while if he is not the owner only a worker, he belongs to the proletariat - worker's class 'A **class** is a group of individuals who perform the same function in the organization of production'. By other definition it is also a group of individuals who possess similar characteristics in terms of occupation, income, power, status, relation to production. Property divides the people in different classes. Development of class consciousness and conflict over the distribution of economic rewards fortified the class barriers. Since work is the basic form of man's self realization, economic conditions of the particular historic era determine the social, political and legal structure or arrangement and set in movement the processes of evolution and social change.

3. Economic determinism :

Marx has given more importance to the economic conditions. For him economic conditions determine the other aspects of society i.e political social legal or cultural e.g. agricultural mode of living determines the political system, social ranking, the system of law or the recreational pattern like dance or religious performances centred around crop or land. All the festivals involve happiness after a good crop, whereas in industrial mode of production the social cultural religious political systems are different. People become more mobile. The nature of their festivals changes. People become conscious of the political system and mass media.

For him, few persons monopolize the means of production and distribution, thus take control of market machinery. These economically powerful people also control political and ideological spheres. They make all important decisions and control those who do not own the means of production. According to Marx - the Bourgeoise are the capitalists who own and proletariat are those who do not own. Bourgeoise convert their economic power into political power and thus can also control courts, police and the military. Thus ruling elites serve the interests of the capitalists.

4. Polarization of classes :

Developed in capitalist society is a tendency toward the radical polarization of classes. "The whole society breaks up more and more into two great hostile camps - two great directly antagonistic classes - bourgeoise and proletariat" which are opposite to each other. "The capitalists who own the means of production and distribution and the working class - who do not own anything but selling labour." All those who belong to same class develop consciousness of being in the same class. "They think, feel and act alike and unite to see that their interests are protected." They also share the same style of living and pattern of consumption. Thus "class consciousness is the awareness or knowledge among the members of a particular class that they share the same conditions of living, they face the common situation and either enjoy or are compelled to experience the same problems at work. Proletariats always feel that they are being exploited by the bourgeoise since their (bourgeoise's) only interest is to make maximum profits and this can be done only by cutting workers' salaries or benefits. Therefore workers are hostile towards the bourgeoise. For Marx, there are only two classes and each member of society is either in one class or the other.

5. The theory of surplus value :

Capitalists accumulate profit through the exploitation of workers. The value of any commodity is determined by the amount of labour it takes to produce it. 'The labour time necessary for the worker to produce a value equal to the one he receives in the form of wages is less than the actual duration of his work'. Let us say that the "worker spends five hours to produce a value equal to the one contained in his wage, but he works for 8 hours." Thus he works and devotes nearly half of his time for his employer and the half for himself. The term **surplus value** refers to the "quantity of value" produced by the worker beyond the necessary labour time i.e. time needed to produce a value equivalent to his wage. "Since employers own the instruments of production, they can force workers to do extra hours of work and increase their profit by increasing exploitation". Thus workers are compelled to work more in order that profit on the part of employers increases.

6. Pauperization :

"Poverty of the proletariat grows with increasing exploitation of labour.” One capitalist makes many others poor and the wealth of the bourgeoise is increased by large profits with corresponding increase in "the mass of poverty, of pressure, of slavery, of exploitation" of the proletariat. "It follows that in every mode of production which involves the exploitation of man by man the social product is so distributed that the majority of people i.e. labour are condemned to work hard and harder only to have bare necessities of life." On the other hand, the minority, the owners of means of production the property owners enjoy comfort, luxury and recreation. Society is divided into rich and poor. Thus, to Marx, poverty is the result of exploitation, not of scarcity. He strongly believed that the tendency to make profit at the cost of workers leads to poverty among the masses.

7. Alienation :

Karl Marx insists that the mode of capitalism produces alienation among the workers. He prefers to say that workers are forced to work under some inhuman conditions, further without any power or relation to other parts of the manufacturing process. Workers are neither given any right over their tools with which they work or any freedom to determine their own pace, nor share in profit. Thus major incentive to work is lost. This creates powerlessness, meaninglessness and sense of isolation which together produce the sense of indifference or loss of attachment to the work. Workers start feeling that work is something that is external to them. Gradually the workers feel their self is stranger to them as they do not know what to do when they do not find any meaning of their work.

8. Class solidarity and antagonism :

With the growth of class awareness, the crystallization of social relations into two groups gets set and the classes tend to become internally homogeneous and the class struggle becomes more intensified and violent. As the workers feel more closer to one another, they develop more strength or power. They become more aggressive and hostile to the other class. Workers do not like to integrate with the class of another as they have strong belief that the other class is exploiting them.

9. Revolution :

At the peak of the class war, a violent revolution breaks out which destroys the structure of capitalist society. This revolution is most likely to occur during an economic crisis which is a part of the recurring booms and recessions - characteristic of capitalism. According to Marx, when the workers get sufficiently united, they can take over the means of production, remove the bourgeoise from their positions and become owners on their own. "No doubt this whole process of change in turn will involve violent bloodshed but at last there will be only one class i.e. the class of proletariats and not of bourgeoise. "Proletariats will then rule" as Marx has believed.

10. The dictatorship of the proletariat :

After the bloody revolution, capitalistic society ends with the increase of proletariats who will achieve ownership of the means of production. They will rule the economic system of society.

11. Inauguration of the communist society :

Abolition of private property will eliminate class system and thereby the causes of social conflict. All the members will unitedly hold the property and distribute the profits equally among themselves.

3.5 CRITICISM OF MARX'S THEORY :

1. Marx maintained that proletarian revolution would eventually result from the inability of the capitalist system (which organises relation of production) to adapt to technological advances in the forces of production. But this would not happen. In industrially advanced societies, capitalism is still flourishing. Revolution has not been the case. Neither Russia nor China was highly industrialized at the time of their communist revolution. In fact both were primarily agricultural societies.
2. Marx did not foresee the large-scale development of labour union in capitalist societies and therefore his conception of continual competition among individual workers for wages which provide minimum satisfaction did not come true.
3. As Marx had said there would be increased pauperization in industrialized capitalist societies, but on the contrary we witness fast growth of money and progress in these countries. We do not find poverty there.
4. Some predictions like increasing tendency towards automation of production and the concentration of capitalist control in fewer and larger organisations have come true.
5. Marx did not think about the rise of middle class. For him there were only two classes on extreme sides. This conception was false.
6. Marx misjudged the extent of alienation in the average worker. The great depth of alienation and frustration which Marx 'witnessed' among the workers of his day is not "typical" of today's capitalism or its worker who tends to identify increasingly with a number of "meaningful" groups religious, ethnic, occupational and local. This is not to deny the existence of alienation but to point out that alienation results more from the structure of bureaucracy and of mass society than from economic exploitation.
7. Marx also over emphasized the economic base of political power and ignored other important sources of power.
8. Marx's imagination of classless and stateless society is only an ideal; there can be no society without an authority structure or a regulatory mechanism. This invariably leads to a crystallization of social relations between the ruler and the ruled, with inherent possibilities of internal contradiction and conflict.
9. Marx's predictions about the downfall of capitalism have not come true. On the other hand socialism flourished

predominantly in peasant societies whereas capitalist societies show no sign of destructive class war.

10. Today's capitalism does not justify Marx's belief that class conflict is essentially revolutionary in character and that structural changes are always the product of violent upheavals; organized labour has been able to balance the power and brought profound structural changes without violent revolution.
11. The most distinct characteristic of modern capitalism has been the emergence of a large "contented and conservative" middle class consisting of managerial professionals, supervisory and technical personnel.
12. Masses are not poor as Marx has predicted with the increased exploitation of labour.

If the value of surplus labour is the only basis of profit, there is no way to eliminate exploitation and profit accumulation. In fact most socialist countries have a higher percentage of accumulation than do capitalist countries.

3.6 SUMMARY :

Mark's theory of class is not a theory of stratification but a comprehensive theory of social change - a tool for the explanation of change in total societies. This, **T. B. Bottomore** a leading expert on Marxist sociology, considers to be a major contribution of Marx to sociological analysis.

Marx's theory of conflict is revived at present basically because it is in sharp contrast to functionalism which has dominated sociology and anthropology for the past 20 or 30 years. Where functionalism emphasized social harmony, Marxism emphasizes social conflict; where functionalism directs attention to the stability and persistence of social forms. Marxism is radically historical in its outlook and emphasizes the changing structure of society; where functionalism concentrates upon the regulation of social life by general values and norms, Marxism stresses the divergence of interests and values within each society and the role of force in maintaining, over a period of time, a given social order. The contrast between 'equilibrium' and 'conflict' models of society, which was stated forcefully by Dahrenderf in 1950 has not become common place.

Sociology of knowledge as a field of study was definitely improved with Marx's contention that ideological and other human thought forms prevailing at a given time and place depend upon the structure and composition of the society.

Analysis of alienation - Marx saw this economic alienation as the source of general alienation of the individual from society and moreover of the individual from himself. This concept has been greatly expanded in the contemporary radical writers and neo Marxists.

Marx has recognised the importance of economic structure though he has overemphasized it, nevertheless he focussed attention on so far largely neglected factor in the study of society i.e. Economic system which was ignored so far in social sciences.

Karl Marx though most criticised led a train of other social thoughts.

3.7 QUESTIONS FOR SELF-STUDY :

1. Critically evaluate Marx's theory of class conflict.
2. Discuss Marx's theory of class struggle in detail.

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4

MARX'S CONCEPT OF ALIENATION

Unit Structure:

4.0 Objectives
4.1 Introduction
4.2 Theory of Alienation
4.3 Main causes of alienation
4.4 Summary
4.5 Questions
4.6 References

4.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To example the concept of alienation.
- To study Marx theory of main causes of alienation.
- To study Marx's analysis of alienation in capitalist society.

4.1 INTRODUCTION :

Alienation means estrange, stranger as mentioned in the pocket oxford Dictionary. 'Alienation' is a central concept in many of Marx's early writings. For Marx, man's own deed in government, wealth and culture "become to him an alien power standing over against his instead of being ruled by him". Man is thus divided within himself and from his follows never truly 'at home' never truly 'whole' in his social life.

Marx borrowed the concept of alienation from Hegal. Hegal viewed alienation "wealth, state-power etc. as things estranged from man's nature; but Hegal used alienation only in thought form'.

According to Marx the material conditions of life generate alienation. Institutions such as economic, political or religious bring about conditions of alienation. For Marx both religion and economic activity create a condition of alienation. Marx's focus was an economic alienation as found in the capitalist system as it affected every aspect of man’s life.

4.2 THEORY OF ALIENATION :

To Marx work - the production of goods and services - holds the key to human happiness "and fulfilment. Work is the most important, the primary human activity. As such, it can provide the means either to fulfill man's potential or to distort and pervert his nature and his relationships with others. In his early writings Marx developed the idea of "alienated" labour. At its simplest, alienation means that man is cut off from his work; he is separated or different from his labour. As such, he is unable to find satisfaction and fulfilment in performing his labour or in the products of his labour. Unable to express his true nature in his work, he is estranged from himself, he is a stranger to his self. Since work is a social activity, alienation from work also involves alienation from others. The individual is cut off from his fellow workers.

Marx believed that work provided the most important and vital means for man to fulfill his basic needs, his individuality and his humanity. By expressing his personality in the creation of a product, the worker can experience a deep satisfaction. In seeing his product used and appreciated by others, he satisfies their needs and thereby expresses his care and humanity for others. In a community where everyone works for himself as well as for others, work is a completely fulfilling activity. But for Marx, man's relationship to his work has been destructive both to the human spirit and to human relationships.

For Marx, the products of labour i.e. goods were started to be used as commodities to be exchanged for other goods, alienation originated. With the introduction of money, as a medium of exchange, they become commodities for buying and selling. The products of labour became the 'objects' in the market, no longer a means of fulfilling the needs of the individual and the community. From an end in themselves, they become a means to an end, a means for acquiring the goods and services necessary for survival. Goods are no longer a part, of the individuals who produce them. In this way, the product has become an 'alien' object.

Alienation springs initially from the exchange of goods in some form of market system. From this, develops the idea and practice of private property, the individual ownership of the forces of production. Marx argues that although private property has caused the alienation, it is rather the consequence of latter. Once the products of labour are regarded as commodity objects, it is only a short step to the idea of private ownership. In capitalist economy, the ownership of the forces of production is concentrated in the hand of a small minority. Alienation is increased by the fact that workers do not own the goods they produce.

From the idea that the worker is alienated from the product of his labour, a number of consequences arise.

1. The worker becomes separate from the act of production since work is the primary human activity, he becomes alienated from himself.
2. When the worker is alienated from his self, he does not fulfill himself in his work but denies his self; he develops a feeling of misery rather than well being, does not develop freely his mental and physical energies but is physically exhausted and mentally debased.
3. Therefore, the worker feels himself comfortable when he is away from work. While at work he feels restless.
4. Work ceases to be an end in itself, a satisfaction and fulfilment of human needs. It simply becomes a means for him for survival. As a means to an end, work becomes boring or routinised and it cannot produce real fulfilment.

5. Alienated from the product of his work, the performance of his labour and from himself, the worker is also alienated from his fellow men. He does no take interest then in his fellow beings or in their problems. He works only for himself and for his family.

4.3 MAIN CAUSES OF ALIENATION :

Infrastructure : Marx emphasized the economic system - the infrastructure as the foundation of society which ultimately shapes all other aspects of social life. For him, infrastructure can be divided into two parts : the **forces** of production and the **relations** of production. According to Marx, the forces of production i.e. means used for producing goods can change the relations of production i.e. relations between those who produce and those who own them. Under feudalism, an agrarian economy is the main force of production; land owners and land less labourers form two groups of relations. Under capitalism, the raw materials and machinery used for manufacturing are the major forces of production. The relations between those who own the capital and these who do not, are established in a capitalist economy. The capitalists own the forces of production (means of production) while workers simply own their labour, which as wage earners they sell to the capitalists or often on hire.

Marx argues that in capitalist economy, a small minority own the forces of production. The worker neither owns nor has any control over the goods he produces. Like his products he is reduced to the level of a commodity. A monetary value is placed on his work and the costs of labour are assessed in the same way as the costs of machinery and raw materials are assessed. Like the commodities he manufactures, the worker is at the mercy of market forces of the law of supply and demand. When the economic recession is there, many workers lose their job or they are given less wages. Only labour produces wealth yet workers receive wages, only a part of the wealth they create. The rest of the wealth goes in the pocket of the capitalists. This is exploitation of workers. Workers are always exploited due to the greed of the capitalist to maximize profits. Capitalism is based on self interest. Both workers and capitalists work for self gain.

Marx has given live characteristics of alienation. For him powerlessness, sense of isolation, meaninglessness normlessness and self estrangement are the five expressions of alienation.

1. Powerlessness :

In the capitalistic mode of production, the earlier masters were reduced to simple workers. They were not allowed to produce anything original or any work of their own creativity. The workers feel that whatever they are producing, they produce for somebody else. The worker is instructed in all details. His own workmanship is lost. The workers feel that he has lost all his power and freedom. Further mechanization has also robbed all freshness and energies from them. The workers have to set their work according to the pace set by the machines. They lose all freedom and control over their own work. Specialisation of labour further produces routinization and monotony of work. This makes them feel unhappy. The workers thus lose the sense of power, feel powerless. Workers realize that they cannot influence their own destiny in the social structure to which they belong. Workers feel that they are at the mercy of others who decide what they should make and how to make them.

2. Sense of isolation :

In the extreme division of labour, work has been divided into a number of different departments, each being specific and managed by specialists. The workers, as specialised groups, work in one department, they do not have any idea about the other departments. They are not provided with any additional informations regarding the working of the entire system. Thus workers feel isolated and neglected. They start losing the feeling of attachment with work since they are concerned with only one aspect of the entire production and remain strangers to the other aspects of work.

3. Meaninglessness :

In the capitalistic system entrepreneurs who hire the labour, own everything - machine, tools, raw materials, building etc. Thus they have every right on the finished products produced by the workers. Workers do not receive anything extra apart from their wages, though they put hard labour to work. Thus labour is external to the workers i.e. it does not belong to his essential being; i.e. his work, therefore he does not affirm himself, but denies himself, does not feel content but unhappy. He does not find any sense of meaning at his work. When he does not get any extra benefit of his hard work, he loses all charm and purpose of his work. He experiences meaninglessness. He therefore only feels himself outside his work and in his work outside himself. He does not know why he is working. He cannot claim any ownership over his own product, he is separated from the product or processes of production. He cannot feel attached to them. Work becomes an instrument only to satisfy needs external to him. The worker feels that his labour benefits others.

This feeling of losing meaning or the aim of life through work is termed as meaninglessness.

4. Normlessness :

Loss of meaning further leads to loss of values. The worker feels that the goals highly valued in society are very far for him. He gets confused. He loses the sense of achievement or direction to reach his goals. He cannot have any set pattern to follow. He feels rejected or normless. He feels as if he is not appreciated by others for his chosen goals or means. What society considers important, the worker is gradually losing faith in them. Workers feel that they cannot achieve socially desirable goals and further that 'work' is no longer a goal in itself.

5. Self estrangement :

The worker feels separated from himself, finally he does not feel concerned any more. It is an experience of loss of interest or involvement, in necessary activities like work, these activities are no longer goal but are simply endured as means to other needed things such as income. It is the loss of self or identity because what he actually wants to do, he cannot. The worker gets confused what he is or what he is doing. He becomes stranger to himself. The more the worker spends himself, the less he has of himself.

Marx's solution to the problem of alienated labour is a communist or socialist society in which the forces of production are. communally owned and the specialized division of labour is abolished. He believed that capitalism contained the seeds of its own destruction. The concentration of alienated workers in large scale industrial enterprises would encourage an awareness of exploitation, of common interest and facilitate organization to overthrow the ruling capitalist class.

4.4 SUMMARY

Karl Marx from Germany strongly protested the capitalism and pointed out its drawbacks. Especially the workers are greatly exploited and become the instruments for making the profit for the employers i.e. capitalists.

Workers feel deprived of their basic rights and thus unitedly flight against the capitalists, leading to take over the factories and to become the owner themselves. ‘Alienation’ is one of the most important aspect of capitalistic mode of production according to Karl Marx.

4.5 QUESTIONS

1. Discuss Marx’s concept of alienation. How has he related this concept to work or production in capitalist system?
2. What is historical materialism? Discuss Marx’s theory of dialectical materialism in detail.
3. What is conflict? Discuss Marx’s theory of class struggle in detail.

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5

EMILE DURKHEIM:
SOCIAL FACTS

Unit Structure:

5.0 Objectives
5.1 Introduction –Durkheim life and circumstances
5.2 Theme of the rules of sociological method
5.3 Concept of Social Facts
5.4 Characteristics of Social Facts
5.5 Rules for Studying Social Facts
5.6 Summary
5.7 Check your progress
5.8 Questions
5.9 Reference

5.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To understand the concept of ‘social facts’, their nature and their characteristics.
- To get acquainted with the rules for studying social facts.

5.1 INTRODUCTION :

Emile Durkheim, through his major works, carved out a special field of study for sociology, established a sound empirical methodology and laid the foundation of structural functionalism. This is one of the dominant schools of sociological theory today. ‘The rules of sociological Method’ describes the methods to be used in study of society. At the outset Durkheim defined the phenomenon next reputed earlier interpretations and finally gave a sociological explanation of the phenomenon.

Emile Durkheims was the 1st French sociologist the first real practitionete of the new science of society which was emerging during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Inspite of being involved in the affairs of the French society, his life was dominated by his academic career.

Durkheim was born at Epinal in Eastern French province of Lorraine on April 15, 1858. Being the son of a Rabbi he decided early in life is following the family tradition and become a Rabbi himself. Thus along with the regular course at school he also studied Hebrew the old testament and the Talmud. However in his early teens he turned away from all religious involvement but continued to have an interest in religious phenomena.

From 1882 to 1887 Durkheim taught in a number of provincial Lycees in the neighborhood of Paris and also went to Germany for further studies with the publication of his reports on German academic life. Durkheim at the age of twenty nine was recognized as a promising figure in the social sciences and in social philosophy. He had several other publications to his credit and these included reviews of the works of German sociologists. Gumplowicz philosopher fouille. These achievements enabled him to get an appointment to the staff of the University of Bordeaux in 1887. A social science course was created for him at the faculty of letters at that university. This was the 1st time that a French University had opened its doors to this subject with pursing his career at Bourdeause Durkheim married Louise Dreyfus. They had two children his wife devoted herself fully to his work. This is turning enabled him to devote all his energies to his scholarly pursuits.

The Bourdeause years saw Durkheim as being very productive wherein he published a number of major critical reviews in 1893 he defended his French doctoral thesis. The ‘Division of labour’ and his Latin thesis on Montesquien two years later ‘the Rules of Sociological Method’ appeared and in 1897 ‘Le Suicide’ was published. These to three major works brought Durkheim into the for front of the academic world.

After establishing sociology as a new field of interest to a wider public, Durkheim also wanted to set up a scholarly journal entirely devoted to the new discipline. Accordingly he founde ‘L’ Annee Sociologique in 1898 in which current literature of sociology in if. France and elsewhere were analyzed. The Annee was successful from the beginning and the French public for the first time gained an overall view of the depth and breadth of sociology.

In 1898 Durkheim also published his famous paper on individual and collective representation a service of other papers published included ‘the Determination of Moral facts’ value judgments and judgments of reality “Primitive classification’ and ‘The Definition’ of Religious Phenomena’.

Nine years after joining the faculty of the University of Bourdeause Durkheim was promoted to a full professorship in social science the first such prostitution in France. In 1906 he was called to the sarbonne as a professor of the science of education in 1913 Durkheims chair was changed to “science of education in sociology” with this Auguste comtes brain child (sociology) had finally gained entry at the University of Paris.

During the last few years of his stay at Bourdeause Durkheim had become interested in the study of religious phenomena. Under the influence of Robertson Smith and the British school of Anthropology, he turned to a detailed study of primitive religion. After publishing a number of preliminary papers in this area Durkheim finally wrote his last major work. ‘The Elementary forms of Religious life which was published in 1912.

The credit for founding the modern phase of sociological theory goes to Durkheim along with Marx Weber. Durkheim succeeded in establishing abroad framework for analyzing social systems, its nature and the relations of that system to the personality of the individual.

Durkheim was an amniuoroud reader and was therefore influenced by many thinkers. His influences have been classified under broad categories as follows.

a) Influences of the French thinkers of the Enlightenment.

Durkheim was greatly influenced by Rousseau conception of volunte Generate “(general will) which conceive society as an expression of social solidarity” further Rousseau distinction between social and psychological phenomena influenced Durkheim in his concept of social and individual facts.

Durkheim learnt from Montesquieu the idea that all social cultural phenomena are interrelated. All elements form a whole and it taken reperately without reference to the other they cannot be understood. In other words Durkheim was indebted to Montesquieu for his holistic view of society.

Comte and Saint Simon influenced Durkheim much more than Rousseau or Montesquieu. Infact Durkheim considered himself as a continuator of the train of thought started by Comte and Saint Simon. (The influence of Comte and Saint Simon on Durkheim will be discussed at length later in this lesson.

b) Influence of other French Thinkers: -

Apart from the Enlightenment thinkers Durkheim was also influenced by two of his teachers from the great historian fasted De Coulanges be learned a lot about the careful historical method of research this is evident in certain sections of this work on division of labour. Towards the end of his life when Durkheim was fascinated by religious phenomena he was once again influence by Conlanges classical book ‘The Ancient city’.

Durkheim was also influenced by his teacher Enmile Bourdouses and reductionist doctrine. This was the idea that society is a reality ‘suigeneris (unique) which cannot be explained by reductionist arguments. Another French thinker who influences Durkheim was the neo-kantian philosopher Charies Renowier. Durkheim like this thinker, believed that ethical and moral considerations occupy a central position in philosophical thought that there is a need for a sciences of ethics and that philosophy should serve as guide to social action.

c) Influence of British and German Thinkers: -

Apart from French Thinkers, Durkheim was also influenced by a number of British and German thinkers. Among the British Herbert Spencer work is the most important Durkheim has derived most of his evolutionary views from Spencer.

Robertson Smith a British Scholar and an anthropologist influenced Durkheim in his later years. The core ideas in his theory of Religion were based on Smiths ideas.

Among the German thinkers, Durkheim was closed to in manual Kant and his stean philosophy of moral duty.

Durkheim distinction between mechanical and organic solidarity can be traced to a similar distinction made by Ferdinand Jannies in his work entitled ‘Germainschaft and Gesselschaft. However, the underlying tones of their works are different while Jonnies found the older form of social organisation Gemainschaft (community) more ‘organic’ attractive and natural, Durkheim found the modern form of solidarity more organic progressive and desirable this difference may be due to the fact that German thought in genemia continued to hanker after the Golden Age of the part while French thought looked to the ‘Golden Age in the future’.

Finally it is believed that within wundt’s nation of the voksecde (the group soul) may have played a part in Durkheims formulation of the collective conscience’ Wundt’s method and style of scientific work provided Durkheim with a model of how scientific research ought to be conducted in other fields of the social science.

Durkheim was profoundly influenced by Saint Simon and Comte and he considered himself as a continuator of their thought. To quality this statement we may how consider the different ways in which Saint Simon and Comet influenced Durkheims & social thought and his works chronologically as well as ideologically Saint Simon had two separate epochs the Revolution Reaction which was accent rated and developed by Marx and the conservative Reaction which was developed by Durkheim.

According to Simon class conflict played an important role in the transition from the tendal to the bourgeois order. But it lost all its significance once the new scientific industrial order was established. Simon recognized the existence of classes and strata in the new society but they also believed that the new condition could lead to a hierarchical order of social peace and stability. Integration could be achieved primarily by starting appropriate moral ideas. Durkheim adopted the same views when he said that the new division of labour need hot lead to a hierarchical order of social peace and stability integration could be achieved primarily by starting appropriate moral ideas Durkheim adopted the same views when he said that the new division of labour need not lead to disorganization and anarchy. Like Simon Durkheim also believed that moral ideas are the real cement of a society.

5.2 THEME OF THE RULES OF SOCIOLOGICAL METHOD :

Durkheim emphasized in his writings that sociology was largely a philosophical discipline consisting of an embracing generalizations. These generations rest more upon logical derivation from ‘a prior’ precepts than upon empirical study. Thus, Durkheim in the Rules of Sociological Methods aimed at clarifying the subject matter of Sociology and delimiting it’s field of investigation.

Durkheim outlined a set of procedures for studying human society because no one had provided such a clear set of methodological directives in the some detail before. His main aim was to make sociological research as objective and scientific as possible. He said that for this, the investigator should eradicate all his preconceptions. The phenomenon under study should eradicate all his preconceptions. The phenomenon under study should be approached with an open mind and all biases must be forgotten. That investigator must concentrate on those characteristics which are external and which others will clearly be able to see. By doing so, the researcher will be able to produce clear end unambiguous definitions of the phenomenon he is investigating.

5.3 CONCEPT OF SOCIAL FACTS :

Durkheim believed that the subject matter for sociologists of the phenomena they study are ‘Social Facts’ which are different from any other facts. They are the very fabric of society and arise out of human relationship and human associations.

According to Durkheim social facts are “collective way’s of acting, thinking and feeling that present the property of existing outside the individual consciousness”. He argued that social facts are not just manifestations of economic or psychological realities or more concepts but are first and foremost ‘things’ which are social in nature. He believed that these ‘Social facts’ can not be studied by employing the method of introspection. They have to be studied objectively.

5.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL FACTS :

According to Durkheim social facts have distinctive social characteristics and determinants which can not be explained on the biological or psychological levels. They also endure through time and out last any set or group of individuals. Besides these social facts can be recognized by virtue of two other properties –

1. They are ‘external’ to individuals.
2. They exercise ‘constraint’ over individual behaviour.

There are two senses in which social facts are external to the individual firstly we know that every man is born into an on going society which already has a definite structure. This conditions the individual personality. E.g. an individual finds the belief and practices of his religious life readymade at birth. Here this implies the existence of social facts ‘outside of himself’. Secondly any individual is only a single element within the totality of relationship which constitutes a society. These relationships are not the creation of any single individual but are created by multiple interactions between individuals. E.g. the system of education in a society or the practices in one’s profession etc. function independently of one’s own use of them.

Social facts are not only external they exercise ‘constraint’ too. In other words, they are ‘coercive’. This can be explained in many ways, e.g. fashion is a social fact. If an individual indulges in forms of areas which are not in fashion, he invites the ridicule of other or if one refuses to follow the patterns of one’s profession, he puts his success in jeopardy. Some of these sanctions may be applied indirectly”. E.g. one will seem to care if one individual follows practices in his businesses that are outdated. But, sooner or later, there will be consequences which will induce the person to care.

Thus, social facts are highly distinctive which exist neither in the body nor in the individual consciousness. Their locus is in society. They constitute the proper domain of sociology and give to this science its unique character.

Apart from these characteristics of social facts, according to Durkheim social facts are of two different kinds which can not be ignored. The two types are ‘normal’ and ‘pathological’ social facts. They are normal when social facts are widespread or general in a society. By this, he meant those social phenomena which were necessary for the operation of a healthy and well ordered society. In this sense, therefore, crime can be found in all societies and it is normal. This is turn means that it is an integral part of any healthy society. Now, how do we study these social facts? To answer this, there is need to study the ‘Rules’ for studying social facts.

5.5 RULES FOR STUDYING SOCIAL FACTS :

As discussed earlier, Durkheim insisted that sociologists must seek objectivity in the study of social facts. For this the rules are follows :

1) The first rule is to consider social facts as ‘things’. Durkheim believed that until then. Sociology had unfortunately concerned itself with concepts. Comte had made on effort to consider social phenomenon as natural objects but very soon he lapsed from objectivity. Spencer too according to Durkheim, abandoned facts for ideas. Durkheim did admit that it is not easy to dispel sentiments and emotions from sociological research. Members of society are susceptible to the opinion of others.

   However, this does not mean that a given field of study should be approached with a completely ‘open mind’. Rather, the sociologist must adopt an emotionally neutral attitude towards what he sets out to investigate. This in turn will depend upon the establishment of precisely formulated concepts.

2) The second rule of the scientific method is that a study should comprise a group of phenomena defined in advance by certain common external characteristics and all phenomena so defined should be included within this group. The rule of definition is particularly important in Sociology because most of the time we deal with concepts like family, crime, property etc. which have meanings in ordinary speech also. This can interfere with precise scientific communication.

3) Finally, the third rule which the sociologists must observe is that they must try to consider social facts, being investigated from an aspect i.e. independent of their individual manifestation. This rule for example, will permit us to distinguish the pecularities of family systems reported by travelers, missionaries and explorers from the underlying reality of family forms. The independence and irreducibility of social facts was his main rule in all sociological analysis.

Last but not the least, Durkheim was also very concerned that sociological theories should be testable. As it was not possible to experiment with total societies, he felt that the comparative method should be used. This would enable the sociologist to compare these linings from one society with these of other societies.

5.6 SUMMARY :

To sum up, it can be said that according to Durkheim, sociology had its birth in the great philosophical system and was therefore overburdened by it. His first principle, “study social facts as things.” means that social life can be analyzed as rigorously as objects or event in nature. What is required is that the principle of casuality should be applied to social phenomena.

5.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. Discuss the main ideas developed by Durkheim in his book ‘The rules of Sociological Method.”
2. Bring out the significant of Durkheim ‘The Rules of Sociological Method’ in Sociological literature.
3. Critically examine Durkheim’s concept of social facts.

5.8 QUESTIONS :

1. Discuss Emile Durkheims idea of Social facts. Give examples.
2. Explain in detail Social facts.

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6

DIVISION OF LABOUR

Unit Structure:

6.0 Objectives
6.1 Introduction
6.2 The Division of Labour
6.3 Mechanical Solidarity
6.4 Organic Solidarity
6.5 Criticism
6.6 Summary
6.7 Check your progress
6.8 Questions
6.9 References

6.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To understand the essential idea contained in the 'Division of Labour'
- To understand the two types of to solidarity as differentiated by Durkheim

6.1 INTRODUCTION :

In the last person we studied about Durkheims concerns with two concepts namely social solidarity and 'anomie' in the present lesson we shall try to understand how Durkheim has focused on these two concepts in his work entitled 'The Divisions of labour'.

6.2 THE DIVISION OF LABOUR :

'The Division of Labour' was the first and most famous work of Emile Durkheim written in 1893. It constituted the major of two theses which he presented of the University of Paris for his doctorate.

The rise of modernity gave rise to a recurring sense of cultural crisis. Many social theories were formulated in an effort to explain and justify the emerging cultural complexity of modernity one such attempt to found in the words of Durkheim in this book The Division of labour. Durkheim set out to put forth is views on the moral consequences of the specialization of activities and functions which industrialism (civilization, according to Durkheim) brings about. He argued that division of labour encompass less all departments of social life and can no longer be confined to purely economic activities alone.

Durkheim’s emphasis on the moral nature of social relationships appears in all his works. In ‘Division of Labour’ also he came out with the idea that the moral life of man in society is a unique subject for investigation which sociologists must undertake to study. He claimed that division of Labour is a moral phenomenon rather than an economic one. He focused on the moral, legal and political problems of societies as they evolve from simple to modern industrial societies.

Earlier, Comte had argued that the division of labour would aucate increased conflicts as individuals and groups would protect their own interests. Spencer on the other hand, had suggested that the division of labour would bring greater inter-independence which would make modern industrial societies less vulnerable to disintegration that simple societies.

Durkheim was influenced by both these ideas. He agreed with Comte that simple or primitive societies have little division of labour. He suggested that such societies have a segmental structure and there is only a limited number of roles to be played by each group. Consequently they are found together by the common roles, pratias, exceptions and beliefs.

As society changes from simple to complex, division of labour also increases as new roles are required thus there in an increasing differentiation of units or groupings. In this process the uniformity of beliefs and moral ideas start decreasing and yet the society does not disintegrate. This is because a new moral order develops to supplement the weakening influences of common values. In effect, Durkheim suggested that a new form of social solidarity or a new form of morality emerges and prevents a society from collapsing. This amounts to saying that as the nature of the moral consensus change there is a corresponding change in the nature of society.

In this account of the division of labour is society we can see that Durkheim like Comte and Spencer has been used an equilibrium mode of society. He viewed society as a stable orderly system which experiences changes and which adjust or adopts to the change situation in some way to re-create a new order a new state of equilibrium.

The use of the concept of equilibrium produces of tendency to reify society, i.e. it gives it the characteristics of a real object. It is assumed that society has an existence of its own Durkheim did claim that society exists 'Sui generis' i.e. society exist in its own right as a separate independent entity.

The question which Durkheim wanted, to pursue in the Division of Labour was what it satisfies. He wanted to find some connection between the division of labour and moral life. Of question often asked is whether likeness or 'differences' between people motivates social relations. Durkheim believed that both similarity and dissimilarity are necessary to the development of natural friendship. This shed a new light on the division of labour that is the differences in duties and responsibilities that contributes to the solidarity of persons he further wanted to know if there are several types of social solidarity and he himself answered in the affirmative. He approached this distinction through the law which he said are also of two types. Repressive and Restitutive laws of sanctions. Let us now try to understand the two types of solidarities and the laws which correspond to them.

6.3 MECHANICAL SOLIDARITY:

This denotes the form of cohesion (togetherness) existing in primitive and traditional social system. It is characterized by the fact that it emphasizes likeness and similarities between individual common moral sentiments binds one member to another mechanical solidarity places strict restrictions of any individual to develop a sense of personal identity uniqueness. Under mechanical solidarity the volume, intensity and rigidness of the collective conscience is very high because the individual depends upon his group almost completely and there is almost no slope for individuality.

Repressive sanctions are operative in societies with mechanical solidarity and they make up the Penal laws. Repressive laws apply to crimes and similar actions which offend the collective conscience thus the crime committed is against the community and not morally against a victim. A crime is an act which violates the sentiments which are universally approved by the members of society. If is the collective conscience which determines whether an action is a crime or not Repressive sanctions consist in the imposition of some kind of suffering upon the individual as a punishment. These could include depriving one of liberty inflicting of pain, loss of honour etc.

The collective conscience under mechanical solidarity is predominantly religious. It affects all consciences in the same way because everyone in similarly situated in relation to values, beliefs practices etc. we may conclude by saying that when mechanical solidarity predominates, the collective conscience to extensive and strong. It harmonized means movements in detail. In these conditions the individual conscience can hardly be distinguished from the collective conscience and collective authority is absolute.

6.4 ORGANIC SOLIDARITY

This denotes the form of cohesions in modern societies and is the opposite of the mechanical type of solidarity. This is because unlike mechanical solidarity. This one develops out of difference between individuals in modern societies. This type of social cohesion stems not simply from acceptance of a common set of beliefs and sentiments but from functional interdependence in the division of labour. Organic solidarity presupposes not identity but differences between individual in their beliefs and actions the growth of organic solidarity and the expansion of the division of labour are therefore associated with increasing individualism.

Restitutive sanctions operate in societies having organic solidarity. These sanctions are imposed on the offender and do not concern society as a whole. They are typical in most areas of civil and constitutional laws. They are not punishments but merely involve restoration as the restablishment of relationships as they were before the law was violated. Thus, if one man claims damages from another, the legal process in values compensating the claimant for some sort of loss incurred by him as an individual.

There is hardly any social disgrace attached to the individual who losses a case of this kind.

Under organic solidarity three dimensions of collective conscience become weakened they are.

i) Volume i.e. extent to which individual conscience is wholly permeated by collective feelings and standards

ii) Intensity – The energy and sincerity with which individual observe collective sentiments.

iii) Rigidity – The relative sharpness or vagueness in collective moral ideas.

It is for this reason that:

a) More and more scope is given to individual conscience attitude and freedom of action.

b) Sentiment relating to the collectively lose their intensity.

c) Collective moral ideas become the focus of vogue feeling and ideas as opposed to rigid nations of duty.

Thus, we see that the progress of organic solidarity signifies a declining collective conscience. This, however does not mean that commonly held beliefs and sentiments disappear completely in complex societies. Neither does it mean that since each individual follows ‘his own interest’. The formation of contractual relations become a moral this is because according to Durkheim, as contractual relations expand or increase, they are accompanied by the development of norms which given these contracts. Hence all contracts are regulated by definite prescriptions. However, Durkheim was disturbed by emerging moral ambiguity concerning the relationship between the individual and society in the contemporary world. On the one hand he saw that the development of the modern form of society is associated, with the expansion of ‘Individualism’. This is a result of the growing division of labour which produces specialization of occupational functions and which therefore encourages the development of specific talents, capacities and attitude. According to Durkheim there are strong events of moral idea’s in the present age which encourages the development of individual personality, special qualities etc. on the other hand, strong contradictory moral trends also, praise the “universally developed individual”.

Durkheim believed that these apparent contradictory moral ideals can be understood only through a historical and sociological analysis of the expanding division of labour. In doing so he pointed out that division of labour is not wholly a modern phenomenon because it existed in primitive societies as well through in a rudimentary form and was confirmed to a sexual division. But as societies become more voluminous an denser, there arose a competition for scarce resource which led to rivalry everywhere. As the competition become acute, social, differentiation developed as a peaceful solution to the problem. When individual started pursing different occupations each competed with only a few who also pursued the same occupation. The chances of conflict therefore gradually diminished. Thus the division of labour was the result of the struggle for existence.

Durkheim also considered cases where for some reason or other specialization of activities have failed to create organic solidarity he described two major abnormal forms namely the Anomic and the forced division of labour. Anomic division of labour denoted the absence of regulation or rules in society as a result of which the parts of the social order are not sufficiently co-ordinate Anomic in this sense is a societal property and not a psychological condition. But this state of affairs produces a sense of isolation and meaninglessness of life and work for the individual.

In the forced division of labour it is not the lack of rules but rather their excess that is the source of the problem. When rules become very rigid individuals find themselves estranged and resentful because they do not have the freedom to choose their occupations instead they are thrust upon the person by custom, law and even sheer chance.

This then was a broad outline of the ideas developed in the ‘Division of Labour’ and the differences in Mechanical and organic solidity. It constituted the foundations of Durkheim’s sociology and all his other works represent elaboration of the themes discussed in this work. Before concluding we can briefly study what various critics have sold about Durkheims works on the division of labour.

6.5 CRITICISM :

(1) The ‘Division of Labour’ as Durkheims’ formative work and not or nature one his thoughts, it is said are not are ‘formed’ in this wor is they are in his later books.

(2) Durkheim has been accused of using social differentiation which is a phenomenon characteristic of modern society is the formative condition of individual liberty only when the collective conscience loses its over powering, rigidity in a society can individual start enjoying a certain amount of freedom of judgement and action. In the individualistic society, the main problem is to maintain a minimum of collective conscience otherwise organic soldierly would lead to social disintegration.

Durkheim attempted to portray society as an interaction of minds that would have consequences for the subjective life of each individual. In this work the collective conscience merely determines the extent to which people develop a sense of themselves as individuals.

6.6 SUMMARY :

Collective conscience: Is the body of beliefs and sentiments which are common to the average members of a society various in its form and content according to whether society is characterized by mechanical or organic solidarity.

6.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. What is mechanical solidarity?
2. What do you man by organic solidarity?

6.8 QUESTIONS FOR SELF-STUDY

1. Discuss the most notable contribution of Durkheims book the Division of Labour.
2. Discuss in detail division of labour by Durkheims.

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7

THEORY OF SUICIDE

Unit Structure :

7.0 Objectives
7.1 Introduction
7.2 Reasons for undertaking the study on suicide
7.3 Explanatory theory advanced by Durkheim
7.4 Nature and implications of the study
7.5 Criticism
7.6 Summary
7.7 Check your progress
7.8 Questions
7.9 References

7.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To understand why Durkheim turned to the study of suicide and the explanatory theory he advanced regarding suicide.
- To understand the nature of his explanations and the implications of this study.

7.1 INTRODUCTION :

Durkheim's book entitled 'Le Suicide' is related in various ways to his study of the 'Division of Labour'. This study deals with a pathological aspect of modern societies it illuminates in the most striking manner the relation of the individual to the collectivity it begins with a definition of the phenomenon, continues with a relation of earlier interpretations, then come a definition of the types of suicide. Durkheim has developed a general theory of the phenomenon.

7.2 REASONS FOR UNDERTAKING THE STUDY ON SUICIDE :

Durkheim turned to the study of suicide for a number of reasons.

a) The suicide of his very close friends victor Hommary affected him deeply and thereafter it influenced his interest and explanation of it.

b) For two centuries there had been a widespread and continuing debate of this considered as a moral problem. In the nineteenth century it was treated as a growing social problem requiring attention and explanations. This prompted Durkheim to undertake a study on suicide for the simple reason that it was timely.

c) Durkheim considered the phenomenon of suicide as something concrete and specific. It offered researchers groups of facts having definite limits and which could be clearly defined. Durkheim felt that this was the kind of front on which sociology could advance.

d) For Durkheim the study of suicide offered an excellent opportunity for demonstrating the principles which he had put forth in his work entitled 'The Rules of Sociological Method'. This principle stated that social facts should be treated as things which are external to the individual.

e) Finally it may be said that the study of suicide had the most direct bearing on the initial question of Durkheim's sociological work i.e. what are the bonds which unite men with one another? LeSuicide offered the clearest case of the dissolution of these bonds.

7.3 EXPLANATORY THEORY ADVANCED BY DURKHEIM :

At the outset Durkheim defined suicide as every case of death resulting directly of indirectly from a positive or negative act performed by the victim himself and which strives to produce this result.

According to Durkheim a positive act would be to shoot oneself or to hand oneself. A 'negative act' would be to remain in a burning building or to refuse food to the point of starvation. Thus, a hunger strike carried out until death is an example of suicide according to Durkheim's definition. Similarly, 'directly' or 'indirectly' refers to a distinction which can be compared to the one between 'positive' and 'negative'. A gunshot may produce death directly. But if one does not leave a burning building it can bring out about death indirectly or in the long run.

Durkheim's definition of suicide includes not only those cases which are usually recognized as suicides but also those instances of voluntary deaths which are surrounded by an area of heroism and glory. E.g. an Indian women committing Sati or an officer who prefers to give up his life rather than surrender in the battlefield.

Usually his characteristic method of argument by elimination, Durkheim systematically considered and rejected the various factors which are liable to have an influence on the suicide rate, namely psychic disposition physical environment, race and heredity. He also dismissed the then popular view that imitation was one of the cases of suicide.

Durkheim's explanation was systematic. He differed from the previous scholars because he handled various factors affecting suicide rates, not one by one, but rather as jointly operative and mutually inter-related. He tried to establish that two dimensions 'integration' and 'regulation' maintain a state of balance it may force certain individuals to take their own lives i.e. commit suicide.

'Integration' is the extent to which individuals experience a sense of belonging to the collectivity. 'Regulation' is the extent to which the actions and desires of individuals are kept in check by moral values. According to Durkheim, a society which possesses too much or too less of those dimensions will favour different varities of types of suicide.

In integration dimension gives two corresponding types of suicide.

1. **Egoistic Suicide –** It is the product of insufficient integration and is a distinctively modern phenomenon. Egoistic suicide can be illustrated by showing how suicide rates vary according to religious affiliation, marital status and political events. The level of integration in the relevant social group is the common denominator among these empirical variations and also a key factor which can prevent suicide.

   That is why Protestantism which tolerates individualism includes a higher suicide rate. Similarly, suicide rates are high among bachelors and the widowed but lower among the married because the latter are well integrated into a family group. Again, in times of war there is an increase in collective political favour and this causes suicide rates to generally fall.

2. **Altruistic Suicide –** It is the product of over – integration or too much integration. It is typical in traditional and primitive societies but it is also found in the modern military context. In these cases, individuals kill themselves out of a sense of excessive moral obligation. The individuals life is so rigorously governed by customer and habits that he takes his own life because of higher commandments.

Altruistic suicide can further be sub-divided into 'obligatory' and 'optional' varieties. Classic illustrations of obligatory altruistic suicides are women throwing themselves at the funeral pyre of their husbands (Sati), Dannish warriors killing themselves in old age as a noble and praiseworthy act. E.g. Japanese Hara-kiri's, self homicide by army suicide squards etc.

The 'Regulation Dimension' also gives two corresponding types of suicide.

1. **Anomic Suicide –** This is the result of insufficient regulation and modern society its effects are added to those of the lack of integration. The main examples given by Durkheim of this variety of suicide are with reference to these effects of economic and commercial crisis because these cause a deregulation of the normative structure.

   Social change may create anomie either in the whole society or in some parts of it. According to him, sudden changes upset the societal scale instantly but a new scale can not be immediately improvised. Collective conscience requires time to reclassify men and things. Anomie suicide may also be found in the domestic context. Statistics show that in Europe the number of suicides is much higher among the separated and the divorced than among the married.

   When there is economic depression it leads to a sudden downward mobility and affected men experience a de-regulation in their lives. There is loss of moral certainty and customary expectations because they are no longer sustained by the group to which these men once belonged. Similarly, the onset or rapid prosperity leads to a quick upward mobility. The affected men are deprived of the social support needed in their new style of life.

2. **Fantastic suicide –** Durkheim only mentioned this type in a brief footnote. It is a product of excessive regulation and can be considered the counterpart of the altruistic case.

7.4 NATURE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY :

In order to be able to relate Durkheim's theory of suicide to his methodological pronouncements it will be useful to understand the nature of his explanations.

Durkheim tried to explain differential suicide rates in terms of social causes – real living active forces, suicidogenic currents. In any given population it is assumed that there are a number of individuals who are suicide prone and who succumb to the impact of suicidogenic currents. Further, Durkheim believed that there are three currents of opinion which incline men in three divergent (even contradictory) directors have a certain personality.

i) Individuals have a certain personality.
ii) An individual is ready to abandon it if required by the community.
iii) An individual is open is some measure to ideas of progress.

When these 'Current of opinion' mutually moderate one another, the 'moral agent' is in a state of equilibrium. This protects the individual against any thought of suicide. But even if one of them exceed a little in intensity it is harmful to the other two and it becomes suicidogenic.

Durkheim presented the currents which generate suicide in a wide variety of ways. He described them as the nature of civilization, ideas and sentiments, belief customs, a state of artist etc. in effect. Durkheim specified all those social factors which can impair the psychological health of the individuals.

We may conclude, by saying that according to Durkheim theory of suicide, under adverse social conditions man's social context fails to provide him with the required sources of attachments and regulations at the appropriate level of intensity. This impairs the psychological or moral health of the individuals and vonerable suicide prone individuals respond by committing suicide.

The importance of this study is the formulation of the law of suicide. This law states that suicide varies inversely with the degree of integration of the social group of which the individual is a part." However, this law of suicide is true only under specified conditions. For example, firstly it is valid provided the regulative system affecting the group is functioning normally. Secondly it is valid provided the group does not establish special regulations which would demand its members to commit suicide under certain circumstances.

The importance to this study cannot be disputed. Durkheim has shown that there is something in society which experts an influence on individuals which makes them what they come to be. These are "Social facts" which impose external restraints upon individuals also operate as positive guides to action. Both material and non-material things exercise constraint and guidance. This study is important also because it tells us about the nature of man and society. Durkheim has shown that the decision to commit suicide can not be understood in psychological terms or by any reference to individual victims. Suicide is a social phenomenon.

7.5 CRITICISMS AGAINST DURKHEIM'S 'STUDY' OR 'SUICIDE' :

Like all his other words 'suicide' has also been criticized on various ground by his critics. The types of criticism may be broadly divided into four categories.

1. The first category of criticism are of a general logical nature. Critics have alleged that Durkheim defined his terms to suit his arguments and presented contradictory assertions.

2. Durkheim has been criticized for this 'use of the data' and the relationship between theory and evidence. Pope, for example, has presented detailed evidence that Durkheim's theory is not borne out by a close examinations of the data which he has assembled. He therefore has questioned the worth of this work.

3. The third allegation against Durkheim's study of suicide is that the theory of the different types of suicides is itself made untestable by its 'ambiguity' and also by the diversity of different and unrelated causal statements made in the course of the analysis. Pope has argued that the two types of suicide called egoism and anomie are not really different.

4. Douglas has questioned the originality of Durkheim's contribution. He argues that Durkheim's statistical data adds very little to what had already been discovered by his contemporaries. Further, Douglas has argued that Durkheim statistical data is based on 'administrative categorization' and not on scientific classification and concepts. This according to him introduced and element of uncontrolled bias in the study.

7.6 SUMMARY :

Not with standing the shortcomings of the study as alledged by some, Durkheim's detailed study of suicide has established sociology as a theoretical science with a special subject matter and a special approach. The study reveals Durkheim's conception of the aspects of the social million that have dynamic consequences for the lives of individuals and of the way in which they exert their influences. He has reiterated that social facts are things that they are external to the individual and that sociology does not and can not rest upon a psychological foundation.

7.7 CHECK YOU PROGRESS :

1. Bring out the significance of Durkheim's 'suicide' in sociological literature.
2. What is alteruistic suicide?
3. What is egoistic suicide?

7.8 QUESTIONS :

1. Explain Durkheim theory of suicide.
2. Discuss how altruistic suicide differs from other forms of suicide?

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8

ELEMENTARY FORMS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

Unit Structure :

8.0 Objectives
8.1 Introduction
8.2 Main ideas of the book
8.3 Function of religion
8.4 Durkheim's views on morality
8.5 Criticisms
8.6 Summary
8.7 Check your progress
8.8 Questions
8.9 References

8.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To understand Durkheim's concerns in his book entitled 'the Elementary Forms of Religious life'.
- To acquaint students with function of religion and morality.

8.1 INTRODUCTION :

Durkheim earlier concerns with social regulations were focused on external forces of control. Later, he considered those forces of control that were internalized in the individual consciousness. He was convinced that society has to be present within the individual. This conviction led him to the study of religion which is one of the forces that creates within individuals a sense of moral obligation to conform to the demands of society. We shall now study the major ideas on religion as put forward by Durkheim.

8.2 MAIN IDEAS OF THE BOOK :

Durkheim's last major book 'The elementary Forms of Religious Life' published in 1912 is often regarded as the most profound and the most original of his works. A relatively long interval separates it from his earlier work. This work has become a classic for two reasons, Firstly, it represents a major breakthrough in establishing the sociology of religion, Secondly, it proposes a wholly different kind of answer to a question which philosophers had debated for centuries. In this process it has helped in establishing a sociological theory of knowledge.

In his earlier works Durkheim had concluded that modern society is characterized by social differentiation, organic solidarity, density of population, weakening of the conscience collection, intensity of communication and of the struggle for survival. He was deeply concerned with the pathological systems of modern societies which could eventually lead to the disintegration society. He was therefore; very keen on understanding how the reintegration of the individual into the collectivity could be brought about.

Durkheim suggested that religious activity is found in society because it has a positive function. it helps to maintain the moral unity of society.

Durkheim chose to study the religion of the aborigine tribe of Australia because these societies represent the simplest type of organization. He believed that it would reveal all that is essential to social organization in general. This would help in highlighting the exact difference between modern and traditional social systems. This in turn would enable sociologists to locats all that is sacking for moral cohesion in industrial (modern) societies.

Durkheim began by refuting the then existing theories of the origin of religion. He rejected Taylors theory of ‘Animism’ and Max Miller’s theory of ‘Naturism’ on the grounds that they failed to explain the main difference between the ‘sacred’ and the ‘profane’ two kinds of phenomena which are the essence of the religion. He also believed that Taylor and Max Miller’s concepts interpreted religion as an infact a ‘reality’ he considered ‘totenism’ as the key concept to plain the origins of religion. He found that the foundations of all religious believe reside in the concept of a mysterious impersonal force which controls life Durkheim’s contention was that this force is derived from the power of the group over the individual. The totem is the outward and visible symbol or emblem of this power. According to him nothing is intrinsically sacred or profane. It becomes either of them according to the value attached to object by the individual. The special character of the sacred is that it is surrounded by cultural prescriptions and prohibitions (do’s and don’ts). It also involves prescribed ritual practices and a definite institutional from. That way, every religions has either a church, a temple etc. This refers to the existence of a regularized ceremonial organization which pertains to a particular group of worshippers with this idea in mind; Durkheim formed his definition of religion as a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things-beliefs and practices which write into a single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them'. Apart from sacred and profane objects, Durkheim also dealt its length with other fundamental aspects of religion, namely ceremonial and ritual practices which are found in all religions. He distinguished between positive, negative and peculiar rites or rites of expectation (rites for making amendments for commuting a sin or crime)

a) Negative rites or taboos are prohibitions (against eating, touching) which limit the contact between the sacred and the profane. They serve to maintain the essential separation between the sacred and the profane.

b) Positive rites, on the other hand, constitute the core of the religious ceremonial itself. They are essential because they are intended to renew the commitment of religious ideals. In the everyday life in the profane world, individuals pursuer their own egoistic interests and as a result may, individuals detached from the moral values upon which societal solidarity depends.

c) Pecullar rites can be seen in ceremonies of mourning. Sorrow is expressed through mourning rituals. These rituals help to bring together the members of the group whose solidarity may be threatened by the loss of one of its members weeping together and holding to one another returns their strength to them. These rites also help to explain the existence of two sorts of religious powers benevolent (good) and malevolent (evil) forces which bring sickness, death and destruction or others. The peculiar rite provides collective activity which acts as a beneficial force for the group.

All these rites have one major function. Their aim is to unhold the community to renew the sense of belonging to the group and to maintain belief and faith. A religion survives only by practices which are both symbols of the belief and ways of renewing them.

Here, a relationship between the above analysis and the one established in the 'Division of Labour' comes to light. Durkheim had earlier mentioned that small scale, traditional societies depend for their unity upon the existence of a strong collective conscience. A society becomes one due to the fact that all its members follow common beliefs and sentiments. The ideas which are expressed in religious beliefs are therefore the moral ideals upon which the unity of the society is founded. By gathering together for religious ceremonies, individuals reaffirm their faith in the moral order upon which mechanical solidarity depends.

Durkheim tried to understand not only the religious beliefs and practices of the Australian tribes but also the ways of thinking which are related to these beliefs. He derived a sociological theory of knowledge from his study of Australian totenism. According to him it is from religion that moral rules and scientific thought have. Emerged to support this he put up three kinds of propositions in the sociological theory of knowledge.

First with the help of a few examples Durkheim showed that the original forms of classification are related to religious images of the universe e.g. species are classified on the basis of their homogeneous characteristics and arranged according to a hierarchical order.

Secondly, Durkheim explained that on idea like 'causality' comes from society. This is because the experience of collective life gives rise to the idea of force, society itself gives men the idea of a force which is superior to that of individuals.

Thirdly, Durkheim tried to show that the sociological theory of knowledge provide a way to avoid the antithesis of empiricism vs a priorism.

According to Empiricism, concepts in general come directly from sense experience. According to apriorism, concepts or categories arise in the human mind itself.

8.3 FUNCTIONS OF RELIGION

Durkheim was concerned with elucidating the particular functions of religion rather than simply describing variant forms. Harry Alpert, a well known critique and Durkheim scholar has classified Durkheim's four major functions of religion as disciplinary cohesive, vitalizing and euphoric social forces.

Religious rituals prepare men for social life by imposing self-discipline and certain measure of asceticism.

Religious ceremonies bring people together and thus serve to reaffirm their common bonds and to reinforce social solidarity.

Religious observances maintains and revitalizes the social heritage of the group and helps transrnit its enduring values to future generations. Finally, religion has a euphoric function because it serve to counteract feelings of frustration and loss of faith by reestablishing the believer's sense of well-being.

8.4 DURKHEIM'S VIEWS ON MORALITY

From the beginning of his career Durkheim gave importance to the moral dimension of human behaviour. He felt that the contemporary world is very poorly ruled by morality which is a system of rules of conduct. Individuals who have varied economic functions to perform are not motivated by self interest and do not restrain themselves. The family which has given up its conventional functions can no longer restrain its individual members. Territorial groups like the village or city cannot reach and to all its members to regulate their ever increasing spheres of occupations. The state also is too remote from individuals and it is not properly equipped to supervise specialized occupational groups. Durkheim was therefore convinced that on effective moral regulation of the social order is possible only through well organized occupational groups or 'corporations' as he call them.

According to Durkheim, such corporations existed in predleval European countries and the Roman Empire. Members of each group looked upon themselves as members of the same family shared a common God, common cult etc. But these corporations did not survive mainly because of excessive state control.

Durkheim was concerned, with the changing character of the 'idea system' found in contemporary societies. The modern world is becoming increasingly penetrated by rationalism and this has resulted in the demand for rational morality. Durkheim reasoned that what is now required is that the modern man should realize their dependence society which was earlier recognized only through the medium of religious representation and discover rational substitute for religious ideas.

8.5 CRITICISMS

Durkheim's work on religion has not gone unchallenged. He has been severely on at least five major countries.

1) Many objections have been raised about Durkheim's assumption that Australian totenism represents the most elementary stage of religious thought. Anthropologists have also drawn upon a wider range of material which challenges the picture given by Durkheim about aborigine society, its homogeneous nature and tightly organized clans.

2) Critiques have objected to Durkheim's distinction between the sacred and the profane as being faculty at an empirical level i.e. as an account of what aborigine religious thought was actually like. They also complain that it falls at a conceptual level as well e.g. according to them it is clear why there can be only two classes of

objects. A part from being sacred or profance cannot things be 'mundane'. These critics also about whether the relationship between the sacred and profance objects is one of total hostility or one of a division between two complementary systems of thought.

3) Durkheim's explanation of religious beliefs and rituals has also come into criticism as being very general criticism alleges that the origins of the actual content of religious systems are not accounted for at all but treated as if the choice of sacred objects were unimportant. They regret this especially as rituals contain important material basis in the agricultural technology of the tribe which employs them.

4) The fourth group of criticism surrounds Durkheim's ambiguity on the subject of the exact relation between religion and society or between society and the conceptual order. Sometimes Durkheim has claimed that social organization exerts a causal influence over religious thought at other times. He has asserted that it is religious thought which is the determining element. At still other times, he has argued that religion and society is the same thing.

5) Finally Durkheim's attempt to place the notions of 'validity' and 'truth' within the social order raises philosophical problem according to some critics.

However, inspite of what various critics feel about Durkheim's work, the fact remains that his contribution to sociology remains unparalled.

8.6 SUMMARY :

Durkheim viewed religion not only as social creation but also as society divinized. The deities which men worship together are only projections of the power of society. Although religion will continue to exist it must retreat as science explain more and more of the natural world.

8.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. What is the main idea of Religion?
2. Explain Durkheim's major concerns in the elementary forms of religions life.
3. What are the function of religion?

8.8 QUESTIONS :

1. Explain in detail Durkheim book on Religion.
2. Discuss Durkheim’s view on Morality.

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9

MAX WEBER
SOCIAL ACTION, POWER AND AUTHORITY

Unit Structure :

9.0 Objectives
9.1 Introduction
9.2 Bureaucracy Legal ration action
9.3 Notion of Power and Authority
9.4 Check your progress
9.5 Social action
9.6 Types of social action
9.7 Weber Thesis
9.8 Summary
9.9 Check your progress
9.10 Questions
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9.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To study on the bureaucratic system of society.
- To study Weber's Sociology of power and authority.
- To understand human behaviour and human actions

9.1 INTRODUCTION :

The process of rationalization led to the development of the industrial society. This view led Weber to believe that the modern large scale enterprise can function only on the basis of bureaucratic administrative principles. Besides Weber's theory on bureaucracy, this unit also studies Weber's notion on power and authority.

Max Weber was born in Erfurt, Germany, on April 21, 1864 into a middle class family. His father and mother were descendents from a long line of protestant refugees from Catholic persecution. Weber's parents had diverse personalities and values. His mother was religious minded and had strong spiritual commitments to hard work and duty to God. His father, on the other hand, was an outstanding lawyer, a German bourgeois who had no ideal while dealing with political affairs and established powers and led a shallow pleasure loving life. These differences in his parents had a profound effect on Weber. Throughout his childhood Weber was under mental anguish as a result of the conflicting personalities of his two parents.

Weber was a shy and sickly child but a voracious reader. At the age of fourteen he would write letters with reference to the works of Homer, Virgil, Cicero and other classical thinkers.

At home, Weber's father was a strict disciplinarian. His mother tried to draw Weber to her side and to cultivate in him Christian values. But Weber identified himself with his father. At eighteen, Weber joined the University of Heidelberg. He chose to study his father's field as low. He joined his father's dueling fraternity. He became active in dueling as well as in drinking bouts. Weber who was shy and sickly become a heavy set young men with fencing scars.

Inspite of these distractions Weber devoted time for his studies. Besides law, he studied medieval history and phisophy. Under Immanuel Bekkar he studied Roman law and Roman institutions. After completing three terms at the University of Heidelberg, Weber went to Strasbourg for compulsory military services.

In Strasbourg, Weber came into contact with his aunt Ida (his mother's sister) and uncled, the historian Herman Baumgartner. Weber frequently visited the Baumgartner who became a second set of parents for him. His aunt Ida had a dominant and forceful personality, deeply religious and devoted to Calvinist piety. Where his mother failed by his aunt succeeded himself in religious reading. Weber was greatly impressed by his aunts uncompromising religious standards in her household and her sense of social responsibility, which she fulfilled through charitable work. In the Baumgartner home Weber acquired his lifelong sense of awe for protestant virtues, though he did not accept the Christian belief.

9.2 BUREAUCRACY LEGAL RATION ACTION:

Weber's interest in the capitalist society led him to concern himself in modern trends of rationalization and the operation of modern large scale enterprises in the political, administrative and economic realms, bureaucracies are organized according to rational principles. Therefore, bureaucratic coordination of activities, Weber argues is the distinctive mark of the modern era.

The world “bureaucracy” itself came into Europe in the middle of the eighteenth century and was a product of the industrial revolution in Western Europe, Albrow explains the word bureaucracy as

a) A form of government where power is in the hands of officials and

b) A collective designation for those officials. Generally, the word bureaucracy designates a form of government on administration. “Weber describes bureaucracy as formally the most rational means of exercising authority over human beings.”

Rationality used as a description of bureaucracy refers to the amount of calculation and logical thought used in carrying out administrative duties. It is this rationality that is the distinguishing mark of modern ‘bureaucratic’ system of administration, bureaucracy becomes relevant in the capitalist society because of the rise of rational legal authority and the qualitative transformation of administration tasks. According to Weber bureaucracy is rooted in rational legal authority. Therefore Weber formulated certain propositions about the structure of rational legal authority system.

1) There is continuous organization of official function bound by written rules.
2) These tasks are divided into functionally distinct spheres, Weber calls them administrative organs, each possessing requisite authority and sanctions.
3) The organization of offices follow the principles of hierarchy i.e. each lower office is under the control and supervision of a higher one. The right and duties are clearly specified.
4) The rules according to which work is conducted are either technical or legal only a person who has adequate technical training is eligible for appointment.
5) The resources of the organization are quite distinct from those of the members of the organization as private individuals.
6) Administrative actions, decisions and rules are formulated and recorded in writing. The combination of written document and a continuous organization of official functions constitute the office which is the central focus of all types of modern corporate action.
7) Such rational legal authority systems may take many forms, but there seen at their purest in a bureaucratic administrative staff.

Weber states that the bureaucracy was the most rational forms of administration because it emboied the calculated construction of an organization to achieve the ends laid down in the code form which its members draw their authority.

Weber also draws up a further list of the characteristics of a rational bureaucracy.

1) The staff members are personally free, observing only the impersonal duties of their office.
2) They are organized in a clearly defined hierarchy of offices.
3) The function of the offices are clearly specified.
4) The offices is filled by an individual on the basis of a free contractual relationship. Thus, in principle, there is free selection of offices holders.
5) Candidates for office are appointed on the basic of technical qualification. In most rational cases this tasted by examination or a certificate of technical training or both.
6) Candidates office holders are remunerated by fixed salaries in money with a right to pension. The salary scale is graded according is always free to resign and under certain circumstances the position may be terminated.
7) The official post is his or her sale or major occupation.
8) The official occupation constitutes a career. There is a system of promotion according to seniority or achievement or both.
9) The officials are entirely sported from the ownership of the means of administration.
10) The official is subjected to strict and systematic discipline and control in the conduct of the office. The discharge of duties is impartially without regard for persons.

These features constitute Weber ideal type bureaucracy, it is bureaucratic organization in this from which represented the most rational from for administration because it was methodical and predictable, producing a routnized from for administration based on expertise in technical matters. Very large modern capitalist enterprises are themselves strict models of bureaucratic organization because business management throughout rests an precision standiness and spread of operation.

Criticism : Weber writing on bureaucracy has been subjected to considerable criticism. There has been a tendency to portray Weber as an advance advocate of bureaucracy as the most efficient from of administration. Weber does talk about the efficiency of the bureaucracy system but this is always in terms of a strict historical comparison with the personal and patrimonial system of administration found in more complex forms of traditional authority compared with this modern bureaucratic efficiency is a by product of its rationality.

According to Frank Parking, Weber's formulation of the idea type is carried out well. That is Weber selected and emphasizes certain feature of bureaucracy that he feels are distinctive. These features are a formal hierarchy of rank and officialdom, application of rules, promotion by merit. Weber suggested that bureaucracy has a technical superiority over any other form of organization. "Having set this ideal type bureaucracy Weber does not compare it with empirical cases of bureaucracy. He does not compare ideal type bureaucracy with any organization. The Technical superiority of bureaucracy is simply stated as a truth that does not require empirical evidence.

Weber critics have pointed out the shortcoming of the ideal type construction of bureaucracy. However, these criticism have been based on empirical data, making significance contribution to industrial sociology.

9.3 NOTION OF POWER AND AUTHORITY :

Weber notion of power must be under stood in the context in which he wrote i.e. the coming of industrialization to Germany. For marks capitalist industrialization began in India Britain. The new form of society was the spontaneous achievement of a powerful bourgeois class. In Germany the bourgeois remained small and uninfluential industrialization was the achievement of a new landed nobility that lived to maintain its traditional privilege and power. German economy developed into capitalism but capitalism achieved through state planning and administration, industrialization was of armament related industries rather than textiles as in the case of England.

Therefore, Weber did not view history as a succession of class struggles but in history it was the struggle for power. Weber defined power in terms of action and meaning "The probability that one actor will be in a position to carry out his own skill despite resistance and then formulated ideal type construct of power and legitimate domination.

For Marx all power depended on the possession of economic resources and all power groupings take the form of class conflict. Weber analysis is more complicated. He distinguish between classes, status group and parties. These groupings are phenomena of the distribution of power Weber sociology of power is viewed from two points.

a) Distribution of power class, status, party,

b) Legitimate domination

Distribution of power class status port :

The three dimensions of any analysis of power are class status and party.

Class : By class Weber means the economic order society where market relationship are important. Market relationship are the relationship of individuals to property.

Consequently, class refers to interest individuals have in common as a result of sharing the same market situation. Weber further explains the ownership of property and ability to control labour power can exist only within the context of market situation. Individuals of the same class have similar life chances to obtain desired goals.

Classes can be subdivided into :

1) Property classes deriving their income from possession.
2) Commercial or profit making classes whose income comes from the marketability of goods and services.
3) Social classes are groupings of class situations within which social mobility is easy and typical.

Weber conception of social class structure of capitalism are :

a) The dominate entrepreneur and propertied groups.
b) The petty bourgeois who owned property but did not command labour.
c) Propertyless white collar workers intelligentsia technicians.
d) The manual working class.

These classes are analytical categories.

Status : Status refers to the social as opposed to economic determination of life chances. According to Weber it is based on status honour, i.e. distribution of prestige. Weber reject the view that economic phenomena alone determine human action. He states that individuals in the same class or market situation may have different status situations. Status is an evolution which others make of them in terms of prestige or estee. Unlike class status group are conscious of their common position. This is because status groups normally have distinctive life styles or patterns of consumption or restrictions on how others may interest with them and so on. This principle is found in caste societies where status is based on religious function.

Party : Parties are rationally organized for the pursuit of certain goals regarding the distribution of life chances. They many functions in economy terms (like class) or moral terms (like status).

They aim world influencing the actions of the state parties may try to achieve position honours or out right control of the social order.

Power also involves the use of physical force and the state has a claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force in the enforcement of its order parties have rational organization. This makes them the characteristic from which political activity control of and by the state.

According to Weber, political activity is characterized by the fact that

1) It takes place within a territory.
2) It involves a form of conduct among those who inhabit this territory.
3) It involves a struggle for nomination and legitimacy.

Legitimate Domination :

In Weber's thes is, domination is a special kind of power. Nomination is the probability that two a command with a given specific content will be obeyed by a given group of persons. "There are two types of domination, one that arises from the monopolistic control of economic resources and to that which rests upon the authority of office. Weber is concerned with the second type of domination that is nomination shall be identical with authoritarian power of command. The true domination commands are not only issued they are also obeyed obedience must be willingly given. An important feature of nomination is the subordination to authority. Willing compliance and not coercion is the basis of nomination. In short, for Weber domination is legitimate authority.

Weber three felt typology of legitimate domination or authority are :

1) Traditional domination rests upon the surrenders of customs and traditions.
2) Charismatic domination rests upon the personal magnetism of an individual.
3) Legal rational domination rests upon the appeal of normally enacted rules and studies.

Traditional nomination Legitimation of domination is achieved with reference to the post i.e. an age old rules and customs.

There are three kinds of traditional authority.

1) Rule by elders usually in small tribal or village communities. The elders achieve legitimate power because they are supposed to be steeped in traditional wisdom. They exercise their authority personally and have no administrative staff.

2) Patriarchalism is authority that rests with the head of the household. This authority is transmitted from generation by rules of inheritance.
3) Patrimonialism is a patriarchal from of nomination with an addition of administrative staff bound to the patriarch by bounds of personal loyalty. This form of authority is found among traditional despotic governments the idea typical example was the sultanate and feudal Europe. Traditional Domination was between the rules and their immediate subordinates and officials.

Charismatic domination charismatic authority is by definition an extraordinary form of domination. According to Weber charisma is a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural superhuman or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities charismatic leaders may arise in any social or historical context. Charismatic leaders may range from religious prophets social activists etc. in all case authority is granted on the basis of the follower belief in their leaders mission.

Charismatic authority has no technical administration hierarchy of office salaried employees or rules of any kind. The charismatic leaders is dependent on his ability to convince his followers of his extraordinary power and ability.

Charisma is a potentially revolutionary force. For Weber it represents a driving force of social change in human history outbreaks of chromatic domination may occur as a reaction to the rationalization process in the modern world.

However, Charismatic authority are unstable because of succession crisis which accompanies the date of charismatic leader if son or daughter tales over it becomes traditional authority if an administrative apparatus is set up in the leader home it become legal national authority.

9.4 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. What do you mean by Bureaucracy?
2. Why Weber’s writing on Bureaucracy has been criticized?

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9.5 SOCIAL ACTION :

Weber's chief concern was with the possibility of analyzing human actions and relationships scientifically. Both action and meaning were Central to Sociological analysis.

Weber defined sociology thus : Sociology is a science concerning itself with the interpretative understanding of social action and thereby with a casual explanation of its course and consequences from this definition we can conclude that Weber regarded Sociology to be a comprehensive science of 'social action'.

For Weber German action is Social in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to his behaviour be it over or covert Commission or acquiescence. Action is social must e studied in terms of the subjective meaning which the actor attaches the action.

According to Weber human behaviour become action (a) when it derives from dealing with other and (b) when it is meaningful actions are never self explanatory they must always be interpret. This is a fundamental tend of Weber's interpreted. This is a fundamental tenet of Weber's interpretations Sociology.

For Weber's Sociology is the study of 'Social action' alone. Other forms of behaviour for example, replex behaviour are not subjects for Sociological analysis, Weber has a four, fold classification of action.

9.6 TYPES OF SOCIAL ACTION :

Weber classifieds action into 4 types. According to Weber social action may be

1) Rational in the sense that it employs appropriate means to a given end (Zweckrational action) i.e. a person acts rationally when his action are guided by considerations of ends, means and the consequences of his action. He rationally assesses the consequences of his actions. Therefore his actions are not emotionally determined nor are they traditional in nature. When he has to choose between competing and conflicting ends, he makes a rational.

2) Rational in the sense that it is an attempt to realize some about value (Wertraditional action) i.e. a person may consciously believe is some ethical aesthetic or religious value or some particular kind of behaviour, for its own sake without considering

its consequences. A person may consciously decide on a goal and organize his action to achieve it. The meaning of the action does not lie in the consequences of the action but in the specific nature of the action. Action here is rational in the sense that it is performed in obedience to certain values or fulfillment of certain claims imposed on the person. When human action is directed to meeting such claims, the action is rational is the attempt to realize a value. An example of action rational action in an attempt to realize some value is the suicide squad.

3) Affectively determined action i.e. action that is emotionally determined. This action is the result of emotional impulses and feelings. When action is emotionally determined is the result from the conscious discharge of emotion. An example of affectively determined action is when a person acts in such a way that he achieves the immediate satisfaction of a need for joy, pleasure, pain revenge etc. whether directly or in a sublimited way.

   The similarly between affectively determined action which is intended to realize some absolute value is that the meaning of the action does not be in the consequence of the action but in the specific nature of the action itself.

4) Traditional action : or action that is an expression of a custom or tradition behaviour is a dull reaction to some tradition or custom and often takes the form of settled habits. Most of our habbits and routine actions are examples of tradition action.

The types of social action are pure abstractions conceived by Weber sociological analysis. Weber’s classification of types of social action (1) helps in making as systematic typological distinction between types of action. (2) provides a basis for investigation of the course of historical development.

Weber’s typology of social action would be applied for the characterization of ‘whole societies’ and not to individual forms of action. Thus, modern industrial societies, for example, were characterized by rational goal oriented (zweckrational) action. Weber, calls this process, “rationalization”. In the industrial society rationalization has replaced magical and religious beliefs.

Weber’s unit of analysis remains the concrete acting persons “Interpretative Sociology considers the individual and his actions as the basic unit, as its atom… The individual is ‘the upper limit and the sole carrier of meaningful conduct.” Such concepts as ‘state’ ‘association’, ‘feudalism’ and the like designate certain categories of human interaction. Hence, it is the task of sociology to reduce these concepts to ‘understandable’ action that is to the actions of participating individual men.

Weber conceived sociology as a comprehensive science of ‘social action’ scientific behaviour is therefore a combination of rational action in relation to a goal and rational action in relation to a value.

Weber explores the various ways in which the ‘economic’ aspect of social life can be studies and thus distinguishes the ‘strictly economic’ (i.e. economically relevant’ and these in turn from the ‘economically relevant’ and these in turn from the ‘economically conditioned’.

By strictly economic, Weber referred to those institutions in which the economic aspect was a primary importance and are created for the economic ends for example bank, stock exchange, factory. There are spheres of interaction modes of conduct institutions and events which are in themselves ‘non-economic’ but are economically relevant. Religion for example may not have any obvious economic conduct and development. Through his works Weber attempted to demonstrate the economic relevance of various religious ethics.

Finally, the economically conditional phenomenon for example, are those dealing with an art form or the artistic taste of a given public which is clearly a non-economic phenomenon but has consequences for economic conduct (i.e. economically relevant). According to Weber, these distinctions are necessary as they bring greater clarity in the analysis of major social institutions. The economic for Weber (as well as Marx) referred to the material struggle for existence Weber’s life long aim was to study not only to the study economic phenomena but the economically conditioned and the economically relevant as well.

9.7 THE WEBER THESIS : PROTESTANT ETHIC AND SPIRIT OF CAPITALISM :

The Weber thesis : Weber asks, why is contemporary Europe “business leaders and owners of capitals, … and even more the higher technically and commercially trained personnel of modern enterprises, are overwhelmingly protestants. “Weber argues that this is not something specific to contemporary. Europe but is also a historical fact.”

Weber examines the economics relevance of a specific religious ethic. Though he speaks of a correlation at times, and of a casual influence elsewhere he states clearly that he is treating

"Only one side of casual chain" i.e. the impact of religious values of economic conduct. Weber is aware of the limited purpose of his efforts and states that he hopes "to clarify the part which religious forces have played in forming the developing web of our specifically modern world culture in the complex interaction of innumerable different historical factors."

Weber is not arguing that capitalism was caused by the rise of Protestantism. He attempts something much more complex. He outlines when he called the elective affinity between Protestantism and certain elements in the culture of capitalism. According to Weber, ascetic Protestantism had contributed something to the overall development of the modern economic system. Though it is difficult to evaluate in quantitative forms, it is necessary to examine Weber's thesis.

The spirit of Capitalism :

Weber defined capitalism as a modern phenomenon, very complex system of institutions highly rational in character, and the product of a number of developments peculiar to western civilization. In Weber's terms capitalism was unique in Two ways. One is the sense that had not appeared before in the history of the west and second, it never emerged spontaneously in the East. Weber emphasis that elements of rationalization were peculiar to Europe rational, permanent enterprise, rational accounting, rational law complementary to there were the rational spirit and a rational economic, ethic, which were responsible for the development of modern capitalism. It was the development of goal oriented (Zweckration behavioural that Weber was interested in Rationalization was the Keynote of what Weber called as the 'Spirit of Capitalism'.

Weber further explains what the spirits of capitalism is. It is not simply agreed for wealth. Many traditional societies exhibited this. These distinctive trait of the spirit of capitalism is not the pursuit of personal gain, but 'the disciplined obligation of work as a duty. It consists of a unique combination of devotion to the accumulation of wealth and the denial of its use for personal enjoyment for Weber there was an affinity between the spirit of capitalism and early Protestant belief. Weber explores the source of the rational spirit and ethic of Protestantism and the treats ethics as a necessary complementary factor.

The Protestant Ethic :

In this study, Weber brings out the important differences between the Protestants and the Catholics. According to Weber Protestants were more inclined to pursue technical, industrial and commercial studies and occupation and to engage in capitalistic enterprises. Catholics seemed to prefer more traditional humanistic studies. Among workers, Catholics preferred more traditional occupations like crafts. Protestants acquired industrial skills and acquired administrative positions.

Weber explain these difference in terms of religious education and values which the two groups received in their homes and communities Weber points out to the smaller representation of Catholics in “modern business life”. While Protestants from the upper or lower strata whether in majority or minority have shown a special tendency to develop economic rationalism. Weber explains that the principles difference is “in the permanent intrinsic character of their religious beliefs and not only in the irreligious beliefs but in their temporary external historic political situation.”

Weber explains these differences on the basis of other worliness of Catholicism and an indifference to matter of this world. Protestantism in contrast is secular, materialistic and of this world Weber looking for the origin, materialistic and of this world. Weber looking for the origin, materialistic and of this world ‘Weber looking for the origin of this spirit traces it to the Protestant doctrine of all Protestant groups shared this ascetic way of life that stimulated capitalistic development. This ethic was seen in the various sects of the Protestants especially among the Calvinists Weber believed that among the Protestant a new concept had emerge the concept of ‘calling’. It referred to the morally dutifufillment of task assigned by God. According to Calvinism everyone ultimate fate was predestined by God. Therefore, good works were unless for the attainment of salvation but they were necessary as a possible sign of ‘election’. For the Calvinists the doctrine of ‘predestination’ seemed to make Salvation a hopeless matter. They had no way of knowing it. They were among God’s elect. To avoid the despair of hopelessness they had to lead pure and fruitful lives. If an individual prospered in his work, it was a sign of God’s grace. Hardwork served to allay the anxiety of the fear of damnation. Hardwork the morally dutiful pursuit of a calling the belief that God helps those who help themselves and the absolute avoidance of anything that would detract one from the ascetic way of life was considered by Weber to be a part of Protestant ethic.

According to Weber, Calvinism insisted on the methodical and systematic pursuit of a calling, everyday for everyone viewed thus he protest and ethic, because of the concept of calling and doctrine of predestination urged its adherents to work hard methodically hard work was a possible sign of ones selection. It also looked upon the pursuit of wealth as an end in itself. At the same time Protestant ethic was against “the spontaneous enjoyment of life." This permitted the accumulation of wealth so necessary for capitalist development.

9.8 SUMMARY :

Weber used the methodology of the ideal type in presenting his thesis. Weber has accentuated what he considered the characteristics of the new spirit of capitalism" and the "Protestant ethic" as a conception of the pursuit of a calling.

Once the capitalist system had been established, the Protestant ethic was no longer necessary for the maintenance of the system Weber suggests that both the spirit of capitalism and protestant asceticism were relatively autonomous developments which interested at a given historical point to contribute to the formation of the modern rational temperament. There was a great "elective affinity" between the norms of the new religious movement and the psychological requirements of the new economic system. In his later writings on world religion Weber states that ascetic. Protestantism was but one among many historical developments that contributed to the special character of Modern Western Society.

Criticism finch off, one of Weber's critics argues that the ideal type method has led to a number of distortions and biases. He criticizes Weber for his over emphases of the concept of 'calling' and 'predestination'. Since Weber was dealing with such complex phenomena he had little hope of demonstrating the validity of his hypothesis.

Brentano objection against Weber's thesis is of historical fact. He argues that many of the developments. Weber attributed to ascetic Protestantism had already appeared during Renaissance.

Weber had promised to examine the reverse relationship i.e. the effects of economic changes on the formation of ascetic Protestantism. He never fulfilled his promise. His critics suggest that his essays create a false impression and are incomplete and methodologically deficient.

Despite these criticisms, some writers have accepted his suggestion of some correlation, however small, between the Protestant ethic and the ethos of modern capitalism.

9.9 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. Discuss Social action.
2. What do you mean by Rational Action?
3. Explain Protestant Ethic in detail.
4. Discuss Capitalism in Weber term.

9.10 QUESTIONS :

1. Briefly discuss Weber's understanding of social action and economic action.
2. Critically evaluate Weber's thesis the Protestant ethics and the rise of capitalism in the west?

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10

METHODOLOGY – VERSTEHEN APPROACH, IDEAL TYPES

Unit Structure :

10.0 Objectives
10.1 Introduction
10.2 Weber's Methodological Approach
10.3 Interpretative Sociology : Verstehen
10.4 Values in Social Sciences
10.5 Ideal Types
10.6 Summary
10.7 Check your progress
10.8 Questions
10.9 Reference

10.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To understand Weber's methodological approach and the criticisms against Weber methodology.
- Weber meant by interpretative Sociology, Verstchen.
- To study the role of values in Weber's Sociology.
- To study ideal type as methodological tool.

10.1 INTRODUCTION :

Weber accepted the possibility of conflicting explanations and theories and therefore he placed a great emphasis on methodology. However, Weber's methodology is not a system of techniques of survey and data analysis. It deals with the fundamental problems of scientific knowledge, Weber's methodology address itself to the practical problems of sociological analysis as opposed to metaphysical issues.

Weber's overall approach to the social sciences was significantly different. This is brought out in his methodological discussions on the differences between the science of nature and the science of man. This unit studies Weber's methodology.

10.2 WEBER’S METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH :

Weber was influenced by the German idealistic tradition which has established radical difference between the world of man and the world of nature and thus between human or social sciences and the natural sciences. The German idealistic tradition held the view of people as active, purposive and free agents. Therefore the social science could not use the same method as the natural sciences. The free will of individuals introduced as element of unpredictability and a capacity to act in a unique manner. The minds of men were not subject to natural laws and the so called homothetic (i.e. analytical and generalizing) methods used in natural sciences could not be used in Sociology. The social sciences must be ideographic (i.e. particularizing rather than generalizing). The social sciences must limit themselves to an understanding of human action and of unique historical events. Since human behaviour is guided by choice, it is not subject to natural laws. Human behaviour and society can only be understood in term of concrete uniqueness of each specific historical case. Weber’s methodology takes into account some of these aspects of German idealistic traditions.

Weber’s methods to the study of society consists of four basic approaches.

1) Weber’s primary concern was to establish sociology as on ‘objective’ social science.
2) Weber favoured an empirical approach to Sociological research. Objectivity can by ensured only through precision research method. Weber admitted that the selection of a research agenda is value - caden as it is influenced by the values of the social scientist.
3) Weber accepted the need for a special approach to study human behaviour. The social scientist needs to separate facts from values. This means that people choose goals they will to pursue and the social science can not specify what these goals will be the distinctiveness uniqueness of the human sciences lies in first causal explanations will be incomplete unless we take into account this characteristics of goal directedness. Or value relevance into account second human variability can become predictable when they are the result of rational choice.
4) Weber states that value judgements must be avoided but at the same time admits that value judgements can not be ruled out from the sphere of social scientific discussions.

The most fundamental idea in Weber’s Sociology in interpretative understanding of social action.

10.3 INTERPRETATIVE SOCIOLOGY : VERSTEHEN :

The aim of Weber’s methodological writings was to show how a sociology based on ’Verstehen’ (understanding) would enable one to arrive at scientic explanations and objectivity Weber believed that such a Sociology based on verstehen involved. The construction and use of ‘ideal types’. This would help in arriving at subjective understanding, and objective explanation.

Weber argued that the only way sociology could have a scientific methodological foundation was to have a clear conception of the relationship between meaning and action. He further states that every sociological description was interpretative in natures. The interpretative nature of sociology helps in arriving at valid sociological generalizations and casual explanations.

By using the method of verstehen. Weber felt that the social scientist can attempt to interpret men’s actions and words. By using versfehen we can understand human action by going into to the subjective meaning that actors attack to their own behaviour and behaviour of others. The science of human behaviour therefore had the advantage of understanding the subjective aspect of action, meaning and motivation.

Subjective meaning is the starting point of social enquiry of the method called Versfehen. Social action can be comprehended through empathetic understanding. Here, the investigator tries to identify with actor and his motives and views, the social phenomena through the actor’s eyes i.e. he empathetical undergo the experience of the actor in his attempt to study any social phenomenon. In his work Weber was the concept understanding to arrive at Knowledge such an understanding (Verstehen) permits – subjective understanding of truth as well as the objective knowledge of social phenomenon. Infact Weber went to the extent of defining Sociology as “that Science which aims at the interpretative understanding (Verstehen) of social behaviour in order to gain an explanation of its causes, it’s course and its effects.”

Verstehen and causal explanation are correlative methods in social sciences. It is through causal explanations that institutions of meaning can be transformed into valid knowledge.

10.4 VALUE IN SOCIAL SCIENCES :

Much has been said about the sole of value in sociological analysis and research, but most of it has been regarded as peripheral to contemporary sociology verge often Weber’s value theory has been reduced to a simple explanation for value neutrality, for a separation of fact and value, Social science and moral concerns, ignoring the fact of complexity of sociology. Weber accepts that values play a part in the selection of a problem. But the real task of science is the construction and testing of hypothesis and this process must be values fare.

Weber points out the differences between the natural science and the social science and the social sciences. The differences are not only in methods of investigation but also difference in interests and aims. The natural scientist is interested in formulating abstract laws of natural events. While the social scientist in formulating abstract laws of natural events. While the social scientists looks for generalizations an human behaviour, he is also interest in human actors and the meaning they ascribe to their actions.

Weber argues that the selection of a problem and the kind of explanation depends on the values and interests of the investigator. The selection of the problem is always 'value relevant'. "There is absolutely no objective' scientific analysis of culture or… of social phenomena". Social phenomena that are selected, organized and analyzed depend on the perspective of the investigator. The selection of a problem by the investigator always has value element (value relevance). There is no scientic criteria. Through the choice of topic has value relevance, the interpretation of the phenomena is objective and value tree.

Weber emphasizes the importance of objectivity in the social sciences. Weber states, "It is certainly not that value judgement are to be withdrawn from scientific discussion in general simply because… they rest on certain ideals and are therefore subjective in origin…

Weber emphasizes the importance of objectivity in the social sciences the same time it is essential for the social scientist to be as clear as possible about their own values and their relevance to their work. The methodology of the social sciences must define the limits in any scientific inquiry to avoid subjectivity.

These limits can be understood by using the term 'Value Orientation' value orientation means that what one investigator with one set on values regards as a problem, another with another set of value might not. The complexity of the firm value orientation can be grasped by saying that value orientation is both a limit on the social sciences and the factor which makes it possible value relevance must be distinguished from value neutrality. Value neutrality or ethical neutrality implies that once the investigator has selected his problem in firms of its relevance to his values, he must become objective this value must not interfere with the collection of data or its analysis. His values must not guide the investigation in any way. Therefore, value neutrality refer to the norms, that men of science must be governed by the ethos of science in their role as scientists.

10.5 IDEAL TYPES :

Weber's basic and original contribution to scientific analysis is the concept of the 'ideal type'. This concept helps in the realization of sociological rationality.

As already discussed Weber's sociology has its methodological foundation grounded in a clear conception of the relationship between meaning and action. This means that every sociological description is 'interpretative' Weber's methodology is based on verstehen. 'Verstehende Sociology' consist of the construction and use of ideal types. Thus enabling subjective understand and objective explanations.

Ideal types are conceptual abstractions that can be used to study the complexity of social life. The totality of social phenomena can be understood by studying patterns of behaviour that consist of a large number of interconnected elements each of these social phenomena (for example capitalism or Protestantism) is composed of a large number of normative or structural elements. According to Weber's methodology in order to study any social phenomenon it is necessary to single out and exaggerate certain basic feature i.e. "a one sided accentuation' of certain characteristics. The ideal type of capitalism for example is unlikely to be the representation of the real thing. It is an exaggerated version, similar to the cartoonist caricature which is on exaggeration but still recognizable. That is ideal types only approximate social reality, it is not the social relity.

Weber suggest that the ideal type is to be used as a kind of yardstick against which to compare and evaluate empirical cases. The difference between the ideal type and the factual from of the social phenomenon is of theoretical interest to the sociologist.

Weber warns that the ideal type is not a moral ideal but a set of characteristics that exist in the mind of the investigation. It is only a tool, an aid to investigation. Therefore, any social phenomena behaviour or institution can have an ideal type.

Weber state that the ideal type can consist of any set of characteristics… "it has only one function in an empirical investigation. Its function is the comparison with empirical relity in order to establish its divergences or similarities … and to understand and explain them casually."

Weber accepts that the selection of elements that make up the ideal type was arbitrary. Those characteristics that are exaggerated and those that are played down would depend on the type of problem being investigated. Therefore an ideal type can not be correct or incorrect. One kind of investigation would consist of one set of characteristics and for another type of enquiry a different set of characteristics would be appropriate. In short Weber is trying to say that social relity can be constructed or represented in various different ways.

Weber applied the concept of idea type of the protestant Ethic and capitalism wherein he constructed an idealized exaggerated picture of the phenomenon and compared in with what is actually found. Weber tried to show the causal connection between the 'Protestant Ethics' and the 'Spirit of capitalism' that would help in arriving at general laws that were scientific in nature.

10.6 SUMMARY :

Weber's methodology provides a different approach to the study of social behaviour. However, his methodology has weaknesses and has come under server attack by his critics.

Verstehen as a method of sociological analysis has certain difficulties. First, in order to understand the actor's conduct by way of empathy, it is necessary for the investigator to be on the same normative and moral wavelength as the actor he observing widely divergent outlook or incompatible belief makes empathetic understanding difficult second, empathetic understanding would be difficult if the investigator and actor are from widely different cultures and civilizations.

Verstehen as a method is difficult to adopt even when the investigator and actor belong to the same culture. There is no way of comprehending the subjective state of the actor's mind. Weber suggests that the investigator must counter check by observing some external behaviour Frank Parkin concludes that verstehen as a method is redundant as there is no way of demonstrating or verifying the correctness of empathetic efforts. If verstenhen requires the observation of external behaviour, then verstenhen is not necessary as sociologists observe external behaviour any way.

Social scientists in general have advocated 'Value Free' social theory. In Weber's methodology value plays a significant role. Frank Parkin asks, "how could sociology ever attain neutrality if its operational tool are started with the investigators own values and preconceptions."

Weber vehemently advocated ideal type construction, but he never explained its benefits. Secondly, if we are required to select only a few key characteristics and exaggerate these. It is natural that there will be a divergence between the empirical case and the ideal type. Thirdly Weber never clarified how this can lead to causal explanation.

Inspite of criticism levelled against Weber's methodology, his contribution to sociological theory and method can not be denied.

10.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. Discuss Weber methods to study Society.
2. What do you mean by Verstehen.
3. Explain the importance of value in Social Sciences.

10.8 QUESTIONS :

1. Critically evaluate Max Weber's contribution to sociological methodology.
2. Write brief notes on
    a) Ideal type
    b) Verstehen

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11

SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

Unit Structure :

11.0 Objectives
11.1 Introduction
11.2 Religion of China and non-development of capitalism
11.3 Religion of India and modern capitalism
11.4 Ancient Judaism and Capitalist Development
11.5 Summary
11.6 Check your progress
11.7 Questions
11.8 Reference

11.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To acquaint students with the religious ethic of China, India and Judaism.
- To examine why capitalism as an indigenous process did not occur in China, India and Judaism.

11.1 INTRODUCTION :

Weber made a detailed study of world religions the religions of China, India and later on ancient Judaism. He believed that in the west capitalism was one aspect of the general historical process of rationalization. Weber's study of world religions shows that the fundamental difference between the civilizations of the west and of the east was in "rationalization". While the rational attitude promoted the development of capitalism, its absence hindered the growth of capitalism.

11.2 RELIGION OF CHINA AND NON-DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM :

Weber attempts to shows why rational capitalism as an indigenous development did not occur in China and occurred only in the west. He explains that the development of capitalism in the west was possible because of two factors, one the great influx of precious metal and two a significant growth in population, both these development of capitalism. According to Weber, several aspects of the Chinese society hindered capitalistic development.

Weber compares the cities of antiquity of China with those of the west. The cities of the middle ages were vehicles of financial rationalization, of money economy and of political capitalism. In China there were no cities like Florence; Chinese cities had no money economy as Chinese officials were paid in silver. There was no centralization of currency.

Chinese cities were never centers in which capitalistic relationships and capitalistic institutions could originate. They lacked political autonomy. They did not possess military power of their own like the cities in the west. Craft guilds were absent in China. Chinese cities did not have the bourgeois class that emerged from struggle and revolt. Revolts in China were to remove a specific official and not to demand freedom for the city. Weber explains that the Chinese city dweller continued to maintain his relation to the native village of his 'sib' the ancestral land and temple. He did not feed any attachment to the city where he lived, but in the west, Christianity played an important role in developing an ethic which transcended kinship obligations.

According to Weber, there are basic differences between the Occidental and the Oriental cities the city in the west was an oversea trading centre where as in China trade was essentially inland foreign trade was limited to a single port since outside influence was limited. This helped to preserve Chinese tradition. Besides industrial development was under the control of traditional interests and groups, it did not take place in the city whereas in the West cities were the centres of industrial development. Therefore economic, political and formal legal foundations of rational organization of industry was possible.

Centralized administration was almost non-existent in China autonomous centers of powder did not exist. Central government officials were shifted to another province once in 3 years. Western types feudalism did not exists as the appointment of officials was based on educational qualification and not on birth.

Capitalism did not develop indigenously in China, though Chinese were highly acquisitive and had a greatly capacity hardwork and industry. China experienced a tremendous growth of population since the eighteenth century and final a constant increase in precious metal.

Weber explains the non-development of capitalism in China. According to Weber, the 'sib' in China was very powerful. This sib controlled the land therefore true alienation of the land from the sit was not possible private. Private as found in the western society did not exists in China.

Another development that contributed to the formation of capitalism in the west was missing in China it was ‘rational warfare’ and absence of overseas colonies Rational development in China took different form that of the west. Bureaucracy is the outcome of capitalist development. In China the bureaucracy was composed of the ‘literate’ who could hold office was not a test in skills like the west, but knowledge of writing and classical literature. Therefore they were not bureaucrats in the western sense but were cultured gentlemen. Administration was carried on by assistants who had administrative skills educated Chinese were secular to some extent yet they believed in magic and magical practices. Magic and animistic beliefs and rituals had a tremendous power in Chinese life. It the west magical beliefs and practices did exists, but it was condemned. Therefore, for Weber with rationalization religion tried to rid itself of magic and relationship between God and the world and the formation of new set of ethical values. Weber counterbalances the conditions favourable to the development of capitalism by other unfavourable conditions. Weber himself accepted that since there were so many variables it was an enormously complicated issue and therefore did not have a simple explanation. However Weber concludes the “Compared to the Occident, the varied conditions which externally favoured the origin of capitalism in China did not suffered to create it”. The religious norms which prevailed in China did not allow the spontaneous development of capitalism.

11.3 RELIGION OF INDIA AND MODERN CAPITALISM :

In his meticulous study of India, Weber saw many social and cultural conditions which should have promoted the rise of modern capitalism finance, warfare and politics had been rationalized. Capitalist form like state creditors, contractors and tax farmers were also been urban development similar to that of the west were evident. Weber points out that ‘rationality’ was prominent in many aspects of Indian cultural life for example, the rational number system, arithmetic algebra rational science and in general a rational consistency, high degree of tolerance to religious doctrines. Besides, there were other aspect which were compatible with capitalist development for example and autonomous stratum of merchants, handicrafts and occupational specialization and a high value on acquisition of wealth. Yet modern capitalism did not develop indigenously in India either before or during the British rule.

Weber regards "Indians religions, as one among many may have prevented capitalist development (in the Occidental Sense). If Indian religion had taken another form similar to ascetic Protestantism, perhaps a modern rational scientific elements in the East, the existence of economic strata that was conductive to the emergence of a modern rational economy. The east remained 'enchanted garden i.e. all aspects of oriental civilization of culture as a whole. The west had undergone significant disenchantment or nationalization of scriptures.

Weber's studies of world religions analyses the entire social structure of the society and not just religious phenomena and religions institutions on his study of India, Weber takes in to account the fundamental importance of the caste system. Using Indological sources Weber sketches the process by which new castes form. Weber explains that when some castes become wealthy, they refused to work in task regarded as unclear or low. As a consequence, alien workers of different origin moved in to these occupations. In the course of time they maintained their hold over these occupations, demanded and received certain Brahmanical services. Though under privileged, these people preferred to have a legitimate status in the caste hierarchy.

Weber shows how the Indian social system may have imposed structural restraints on economic development. Firstly, the caste system had negative consequences for economic development. The caste system was totally traditionalistic and anti-rational in its effects. Weber states not only the position of the village artisan but the caste order as a whole must be viewed as the bearer of stability". "The traditional, anti rational 'spirit' of the whole social system… constituted the main obstruction to the indigenous development of capitalism. Weber explains that the antirational spirit was evident in the prevalence of 'magic' which the Brahmin himself propagated in all spheres of life.

Secondly, the Indian bourgeois was weak. Weber gives two reasons : one because of the pacifism of salvation religions like Buddhism and Jainism and two, the caste system prevented the development of military power of the citizenary. As result the 'polis' in the European sense did not develop. The prince was in absolute control. Indian towns were never autonomous.

Thirdly, Weber points outs, to other reasons in the Indian Social System, the implications of the sacred low magicoreligious practices and worship of tools hindered technical industrial development. The stereotyping of tools was one the strongest handicaps to all technical development in Indian Society.

And lastly, Indian religions did not one to prove himself through action or work. Highest good could be achieved by withdrawing oneself from the world.

Indian ascetism did not permits rational way of life. On the contrary it promoted traditionalism. So like, China, India remained an enchanted garden where the Brahmin priests in the interest of their own power recognized the influence of magic, rationalized and even encouraged it. In context, Christianity condemned magic and magical practices.

According to Weber, Asian religions in general were a form of gnoris i.e. knowledge in the spiritual realm is mystically acquired. This required a training of the body and mind through intensive meditation. Therefore, gnosis was not a rational and empirical means by which man could dominate nature Asiatic religions and led to other worldliner with no emphasis on 'this life' in contrast to the soul saving doctrine of Christianity.

Weber concludes that this anti-national magical religion had a profound impact on economic conduct and economic development. This magical mentality prevented the development of rational capitalism. Acquisition of wealth had a high value but the less for gain never gave rise to the modern economic system.

11.4 ANCIENT JUDAISM AND CAPITALIST DEVELOPMENT :

Weber's analysis of the religion of ancient Judaism takes into account its historical development as well as the historical importance of Judaism as the source of Christianity and Islam. The development of Judaism was also important for the profound impact it had on the beginnings of western civilization.

According to the Jewish religion god created the world. The misery and suffering in the present world was temporary and would given away to a "truly god ordained, order. Therefore, the worldly actions of the Jews must be in accordance to the commandments of god (Yahwe). The historical importance of Judaism is to be found in its rational ethical character. In his remarkable study Weber traces the history of the Jewish religion.

He defines the historical status of the Jews as 'pariah people a term which refers to the social segregation of the Jews which resulted from the ritualistic requirement and commandments of the religion Weber explores the influence of religion ideas on Social life, Political structures and economic developments. He shows how the order stratification systems changed with the emergence of the wealthy participate on the one hand and an economically heterogeneous strata (i.e. poor) on the other class conflicts existed between the wealthy urban and the indebted peasant's Morarchy emerged as the conflicts increased. Along with monarchy prophets of social justice also emerged in the Israil society. They message of the prophets of the was purely religious the prophets criticized the patrician and their riches the kings and their chariots and told how Yahwe himself could bring victory if his commandments were obeyed. They foretold doom when god's convents were for taken.

Weber established a relationship between religious ideas and socio-economic condition in Israil society. The prophets were a relatively autonomous stratum in Israil society. They were religious practitioners but their messages were not purely religious. In Weber's view 'Rationalization' was a consequence of the prophets increasing was against magical and orgiastic practices. The prophets also emphasized total devotion to Yahwe. This devotion was based on the unique relation of Israil to God and a constant reminder by the prophets of the miraculous liberation of the Jews from Egyptian bondage. This was proof of god's absolute power and dependability. Therefore, the Jews owned a lasting gratitude to serve and worship Yahwe and no other god. This rational relationship created an ethical obligation so binding. The Jewish tradition regarded defection from Yahwe a 'fatal' abomination. According to Weber the rational nature of this relationship lay in the wordly nature of God's promise. Like they would have numerous descendents like the sands of the seashore trumph over enemies, rich harvests and a good life. As a result oracle and magic were less important. Sexual and alcoholic orgianticism were condemned. The for a teachers, the prophets the wealthy, influential and pious families defended Yahwistic traditions.

In Weber's view prophecy in ancient Judaism had gained importance because of expansionist policy of Egypt and Mesopotamia very often Jews feared being conquered and a threat to the very existence of Israel. Therefore, doom was prohenied when the jews failed to follow Yahwe's commandments. In his study Weber demonstrated the enormous complexity of prophersy in Judaism.

The prophets were not from the oppressed class but were very often from wealthy families. They had no political interests. They were mouthpieces of Yahwe though rationalization of religion did exist in Judaism. It did not result in capitalism, Weber emphasized that the prophets and the Torah teachers were major importance in the rationalization of Judaism. Secondly, Weber also emphasized on the Jews as a pariah community. Conquest of the Jews by the Babylonians set the Jews in to exile. It became necessary for the Jews to remain ritually pure and guard themselves against pagan gods and practices. This was especially important as the Jews regarded their exile as a temporary situation and hoped to return to their homeland. The Jews in exile remained a specific religious community a pariah community.

For Weber, the Jews had produced a rational religious ethic which influenced western culture at its roots but this did not lead to rational economic activity as it did among the Calvinist. Weber explains this in terms of the peculiar ethical dualism of the Jews and their in group out group morality which forbid certain form of behaviour to outsider but permitted it to their Jewish brother. While the sib and other kinties were important of or the Jews, they were weak in the west. Weak kinties had important implications for economic activity in the west. Also protestants had uniform ethics, especially among the Calvinists, whose “superior religiously determined economic ethics gave than superiority over the competition of the godless…?

Weber views the growth of capitalism in the west as a general historical process in the west, to which a large number of historical events had contributed Weber views modern capitalism and Protestantism along with other aspects of modern western civilization as the complex product of a historical process that reaches back a ancient Israel.

11.5 SUMMARY :

World Religion and non-development of capitalism :

In his study of world religious, Weber shows how the religious of China and India acted as an obstacle to capitalist development. Both these societies had certain aspect that were necessary for the development of capitalism. But religious in the form of traditionalism and magico-religious practices hindered the indigenous development of capitalism.

Similarly, though Judaism provided Christianity its source had a profound impact on western civilization ritualism and a strict adherence to ‘in-group’ and ‘out – group’ behaviour acted as a break to capitalist development.

It is east to conclude that the non-development of capitalism in these societies was the lack of appropriate religious ethics i.e. religious behaviour that promoted capitalistic development. But one must take into account Weber’s caution. Weber himself accepted that since there were so many variables the issues were complicated and therefore a simple explanation would seem rather native.

11.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. Discuss religion of China.
2. What do you mean by non-development of capitalism?
3. Highlight religion of India.
4. What do you mean by modern Capitalism?
5. Discuss ancient Judaism.
6. Explain the term capitalist development.

11.7 QUESTIONS :

1. Discuss Weber's views on the religious of India and China. Explain why there religious hindered the development of capitalism in these societies.
2. Explain the development and non-development of capitalist by discussing the main features of Judaism.

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12

SOCIAL SYSTEM THEORY
PARSON THEORY OF SOCIAL ACTION

Unit Structure :

12.0 Objectives
12.1 Introduction
12.2 Parson's theory of social action
12.3 Basic elements of action
12.4 Social action and Social function
12.5 The Social System
12.6 Social System theory
12.7 Pattern variables
12.8 Systems and subsystems
12.9 Summary
12.10 Check your progress
12.11 Questions
12.12 References

12.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To introduce the writings of Parsons who gave importance to co-operation rather than hostility.
- To discuss his theory, theory of value orientation and social action.

12.1 INTRODUCTION :

Today the name of Talcott Parsons is synonymous with functionalism over a period of some 50 years, Persons published numerous articles and books and during the 1940s and 1950s he became the dominant theorist in American Sociology. Like Durkheim, Parsons begins with the question of how social order is possible. He observes that Social life is characterized by 'mutual advantage and peaceful co-operation rather than mutual hostility and destruction'. A large part of Parsons, Sociology is concerned with explaining how this state of affairs is accomplished. He took the views from Thomas Hobbes who observed that man is directed by passion and reason. His passions are the Primary driving force reason being employed to devise ways and means of providing, for their satisfaction. If man's passions were allowed free reign, he would use any means at his disposal, including force and fraud, to satisfy them. The net result would be the war of all against all". However, fear of this outcome is created by the most basic of Man's passions, that of self preservation.

Guided by the desire for self preservation, man agrees to control his passions, give up his liberty and enter into a social contract with his fellows. He submits to the authority of a ruler or governing body in return for protection against the aggression, force and fraud of others. Only because of this soverign power is the war of all against all prevented and security and order established in Society. Hobbes views man as rational self – interested and calculating man while E-Durkheim viewed man acting in response to moral commitments and obeying social rules because he believes that only a commitments and obeying social rules because he believes that only a commitment to common values provides a basis for order in society, value consensus forms the fundamental intergrating principle in society. If members of society are committed to the same values, they will tend to share a common identity which provides a basis for unity and co-operation.

Persons mostly talked about norms, values, common goals and roles. He gave Central importance to concepts of social action and system. Though born in America and a graduate of Amherst college, where biology was his primary interest Parsons was greatly influenced by European Scholars. As impressed by Malinowski and Hobnouse as Mentioned earlier he translated Weber's "the protestant ethic and the sprit of capitalism." As professor of Sociology the headed Harvard's interdisciplinary department of Social relations in 1946, an office he held of for several years. For many years he had consistently emphasized the necessity of developing a systematic general theory of human behaviour. He views the development of abstract theory as a Principal index of the Maturity of Science. Such theory facilitates description, analysis and empirical research. These pursuits, Parsons Stresses require a general frame of reference and demand understanding of the structure of the theoretical system as such. He first developed a system of as such. He first developed a system of logically interrelated analytical concepts to provide the framework; these concepts were classified later and organized into analytical systems.

12.2 PARSON'S THEORY OF SOCIAL ACTION :

This theory overcomes the positivistic – idealistic dualism of Modern Social processes, though positivism has no room for subjective Meaning or social action theory. The world is as and only as positivism describes it. i.e. study as it is from objective point of view and human action therefore is merely a process of adaptation to it. The social actor is merely an objective product of his subjective situation. The problem with idealism is that it concentrates on ideal conception of the world. The social world is nothing but a universe of the meaning in which all phenomena including action are arising from all pervasive ultimate values. In other words, the social world consists of meanings attached to all social actions and social phenomena which arise from ultimate values. This is the idealism. Here individuals are considered as inactive actors only to follow the values.

Thus individual actors are not given any attention they are subjected to passive orientation to pre-given meanings for Parsons, Individuals are not passive. He rejected the extreme formulation of pure rational approach of positivists i.e. explanation of world in terms of cause and effect relationships among physical phenomena, Parsons utilized all relevant concepts and theories of Weber, Durkheim, Pareto and A. Marshall and had interwoven them rationally to develop his own ‘voluntaristic theory of action’. This theory has undergone changes through essays in Sociological theory of the social system.

According to Parsons, the frame of reference of action involves an actor, a situation and the actor’s orientation to the situation. Two orientational components can be distinguished “motivational” and “value” motivational orientation which supplies energy to be spent in action is there – fold :

a) Cognitive corresponding to that which the actor perceives in a situation in relation to his or her system of need disposition (which perhaps in Parsons thinking overlap with attitudes). Here emotion does not play any role. The act is purely rational. The actor considers all the different consequences of his action. The knowledge about the situation helps the actor to determine the course of his action.

b) Cathectic (emotional) involving a process through which the actor invests an object with affective or emotional significance and the actor acts with affective or effective touch, here only knowledge about the situation is not enough. The actor expresses his feelings for his satisfaction e.g. loving the child or shouting while seeing the match.

c) Evaluative by which the actor makes a choice between various interests. He criticizes and decides which situation is better.

Value orientation, on the other hand, points to observance of certain social norms or standards as opposed to ‘needs’ – the focus of motivational orientation. Again, these are three modes of value orientation – the cognitive, the appreciative and the moral. This scheme serves as the background for the construction of three analytical systems – the social system, the personality and the cultural system.

The social system provides a conceptual – framework for interrelating the actions of individual actor in a variety of situations. The actor's view of the Means and Goals available in the situation is largely shaped by beliefs, norms and value and these in turn are organized into role expections. Thus, the actor does not face the situation in isolation but rather as the occupant of a social role that provides normative definition roles. This network of interrelated roles provides as ordering of interactive relationship and comprises the social system while theoretically a social system can be any size, referring to any patterned clustering of social roles. Parsons has directed his attention to total social system. E.g. Family – The individual members of family act according to the expectations of family towards them. The wife behaves as per the norm and standards as fixed by society. Similarly, children, though enjoying freedom can not go against the wishes of parents. All these member are interrelated to each other in a social framework which Parsons has called a Social System. In the earlier joint family system the eldest male member was to be obeyed by all males and females younger to him. This social action or performance of a role is always according to the norms and beliefs of a family.

Parsons takes units action as building block of the system. In his initial formulation, he conceptualizes "voluntarism" as the subjective decision making processes of individual action. He wishes to say that the individuals actor though acts on his own, his decision is bound by norms and values.

For Parsons, firstly there is an actor or a subject of action and secondly there is a context or situation with reference to which the actor performs a social action. The actor, who performs the action, keeps in mind the existence of the situation or social context. i.e. either other actors or the purpose of his action.

12.3 BASIC ELEMENTS OF ACTION :

Voluntaristic action therefore involves the following basic elements :

1) Actor : Actor is the individual Parson at this point.
2) Goal : The actor keeps in mind his goal while performing any action – i.e. purpose of his action. Goal is the "desired future state of affairs towards which the process of action is oriented."

3) Alternative Means : The actor is also in Possession of alternative mean i.e. there are various means available to him to fulfill his desires.
4) Actors are confronted with a variety of ‘situational conditions’ such as their own biological make up and heredity as well as various external constraints that influence the selection of means and ends.
5) Actors are seen to be governed by values, norms and other ideas in that, these ideas influence what is considered a goal and what means are selected to achieve it.

Parsons ‘Primary focus is unit act’ of individuals which makes up the whole system – social processes and structures. Here the actor is motivated to seek a goal i.e. B.A. degree to achieve the degree he has to follow certain rules i.e. to pass the intermediate courses like first year and second year. To pass the examinations he has to consider the means available to him like brain (memory, capacity to understand language), notes, books and money for fees etc.

Thus, there are four parts of the units act according to the action scheme given by

1. An actor – an agent or the individual
2. An end – i.e. goal – a future state of affairs
3. A situation – comprised of conditions over which the actor has no control and means available to him in the pursuit of his ends.
4. A normative condition – i.e. rules and regulations, which the actor has to follow in order to achieve his goal and which help him to choose his means available to him from among a variety of them.

The meaning of social action, according to Parsons is thus the relationship between two or more individuals who work with certain orientation or goals. The individual makes decision on his own but he is also governed by some rules, laws, norms and values i.e. normative as situational constrations. Thus the individual actors are attached to the social processes or systems when they follow the guidelines or rules of behaviour. According to Parsons this leads to social intergration or Social order.

This scheme has important implication for the characterization and analysis of social action. It begins first with the subjective analysis of the goal to be achieved by the actor. Secondly action always takes places over time. It is history that leads to the third implication. Thirdly the idea or the future state of affairs is formed. It is necessary to his thinking while ideals do not yet exist. But they motivate the actor. The actor defines and analyses his action in terms of his vision of the ideal. Fourthly, the norms and values which restrict the actions of individuals and direct them to major goals of society.

Thus, for Parson, man is essentially active, creative, evaluating creature who acts upon the means in order to bring it into lien with his “ends” purposes and ideals. He is a being of choice, who through his own independent agency. “Selects his own ends his own normative orientations” and makes his decision to act.

This theory of social action distinguishes from psychological behaviourism. The theory of behaviourism emphasize more on stimulus – response pattern e.g. if there is an explosion, the individual is afraid. Thus, fear is the response to explosion. All actions are reduced to stimulus – response pattern. But according to Parson, many factors other than stimulus and response determine the course of action. The individual actor is affected by a number of factors before he beings to act. Above all he is a moral being the relationships of man to norms is essentially “creative” and Fundamentally, creative of moral community and due to this, community values emerges, through this conception Parsons has created active purposeful self and socially creative man.

12.4 SOCIAL ACTION AND SOCIAL FUNCTION :

This theory of Social action is a generalized system of social functioning. It is based on the following four elements :

1. Heredity and Environment
2. Means and Ends
3. Ultimate values
4. Effort

1. **Heredity and Environment :** This element includes biological heritage of the actor and all those conditions or the environment in which the actor lives or that surrounds him. The total environment is thus the sum total of those physical and non-physical conditions and situations that influence man form outside as well as inside. Heredity consists of all those characteristics which are shaped and moulded by the environment. In fact, these are the conditions which control the course of the action.

2. **Means and Ends :** This includes all those factors which determine the nature of the actions. The actor must know what are the various means or resources available which can help him or finalize or achieve his final ends.

3. **Ultimate Values :** All actions are guided by some values. These may be rational emotional or moral. Every action is performed with a view to achieve these values. Values influence the direction of action as well as have some control over the nature of action. Values impose certain limits within which the action is performed.

4. **Effort :** Effort is the link between the vales and the conditions in which these values can be achieved. The man combines the idealistic, the elements of ideals and ultimate conditions of the action.

12.5 THE SOCIAL SYSTEM :

A Social System according to Parsons consists of a number of individual actors who come in contact with each other in connection with the accomplishment of their goals under a common rule of conduct i.e. norms and values. Through this a patterned normative order is created which organizes the life collectively.

a) **Status and Roles :** Parson has emphasized that all individuals are given some status in Society according to their physical and social capacities and they are expected to behave in a particular sociology desirable manner what we call ‘roles’. Thus status determines a specific form of behaviour i.e. role which also controls the actions of the individual which constitute the basis. These relations from the structure, Individuals are accorded status a position in society in comparison with others in which they are placed. They are also expected to perform in a certain manner in their positions – this is role. Role is the expected behaviour of a person holding certain status. The individual actor performs in a particular manner while occupying certain status in the system. Thus, there is always an organized and systematic manner of behaviour interactions e.g. in a family the father plays the role of a provider, mother satisfies the basic needs, a student. Studies, a teacher teaches and so on. From functional points of view the roles are adaptive i.e. helps adoption to environment for basic needs.

   A system can be analyzed in terms of roles and statuses of individual members interacting with each other in a patterned and organized manner e.g. a family consists of a number of roles and statues like mother, father, brother and sister, grand father and grand mother etc. and they behave in a desirable manner.

b) **Collectivity :** Both roles and collectivities, however are subject to ordering and control by norms or rules of conduct. A number of actors interact with each other in an organized manner – this is called collectivity. From the functional point of view a collectivity serves important need of attaining major socially important goals e.g. institutions or association like family, polity, economy or education. They need the system achieve major goals like satisfaction of basic as well as derived needs both at lower and higher levels.

c) **Norms :** Rules of behaviour which are determined according to the situation but are defined collectively. These regulate individual behaviour. According to Parson, norms are primarily interrogative; they regulate the great variety of process that contributes to the implementation of value commitments. Each unit i.e. individual or the group keeps in mind, the rules and regulation white interacting with others. This helps keep the order and harmony and also the balance of social system.

d) **Values :** These are standards of proper conduct with ideas of rightness or wrongness of acts. These define the desirable kind of system of relations. Values give us idea what is more important or worth while. Values help us to select proper alternatives or means to achieve our goals. Values are regulatory moral orders which set things right and direct the social system to function. They are the guidelines to proper behaviour.

For persons value consensus form the fundamental intergrating principle in society. If members of society are committed to the same values, they will tend to share a common identity which provides a basis for unity and cooperation from shares values derive common goals. Values provide a general conception of what is desirable and worthwhile. Goals provide direction in specific situations. For e.g. in western society, members of particular work force may share the goal of efficient production in their factory, a goal which stems from the general value of economic productivity. A common goal provides an incentive for cooperation. Roles provide the means whereby values and goals are translated into action. A social institution consists of a combination of roles.

For instance, a formal system of organization is made up of a number of specialized roles which combine together to further the goals of the organization. E.g. The Chairperson, Secretary or Treasurer or Managers, Specialist, Supervisor. The content of roles is structured in term of norms which define the rights and obligations applicable to each particular role. Norms can be seen as specific expressions of values i.e. to each the people what is desirable or right. E.g. the norms of punctuality and efficiency which lead to better performance are to be followed by every employee in the organization. Thus the norms which structure the roles of manager, accountant, engineer and shop floor worker express the requirement of economic productivity. Norms tends to ensure that role behaviour is standardized, precidictable and therefore orderly. This means that from the most general level, the central value system, to the most specific, normative conduct the social system is infused with common values. This provides the basis for social order.

Equilibrium :

The importance Parsons places on value consensus has led him to state that the main task of sociology is to analyze the institutionalization of patterns of values orientation in the social system when values are institutionalized and behaviour structured in terms of them, the result is a stable system. A state of social equilibrium is attained, the various parts of the system being in a state of balance.

Parsons has emphasized that through socialization society values are transmitted from one generation to the next and internalized to form an integral part of individual personalities. This then leads to social equilibrium. The family and education system perform this function.

The other way of attaining this social equilibrium is by adopting various mechanisms of social control which discourage deviance and so maintain order in the system. The processes of socialization and social control are basic to the equilibrium of the social system and therefore to the order in society.

In the structure of social action, Parson emphasized on using various concepts and ideas to explain the system. He adopted the functional perspective. This approach suggests interconnectedness of various parts to the whole. The basic idea of functionalism is (1) wholeness composed of parts which somehow from the whole and contribute to the maintainance even though both the parts and the whole may be changing. (2) It is this whole out of parts, whole needing parts – parts needing whole idea that unites sociological functionalism with so much other thought that it makes functionalism as a Pattern theory.

His theory of social action and the theory of social system overlap each other, explain their relationship and of recurring transaction from one to another.

12.6 SOCIAL SYSTEM THEORY :

Talcott Parsons is undoubtedly the most outstanding exponent of the social system theory. In the ‘structure of social action, Parsons focused on unit act but, in ‘The Social emphasis shifted from unit act to institutional orders and the system was the primary unit of analysis.

Parson’s concept of ‘Social System’ is only a conceptual framework; it is not an empirical referent. A social system for him is an open system in continuous balancing and its crucial elements are ‘conditions’ ‘needs’ and functions.

The following defention of the social system is more comprehensive.

A social system is a system of action which has the following characteristics :

1) It involves a process of interaction between two or more actors, the interaction process as such is a focus.
2) The actor’s orientations may be either goals to be pursed or means for the accomplishment of goals.
3) All actions are interdependent and they all orient to a common goal in the social system.
4) There is also a consensus of normative and cognitive expectations. E.g. a family is a social system; its members interact with each other to satisfy their needs. They also follow family values and norms and orient to a common goal i.e. Family integrity. All members co-operate with each other and achieve happiness.

For Parsons, Action consists of the structure and processes by which human beings from meaningful intentions and more or less, successfully implement them in concrete situations. Parsons is more interested in the patterning of relationships which result in product like physical cultural and the mechanism and processes that control such patterning. The social system is one of the primary subsystems of human action and system; the other three are biological cultural and personality systems.

The system theory of Parsons can be analyzed in the following way :

a) The social system is made up of the interaction of human individuals.
b) Each member is both actor and object of orientation for other actors and himself. This means that the other actor becomes the means to fulfill one’s ends.
c) The actor is seeking a goal or set of goals.
d) The actor is confronted with a variety of situational conditions as societal environments and ecological constraints.

e) The actor's orientation to the situation is both motivational and value orientations.

For Parsons, there are three types of Motivations which provide energy to act as is earlier mentioned.

1) **Cognitive :** This is knowledge or awareness of what goal the actor is going to achieve.
2) **Cathectic :** This is associated with the emotions or sentimental aspects of action. The actor determines the means by which the goal can be achieved and this is based on the satisfaction he derives. Any act which is enjoyable is performed by the actor and the one which is painful is avoided by him. But here the actor has to control himself and judges appropriately. E.g. taking treatment can be painful but the patient has to go for it.
3) **Evaluative :** The actor has to judge the suitability of means and on the basis of norms and values selects the most appropriate alternative to achieve his goals. The student has to select the most appropriate technique of retaining his memory for the examination. He has to write and rewrite the answers in order to retain the points. Here, he does sacrifice all other interests.

Value orientation, on the other hand, to repeat refers to the observance of social norms or standards. The value orientation supplies norms or standard of action. The actor decides on the basis of values which action is more desirable or worth to be done. In the social system everyone is judged on the basis the values. This contributes to intergration since the standards are same.

There are three types of standards according to Parsons, which can judges the action of individuals.

1. **Cognitive Standard :** Those by which the validity of cognitive judgement are assessed. This means the level of knowledge which leads individual to act and his action is judged.
2. **Appreciation Standard :** The emotional aspect of judgement is assessed whether the sentiments or feelings by which the action is done are correct or no.
3. **Moral Standards :** These are in general socially formed evaluate standards by which the actions of individual are judged. These are neither cognitive nor appreciative.

Accordingly Parsons identifies three types of action :

1. **Instrumental Action :** This is oriented to the achievement of goals which is a future state of affairs and which involves knowledge about the various ways of achieving the goal. For example working in a factory is an instrumental action. The

actor knows that by working he will be able to satisfy the basic needs of his family. When one action is performed in order to achieve some other goals, the action becomes the instrument to achieve them then it is called instrumental action e.g. studying hard to pass the exam is the instrumental action.

2. **Expressive Action :** The action which satisfies the immediate needs of the actor. E.g. watching a television satisfies the actor's immediate need of entertainment or passing the time. Here the goal is not of future but of the satisfaction or desires. When a father beats his child for having repeated the same mistake, it is expressive of his anger, he may repent afterwards.

3. **Moral Action :** The actor acts to satisfy his needs for some value oriented action or to achieve some higher level goals i.e. to serve humanity or to donate for needy persons. Even giving blood to the patients during emergency is a kind of moral action. The goal is not to satisfy one self for immediate cause or to achieve some long term goal but to fulfill some greater concern.

Parsons argues that in order to fulfill are achieve different goals the actors come in contact with each other, follow the norms and values and maintain the system when majority of actors follow the same norms, the norms become stable and institutionalized i.e. pattened. Then it is possible to regulate the individual's behaviour and intergrate their various activities. This leads to a balanced structure or stable and ordered system of functioning by which a society attempts to satisfy the needs of its members.

The individuals, through basic initial learning internalize various norms in order to behave in a particular way. These become the part of their personality. This is what Parsons conceptualizes as "institutionalization" i.e. permanency of rules and regulation. He argues that it is due to this process that every actor behaves in accordance with the social expectations and thus maintain social harmony.

According to Parsons there are different types of institutions i.e. Patterns of norms.

1. **Relational Institutions :** These regulate interactive relationships e.g. family, education.

2. **Regulative Institutions :** Individual and Social interest are controlled in order to bring harmony and proper functioning. E.g. Law.

3. **Cultural Institutions :** The idea of what is right or desirable is developed through cultural patterning. What goals individuals should seek or society as a collectivity orient towards are determined by cultural institution. The morality of action form

the collectivity as well as individual points of view are decided on the basis of cultural values.

Relational institutions define reciprocal role expectations and thus constitute the core of the social system. Regulative institutions define the legitimate means to be employed in the pursuit of interests, cultural institutions, peripheral to the social relationships structure, define obligations and value orientations with regard to cultural pattern.

Parsons argues that any action must be supportive to the system. It must lead to the equilibrium or balance of the system and he gave more importance to values or norms for this equilibrating processes. For him, when majority of individuals interact following an ordered system of values the system function.

In parsons system analysis structural aspect i.e. the pattern of relationships and the result in terms of ultimate equilibrium maintained by the system explains the central place. He outlines four fundamental functions which every system has to perform in order to achieve stability and regularity. These he has termed as functional requisites in short as AGIL.

A function is a complex of activities directed towards meeting a need or needs of the system. Using this definition Parsons believes that there are four functional requirements of a social system that are necessary for every system namely adoption to external environment, instrumental goal attainment, intergration among units of the system and pattern maintainance and tension management.

He emphasizes the problem of order and the adequacy of motivation is his analysis. The system can sustain itself only if a sufficient proportion of its members perform the essential social roles with an adequate degree of effectiveness. To avoid disruptive behaviour, all members must fulfill all the expectations and for this they must be sufficiently motivated and trained for broad functional requisites of the social system.

Functional requisites of a system :

1. **The function of adaptation :**

A	Adaptation	Goal attainment	**G**
L	Latency – Pattern maintainance and tension management	Intergration	**I**

A system must cope with external situational exigencies. It must adapt to its environment in order to fulfill its needs. It also means to secure and distribute the means of survival from the environment. This is economic function. In a family this is the husband / father's role. In modern era, wives also perform this role. They earn and satisfy the basic needs of the family.

2. **Goal attainment :** Goal attainment or determining ordering and facilitating the attainment of goals of the system. This is the role of the "head" of the institution. A system must define and achieve its primary goals. In order words this is the function of maximizing the capacity to attain collective goals. For example, the government has to facilitate the attainment of goals.

3. **Intergration :** Intergration or sousing cooperative and coordinated social relationships within the system. This is the tendency to cooperate and making the members obey the rules. A system must regulate the interrelationships of its component Paris. It must also manage the relationships between and among the other three functional imperatives (A, G, L).

4. **Latency :** Latency which includes pattern maintenance involving the motivation of desired behaviour and tension management involving the mechanism of avoiding tensions and strains. A system must furnish, maintain and renew both the motivation of individuals and the cultural patterns that create and sustain the motivation.

In a social system like society these four functions are performed by four systems :

Economy – Adaptive
Polity – Goal attainment
Family – Intergrative
Cultural System – Pattern maintainance and tension management

Social System

A	Economy	Polity	**G**
L	Cultural System	Family	**I**

In a family subsystem these four essential functions are performed by different members and mechanisms.

Family

A	Husband / Father	Head	**G**
L	Education and Intergrative Culture	Socialization	**I**

In Industry, these four essential functions are performed in the following ways :

Industry

A	Production	Management	**G**
L	Management labour relation	Personal trade unions	**I**

In accordance with persons scheme, a factory as a social system can be analyzed as under :

1) **Adaptive Function :** Proper lighting, good working condition suitable machinery, food services.

2) **Goal attainment :** Processing, Manufacturing marketing research activities.

3) **Intergrative Function :** Management labour council, clubs, public relations, recreational and social events, insurance and labour welfare programmes.

4) **Pattern maintenance and tension management :** Training orientation session, allocation of rank, salary structure, promotion, increments and bonuses, disciplinary control, mechanism for the redress of grievances.

In a polity system the adaptive function is carried out by election system, goal attainment by the government, intergrative by education and pattern maintenance function by law.

Polity System

A	Election	Government	**G**
L	Law	Education	**I**

Education System

A	Building rooms facilities	Principal Teacher	**G**
L	Picnic, extra curricular activities	Discipline rules	**I**

Two basics doctrines underline Parson's description of the four categories of activity which are primarily related to social systems as phase problem and functional imperatives. He subscribes to the view that action generated within any given social system is in part directed towards its internal situation, the proportion varying with the type of system. The external internal dichotomy is the one axis. Consistent with this means – ends formulation he also sees some activity as instrumental in the sense that its product represents the means to a goal and not the goal itsel; (i.e. instrumental) whereas other activity is consummatory in that the product of the activity or the activity is itself represents goal. This means that the activity is itself the goal. E.g. expressing love or enjoying dinner.

The instrumental consummatory dichotomy is the 2nd axis, which upon interaction with the external internal axis describes four general areas of activity as revealed in the figure below.

	I	C	
A External	Instrumental Adaptive function	Consummatory Goal attainment function	G
Internal L	Pattern maintenance and tension management	Intergration function	I

A : Adaption
G : Goal attainment
I : Intergration
L : Latent Originally Called latency SOL but now revised as pattern maintenance and tension management

Bob Jessop has neatly summarized Parson's framework as follows: Every Social System is confronted with four functional problems. These problems are those of : a) Pattern maintenance, intergration, goal attainment and adoption.

1. Pattern Maintenance : Refers to the need to maintain and reinforce the basic values of the social system and to resolve tension that emerge from continuing commitment to these values. E.g. in the family the picnic or vocation focus serve this purpose. Even in school, extra curricular activities serve this purpose. In industry the entertainment programmes meant for the workers or employees serve this purpose.
2. Intergration refers to the allocation of rights and obligations, rewards and facilities to ensure the harmony of relations between the members of the social system. Training for moral values, insistence on discipline, control and strict conformity to rules.

3. Goal attainment involves the necessity of mobilizing actors and resources in organized ways for the attainment of specific goals e.g. production for the industry or stability for the family.

4. Adoption refers to the need for the production or acquisition of generalized facilities or resources that can be employed to attain specific goals. E.g. arranging the facilities, equipments or necessary machines for production in industry.

12.7 PATTERN VARIABLES :

In describing the structure of action, Parsons gave different ways of acting by the individuals in the form of variables. He deduces them from Tonnies dichotomy – Gemeinshaft – Gemeinshaft and forms them into a series of alternative value orientations which every actor faces. The alternatives of dilemmas and their resolutions are presumably associated with definite role expectations and types of social system and one sort of resolution would be expected either in a predominatory geimeinschaltich system or situation or the polar opposite in a geseuschfteclor situation. This means that either in a traditional society or in a modern society any one alternative is expected.

The role of a physician is a case in point while having relationship with the pattern, the physician has to maintain primary relations but when the principle, of welfare of the patient is considered, the physician has to be objective or adopt secondary relationship. Therefore, Parsons sought to identify the choices between alternatives that an actor confronts in a given situation and the relative primacies that can be assigned to such choices. In another example, a teacher has to be affectionate towards students but while examining them, she has to be neutral, similarly, a judge has to be impartial even in case of his own wife caught driving rashly or carelessly.

1. **Affectivity vs affective neutrality (the gratification discipline dilemma) :** The pattern is affective when an organized action system emphasizes gratification i.e. satisfaction e.g. when an individual tries to avoid pan and maximize pleasure; the pattern is affectively neutral when it imposes discipline i.e. consciousness of duty or control and renouncement or deferment of some gratifications in favour of other interests e.g. husband wife relations. The relationship has to be affective and not affective neutral. Similarly soldiers have to ignore immediate grantification and be affectively neutral in the line of duty to maintain discipline even if that involves risking their lines when the actor seeks immediate gratification it is affective action e.g. watching TV or eating food, while sacrificing immediate interests for the state of achieving larger goals it is affective neutral. The actor has to control his desires e.g. during the examination the student has to work very hard and forget all amusements. This is effective neutral action.

2. **Self orientation vs Collective Orientation :** The actor pursues either his own private interests or those of the collectivity. The student works hard and passes the examination. This he does for self interest but if he joints any students organization or a

rally. For some cause benefitting the students as a whole, it is collective orientation. The actor can give importance either serve his own interest or do something for the larger community to be belongs similarly a lecturer delivers lectures and goes home; this is self oriented action but if he organizes some extra curricular activities for the benefit of student. It is collectively oriented action. Doctor's services are also called collectively oriented.

This dichotomy depends on social norms or shared expectations which define as legitimate the pursuit of an actors private interest or obligate him to act in the interests of the group. The salesman glorifies his products, this is self oriented action but a doctor also has to see the welfare of the patient, apart from earning money therefore this is collectivity or group oriented action.

3. **Particularism vs universalism :** The former refers to standards determined by an actor's particular relations with a particular object, the latter refers to value standards that are highly generalized. A teacher is supposed to give grades to all students impartially i.e. accordance with the same abstract, general, universal principles. But if he favours his son or a friend who happens to be in the same class, he is behaving particularistically, for he is treating people differently on the basis of their particular relationship to him. Similarly, a judge has to be impartial and has to apply universalistic principles. A job has to be given on the impartial general criteria of selection basis : this is universalistic approach. But considering the personal relationship or some caste relations while selecting a candidate becomes the example of particularistic approach.

   According to Parson in traditional societies particularistic approach is more common while in modern industrial societies general and universal logical principles are adopted for selection. Judgement or examination or promotion.

4. **Quality vs. Performance :** This is similar to Ralph Linton's ascription achievement dichotomy. Does the actor orient himself to another in accordance with what he is or what he does? That is whether natural in born qualities are considered or the performance i.e. behaviour. The former involves defining people on the basis of certain attributes such as age, sex colour, nationality etc. the latter defines people, on the basis of their abilities and interests. Age wise retirement, racial discrimination and the notion of caste superiority or even male superiority are all based on considerations of quality i.e. factors which are in born and over which one has no control. Recruitment of personnel in a modern bureaucracy based on

technical qualifications and standards tests involves consideration of performance or ability. In a family or family enterprise descriptive quality is given more importance while in formal industry qualification or achievements are preferred.

5. **Diffuseness vs specificity :** Diffuseness is described here in terms of roles which are quite broad in involvement morally obligating and wide in scope e.g. the role of mother. A mother can not go on strike or refuse to cook. Even after the age of 60, she is morally obligated to her family. Her role is diffuse i.e. unlimited in scope or definite in expectations. A child goes on expecting from his mother even through he himself groups old. While specify is described in terms of the role which has limited performance and restricted involvement. A worker for example does not work after 5m. in the industry. He is not expected either. This is specific role while family roles are diffuse, since they involve unlimited scope, never ending expectations and obligations which the member has to fulfill throughout his life. A mother, to repeat, has diffuse role in the sense that she has to perform her role with full zeal, devotion and attachment till death. The parents also demand continuasy from their childrens in terms of comfort or luxuries even at the old age, the children are always obliged to fulfill the expectation of their parents. While the relationship between the employer and employees involves definite terms and conditions, limited obligations and no expectation of any extra performance beyond the terms or conditions of the contact. In feudal traditional structure the tenant or landless labourer was expected to serve or work on endless obligations basis, there was no recognition or appreciation of his service to his masters. Even in traditional families there is no appreciation of services rendered by wives. These are diffuse roles.

According to Parson, specific roles are the characteristics of modern society while diffuse roles are the basis of traditional social system.

Parsons, in order to make the social system theory more intergrated has linked the pattern variables with the types of actions.

Expressive	Instrumental
Ascription (Quality)	Achievement
Diffuseness	Specificity
Affectivity	Neutrality
Particularism	Universalism
Collectivity	Self

For him all the first category of behavioural dilemmas are expressive i.e. involving emotions or sentiments to satisfy short term needs and goals. While the second category of behavioural dilemmas are instrumental i.e. oriented to long term goals.

12.8 SYSTEMS AND SUBSYSTEMS :

Parsons's general theory of system recognizes four different aspects of reality – social cultural biological and personality organism. Corresponding to these four realms of reality, there are four subsystems of action the social, the cultural, the personality and the biological systems, which are analytically separable and can be explained independently.

I. The Social System :

According to Parsons, "A Social System consists in a Plurality of individual actors interacting with each other in a situation which has at least a physical or environmental aspect, actors who are motivated in terms of a tendency to the "optimization of gratification" and whose relation to their situations including each other, is defined and Mediated in terms of a system of culturally structured and shared symbols."

In other words, as is mentioned earlier, a social system consists of a number of individuals who come in contact with each other with their goals and tendencies to use the resources to achieve them. During these processes they also have to control themselves, take into account others' goals and available means. They are governed by a common set of norms and values in order to have satisfactory achievement of goals and fulfillment of desires.

Thus, a social system is generated by the process of interaction among the individual units. But a social system is not made up of the total action of individuals and groups, but only their actions in specific roles.

The core of a social system is the patterned normative order through which the life of a population is collectively organized. As an order, it contains values as well as norms and standards. As a collectivity, it displays a patterned idea of membership. i.e. made up of those individuals who belong to it. And, the social system is an open system engaged in processes of interchange with its environment (i.e. with other subsystem) as well as consisting of interchanges among its internal units.

What are the units of social system? Basically, the unit is the act. But for most purpose of the more higher order analysis of social system. Parsons prefers 'status role' since a social system is a system of processes of interaction between actors. It is the structure of the relations between and among the actors as involved in the interactive process which is essentially the structure of the social system. The system is a network of such relationships.

The need to fulfill various functions of the social system gives rise to different structural arrangements. Thus, a total society, as a social system (A) tends to differentiate into subsystems (Social Structures) and it terms of the four primary functions (AGIL). Four subsystems of society are identified by Parsons and linked with four functional requisites while each subsystem (B) is further described in terms of four ewquisities.

A) Social System

A	Economy (Production)	Polity (Government)	**G**
L	(Culture) vale oriented family, school, research	Court Law Police	**I**

B) Biological System

A	Physical Organism	Personality	**G**
L	Cultural Entertainment	Social – rules / norms	**I**

A. The adaptive Subsystem :

The economy is the primary specialized sub system in relation to the adaptive function of a society. It functions to produce generalized facilities, particularly commodities and resources, as means to numerous ends and through the institutions of contract and property the economic system regulated the processes of production and distribution.

B. The goal attainment subsystem :

The primary goal attainment subsystem is the polity whose function is the mobilization of necessary prerequisites for the attainment of given system goals of the society. This means that the government has to set long term goals and also to arrange necessary resources and means to achieve these goals.

C. The Intergrative Subsystem :

All subsystems that function to control conflict and deviances and maintain the institutionalization of value patterns are intergrative subsystems of society. E.g. law education clubs, courts, police etc.

D. The pattern maintenance and tension management subsystems :

Structure like Family socialize the children and also help them internalize the norms. Education systems teach what is good and proper. These are closely related to cultural systems.

Patterned interaction between and among the various parts leads to a system or subsystem which is again a part of the larger system. According to Parsons these contribute towards the maintence of the order and existence of the system to which they belong. As long as they maintain, they are effective.

II. The cultural System :

Parsons defines the cultural system as “the aspect of action organized about the specific characteristics of symbols and meaningful patterning which give the primary sense of direction e.g. language and communication system of beliefs and ideas “parsons also argues that the possibility of their preservation over time and of their diffusion from one personality and / or social system into another, are perhaps the most important hallmarks of the independent structure of cultural systems.

Cultural institutions consist of cognitive beliefs, systems of expressive symbols and private moral obligations. The main function of the cultural value patterns provide the most direct link between the social and cultural systems in legitimizing the normative order. They define what is appropriate and what is not, not necessarily in a moral sense but in accordance with the institutionalized order. As Parsons puts it “Moral values” build the core of the cultural system. They are also related to personality system through internationalization of values, and also to behavioural organism, and more generally they articulate with religion, science and the arts within the cultural system.”

Actors are oriented to values or they can also deal with values some cultural patterns function primarily as symbolic froms for the organization of the actor’s cognitive orientation. Others serve a similar function in relation to the cathectic aspect of his orientation. Finally there are those which mediate or structure his evaluative orientations. Accordingly Parsons proposes a typology of cultural patterns which includes :

1) Systems of cognitive, ideas or beliefs i.e. knowledge – education mass media etc.
2) Systems of adjustive patterns or expressive symbols rituals customs.
3) Systems of intergeative patterns or value orientation standards, family training – Socialization.

II. The Personality System :

Parsons views personality as “the aspect to the living individual, as “actor” which must be taken as cultural and social content of the learned patterning that make up his behavioural system.” Personality forms a distinct system articulated with social systems through their political subsystems i.e. collective orderning. The culture is reflected through personalities. It is an integrated system of norms and values.

1) The main function of the personality system is to develop, the level of motivation so that the individual can take effective part in all social activities.
2) Personality system is organized through socialization process.
3) Religion also supports the personality system.
4) Through reward and punishment system, the order is achieved.

Personality System

Control	Motivation
Goals	Reward

‘Personality’ thus constitutes the main social and cultural contents expected from the acting or behaving individuals. Personality is related to role through interdependence and interpenetration for Parsons, personality serves the following functions in Society.

a) Motive force to increase instrumental performance.
b) Facilities are controlled.
c) Expectations are fulfilled.
d) The relationships between the system and the personality become stable.

Thus the individual becomes very important component of society which ultimately carries values, adopts goals and uses available means to achieve them. He is the ultimate instrument to achieve societal goals. Thus personality system is the basic of all social sub systems.

IV. The Biological System :

According to Parsons all relations between the social system and the Physical environment are mediated through the behavioural organism. Man knows about the environment through his perceptive power and also organizes culture.

Human organism is capable to learn any pattern of behaviour. It is also sensible i.e. the human organism is influenced by the attitude of others in the social interaction process.

Parsons argues that certain biological facilities from personality :

1) Motivational Energy
2) The perceptual or Cognitive Capacity
3) Performance or response capacity or the capacity to utilize the structure of the organism.
4) The mechanisms that intergrate these facilities with each other and the needs of psychological system, especially the pleasue mechanism.

The four primary subsystems of society (adaptive, goal attainment, intergrative and pattern maintenance and tension management) are functionally specialized around their inter relations with the three other subsystems of action (Cultural biological and Personality). Each of the four societal subsystems may also be considered a distinct environment of the subsystem which is the society's integrative core.

Criticism – critics have charged that Parsons system of concepts does not calles pond to events in the real world, Dahrendorf has called such social system as utopia i.e. ideal world where there is no concept of change and there is existence of universal consensus on prevailing values, Dahrendorf does not see anything logically with the term system but when it is applied to total societies and that too universally, all kinds of undesirable consequences follow. For Parson's change occurs only when the parts try to adjust or cope with the changes in the structure. All the relations are based on role expectations which are fixed point of reference against which other structures or talent consequences are seen as potentially disruptive, deviance and strains of various kinds are residue in the model. Though the system seeks equilibrium it has 'problems' and 'imperatives' of control, but Parson's has never talked about them.

12.9 SUMMARY :

Parson's theory of action and of social systems explain functional theory for him the society is a whole composed of several parts who are the individual actors as well as groups. These parts perform their roles according to their status, following of conforming to socially determined norms and values, these are essential to have a proper control over the process of or behaviour of individual actors.

12.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. Discuss Parson theory of Social action.
2. Write in detail basic elements of action.
3. What do you mean by Social function?
4. Discuss Equilibrium.
5. Highlight Pattern variable.

12.11 QUESTIONS :

1. Analyze the theory of social system as given by Parson with specific reference to –
   a) Functional requisite
   b) Pattern Variable
   c) Components of a social system

2. Discuss the theory of action as given by Parson with reference to
   a) Types of Action
   b) Motivation for Action

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13

MERTON’S MIDDLE RANGE THEORY

Unit Structure :

13.0 Objectives
13.1 Introduction
13.2 Structure-functionalism
13.3 Theories of middle range
13.4 Chief attributes of theories of middle range
13.5 Reference Group
13.6 Theory of Anomie
13.7 Summary
13.8 Check your progress
13.9 Questions
13.10 References

13.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To acquaint students with structural functionalism in sociology.
- To highlight theory of anomie and Deviance.

13.1 INTRODUCTION :

Although R.K. Merton’s approach to functionalism differs substantially from that of Parsons, he has also been influential in shaping contemporary American Sociology. Born in Philadelphia and a graduate of temple University there, Merton received his Ph.D from Harvard in 1936, where he studied under Parsons. He subsequently taught at Harvard Tulane and Columbia University and since 1941, he has been at Columbia University, currently he is the assistant director of Bureau of Applied Social Research.

13.2 STRUCTURE – FUNCTIONALISM :

While T. Parsons is the most important structural – functional theorist his student Robert Merton authored some of the most important statements on structural functionalism in sociology. Merton criticized some of the more extreme and indefensible aspects of structural functionalism. But equally important, his new conceptual insights helped to give structural functionalism a continuing usefulness.

Although both Merton and Parsons are associated with structural, functionalism, there are important differences between them. For one thing, while Parsons advocated the creation of grand overarching theories, Merton favoured more limited, middle range theories. For another, Merton was more favourable toward Marxian theories than Parsons was. In fact Merton and some of his students especially Gouldner can be seen as having pushed structural functionalism more to the left politically.

A structural functional model: Merton criticized what he saw as the three basic postulates of functional analysis as it was developed by anthropologists such as Malinowski and Radcliffe Brown. The first is the postulate of the **functional unity of society.**

1. Postulate of the functional unity of society:

This postulate holds that all standardized social and cultural beliefs and practices are functional for society as a whole as well as for individuals in society. This view implies that the various part of a social system are highly integrated. It believes that each custom, belief, ritual i.e. every unit of culture is functional in the sense that it contributes to the maintenance of the whole society. Merton however maintains that although it may be true of small, primitive societies, the generalization cannot be extended to larger, more complex societies. He contends that cultural items do not function always and all the elements may not always contribute or uniformly contribute to the survival of the society e.g. dowry custom or child marriage or child marriage or female infanticide in India. He gave the example that upper class’s contribution and lower class’s contribution may be different and at times they clash. In today’s modern complex societies with functional specialization, structural differentiation and rational bureaucracy the functional unity is doubtful. Therefore functional analysis must bring out both positive and negative consequences and specify which element contributes to what and how.

2. The postulate of universal functionalism:

It is argued that all standardized social and cultural forms and structures have positive functions. Merton argued that this contradicts what we find in the real world. The contention that every custom, material object, idea or belief as malinowski says fulfills some vital function in every type of civilization, has been objectionable to Merton. e.g. the feeling of racial superiority is detrimental to the progress of other communities. ‘What is good for the individual may not be good for the society'. A custom may be good for a particular community but definitely not for others e.g. sacrifice of goat among Muslims. A social custom that has positive consequences for the elite may have negative consequences for the masses. For example technical literacy has produced more unemployment and so frustration among the new generations everywhere. The cases of suicide are not surprising then today. Similarly, the unquestioned authority of elders may be good in joint family system but it is not functional in nuclear family pattern.

3. The postulate of indispensability:

The assumption is that if a social pattern is well established, it must be meeting some basic needs and therefore it must be indispensable. Merton objects to this stand by saying that some institutional function can be performed by different alternatives e.g. if social integration is the function of religion, this function could be served by a strong centralized government. A government can be formed by a traditional monarch, liberal democrat or a military dictator. If salvation is the function served by a religion, a simple system of faith can do and numerous complex religions can be avoided. Merton says that this postulate leads to an idea that all structures and institutions are functionally necessary for society and that they cannot be replaced. But Merton has clarified that the same function can be performed equally well by other alternative. His criticism was that we all at least admit that there are alternatives to various existing institutions.

Merton's position was that all these functional postulates rely on non-empirical assertions based on abstract, theoretical systems. At the minimum, it is the responsibility of the sociologist to examine each empirically. Merton believed that empirical tests, not theoretical assertions are crucial to functional analysis. This led him to develop his 'paradigm' of functional analysis as a guide to the integration of theory and research.

Merton made it clear from the outset that structural functional analysis focuses on groups, organizations, societies and cultures. He stated that any object that can be subjected to functional analysis must be standardized. He basically referred to social roles, institutional patterns, social processes, cultural patterns, culturally patterned emotions, social norms, group organizations, social structure, devices for social control etc.

For Merton, the 'functional' reference taken by the earlier functionalists have social motives too. For him, they took the 'function' as the intention of the individuals for social purposes i.e. motives of action. Merton says that the focus of the structural functionalist should be on social functions rather than on individual motives. **Functions** according to him, are defined as "those observed consequences which make for the adaptation or adjustment of a given system".

Merton says that when there is positive consequences of any given structure or institution, there can also be negative implication as well, therefore he has developed the concept **'dysfunction'**. "Just as structures or elements could contribute to the maintenance of the other parts of social system, they could also have negative or destructive consequences for them". 'Slavery' e.g. was good in one sense that agriculture was well developed but then people were so much dependent on them that they could not think of other mode of production for example industrialization therefore industrialization could not be developed early.

Merton also presented the idea of **'non-functions'** which he defined as consequences that are simply irrelevant to the system under consideration. Earlier, some forms might have been functional or had positive consequences but now in today's time they had become irrelevant or unnecessary but they are being continued only in the name of tradition e.g. many social religious customs of keeping fast for the long life of husband, and children as observed by north Indians are totally irrelevant but continued only in the name of tradition.

Dysfunctions: Dysfunctions are those consequences which are detrimental to the existence of society e.g. religious riots/communal riots is the dysfunction of religion. Similarly, low status of women is dysfunction to the progress of society. For Merton, dysfunctions are those observed consequences which lessen the adaptation or adjustment of the system.

An item may have functional or dysfunctional consequences. The positive and negative effects have to be counteracted and the net balance of consequences has to be seen.

Merton also introduced the concepts **manifest** and **latent** function. These two terms have also been important additions to functional analysis. In simple terms, manifest functions are those that are intended, whereas latent functions are unintended. Manifest functions are seen and recognized by participants in the system while latent functions are hidden and not realized by any one directly of immediately e.g. construction of temples or church is the manifest function of religion but encouragement to art or science through religion is the latent function. Merton has given the example of Hopi Indians to explain the difference between manifest and latent function who in times of drought perform ritual brings rain or no, it does promote magically causing rain. Whether the ritual brings rain or no, it does promote a general feeling of social solidarity and even provides relaxation and entertainment and the custom continues. The manifest function of any custom is clearly seen but the hidden and not clear intention should also be understood. This is sociological analysis.

Arranging a religions function on a grand scale by some families may reflect faith in God but the latent function is to show status and earn prestige for the family. Similarly by following dowry custom, the boy's party may try to show conformity to the custom but latently it tries to earn much prestige by accepting a huge amount of money. Many Christian missionaries serve humanity by helping poor, nursing sick of a educating children all free of cost as manifest aims but latently they wish to spread their Christian faith all over the world. They open hospitals, schools and also help poor or needy financially but their real aim is to spread their faith.

The analysis of function by Merton in terms of function and dysfunction and manifest and latent has made it more clear, meaningful and scientific.

Merton has said – the same social arrangement can have or may be perceived to have both positive and negative results. Religion is perceived as means of salvation by the faithful but it is characterized as opiate by Marxists since it makes people lazy and dependent on fate. What is functional in one aspect for some, may be dysfunctional in other aspect for others. Exploitation of labour may be good for the capitalist in terms of increasing profit but dysfunctional in terms of productivity or causing unrest of workers.

13.3 THEORIES OF MIDDLE RANGE :

Just as T. Parsons was beginning to develop a form of requisite functionalism, Robert K. Merton launched a critique of Parson's functional theory. To him, Parsons searched for "a total system of sociological theory, in which observations about every aspect of social behaviour, organization and change promptly find their fixed place." For Merton such grand theoretical schemes are premature since the theoretical and empirical ground work necessary for their completion has not been performed. Such theory is based only on general data, suggesting types of variables which theorists must somehow take into account, rather than clearly formulated, verifiable statement of relationships between specified variables. For Merton such theories are grand but not really theory but philosophical systems with their varied suggestiveness, their architectonic splender and their sterility. Therefore, Merton formulated theories of middle range in Sociology.

In Merton's view, theories of the middle range offer more theoretical promise than Parson's grand theory. They explain limited range of phenomena and are at lower level of abstraction. Although middle range theories are abstract, they are also connected to the empirical world, thus encouraging the research so necessary for the clarification of concepts and reformulation of theoretical generalizations. Merton maintained that the theory must be connected to research or else, theoretical suggestions would remain at the level of concepts. Similarly, research without theory would be disjointed, unsystematic and useless for expanding a body of sociological knowledge. Thus by following a middle range strategy, the concepts and propositions of sociological theory will become more closely organized as theoretically focused empirical research forces clarification, elaboration and reformulation of the concept and propositions of each middle range theory.

In fact, for Merton, although it is necessary to concrete energies on the construction of limited theories that inspire research, theorists must also be concerned with “consolidating the special theories into a moral general set of concepts and mutually consistent propositions.” The special theories of sociology must therefore be formulated with the intention of offering more general sociological theorizing. Conceived in this manner, functionalism became for Merton a method for building not only theories of the middle range but also the grand theoretical schemes that would someday contain such theories of the middle range. On the basis of middle range theories grand theories could be constructed.

Though the aim of the researcher must be to consolidate the special theories into a more general set of concepts and mutually consistent propositions, he should first concentrate on the middle range theory. For Merton, a theory must be based on adequate facts. As he puts, “the so called theories of middle range lies between the minor but necessary working hypothesis that are used in studying a research problem and that all inclusive efforts to develop a grand unified theory that will explain all the observed uniformities of social behaviour, social organization and social change.” Another significant feature is that they are principally used to guide empirical research. They deal with limited aspects of social events like social mobility, reference groups, changing norms and values, religion etc. It is obvious that such middle range theories and minor hypothesis will help to build up knowledge which is cumulative and generalized. Such theories can also be empirically tested.

In building middle range theory, Merton advocates the use of the functional model that would allow for both the easy specification and elaboration of relevant concepts while encouraging systematic revision and reformulation as empirical findings would dictate.

13.4 CHIEF ATTRIBUTES OF THEORIES OF MIDDLE RANGE :

1. The middle range theories are based on limited sets of assumptions. From these limited sets, specific hypothesis are derived and then confirmed by empirical investigation.
2. The middle range theories are consolidated into the wider network of theory.
3. These theories deal with the different spheres of social behaviour, social change, social structure e.g. theory of conflict which can also be related to race and class conflict.
4. The middle range theories cut across the distinction between micro sociological problems and macro sociological problems.
5. The middle range theories consist of specific orientation rather than general sociological orientation.
6. As a result of this distinction, many theories of the middle range can be developed into wider theories of system.
7. Such theories are related to only particular problems that might be explained on the basis of available knowledge for example, the theory of role set. This concept of role set explains the position of an individual in a social situation e.g. a woman as a wife, mother, friend, neighbour, working as a professional, relative, daughter-in-law or even mother-in-law. Thus this concept explains that a role is not a single event, it is related to many others and also involves an array of related roles. Thus the concept of role set is an image for thinking about a component of the social structure. The notion of the role clarifies that the structure of society is made up of such role sets and people interact according to their role sets. All these roles are to be managed successfully to avoid any conflict.

Merton's functionalism has never become as did Parsons. Yet, the middle range theories that attract much attention. Merton's middle range strategy encouraged the proliferation of what may be called – theories of … that is, empirical generalization defended as theory, despite the fact that they are not sufficiently abstract. Merton has constructed theories about juvenile delinquency, family conflict, race relations, social mobility in America, urbanization and other empirical events. Virtually none of these theories has been consolidated into more general and abstract propositions because they are too empirical and therefore too tied to specific times, places and contexts. While Merton's functionalism did not catch on, his advocacy for middle range theory did. These theories have the grounds for empirical research thought for other like Turner these theories are little more than statement of empirical regularity that need a more abstract set of propositions to explain them.

13.5 REFERENCE GROUPS :

Sociologists, social psychologists and cultural anthropologists have always operated on the fundamental principles that an individual's attitudes and conduct are shaped by the group to which he belongs and secondly, self appraisal and the correlative feelings and behaviour flow from the individual's position within a social hierarchy in a particular group.

But sometimes upper class people also have radical or revolutionary ideas inspite being in relatively advanced positions, children of orthodox families turn non-conformists. In shaping their attitudes, men may orient themselves to groups other their own. Such groups which individuals refer are empirically determined. By comparing with such groups, individual's self evaluation and conduct will be enhanced, the ideal principles about the group influence can be protected; and an understanding of the complex processes by which men relate themselves to groups can be enriched.

W. G. Sumner gave the idea of ingroups and outgroups, C. H. Cooley discussed selective affinity to groups outside the one's own immediate environment, Cooley's remark that people differ much in the vividness of their imaginative sociability suggests that individuals use multiple groups for reference or comparison. In 1890, W. Jones in his account of 'social self' suggested that our potential self is developed and inwardly strengthened by thoughts of remote groups and individuals who function as normative points of reference.

In his contribution to the theory of reference group behaviour, Merton makes many numerous kinds of reference groups. They are said to provide a frame of reference for self evaluation and attitude formation. A term introduced by Hyman in 1942 to denote a group, collectivity or person which an individual takes into account in determining his or her behaviour and attitudes. It can be the same or different from the group of which he / she is currently a member. The basic concern is to explain a person's activities and beliefs in terms of subjectively significant relationships. This also adds a time dimension, a person's reference group will be determined by his / her part, while present actions may be carried out with reference to a desire subsequent to join a group.

Merton refers to two distinct types of reference groups in terms of their characteristic for the behaviour of those oriented towards them:

1. The normative type – which sets and maintains standards for the individual.

2. The comparison type – which provides a frame of reference (comparison) relative to which the individual evaluates himself and others.

The first is the source of values assimilated by designated individuals who may or may not be members of the group, the second is for evaluating the relative position of ourselves and others. This is to gain either self pride or desire to imitate the other group.

Normative reference groups become ideal for the individuals e.g. Mahatma Gandhi and other political leaders. The individuals receive inspirations for them. Similarly western society motivates Asian countries to improve technically and materially. While comparison with reference group exists at the same level. The middle class compares itself with either the lower class or the upper class. The chawl dweller compares with the slum dwellers and feels better, but he does not want to be the same, while the normative reference group serves as an ideal to be imitated; Parsis serve as normative reference group for Gujaratis. Britishers presented themselves as normative reference groups for Indians. In such cases the individuals compare themselves with that normative group but does not afford to become like them.

13.6 THEORY Of ANOMIE :

The development of the concept of anomie may be to Emile Durkheim's first book – The Division of Labour in society, published in 1893. But in 'suicide' for the first time the concept of 'anomie' was used in interpreting selected uniformities in rates of suicide.

Durkheim attributed anomie to unlimited aspirations and the breakdown of regulatory norms. "No living being can be happy or even exist unless his needs are sufficiently proportioned to his means." "Man's capacity for feeling is unsatiable and bottomless." Durkheim determined that man's desires can only be controlled by a moral force and for him social force or the force of the social collectivities is powerful enough to regulate social needs or moral needs; for it is the only moral power superior to the individual, the authority of which he accepts.

However, occasionally this mechanism breaks down and normlessness ensues. The individuals lose their faith on social order or laws.

"But when society is distributed by some painful crisis or by beneficial but abrupt transition, it is momentarily incapable of exercising this influence, then come the sudden rises in the curve of suicide … many people becomes suddenly poor, the degradation to lower status can not be acceptable to them. Instead of controlling or reducing the requirements or learning greater self control, they like to continue with their old rich life styles. The society also is unable to give them time; the individuals lose faith and at times commit suicide.”

Thus any abrupt transitions such as economic disaster, industrial crisis or sudden prosperity can cause a deregulation of the normative structure. Sudden changes upset the societal scale instantly but a new scale can not be immediately improvised. “The state of deregulation or anomie is thus further increased by passions less disciplined, precisely when they need more disciplining.” Sudden upward changes in the standard of living or the break up of a marriage throw life out of gear and put norms in a flux.

In short, Durkheim conceived of anomie as a social condition of normlessness or the deregulation of the normative structure i.e. the failure of the collective moral order to restrain the ever increasing ambition, greed and unlimited aspirations.

In his famous essay, social structure and Anomie, Merton broadened Durkheim’s concept of anomie in an attempt to explain not only suicide but various types of deviant behaviour as well as revolutionary changes. While Durkheim who emphasized man’s ever-increasing ambition to achieve unattainable goals, Merton sought to discover how some social structures exert a definite pressure upon certain persons in the society to engage in non-conforming rather than conforming conduct’. In sharp contrast to the Freudian contention that social structure puts stain on the free expression of man’s innate impulses and that man at times breaks into open rebellion against these restraints to attain freedom, Merton contends that social structure is active, producing fresh motivations and patterning types of conduct. Thus Merton concentrated not on the individual but on the social order and stressed the importance of normative structures in determining individual responses.

From among the several elements of social and cultural structures, Merton analytically separates two – **cultural goals** and **institutionalized means**. The goals are – social prestige, good income, comfortable job, status, power house, while the means are – hard work, good education, willingness to take up challenges to move ahead, to progress, source etc. Institutionalized means are the acceptable modes of achieving these goals. These are not necessarily the most efficient means but these are normatively regulated and approved by the social system.

Merton stresses that when the socially approved and regulated means do not help the individuals to achieve the goal, they go for other means which are not sanctioned by the society. This situation has been defined by Merton as anomie that means individuals are deviated from the normal course of action due to their inability to cope with the situation. Anomie, thus for Merton is a type of deviance, where the individuals do not follow the normal ways of living.

Merton modified the concept of anomie to refer to the strain put on individual's behaviour when accepted norms conflict with social reality. In industrial societies, generally held values emphasize material success and the means of achieving success are supposed to be hard work and self discipline. But many do not get opportunities to get material success. In this situation there is great pressure to try to get ahead by any means, legitimate or illegitimate. According to Merton, then deviance is a byproduct of economic inequalities and lack of equal opportunities.

Merton, thus used the notion of anomie to explain why people accept or reject the goals of a society, the socially approved means to fulfill their aspirations or both. Merton maintained that one important cultural goal is success which is largely measured in terms of money. In addition to providing the goal for people, our society offers specific instructions on how to pursue success – go to school, work hard, do not quit, take advantage of opportunities and so on.

Merton has given the typology of deviant acts which are caused by a gap between the cultural goals and institutionalized means. When individuals do not achieve success through proper means, they adopt different means, resulting in deviant behaviour. This is called **anomie theory of deviance**.

Merton calls these four modes of adaptation which individuals adopt for survival in society as (1) Innovation, (2) Ritualism, (3) Retreatism, (4) Rebellion.

1. Conformity : Conformity to social norms, the most common adaptation in Merton's typology, is the opposite to deviance. It involves acceptance of both the overall social goals (i.e. to become wealthy) and the approved means (by working hard). In Merton's view, there must be some consensus regarding accepted cultural goals and legitimate means for attaining them. Without such consensus, societies could exist as collectivities of people - rather than as unified culture and might function in continual chaos.

2. Innovation : This type of adaptation occurs when the individual has assimilated the cultural emphasis on the goal without equally internalizing the institutional norms governing the means for its attainment. The individual accepts the success goals but rejects the approved means; he resorts to institutionally prohibited and illegal means like robbery, theft, forgery, cheating at the examination and all similar cases where success goals are sought to be attained by illegitimate means. These are examples of innovation. Merton notes that this type of deviant behaviour is particularly common among lower classes whose advance towards the success goal is blocked by numerous structural barriers. On one side the goal of success is highly evaluated, on the other certain segments of population are not given opportunities to achieve it. But only lack of opportunities is not the main cause, the unique combination of caste and class barriers with a great emphasis on success and social mobility leads to deviance among the deprived sections.

3. Ritualism : Though ultimate goal is rejected by some, rules are being followed. Such people are not much ambitious though appear for all exams. Such people like receptionist at the counter or the bureaucrats are only interested in doing work with minute observance of every rule though internally, they are aimless. Students attend lectures but without heart or mind. Their aim is only to fulfill the attendance quota in order to appear for the exams. Instead of appearing in competition and working hard for them they prefer to cling to safe routines and the institutional norms. Merton expects members of the lower middle class to be more heavily represented among ritualists. For him, the ritualist abandons the goal of material success and become compulsively committed to the institutional means. Therefore such people do work but do not nave heart in that, they regard 'work' as means to achieve success but do not regard ‘work' as goal of life. They do work because there is no other alternative, because they have to do it or else they would leave it. Therefore work becomes a way of life rather than a means to the goal of success sometimes a social worker refuses to assist a homeless family because they had come from a different state. Many a times bureaucrats blindly apply the rules without seeing their utility in achieving the goals of the organization. Such people stick to their jobs even though they know that their jobs would not give them any rewards.

4. The retreatist : The 'retreatist' as described by Merton, has basically withdrawn (or repulsed) from both the goals and the means of a society. They do neither accept the goal of material success nor even believe in the institutionalized means of acquiring it. They reject both and adopt some other means which give them a meaning to life though false. Drug addicts, alcoholics create their own world and they live in that without bothering for their future. Such individuals are not even aware of their responsibilities towards family and society. They live a life of loneliness. They believe in their own individual gains and do not like the social world. They are socially withdrawn. Such individuals reject both the dominant values and the approved means of achieving them.

5. Rebellion : The final adaptation identified by Merton reflects people's attempts to create a new social structure. The 'rebel' is assumed to have a sense of indifference towards or alienation from dominant means and goals and to be seeking a dramatically different social order. All revolutionaries, leaders of social movement are 'rebels' in the sense that they wish to have a completely new order or a system. Naxali leaders who oppose zamindars or rich people, militants who kill the innocent people to create terror in the minds of people are 'rebels'. The members of radical political groups also fall in this category. They reject both the existing values and the means but wish actively to substitute new ones and reconstruct the social system.

Merton has stressed that he was not attempting to describe five types of individuals. Rather, he offered a typology to explain the actions that people usually take. Thus leaders of organized crime syndicates will be categorized as innovators since they do not pursue success through socially approved means. Yet they may also follow religious rituals and send their children to school. Conversely "respectable people may cheat on their taxes or violate traffic laws. According to Merton, the same person will move back and forth from one mode of adaptation to another depending on the demands of a particular situation.

Having identified the modes of individual adaptation, Merton defines 'anomie' as a breakdown in the cultural structure, occurring particularly when there is an acute disjunction between the cultural norms and goals and the socially structured capacities of members of the group to act in accord with them. In this conception, cultural values may help to produce behaviour which is at odds with the dominant values.

In other words, the condition of anomie or normlessness sets in when the social structure strains the cultural values, i.e. when the cultural system calls for behaviours and attitudes which a social system does not approve. Merton offers a distinction between 'simple' and 'acute' anomie. 'Simple’ anomie refers to the state of confusion in a group or society which is subject to conflict between value systems, resulting in some degree of uneasiness and a sense of separation from the group; 'acute' anomie to the deterioration and at the extreme the disintegration of value systems, which results in marked anxieties. In short Merton sees the conflict between cultural goals and institutionalized means as the primary source of anomie. Thus for him ‘anomie' is the disjunction between the culturally approved goals and the institutionalized means to achieve them.

Merton insists that anomie is essentially a sociological concept. ‘Anomie' refers to a property of a social system not to the state of mind of this, or that individual within the system. He adds 'Anomie' then is a condition of the social surround, not a condition of a particular people. People are confronted by substantial anomie when they cannot rely upon legal conditions or legally available opportunities of survival. For example, a Degree of anomie has set in when men and women cannot move in parks or streets freely without having the fear of being looted. The condition of anomie exists when there is a general loss of faith in the efficacy of the government, when there is lack of trust in contracts or there is uneasiness due to increase in crime rates or some other impending danger.

The theory of anomie as adaptation to social situation has little applicability for example, it is difficult to determine to what extent all acts of deviance can be accounted for by innovation, ritualism, retreatism and rebellion. Moreover, while Merton's theory is useful in examining certain types of behaviour such as illegal gambling by disadvantaged people functioning as 'innovators', his formulation fails to explain key differences in rates i.e. why all disadvantaged groups are not gamblers? or why the rates of crime differ in different societies.

13.7 SUMMARY :

No doubt, Merton has made a key contribution to sociological understanding of deviance by pointing out that deviants (such as innovators and ritualists) share much with conformists. They also have certain ethics or values. They also hold many of the aspirations that people with no criminal records have. Therefore deviance can be understood as socially created behaviour, rather than as the result of instinctive or compulsive behaviour.

R. K. Merton has given his middle range theory as against grand system theories of functionalism. He also talked about reference groups, deviance functions etc. He is famous for the relationship between theory and research he has established.

13.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. Highlight Merton theory of structure functionalism.
2. What do mean by references group.
3. Discuss middle-Range theory.
4. Highlight anomic theory of Deviance.

13.9 QUESTIONS :

1. Discuss the significance of Merton's middle range theories.
2. Explain the functional analysis as given by Merton. Also differentiate between function and dysfunction, manifest and latent functions with examples.
3. Discuss Merton's theory of reference group.
4. Write short notes on :
    a) Merton's three postulates of functional analyses
    b) Manifest and latent functions
    c) Reference group
    d) Innovation and ritualism as two modes of adaptation
5. Explain Merton's theory of anomie.

13.10 REFERENCES :

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14

ETHNOMETHODOLOGY

Unit Structure :

14.0 Objectives
14.1 Introduction
14.2 Ideas of Alfred Schutz
14.3 Knowledge of others
14.4 Reciprocity of perspectives
14.5 Multiple Reality
14.6 Common sense and Scientific Concepts
14.7 Common sense and Social Science
14.8 The constructs and models of Social Science
14.9 Erving Goffman
14.10 Dramaturgical Analysis
14.11 Evaluation
14.12 Summary
14.13 Check your progress
14.14 Questions
14.15 Reference

14.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To introduce the writings of Ethnomethodologist and Phenomenologist.
- To discuss the relationship people construct on basis of social reality.

14.1 INTRODUCTION :

Alfred Schutz (1899 – 1959)

The 1960's and 1970's witnessed a boom in several theoretical perspectives that can be lamped together under the heading of sociologies of everyday life.

14.2 THE IDEAS OF ALFRED SCHUTZ :

The philosophy of phenomenology, with its focus on consciousness, has a long history, but the effort to develop a sociological variant of phenomenology can be traced to the publication of Alfred Schutz's. The phenomenology of the social world in Germany in 1932 Schutz was focally concerned with a way in which people grasp the consciousness of others while they live within their own stream of consciousness. Schutz also used intersubjectivity in a larger sense to mean a concern with the social world, especially the social nature of knowledge.

Much of Schutz's work focuses on an aspect of the social world called the life world, or the world of everyday life. This is an intersubjective world in which people both create social reality and are constrained by the pre-existing social and cultural structures created by their predecessors. Although must of the life world is shared, there are also private aspects of that world. Within the life world, Schutz differentiated between intimate face to face relationships ("”we-relations”) and distant and impersonal relationships (“they-relations”) while face to face relations are of great importance in the life of the world, it is far easier for the sociologists to study more impersonal relations scientifically. Although Schutz turned away from consciousness and towards the intersubjective life world he did after insights into consciousness especially in his thoughts on meaning and people's motives.

Overall, Schutz was concerned with the dialectical relationship between the way people construct social reality and the obdurate social and cultural reality that they inherit from those who preceded them in the social world.

In his major work, the meaningful structure of the social world, Alfred Schutz sought to trace some of the main concepts of social science to their roots in the fundamental characteristics of consciousness, pointing thereby to a connection between Weber's Verstehende Sociologic and Husserl's transcendental phenomenology. Among Schutz's central concerns, however, here as well as in his ‘other writings, are a critique of naturalism, a critical reflection on conscious life : and an understanding of signs, symbols and ideas. The influence of Husserl is evident throughout, notably his theory of intentionally and his conceptions of intersubjectivity and Lebenswelt.

The social world of everyday life, Schutz tells us, is always on intersubjective one. Our experience of everyday world is a common sense one for each of us takes for granted that our fellow men exist, that they have a conscious life, that we communicate with them and finally, that they live in the same natural, historically given, sociocultural world as we do.

14.3 KNOWLEDGE OF OTHERS :

Schutz spells out the essentials of the common sense, taken for granted, everyday world an elaborate of Husserl's Lebenswelt. He employs Husserl's notion of appresentation to explain how we come to know others and communicates with them. Husserl calls a system of appresentations which in turn he regards as the source of sign systems and ultimately of language. For example, if we are in empathy with another, it is the same as saying we have grasped his meaning through appresentation. This process is not unlike the are in which we find meaning in any cultural object whether this be a book, a tool, a house or what have you. We constitute the object in accordance with the meaning it has for us. Similarly, in face to face interaction it is not the words merely as external sounds that we hear as we listen to someone talking but rather words as vehicles of meaning that enable us to comprehend him.

14.4 RECIPROCITY OF PERSPECTIVES :

When Schutz speaks of the microworld of face to face interaction, he also uses terms like "World within my actual reach" and "World within my manipulatory zone." The concepts, if not the actual words, are also employed by William James and George Herbert Mead.

The common – sense, take for granted attitude we share is that we could exchange places and that if we did so each would then see the world just as the other did previously.

Of course, this applies not only to spatial but also to sociocultural perspectives. The biographical situation of each of us is unique. If follows that our purposes and systems of relevances must differ. The typifying constructs we share enables us to go beyond our private worlds into a common one. Schutz reminds us that the thesis of "interchangeability of stands points" is an idealization even in the relatively simple microworld. For although it is true that we can often reciprocally exchange our standpoints and hence our perspectives atleast for practical purposes, there is some inevitable transcendence of each other's worlds. There is however, still another form of transcendence that becomes evident with the "we relation" this phenomenon says Schutz, belongs to the realm of meaning transcending everyday life and can only be grasped symbolically.

14.5 MULTIPLE REALITIES :

Here Schutz modifies Williams Jame's notion of "Sub universe". James had suggested that anything that excites or stimulates our interest impresses us as real, and that the impression remains with us so long as it is uncontradicted. Given, his psychological interest, however, James did not pursue the social implications of these differing orders of reality : this is precisely what Schutz wishes to do. Men's interests in the world of everyday life are eminently practical not theoretical.

In their "natural attitude" they are governed by pragmatic motives – they strive to control dominant or change the world so as to realize their projects and purposes. Schutz calls the practical everyday "world of working" the paramount reality, for this is the area of social life in which men treat the world as a field to be dominated, and strive to overcome the resistance of objects and others to their life plans. This is the reality we are all most interested in, but not all aspects of their paramount world are equally relevant to our life projects. We select from the world within our actual a potential reach those objects that we believe will serve our interests and the realization of our projects.

In this paramount reality our hopes, fears, and wants impel us to act, to plan, to resist obstacles, to realize our projects. But the anscieties of everyday life spring from our most basic existential experience : our knowledge and our fear of death. Each one of us knows he will die and fears dying before he has fulfilled his hopes and realized his plans. This Schutz says, is our "fundamental anxiety" Ansciety is an essential element of our social experience in the world of our working, daily lives. This world, its objects and its typical patterns we take for granted until proof to the contrary asserts itself. We be believe we experience things as they really are so long as we have no good reason to believe otherwise. This is a man's "natural attitude" in his paramount reality.

From the paramount reality he may shift to the world of Phantoms daydreams, Jokes, play etc. Hence, he leaves behind his will to master the world and his pragmatic motives he becomes an imagining self who plays any role and projects himself into any world he chooses. He has freedom of discretion, says Schutz – a specific freedom he lacks in both the paramount reality and the "world of dreams." In the latter, events appear inexorable as the dreamer is powerless to influence what is happening. Neither does he have purposes or projects, for his life is wholly within the "inner duree; whose flow he controls not at all.

Finally, there is the world of scientific theory, which Schutz deliberately defines narrowly as activity among towards the observation and understanding of the world but not toward its mastery. The Practical and meliorative motives are not, strictly speaking, "an element of the process of scientific theorizing itself."

14.6 COMMON SENSE AND SCIENTIFIC CONCEPTS :

Philosophers generally agree that all perception, even the simplest, is never purely sensory but rather involves imagination and concepts. Seeing, hearing, touching etc. are always mediated and accompanied by thinking or conscious activity. This is true of both the common sense world or everyday life and science. It is an error, them, to assume that we see the world immediately and directly. What we see is not at all the so called “concrete” or “actual” world. For the most rudimentary common sense perception involves highly complex abstractions what we see is never just a “thing”, “out there” “as it is”. It is rather a thought object constituted by our consciousness. He who fails to bear this is mind commits “fallacy of misplaced concreteness.”

With the advent and increasing institutionalization of science, the aspects of reality science centers on diverge from those of everyday life. The history of science is also the history of a indexing gulf believes its thought objects and those of common sense. Indeed, the latter are soon totally superseded by scientific concepts – a development that has different implications for the physical and the social sciences. Ideally it is the natural scientists himself who selects him problems and decides what aspects of reality to study. The facts are not pre-selected or pre-interpreted by the subjects of his inequiry, since meaning is not intrinsic to nature.

The social scientist, in contrast, studies a world that has already been pre-selected and pre-interpreted by the living, thinking acting subjects within it. Men orient themselves and cope with everyday world by means of common – sense constructs and thought objects. For Schutz, the natural and social worlds are therefore stuttered differently.

14.7 COMMONSENSE AND SOCIAL SCIENCE :

All science, the physical as well as the social employ abstractions and study, typical, not unique events. The social sciences are justifies in doing so since everyman in everyday life also employs abstractions and orients himself in terms of the typical facts, events and experiences. For Schutz, the special problem and responsibility of the social science is “to develop methodology devices for attaining objective and verifiable knowledge of subjective meaning structure.”

In everyday life Everyman often finds himself observing others in their interaction, but without his being a party to their interaction, and without his being involved in their motives. In such cases he is not directly interested in the interaction or its outcome.

In this sense he is detached and disinterested. The social scientists is therefore a special case of disinterested observation. In a society consisting of classes, strata, groups and associations there can be a no doubt that he will inevitably favor the values and interests of some and appose those of others. Schutz world therefore agree that the social scientist in never absolutely detached.

14.8 THE CONSTRUCTS AND MODELS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE :

Schutz reviews the social scientists typical procedure. The explain certain observed actions he constructs ideal typical courses of action along with the accompanying hypothetical do actors, whom he endows with equally hypothetical consciousness. All this he does as it relates to his specific scientific problem. Fictitious motives are thus ascribed to fictitious actors engaged in fictitious situations :

Schutz's main aim is to remind us that Verstehen is also a common sense method of everyday life that fields public controllable and verifiable truths. It is a method with which men make numerous predictions with a probability approaching unity for instance when they mail a properly stamped and addressed letter, "Knowing that is well most probably reach its distinction. Men in their daily lives understand and organize their experiences of the social world and it social scientists fail to grasp the general principles according to which men do so; they have failed in their important task.

Schutz's work is mainly programmatic apart from the ideas summarized here, there is remarkably little development or application of the method he advocates. Moreover, we must raise several critical points regarding his efforts.

Most broadly, Schutz phenomenological sociology focuses on intersubjectivity. While Phenomenological Philosophers focused primarily on consciousness, Schutz turned phenomenology outward to a concern for the intersubjective, Social World. People develops and use typifications in the Social World. In any given situation in the world of everyday life an action is determined "by means of a type constituted in earlier experienced.

Typification takes many forms when we label something e.g. a man, a dog. We are engaging in typifications. Any time we are using language we are typifying language can be thought to as a "treasure house" of typologies that we use to make sense of the social world.

Inspite of to their greater accessibility to the social scientist, Schutz was with more included to study because motives than in order to motive. However, Schutz believed that all social interaction was founded on a reciprocity of motives.

14.9 ERVING GOFFMAN :

Goffman was born in Canada, but spent most of his professional life in the United States after training at Chicago, with some of the original Chicago School Scholars. His work is of interest to researchers in a number of fields, including ethology, anthropology and psychology as well as sociology and cultural studies. This is hardly surprising as he was well read and dipped with diverse literatures in search of ideas that could be applied to the study of human behaviour. He rose to prominence with the publication of the presentation of self in Everyday life, a took which drew on his fieldwork in the Orkney Islands of Scotland. Here he looked at face to face behaviour in detail and its relationship to the self. Other works throughout his carrier also focused on the self and covered a bewildering number of topic areas, from mental hospitals to advertising to eye contact to behaviour in elevators. Goffman was a brilliant writer and much of the appeal of his work lies in his beautifully crafted and accessible essays.

Micro perspectives are diverse and sometimes in competition with each other. There are however, a number of family resemblances within this diverse tradition. These can be summarized as follows :-

1. Face to face encounters between actors area central feature of social life.
2. People are creative, intelligent and knowledgeable.
3. Social under arises as an accomplishment of actors who are able to manage encounters and make them predictable, successful and mutual understandable.
4. In order to study how society works, we need interpretative methodologies which try to capture the actor's definition of the situations.

Erving Goffman is indely recognized as a uniquely talented observer of social life, and would be a strong candidate in any poll to name the 20 Century's most influential symbolic interactionist. Perhaps the best way to get an overview of Goffman's broad talk on social life is to quickly run through the contents of some of his major books.

14.10 DRAMATURGICAL ANALYSIS : THE WORK OF ERVING GOFFMAN :

In this, his first and arguably most influential work, Goffman suggested that social action could be studied using an elaborate dramaturgical metaphor. The aim was to show how "the individual in ordinary work situation presents himself and his activity to others, the ways in which he guides and controls the impression they form of him, and the kinds of things he may and may not do while sustaining his performance." So while parsons saw actors as inhabiting an internalized role, Goffman sees as "performing a role and emphasizes what he calls role distance. The distinction is important as it highlights the reflexivity and acting crafting of social life. Goffman argues that people have to make an acceptable show of whatever they are supposed to be doing. This is called impression management. In acting act their role they may well make use of objects as props. There is also an audience watching them and perhaps a team supporting them. When people are in interaction each will have to be both an audience and an actor. Goffman also suggests that spatial regions have an implication for interaction. There is often a backstage area where they carry out tasks that are hidden from the audience, but which are essential for a smooth frontstage performance. Goffman provides numerous examples to support this vision, perhaps the most compelling of which is that of a restaurant. The skillful waiter will act his role before an audience of customers supported by a backstage team in the kitchen. He will use props like corkscrews and menus, and try to give off an impression of professional solitude.

Dramas in the theatre are usually scripted, rehearsed and polished. Getting through social life, however, is a chance business. Goffman discusses the way that people have to be able maintain then self-confidence, risk making mistakes, and deal with disruptions to their performance. The overall impression we get from the presentation of self in everyday life is of people being ingenious and talented. They are constantly giving off signals to each other. This says who they are and what they are doing and assists actors to maintain a mutually agreed definition of the situation. A danger with this perspective, however, is that the logic of the dramaturgical metaphor leads up to a simplistic vision of people as fakes and frauds, acting strategically to manipulate impressions in order to control other people. This rather instrumental understanding of action sees people standing outside of culture and using it, rather than culture being internalized into the self as a deep, motivating force for action.

14.11 GOFFMAN – AN EVALUATION :

From the perspective of cultural studies, Goffman’s work has much to offer. Positive aspects of his work include :
An attention to the ways that people use cultural resources to maintain common definition of the situations and offer situationally appropriate behaviour.

- His focus on links between action, meaning and the self. In some ways this foreshadows concerns with “Identity in more recent cultural studies worth.
- His focus on the ritual aspects of social life in institutions and in face to face encounters. This marks an important elaboration within the Durkheimion tradition.

A multitude of criticism have also been raised.

- Goffman’s perspective is one which tends to falsely universalize from the perspectives of a white middle class in 1950’s America. Real problems exist in deciding to what extent his observations are applicable to other contents, most notably the experiences of women, minorities and so on.
- The institutional level analyses of Asylums and the media based study of Gender Advertisements, a big question mark hangs over the ability of his approach to inform more “macro”, issues about culture.
- Issues of power are neglected, which Goffman is able to deal with this question in some of his work e.g. Asylums it is generally that he overlooks the ways that power might influence the course of face to face interactions. Even more importantly, Goffman needs to pay more attention to the ways that external structures of power or culture might influence the definition of the suitation within a given interaction.

14.12 SUMMARY :

While Goffman may have gone beyond Parsons in unpacking agency, his approach to culture itself did not constitute an advance.

14.13 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. Contribution of Alfred Schutz
2. Evaluate Erving Goffman
3. Alfred Schutz notion of reality

14.14 QUESTIONS :

1. How does Schutz differentiate between Common Sense and Scientific Concepts?
2. Write note on Erving Goffman's Contribution to Ethnomethodology?
3. Discuss Erving Goffman's Dramaturgical Analysis?

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15

PHENOMENOLOGY AND ETHNOMETHODOLOGY

Unit Structure :

15.0 Objectives
15.1 Introduction
15.2 Phenomenology
15.3 Defining Ethnomethodology
15.4 Stress and Strains
15.5 Summary
15.6 Check your progress
15.7 Questions
15.8 References

15.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To explain the basic concepts of Phenomenology and Ethnomethodology.
- To help students understand the similarities and differences between Phenomenology and Ethnomethodology.

15.1 INTRODUCTION :

Phenomenology is a movement in philosophy that has been adapted by certain sociologists to promote an understanding of the relationship between status of individual consciousness and social life. As an approach within sociology, phenomenology seeks to reveal how human awareness is implicated in the production of social action, social suitations and social worlds.

Phenomenology was initially developed by Edmund Husserl (1859 – 1938), a German Mathematician. He presented various philosophical conceptualizations and techniques designed to locate the sources of reality in the human consciousness. It was not until Alfred Schutz (1899 – 1959) came upon some problems in Max Weber's theory of action that phenomenology entered the domain of sociology Schutz, writings gave a more sociologically relevant approach. Schutz set about describing how subjective meanings give rise to an apparently objective social world.

15.2 PHENOMENOLOGY :

Best knows of phenomenology techniques is Edmund Husserl's methodology of "bracketing". This involves stripping away the taken for granted from our experience of the world. The idea is to prase an experience and to work out what what its constituent elements might be so as to reveal a pure perception untainted by common sense. Husserl argue that this involves numerous element – a sense of being a self so that we can be conscious of our perceptions, a mental image of something large and allocation of meaning to that image as a coherent object and so on. In this works Husserl uses his method of bracketing to remove and account for each of these stages of perception in intricate detail.

Schutz was a student of Husserl and sought to make his teacher's findings more relevant to explaining everyday life than to relate to philosophical controversies.

Phenomenological Sociology and Ethnomethodology, like Symbolic Interactionism, focus on the everyday world, although in a manner that, as will see, differs from the approaches of Mead, Blumer and Goffman. Although Phenomenological Sociology is the far older tradition, and even though it was source of Ethnomethodology, it has been highlighted in recent years by the boom in interest in Ethnomethodology around the world.

Phenomenological Sociology and Ethnomethodology have often been discussed together. George Ritzer saw them as two theoretical components of the "Social definition Paradigm". Monica Morris (1977) viewed them as two varieties of what she called "Creative Sociology", Jack Douglas (1980) and Andrew Weigert (1981) included them under the heading "Sociologies of every day life" and Richard Hilbert (1986) saw them as varieties of "Social Constructionism". While there are important similarities between them, there are also strong differences that persuade us to deal with the two theories separately here.

Phenomenology is used in two basic ways in Sociology.

(1) To theorize about substantive sociological problems and

(2) To enhance the adequately of sociological research methods since phenomenology insists that society is a human construction, sociology itself and its theories and methods are also constructions.

Thus, phenomenology seeks to offer a corrective to the field's emphasis on positivists' conceptualizations, and research methods that may take for granted the very issues that phenomenologist find of interest. Phenomenology presents theoretical techniques and qualitative methods that illuminate the human meanings of social life.

Human beings are open to patterned social experience and strive towards meaningful involvement in a knowable world. They are characterized by a typifying mode of consciousness tending to classify sense data. In phenomenological terms humans experience the world in terms of typifications. Children are exposed to the common sounds and sights of their environments, including their own bodies, people, animals and vehicles and so on. They come to apprehend the categorical identify and typified meanings of each in terms of Conventional linguistic forms. In a similar manner, Children learn the formula's for doing common activities. These practical means of doing are called receipes for action. Typifications and receipes, once internalized, tend to settle beneath the level of full awareness, that is, become sedimented, as do layers of rock. Thus in the natural attitude, the foundations of actor's knowledge of meaning and action are obscured to the actors themselves.

Actors assume that knowledge is objective and all people reason in a like manner. Each actor assumes that every other actor knows what he or she knows of this world. All believe that they share common sense.

However, each person's biography is unique, and each develops a relatively distinct stock of typification's and receipes. Therefore, interpretations may diverge. Everyday, social interactions is replete with ways in which actors create feelings that commonsense is shared, that mutual understanding is occurring, and that everything is all right. Phenomenology emphasizes that human's live within an Intersubjective World, yet they at best approximate shared realities which a paramount reality is commonly experienced in this manner, particular realities on finite provinces of meaning are also constructed and experienced by diverse cultural, social or occupational groupings.

Thus, typifications denied from commonsense are internalized, becoming the tools that individual consciousness uses to constitute a lifeworld, the unified arena of human awareness and action. Commonsense serves as an ever present resource to assume actors that the reality that is projected from human subjectivity is an objective reality. Since all actors are involved in this intentional work, they sustain the collaborative effort to reify them projections and thereby reinforce the very frameworks that provide the construction tools.

Phenomenological work with young children examines how both family interactions and the practices of everyday life are related to the construction of childhood. It is revealed how the children's elemental typifications of family life and commonsense are actualized through ordinary interaction. Penetrating the inner world of children requires that the phenomenological practitioner view the subjects in their own terms, from the level and viewpoints of children. Such investigation shuns adult authoritative and particularly scientific perspectives and seeks to give voice to the children's experience of their own worlds. Infant's and children's communicative and interactive competencies are respected and are not diminished by the drive towards higher level functioning.

The phenomelogical influence upon contemporary sociology can be seen in the increased humanization of theoretical works, research methods, educational, assessment procedures, and instructional modes. Phenomenological thought has influenced the work of post modernist, post-structualists, critical and neo-functional theory. Notion such as constructionism, situationalism and reflexivity that are at the core of phenomenology also provide the grounds for these recent formulations. For example, the premise of poststructuralism that language is socially constituted denying the possibility of objective meaning is clearly rooted in phenomenology. The procedure known as deconstruction essentially reverses the reification process highlighted in phenomenology. The post-modernist argument that knowledge and reality do not exist apart from discourse is also clearly rooted in phenomenology. Postmodernism's emphasis on the representational world as reality constructor further exemplifies the phenomenological bent towards reflexivity. On the other hand, phenomenology has used to reverse nihilistic excesses of postmodernism and post structuralism. The emphases of the critical school on the constitution of the liberative life world by the autonomous, creative agent via the transcendence of the linguistic constraint echoes a theme of phenomenological thought.

Contemporary practitioners of both phenomenological sociology and Ethnomethodology trace their intellectual roots to the philosophical work of Edmund Husserl (1859 – 1938). Many of his ideas are the inspiration for a number of contemporary aspects of phenomenological sociology. More important, they were the inspiration for the work of Alfred Schutz. Schutz took Hussert's philosophy and transformed it into a sociology and Ethnomethodology. Contemporary phenomenological sociology is traceable directly to the work of schutz. In Ethnomethodology Husserl's influence is less strict. Harold Garfinkel, the founder of Ethnomethodology, studied with Schutz, and it is Garfinkel's (and his supporters) adaptation of Schutz's idea that is a major basis of Ethnomethodology. The questions like how is colour experienced?

What is a sense of self? These are the kinds of questions that people never ask themselves in everyday life, and exploring them requires the phenomenologist to suspend their everyday way of thinking and develop new methods for interrogating conscious experience.

15.3 ETHNOMETHODOLOGY :

Ethnomethodology (literally, "the study of a people's (folk) methods) is a sociological discipline which examines the way in which examines the way in which people make sense of their world, display their understanding to others, and produce the mutually shared social order in which they live. The term was initially conied by Harold Garfinkel in the 1960's.

Ethnomethodology is distinct from traditional sociology, and does not seek to compete with it, or provide remedies for any of its practices.

Given its Greek roots, the term Ethnomethodology literally means the methods that people use on a daily basis to accomplish their everyday life. To put it slightly differently, the social world is seen, as an ongoing practical accomplishment. People are viewed as rational, but they use "Practical reasoning" in accomplishing their everyday lives. The emphasis in Ethnomethodology is on what people do whereas in phenomenological sociology it is on what people think.

However, while Ethnomethodologists focus on action, it is action that implies and involves a thoughtful actor; Ethnomethodology does not deny the existence of mental processes. Ethnomethodologists are critical of some varieties of sociological theory (for example, structural functionalism and structural Marxism) that treat the actor as "Judgemental Dope". While Ethnomethodlogists refuse to treat actors as judgemental dopes, they do not believe that people are "almost endlessly reflexive, self-conscious and calculative". Rather, following Schutz, they recognize that most often action is routine and relatively unreflective.

Given these introductory comments, we repeat the definition of Ethnomethodology, the study of "the body of commonsense knowledge and the range of procedures and considerations by means of which the ordinary members of society make sense of find their way about in, and act on the circumstances in which they find themselves" [Heritage, 1984:4]

We can get a better understanding of Ethnomethodology. First, like Durkheim, Garfinkel considers “Social facts” to be the fundamental sociological phenomenon. However, Garfinkhel’s social facts are very different from Durkheim’s social facts. For Durkheim, social facts are external to and coercive over individuals. Those who adopt such a focus tend to see actors as constrained or determined by social structures and institutions and able to exercise little or no independent judgement. We can say Durkheim’s social facts are macro objective phenomena white Garfinkel’s social facts are micro objective that is, Garfinkel, like Durkheim, sees social facts as objective phenomena but unlike, Durkheim, Garfinkel sees them at the micro level. To put it in another words, Ethnomethodology is concerned with the organization of everyday life, or as Garfinkel calls it “immortal, ordinal society”.

In Maynard and Clayman’s view, Garfinkel has sought a new way to get at the traditional concerns of sociology the objective reality of social facts. But instead of conceiving of social facts as external and coercive, Garfinkel sees them as the result of the concerted work of people going about their everyday life. In focusing on this concerted work, Garfinkel is not foculy interested in the cognitive processes necessary for this to occur but rather in people’s “Procedures” “Methods” or “Practices”. To pick up still more on Garfinkel’s definition, social order is an “Ongoing practical achievement.”

Two central differences between traditional sociology and Ethnomethodology are:-

1) While traditional sociology usually offers an analysis of society which takes the facticity of the social order for granted, Ethnomethodology is concerned with the “how” (the methods) by which that social order is produced and shared.

2) While traditional sociology usually provides descriptions of social settings which compete with the actual descriptions offered by the individuals who are part of those settings, Ethnomethodology seeks to describe the practices (the methods) these individuals’ uses in their actual descriptions of those settings.

Ethnomethodology has had an impact of linguistics and particularly on pragmatics spawning a whole new discipline of conversation Analysis. Ethnomethodological studies of work have played a significant role in the field of human. Computer interaction, improving design by providing engineer’s with descriptions of the practices of users.

Ethnomethodology has also influenced the sociology of scientific knowledge by providing a research approach that describes the social practices (methods) of its research subjects without the commonly accepted practice of evaluating the validity of those practices from an imposed normative stand point. This has proved to be useful to researchers studying social order in laboratory settings who wished to understand how scientists actually conducted their experiments without either endorsing or criticizing their activities utilizing traditional scientific criteria.

Harold Garfinkel and his associates have been engaged for some years in research rooted in the phenomenological tradition. Although Garfinkel acknowledges the influence of several thinkers, including Weber, Mannheim and Talcott Parson, it is evident that Schutz is the major and most immediate source of what Garfinkel has chosen to call Ethnomethodology. Ethnomethodology is clearly, a form of phenomenology and deserves attention as a version of that tradition.

Garfinkel's main efforts have been directed towards the empirical study of everyday, common place activities and phenomena. In common with other phenomethonologists Garfinkel is concerned with meaning and how it is intersubjectively conveyed. His several researches, reported in studies in Ethnomethodology, attempt to demonstrate.

1) That commonplace everyday conversations convey a good deal more meaning than is carried immediately by the words themselves.
2) That such conversations presuppose a common meaningful context.
3) That the common understanding accompanying or resulting from the conversation consists of an ongoing process of intersubjective interpretation and finally.
4) Treat everyday exchanges and affairs have a methodological, planful and hence "rational" character, so that one gets the sense or meaning of another's utterance by grasping the "rule" according to which it was made.

Garfinkel sees these ethnomethods as "reflexively accountable." To understand this, we need to deal with two key concepts in Ethnomethodology – reflexivity and accounts. By reflexivity, the Ethnomethodologists mean the process in which we all engage to create social reality through our thoughts and actions. However, we are rarely aware of this process, usually because we conceal it from ourselves. When we say hello to someone and the person responds similarly, we are not conscious of the reflexive work being done by both parties. But when the other person scowls and walks away without returning the greeting, we become aware that we were trying to create a certain reality with our actions and that we failed. We may then attempt to reaffirm the world of greetings as we know it by trying to explain away the individuals' inappropriate response ("He didn't hear me or she wasn't feeling well")

The Ethnomethodologist rejects the idea that order comes from mere conformity to norms. Rather, it is the actor's awareness of their options as well as there ability, to anticipate how others are going to react to what they say and do, that helps make for order in the everyday world.

Accounts are the ways in which actors do such things as describe, criticize and idealize specific suitations. Accounting is the process by which people offer accounts in order to make sense of the world. Ethnomethodologists devote a lot of attention to analyzing people's accounts as well as the ways in which accounts are offered and accepted (or rejected) by others. This is one of the reasons that Ethnomethodologists are preoccupied with analyzing conversations. To take an example, when a student explains to her professor why she failed to take an examination, she is offering an account. The student is trying to make sense out of an event for her professor. Ethnomethdlogists are interested in the nature of that account but more generally in the accounting practices by which the student offers the account and the professor accepts or rejects it. In analyzing accounts, Ethnomethodologists adopt a "Ethnomethodological indifference." That is, they do not judge the nature of the accounts but rather analyse them in terms of how they are used in practical action. They are concerned with the accounts as well as the methods needed by both speaker and listener to proffer, understand and accept or reject accounts.

Extending the idea of accounts, Ethnomethodologists, take great pains to point and that sociologists, like everyone else, offer accounts. Thus, exports, of sociological studies can be seen as accounts and analysed in the same way that all other accounts can be studied. This serves to disenchant the work of sociologists, indeed all scientists.

A good deal of sociology (indeed all sciences) involves common sense interpretations Ethnomethdlogists can study the accounts of the sociologists in the same way that they can study the accounts of the lay person. Thus, the everyday practices of sociologist and all scientists come under the scrutiny of the Enthnomethodologists.

Garfinkel's idea that everyday methods are reflexive accountable, we can get a better understanding of what he means. People are able to reflect on the things that they do and as a result are able to offer accounts of those actions to others. It is joint reflexivity, as well as the offer and acceptance of accounts that helps to explain why the everyday world is orderly.

A few other key terms like Indexicality is concept derived from linguistics, where it describes the fact that sentences have different meanings in different contexts. “His raining has a different meanings : on the day of a long awaited picnic, at the end of brought, when the rivers are already overflowing their banks, or when one is driving and the temperature is near freezing.” Extending this idea Ethnomethodologists adopt the view that all accounts – in fact, all expressions and practice actions must be interpreted within their particular context. Neither the laypersons nor the sociologists can be content with the analysis of isolated events, both need to uncover the underlaying pattern of which the event is part. The documentary method allows laypeople to better understand what is happening and to better orient their actions. In interacting with other, we trust that they are relying on. If one trust is misplaced, and if this is not the case the interaction will break down.

Finally, Ethnomethodologists place great importance on natural language. This is the system of practices that allows people to speak, hear and witness the objective production and display of social life. Natural language is not the linguistic elements that we use to communicate with one another but rather the nonlinguistics elements of interpersonal communication. It involves such things as the need to take turns in conversations and to cope with descriptions in a conversation. Ultimately it involves a concern with the basic structure of speaker – listener interaction. And, this is a major concern of a branch of Ethnomethodology known as Conversation Analysis.

Conventional Sociological studies of such institutional settings focus on their structure, formal rules, and official procedures to explain what people do within them to the Ethnomethodologists such external constraints are inadequate for explaining what really goes on in these institutions. People are not determined by these external focus, rather they use them to accomplish there tasks and to create the institution in which they exist. People employ their practical procedures not only to make their daily lives but also to manufacture the institutions products. For example, the crime rate compiled by the police departments are not merely the result of officials following clearly defined rules in their production. Rather, officials utilize a range of common sense procedures to decide, for example whether victims should be classified as homicides. Thus such rates are based on the interpretive work of professional and we need to be careful in interpreting official statistics.

The second, and most important, variety of Ethnomethodology is conversation analysis. The goal of conversation analysis is "the detailed understanding of the fundamental structure of conversational interaction." (Zimmerman, 1988 : 429). Conversation is defined in terms that are in line with the basic elements of the Ethnomethodological perspective : "Conversation is an interactional activity exhibiting stable, orderly properties that are the analyzable achievements of the conversants" (Zimmerman, 1988 : 406; italics added). While there are rules and procedures for conversations, they do not determine what is said but rather are used to "accomplish" a conversation. The focus of conversational analysis is the constraints on what is said that are internal to the conversation itself and not external forces that constrain talk.

Methodologically, conservation analysts are led to study conversations in naturally occurring situations, often using audio – tape or videotape. This method allows information to flow from the everyday world rather than being imposed on it by the researcher. The researcher can examine and reexamine and actual conversation in minute detail instead of relying on his or her no teas. This technique also allows the researcher to do highly detailed analyses of conversations.

Conversation analysis is based on the assumption that conversations are the bedrock of other forms of interpersonal relations. They are the most pervasive form of interaction, and a conversation "consists of the fullest matrix of socially organized communicative practice and procedures."

Some Ethnomethodologists have turned their attention to the work world. For example, Button (1987) has cooked at the job interview. Not surprisingly, he sees the interview as a sequential, turn taking conversation and as the "situated practical accomplishment of the parties to that setting." One issue addressed is this study involves the things that interviewers can do, after an answer has been given, to move on to something else, thereby preventing the interviewee from returning to, and perhaps correcting, his or her answer. First, the interviewer may indicate that the interview as a whole is over. Second, the interviewer may ask another question that moves the discussion off in a different direction. Third, the interviewer may assess the answer given in such a way that the interviewee is precluded from returning to it.

Button wonders what it is that makes a job interview on interview? He argues that it is not the sign on the door or the gathering together of people. Rather, it is "what those people do, and how they structure and organize their interactions with one another, that achieves for some social setting its characterizability as an interview. This integrally involves the way in which the participants organize their actions speech exchange with one another." Thus it is the nature of the interaction, of the conversation, that defined a job interview.

15.4 STRESSES AND STRAINS IN ETHNOMETHODOLOGY :

While Ethnomethodology has made enormous strides in sociology and has demonstrated, specially in the area of conversation analysis, some capacity to cumulate knowledge of the world of everyday life, there are some problems worth nothing.

First, while Ethnomethodology is for more accepted today than it was a decade ago; it is still regarded with considerable suspicion by many sociologists. They view it as focusing on trivial matters and ignoring the crucially important issues confronting society today. The Ethnomethodologists' response is that they are dealing with the crucial issues because it is everyday life that matters most. Paul Atkinson sums up the situation : "Ethnomethodology continues to be greeted with mixtures of incomprehension and hostility in some quarters, but it is unquestionably a force to be recknoned with when it comes to the theory, methods, and empirical conduct of sociological inquiry" (1988 : 442)

15.5 SUMMARY :

While Ethnomethodology is far more accepted today than it was a decade ago, it is still regarded with considerable suspicion by many sociologist. They view it as focusing on small matters and ignoring the crucially important issues confronting society today. The Ethnomethodologists response is that they are dealing with crucial issues because it is everyday life that matters most.

15.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. Highlight the contribution of Edmund Husserl's to phenomenology.
2. The ways in which phenomenology is used in sociology.
3. What do you mean by Ethnomethodology?

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15.7 QUESTIONS :

1. Discuss briefly the similarities and differences between phenomenological and Ethnomethodological school of thoughts?
2. In what way Ethnomethodology challenge conventional sociology?

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16

FRANKFURT SCHOOL

Unit Structure:

16.0 Objectives
16.1 Introduction
16.2 Origin of Frankfurt School
16.3 The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory
16.4 Criticisms of the Frankfurt School
16.5 Habermas critique of science and rationality
16.6 Major Contributions
16.7 Theory of Communicative Action
16.8 Summary
16.9 Check your progress
16.10 Questions
16.11 References

16.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To acquaint students with Habermas theory as critique of post modernism.
- To examine the Habermas understanding into the process of human action, interaction and organization.

16.1 INTRODUCTION :

Habermas has integrated into a comprehensive framework of social framework of social theory and philosophy an extreme wealth of ideas.

Within Sociology, Habermas's major contribution is the development of a comprehensive theory of societal evolution and modernization focusing on the difference between communicative rationality and rationalization on the one hand and strategic / instrumental rationality and rationalization on the other. Habermas sees the rationalization, humanization, and democratization of society in terms of the institutionalization of the potential for rationality that is inherent in the communicative competence that is unique to the human species. Hebermas believes communicative competence has developed through the course of evolution, but in contemporary society it is suppressed or weakened by the way in which major domains of social life, such as the market, the state and organizations, have been given over to or taken over by strategic / instrumental rationality, so that the logic of the Habermasian system supplants that of the lifeworld.

Lifeworld is a concept used in philosophy and other social sciences, meaning the world as it immediately presents itself to us prior to scientific or philosophical analysis.

16.2 ORIGIN OF FRANKFURT SCHOOL :

This concept (Lebenswelt) was introduced by Edmund Husserl and further developed by Jurgen Habermas. For Habermas, lifeworld is less a purely congnitive horizon and more an environment made by practices and attitudes, a realm of informal culturally grounded understandings and mutual accommodations. Rationalization of the life world – its penetration by bureaucracy is what Habermas calls colonization of the lifeworld.

Social coordination or regulation occurs by means of shared beliefs and values; in the lifeworld, individuals draw from custom and cultural traditions to construct identities, negotiate situational definitions, coordinate action and create social solidarity. He views lifeworld as consisting of interpretative patterns with respect to culture, society, and personality.

By this explanation of the lifeworld, he tried Talcott Parson’s analytical distinctions among personality, social and cultural systems to the process of interaction. People use linguistically articulated patterns as well as more implicit and tacit stocks of knowledge about culture, society and personality in their day to day interactions. These distinctions are not just those of analytical theory; they are also implicit among interacting and communicating actors. He made lifeworld less mystics as opposed to the ethnomethodologists or phenomenologists. Rather than just a mass of implicit and tacit understandings, it is a series of folk ideas about several classes of phenomena culture (symbols), society (social organization), and personality (self and ego). His views of the lifeworld has brought closer the functionalists arguments about social intergration and its dependence upon value consensus and other cultural force with the processual arguments of interactionists. By viewing the lifeworld as interpretative patterns with respect to culture, society and personality and as the background context for speech acts and validity claims, societal integration is reconceptualised as being sustained through the active processes of interaction that utilize and reproduce the interpretative patterns of the lifeworld. Culture is not a mrer external force but a more encompassing stock of knowledge and crucial resource that is used in interaction. And in being actively used, it is reproduced in ways that allow actors to understand each other's subjective points of view and to coordinate their actions.

System processes are given a standard interpretation of institutional structures involved in material reproduction of the species through the institutionalization of economics, political, legal and family activities. He views lifeworld and system processes as interdependent. Institutionalized structure like economy and polity function better when the behaviours that reproduce them are conducted in terms of communicative interactions utilizing and reproducing the interpretative patterns of the lifeworld. The integrative problems occur in the form of decoupling of lifeworld and system. He provides specific processes of interaction that malintegrate by indicating what is being lost certain types of speech acts involving validity claims and discourse that utilize lifeworld processes to create the mutual understandings that integrate the social order.

16.3 THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL AND CRITICAL THEORY :

The first meaning of the term critical theory was that defined by Max Horkheimer of the Frankfurt School of social science in his 1937 essay Traditional and Critical theory : Critical theory is social theory oriented toward critiquing and changing society as a whole, in contrast to traditional theory oriented only to understanding or explaining it. Horkheimer wanted to distinguish critical theory as a radical, emancipatory form of Marxian theory both from the model of science put forward by logical positivism and from what he and his colleagues perceived as the convert positivism and authoritarianism of orthodox Marxism and communism. It is also central to this notion that critical social theory be directed at the totality of society in its historical specificity, i.e. in the way it had come to be configured at a specific point in time, and that it integrates all of the major social science theories that will help grasp the major dimensions of society, including especially economics, sociology, history, political science, anthropology and psychology.

The first generation of Frankfurt school confronted a dilemma; how to reconcile Marx's emancipatory dream with the stark reality of modern society as conceptualized by Weber. The defeat of the lift using working class movements, the rise of fascism in the aftermath of the World War 1, and the degeneration of the Russian Revolution into Stalinism has by the 1930s, made it clear that Marx's analysis needed drastic revision.

Moreover the political developments also failed Weber's analysis of bureaucracy and rationality. The members of the Frankfurt School wanted to maintain Marx's notion of Praxis and wanted a theory to expose oppression and to propose less constrictive options. Yet, they were confronted with the spread of political and economic domination. Thus, the development of modern critical theory in sociology was born in a time when there was little reason to be optimistic about realizing emancipator goals. Three members of the Frankfurt school are most central : George Lukacs, Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adordo.

In the late 1960s Juergen Habermas of the Frankfurt School, redefined critical theory in a way that freed it from a direct tie to Marxism or the prior work of the Frankfurt School. In Habermas's epistemology, critical knowledge was conceptualized as knowledge that enabled human beings to emancipate themselves from forms of domination through self reflection and took psychoanalysis as the paradigm of critical knowledge. This expanded considerably the scope of what counted as critical theory within the social sciences, which would include such approaches as world systems theory, feminist theory, postcolonial theory, critical race theory, queer theory, social ecology, the theory of communicative action (Habermas), structuration theory and neo-Marxian theory.

The First Phase :

The Frankfurt School made major contributions in two areas relating to the possibility of rational human subjects, i.e. individuals who could act rationally to take charge of their own society and their own history. The first consisted of social phenomena previously considered in Marxism as part of the "superstructure" or as ideology : personality, family and authority structures (its first book publication bore the title studies of Authority and the family), and the realm of aesthetics and mass culture. Studies saw a common concern here in the ability of capitalism to destroy the preconditions of critical, revolutionary consciousness. This meant arriving at a sophisticated awareness of the depth dimension in which social oppression sustain itself. It also meant the beginning of critical theory's recognition of ideology as part of the foundations of social structure. The Frankfurt School and various collaborator had a gigantic effect on social science through their work. The Authoritarian personality, which conducted extensive empirical research, using sociological and psychoanalytic categories, in order to characterize the forces that led individuals to affiliate with or support fascist movements or parties. The study found the assertion of universals, or even truth, to be a hallmark of fascism; by calling into question any notion of a higher ideal, or a shared mission for humanity. The Authortarian personality contributed greatly to the emergence of the counter culture.

The nature of Marxian itself formed the second focus and in this context the concept of critical theory originated. The term served several purposes – first, it contrasted from traditional notions of theory, which were largely either positivist or scientific. Second, the term allowed them to escape the politically charged label of “Marxism”. Third, it explicitly linked them with the “critical philosophy” of Immanuel Kant, were the term “critique” meant philosophical reflection on the limits of claims made for certain kinds of knowledge and a direct connection between such critique and the emphasis on moral autonomy. In an intellectual context defined by dogmatic positivism and scientism on the one hand and dogmatic “scientific Socialism” on the other, critical theory meant to rehabilitate through such a philosophically critical approach an orientation toward revolutionary agency, or at least its possibility, at a time when it seemed in decline.

Finally, in the context of both Marxist – Leninist and social – Democratic orthodoxy, which emphasized Marxism as a new kind of positive science, they were linking up with the implicit epistemology of Karl Marx’s work, which presented itself as critique, as in Marx’s “Capital : a critique of political economy” wanting to emphasize that Marx was attempting to create a new kind of critical analysis oriented toward the unity of theory and revolutionary practice rather than a new kind of positive science. In the 1960’s Jurgen Habermas raised the epistemological discussion to a new level in his “knowledge and Human Interests”, by identifying critical knowledge as based on principles that differentiated it either from the natural sciences or the humanities, through its orientation to self reflection and emancipation.

Although Horkheimer’s distinction between traditional and critical theory in one sense merely repeated Marx’s dictum that philosophers have always interpreted the world and the point is to change it. The Frankfurt school, in its critique of ideology, took on such philosophical currents as positivism, phenomenology, existentialism and pragmatism with an implied critique of contemporary Marxism, which had turned dialectics into an alternate science or metaphysics. The Frankfurt School attempted to reformulate dialectics as a concrete method, continually aware of the specific social roots of thought and of the specific constellation of forces that affected the possibility of liberation. Accordingly, critical theory rejected the materialist metaphysics of orthodox Marxism. For Horkheimer and his associates, materialism meant the orientation of theory towards practice and towards the fulfillment of human needs, not a metaphysical statement about the nature of reality.

The Second Phase :

The second phase of Frankfurt School critical theory centers principally on two works : Horkheimer's and Adorno's Dialective of Enlightenment and Adorno's Minima Moralia. The authors wrote both works during the Institute's American exile in the Nazi period. While retaining much of the Marxian analysis, in these works critical theory has shifted its emphasis. The critique of capitalism has turned in to a critique of Western Civilization as a whole. Indeed, the Dialectic of Enlightenment uses the odyssey as a paradigm for the analysis of bourgeois consciousness Horkheimer and Adorno already present in these works many themes that have come to dominate the social thought of recent years; the domination of nature appears as central to western civilization long before ecology had become a catchphrase of the day.

The analysis of reason now goes one stage further. The rationality of western civilization appears as a fusion of domination and of technological rationality, bringing all of external and internal nature under the power of the human subject. In the process, however, the subject itself gets swallowed up, and no social force analogus to the proletariat can be identified that will enable the subject to emancipate itself. Consequently, at a time when it appears that reality itself has become ideology, the greatest contribution that critical theory can make is to explore the dialectical contradictions of individual subjective experience on the one hand, and to preserve the truth of theory on the other. Even the dialectic can become a means to domination and this intention must be toward integral freedom and happiness.

The Third Phase :

From these thoughts only a short step remained to the third phase of the Frankfurt School, which coincided with the postwar period, particularly from the early 1950s to the middle 1960s. With the growth of advanced industrial society under cold war conditions, the critical theorists recognized that the structure of capitalism and history had changed decisively, that the modes of oppression operated differently, and that the industrial working class no longer remained the determinate negation of capitalism. This led to the attempt to root the dialectic in an absolute method of negativity, as in Marcuse's one Dimensional Man and Adorno's Negative Dialectics. During this period the Institute of Social Research resettled in Frankfurt (although many of its associates remained in the United States), with the task not merely of continuing its research but of becoming a leading force in the sociological education and democratization of West Germany.

More importantly, however, the Frankfurt School attempted to define the fate of reason in the new historical period. While Marcuse did so through analysis of structural changes in the labour process under capitalism and inherent features of the methodology of science, Horkheimer and Adorno concentrated on a re-examination of the foundation of critical theory. This effort appears in systematized from in Adorno's Negative Dialectics, which tries to redefine dialectics for an era in which "Philosophy, which once seemed obsolete, lives on because the moment to realize it was missed." Negative dialectics expresses the idea of critical thought so conceived that the apparatus of domination can not co-opt it. Its central notion, long a focal one for Horkheimer and Adorno, suggests that the original sin of thought lies in its attempt to eliminate all that is other than thought, the attempt by the subject to devour the object, the striving for identity. This reduction makes thought the accomplice of domination. Negative Dialectics gives importance to the object through a thought based on differentiation, paradox and ruse : a "logic of disintegration Adorno thoroughly criticizes Heidegger's fundamental ontology, which reintroduces idealistic and identity - based concepts under the guise of having overcome the philosophical tradition.

Negative Dialectics comprises a monument to the end of the tradition of the individual subject as the locus of criticism. Without a revolutionary working class, the Frankfurt School had no one to rely on but the individual subject. But, as the liberal capitalist social basis of the autonomous individual receded into the past, the dialectic based on it became more and more abstract. This stance helped prepare the way for the fourth, current phase of the Frankfurt School, shaped by the communication theory of Habermas.

Habermas work takes the Frankfurt School's abiding interests in rationality, the human subject, democratic socialism and the dialectical method and overcomes a set of contradictions that always weakened critical theory : the contradictions between the materialist and transcendental methods between Marxian Social theory and the individualist assumptions of critical rationalism between technical and social rationalization and between cultural and psychological phenomena on the one hand and the economic structure of society on the other. The Frankfurt School avoided taking a stand on the precise relationship between the materialist and transcendental methods, which led to ambiguity in their writings and confusion among their readers. Habermas epistemology synthesizes these two traditions by showing that phenomenological and transcendental analysis can be subsumed under a materialist theory of social evolution, while the materialist theory makes sense only as part of a quasi – transcendental theory of emancipatory knowledge that is the self-reflection of cultural evolution. The simultaneously empirical and transcendental nature of emancipatory knowledge becomes the foundation stone of critical theory.

By locating the conditions of rationality in the social structure of language use, Habermas moves the locus of rationality from the autonomous subject to subjects in interaction. Rationality is a property not of individuals per se, but rather of structures of undistorted communication. In this notion Habermas has overcome the ambiguous plight of the subject in critical theory. If capitalistic technological society weakness the autonomy and rationality of the subject, it is not through the domination of the individual by the apparatus but through technological rationality supplanting a describable rationality of communication. And, in his sketch of communicative ethics as the highest stage in the internal logic of the evolution of ethical systems, Habermas hints at the source of a new political practice that incorporates the imperatives of evolutionary rationality.

Frankfurt School critical theory has influenced some segments of the left using and leftist though (particularly the New Left). Herbert Marcuse has occasionally been described as the theorist or intellectual progenitor of the new Left. Their work also heavily influenced intellectual discourse on popular culture and scholarly popular culture studies.

Major Frankfurt School thiners and scholars :

Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, Alfred Sohn-Rethel, Leo Lowenthal, Franz Neumann, Franz Oppenheimer, Friedrich Pollock, Erich Fromm, Alfred Schmidt, Jurgen Habermas, Oskar Negt, Karl A. Wittfogel, Susan Buck – Morss, Axel Honneth.

16.4 CRITICISMS OF THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL :

One criticism is that the intellectual perspective of the Frankfurt School is really a romantic, elitist critique of mass culture dressed – up in neo – Marxist clothing : What really bothers the critical theorists in this view is not social oppression, but that the masses like Ian Fleming and The Beatles instead of Samuel Beckett and Webern. Another criticism, originating from the Left, is that critical theory is a form of bourgeois idealism that has no inherent relation to political practice and its totally isolated from any ongoing revolutionary movement.

16.5 HABERMAS CRITIQUE OF SCIENCE AND RATIONALITY :

The theme of human emancipation in Karl Marx carried over to subsequent thought under a number of guises, the most important of them being critical theory. Critical theory holds that the aim of social sciences is to liberate human being from social restraints. Critical theory was primarily developed by the thinkers of the Frankfurt School. Frankfurt School was an institution set up in Germany in early twentieth century. During the lifetime of the first generation of critical theorists, the world did not seem to be rife with emancipatory. Max Weber's analysis of the increasing bureaucratic control over every sphere of life seemed to be a more apt prognosis of the future than Marx's communism. Thus the first critical theorists grappled with the question. How to reconcile Marx's emancipatory project with Weber's characterization of modern society? According to Habermas, it was George Lukacs who blended Marx and Weber by unveilling the onvergence of Marx's ideas about commoditization of social reations through money with Weber's thesis on rationalization of more and more spheres of modern life.

16.6 MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS :

Habermas has contributed many concepts to sociology : public phere, legitimation crises, ommunicative rationality etc. In structural transformation of the public sphere, Habermas traces the genesis and dissolution of the public sphere. The public sphere originated in the eighteenth century when various fora for public debtc – clubs, cafes, journals, newspapers – proliferated. These fora helped erode feudalism which is legitimated by religion and custom rather than consensus reached through public debate. The public sphere was strengthened by the development of market economy. This sphere is a realm of social life where people can bring up matters of general interest; where they can discuss and debate these issues without recourse to custom, dogma and force; and where they can resolve differences of opinion by rational argument.

In his earlier works, the logic of the social sciences and knowledge and human interest, Habermas analyses the systems of knowledge in order to lay down a framework for critical theory. He says that science is but one type of knowledge aimed at meeting only one set of human interests. Habermas outlines three basic types of knowledge that encompass the full range of human reason. First, empirical analytical knowledge that pertains to understanding the laws of the material world. Secondly, hermeneutic – historical knowledge that is devoted to understanding of meanings, especially through the interpretations of historical texts. Thirdly, critical knowledge that reveals the conditions of constraint and domination. These three types of knowledge correspond to three basic types of human interest respectively. First, a technical interest in the reproduction of human existence by controlling the environment. Secondly, a practical interest in understanding the meaning of situations. Thirdly, and emancipatory interest to achieve freedom for growth and improvement. These three types of human interest create the three types of knowledge, respectively. The interest in material production has created science or empirical – analytical knowledge. The interest in understanding meanings has resulted in hermeneutic – historical knowledge. And the interest in liberation has led to the development of critical theory.

16.7 THEORY OF COMMUNICATIVE ACTION : CRITIQUE OF SCIENCE AND RATIONALITY

Habermas thinks that emancipation of the human being from oppression can be achieved through “Communicative action”, which is roughly a modified concept of public sphere.

Habermas first tries to reconceptualise action and rationality while shifting emphasis from subjectivity and consciousness of the individual to the process of symbolic interaction. There are four types of action : teleological, normative, dramaturgical and communicative. Firstly, teleological action entails calculating various means and selecting the most appropriate means to achieve explicit goals. Habermas also calls this action “instrumental”. Teleological action is hitherto considered rational action. But Habermas asks since teleological means – ends rationality is what oppresses the people today, how can critical theory propose rationality? Because such a rational theory will also be yet another oppressive application of rationality. Habermas, therefore, answers that there are several types of action and true rationality does not lie in teleological action, but is communicative action.

Secondly, normative action is behaviour oriented to common values of a group. It is directed towards fulfilling the normative expectations of a collective group of individuals. Thirdly, dramaturgical action is egocentric action whereby actors mutually manipulate their behaviour before one another, presenting their own intentions. It is also social since manipulation is done in the context of organized activity.

Thirdly, communicative action is interaction among agents who use speech and non verbal symbols as a way of understanding their mutual situation and their respective plans of action. This helps them agree on how to coordinate their behaviour.

The four types of action presupposes different kinds of "worlds". Each action oriented to different aspects of the universe that can be divided into (1) "objective or external world" of manipulable objects, (2) "Social World" of norms, values, and other socially recognized expectation and (3) "Subjective world" of experiences. Teleological action is concerned primarily with the objective world, normative action with the social, and dramaturgical action with the subjective and external. It is only with communicative action that actors "refer simultaneously to things in the objective, social and subjective worlds in order to negotiate common definitions of the situation."

Habermas summarizes his basic premise in volume 1 of the theory of communicative action :

"If we assume that the human species maintains itself through the socially coordinated activities of its members and that this coordination is established through communication and in certain spheres of life, through communication aimed reaching agreement then the reproduction of the species also requires satisfy in the conditions of a rationality inherent in communicative action."

Communicative action is more rational than the other three types of actions because it involves all three worlds and proceeds in terms of speech acts that assert three types of validity claims. These speech acts assert that, first, the statements are true in reference to the external and subjective world, secondly, they are correct with respect to the existing normative context or social world and thirdly they reflect the subjective world of intention and experiences of the actor. Communicative action – in which these three types of validity claims are made, accepted or challenged by others - is more rational than other types of action. If a validity claim is not accepted, then it is debated and discussed in order to reach an understanding without using force.

While making validity claims through speech acts, actors use existing definitions of situation or create new ones. In other worlds, when people communicatively interact, they not only use but also produce common definitions of the situation. These definitions are part of the lifeworld of a society. These definitions become part of the stocks of knowledge in their lifeworlds, and they become the standards by which validity claims are made, accepted and challenged. In communicative action, the lifeworld serves as a point of reference for the adjudication of validity claims which encompass all the three worlds – objective, social and subjective. In Habermas, the lifeworld functions as a "court of appeals" for communicative action. As the common definitions are produced and reproduced through communicative action, they are the basis for the rational and non oppressive integration of a society.

16.8 SUMMARY :

'Habermas' classification of teleological, normative, dramaturgical and communicative action enriches our understanding of human behaviour. But his distinction between the teleological and the normative does not add beyond Talcott Parsons' analysis in the structure of social action, which in turn does not go much beyond Max Weber's analysis. Though Habermas incorporates Goffman's ideas into his action theory, he does not develop Goffman's ideas on dramaturgical action. The only uniqueness of Habermas' contribution is the conceptualization of communicative action.

The conceptualization of reaching an intersubjective understanding through speech acts and common assumption of the lifeworld is an example of a creative synthesis of linguistics, ethnomethodology, phenomenology and symbolic interactionism.

16.9 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. Explain about the origin of Frankfurt School.
2. What do you mean by Frankfurt School and critical theory?
3. What do you mean by communicative action.

16.10 QUESTIONS :

1. Write short note on Frankfurt School.
2. Explain in detail relation between science and rationality.

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17

ANTHONY GIDDENS

Unit Structure :

17.0 Objectives
17.1 Introduction : Anthony Gidden
17.2 Naturism and Positivism
17.3 The Structuration Theory
17.4 Reconceptualizing Structure and System
17.5 Reconceptualizing Institutions
17.6 Summary
17.7 Check your progress
17.8 Questions
17.9 References

17.0 OBJECTIVES :

1. To get students acquainted with the production and reproduction of society due to the outcome of human agency.
2. To highlight theory of the conditions, consequences of action and an interpretation of structure.

17.1 INTRODUCTION ANTHONY GIDDENS :

Anthony Giddens currently director of the London School of economic and formally professor of Sociology at Cambridge. Anthony Gidden has contributed extensively to the interpretation classical. Sociological theory in capitalism and Modern Social Theory (1971) politics and Sociology. In the thought of Max Weber (1972), Emile Durkheim (1978) and Sociology (1982).

The Central theme of his perspective has been to develop the theory of action, agency and structure and the knowledgability of the social actor. He has began an extensive critic of the historical materialism in a contemporary critic of historical materialism (1981). He has also presented an Innovative framework for an integration of Sociology and Geography in the analysis of Time and Space (1984).

He has criticized sociology for its failure to provide an analysis of the development of the state and the impact of international conflict on Social Relation in nation state and Violence (1985).

Giddens has been critical of post modernism as a theory of society in the consequences of Modernity (1990). In (1999) Reith Lectures published as Runaway World (1999) he discuss the impact of globalization focusing on Risk, tradition, family and democracy. He argues that the positive effect of Global change include wealth generation more egalitarian personal and familiar relationship and the possibility of more democratic society. He also put forth that the emergence of global cosmopolitan society also destroys tradition, diminishes nation state and generate high level's of personal anxiety.

17.2 NATURALISM AND POSITIVISM :

At the core of Gidden's effort to redirect social theory is the rejection of a "covering law" view of sociological explanation. For Gidden's there can be no enduring abstract laws about social processes. In asserting this view, he stresses Herbert Blumer's charge that social organization is changeable by the acts of individuals and thus there can be no laws about the invariant properties of social organization. This assertions are different than those traditionally advocated by Chicago School Symbolic interactionism.

Gidden assets that social theorizing involves a "double hermeneutic", this assets that the concepts and generalization used by social scientists to understand social processes can be employed by agents to alter these processes, thereby potentially obviating, the generalization of "Science". Giddens, contends, that lay actors are also "social theorists who alter their theories in the light of their experience and are receptive to incoming information". And thus, social science theories are not often "news" to lay actors, and when they are, such theories can be used to transform the very order, they describe. For within the capacity of humans to be reflexive that is, to think about their situation, is the ability to change it.

Secondly, social theory is by its nature social criticism. Social theory often contradicts "the reasons that people give for doing things" and is therefore, a critique of these reasons and the social arrangements that people construct in the name of these reasons. Sociology does not, therefore need to develop a separate body of critical theory, it is a critical theory by its very nature and by virtue of the effects it can have on social processes.

According to this implication, Gidden's believe are profound that we need to stop imitating the natural sciences. We must recognize that social theory does not exist "outside" our universe. We should accept the fact that what sociologists and lay actors do is, in fundamental sense, very much the same. And we must redirect our efforts at developing "Sensitizing Concepts" that allow us to understand the active processes of interaction among individuals as they produce and reproduce. Social structure while being guided by these structure.

Gidden is correct in his conclusion that too much social theory converts this methological procedure of bracketing with on logical statements abort what is really real in the social universe.

17.3 THE STRUCTURATION THEORY :

One of the best known and most articulated efforts to integrate agency and structure is Anthony Gidden's Structuration Theory. Giddens began "introducing" this theory in the 1970's but it appeared in its most fully developed form in his book. The constitution of Society, which is subtitled outline of the theory of Agency.

While he is not a Marxist there is a powerful Marxian influence in Gidden's work, and he even sees the constitution of society as an extended reflection on Marxian's inherently integrative diction : Marxian's theory is but one of many theoretical inputs into structuration theory. Gidden has analyzed and critiqued most major theoretical orientations and derived range of useful ideas from many of them structuration theory is extraordinarily electic.

Gidden's survey a wide range of theories that begin with either the individual / agent or the society / structure and rejects both of these polar alternatives. At its ore Giddens structuration theory, with its focus on social practices, is a theory of the relationship between agency and structure agency and structure can not be conceived of apart from one another they are two sides of the same coin. In Gidden's terms, they are a duality. All social action involves structure, and all structure involves social action. Agency and Structure are interwoven in ongoing human activity or practice.

Gidden's analytical starting point is human practices, but he insists that they seen as recursive. In and through their activities agents produce the conditions that make these activities possible. These activities are not produced by consciousness, by the social reconstruction of reality, nor are they produced by social structure. Rather in expressing themselves as actors, people are engaging in practice and it is through that practice that both consciousness and structure are produced.

Gidden's is concerned with consciousness or reflexivity. However, is being reflexive the human actor is not merely self conscious but is also engaged in the monitoring of the ongoing flow of activities and structural conditions. Thus, Gidden's deals with the agency structure issue in a historical, processual and dynamic way.

Gidden's makes a distinction between discursive and practical consciousness. Discursive consciousness entacts the ability to put things into words. Practical consciousness that which is simply done by actors without their being able to express what they are doing in words. It is the latter type of consciousness that is particularly important to structuration theory, reflecting a primary interest in what is done, rather than what is said. Given the focus on practical consciousness, we make a smooth transition from agents to agency, the things that agents actually do. The conceptual core of structuralism theory lies in the ideas of structure, system and duality of structure. Structure is made possible by the existence of rules and resources. Structures themselves do not exist in time and space. Rather social phenomena have the capacity to become structured Gidden's take pain to avoid the impression that structure is "outside" or "external" to human action. It is clear that structuration involves the dialectical relationship between structure and agency. Structure and agency are a duality; neither can exist without the other.

There is a great deal more to structuration theory that can be presented here, Gidden's goes in or great detail about the elements of the theory outlined above and discusses many others as well. Gidden's has gone beyond a program statement for agency – structure, integration, he has given a detailed analysis of its various elements and more important, has focused on the nature of the inter relationship.

17.4 RECONCEPTUALIZING STRUCTURE AND SYSTEM :

For Giddens structure can be conceptualized as the "rules" and "resources" that actors use in "interaction contexts" that extend across "space" and "over time". These rules and resources are used by the actors to sustain or reproduce structures in space and time.

Rules are “generaligable procedures” that actors understand and use in various circumstances. For Giddens, a rule is a methodology or technique that actors know about, often only implicitly, and that provides a relevant formula for action. From a sociological perspective, the most important rules are those which agents use in the reproduction of social relations over significant lengths of time and across space. These rules reveal certain characteristics.

1) Any are frequently use in
    a) Conversation
    b) Interaction rituals
    c) The daily routines of individuals
2) They are tactily grasped and understood and are part of the “stock knowledge” of competent actors.
3) They are informal, remaining unwritten and unarticulated and
4) They are weakly sanctioned through interpersonal techniques.

With this conceptualization Giddens subsumes

a) The functionalist’s emphasis on institutional norms and cultural values.
b) The Ethnomethodologist’s emphases on folk methods.
c) The structuralist’s concern with the generative nature of symbols and codes and
d) Just about all other conceptualizations in between.

The thrust of Gidden’s argument is that rules are part of actors “knowledgeability”. Some may be normative in that actors can articulate and explicitly make reference to them, but many other rules are more implicitly understood and used to guide the flow of interaction is ways that are not easily expressed or verbalized. Moreover actors can transform rules into new combinations as they confront and deal with each other and the contextual particulars of their interaction.

Gidden visualizes resources as what generates power. Power is not a resource as much social theory argues. Rather, the mobilization of other resource is what gives actors power to get things done. Thus, power is integral to the very existence of structure, for as actors interact, they use resources, and as they use resources, they mobilize power to shape the actions of others.

Giddens visualizes rules and resources as “transformational” and as “mediating”. Giddens means that rules and resources can be transformed into many different patterns and profiles. Resources can be mobilized in various ways to perform activities and achieve ends through the exercise of different forms and degrees of power, rules can generate many diverse combinations of methodologies and formulas to guide how people communicate, interact and adjust to each other. Rules and resources are what actors use to create, sustain, or transform relations across time and in space. And because rules and resources are generative they can come together to form different patterns of social relations in time and space.

Giddens develops a typology of rules and resources. The three concepts in this typology are dominations, legitimation and signification. The basic idea is that resources are the stuff of domination because involve the mobilization of material and organizational facilities to do things. Other rules are used to create signification, or meaningful symbolic systems, because they provide people with ways to see and interpret events.

Giddens also stresses that rules and resources are interrelated. Giddens emphasizes that as agents interact in social systems, they can reproduce rules and resources or they can transform them. Structuration is therefore the dual processes in which rules and resources are used to organize interaction across time and space and to reproduce and transform these rules and resources.

17.5 RECONCEPTUALIZING INSTITUTIONS :

For Giddens, institutions are system of interaction in societies that last over time and that distribute people in space. Giddens offers a typology of institutions in terms of the weights and combinations of rules and resources that are implicated in interaction. If signification that is interpretative rule is primary, followed respectively by domination that is allocative and authorative resources and them by legitimation that is normative rules, a symbolic order exists. If authoritative domination, signification and legitimation are successively combined, political institutionalization occurs. If allocative dominance, signification and legitimation are ordered, economic institutionalization prevents. And if legitimation, dominance and signification are rank ordered, institutionalization of law occurs.

Most functional theories analyse the process of institutional differentiation for example economy, law, polity, education and kinship. Giddens rejects the process of institutional differentiation done by functional theories. Giddens avoid this mechanical view of institutionalization in several senses.

1) Systems of interaction in empirical contexts are a mixture of institutional processes.
2) Institutions are tied to the rules and resources that agents employ and thereby reproduce.
3) The most basic dimensions of all rules and resources that is signification domination and legitimation are all involved in institutionalization.

Institutions and agents can not exist without each other, for institutions are resproduced practices by agents, whereas the conscious and unconscious dynamics of agency depend upon the routines and regions provided by institutionalized patterns.

17.6 SUMMARY :

There is a great deal more than to be presented. Gidden's goes into great detail about the elements of the theory outlined and discussed, unlike like others, Giddens has gone beyond a program statement for agency structure integration, he has given a detailed analysis of its various elements and more important has focused on the nature of the interrelationship.

17.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. Write the contribution of Anthony Gidden's to Sociology.
2. Elaborate on Gidden's Agents and Agency.

17.8 QUESTIONS :

1. Write a note on Gidden's structuration theory.
2. Highlight Gidden's viewpoint on reconceptualizing institution.
3. Elaborate on Gidden's conceptualizing structure and system.

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18

WHAT IS POSTMODERNISM

Unit Structure :

18.0 Objectives
18.1 Introduction
18.2 Post modern Social Theory
18.3 Central theories and methods: Foucault's Theory of Discourse
18.4 Madness and Civilization
18.5 Summary
18.6 Check your progress
18.7 Questions
18.8 References

18.0 OBJECTIVES :

- To acquaint students with the work and theory of an eminent French Philosopher – Michel Foucault.
- To bring awareness among students regarding the contribution of Foucault to the field of Sociology.

18.1 INTRODUCTION :

Michel Foucault [15th Oct. 1926 to 25th June 1984] was a French Philosopher, sociologist and historian. He is therefore both a sociologist of the body and a post structural theorist. His version of post structuralism is usually called 'discourse theory'. These elements of his work are closely linked since he uses post-structural theory to explain the way in which social and cultural influences on the body define its universal, natural features in different ways, depending on time and place. Of course, sociologists of the body do not deny that the bodies of males and females have the same organic constitution irrespective of the societies in which the live. However, they argue that these natural features mean different things in different cultural settings. According to many such sociologists, this is because people in different social worlds are taught to think differently about their bodies.

Foucault’s sociology of the body differed sharply from that of other theorists of his time. While his work is greatly concerned with the exercise of power, he distances power relations from both the actions of subjects. [The issue of who exerts power] and notions of underlying structures [such as mode of production] or centralized institutions like the state. He rejects top down models of powers as well as the model of legitimation and consensus that has been a major theme so far. This now shifts to a concern with organized practices, discourse, discipline and regulation.

18.2 POST MODERN SOCIAL THEORY :

Postmodernism is a tendency in contemporary culture characterized by the rejection of objective truth and global cultural narrative. It emphasis the role of language, power relations and motivations, in particular it attacks the we of sharp classifications such as male versus female, straight versus gay, white versus black and imperial versus colonial. Postmodernism has influenced many cultural fields including literary criticism, sociology, linguistics, architecture, visual arts and music.

Post modernist thought is an intentional departure from modernist approaches that had previously been dominant. The term ‘postmodernism’ comes from its critique of the ‘modernist’ scientific mentality of objectivity and progress associated with the ‘Enlightenment’. Indeed, postmodernism, particularly as an academic movement can be understood as a relation to modernism in the Humanities.

Foucault introduced concepts such as ‘discrusive regime’ or re-invoked those of older philosophers like ‘episteme’ and ‘genealogy’ in order to explain the relationship between meaning, power and social behaviour within social orders. In direct contradiction to what he called ‘bio power’ are not only inseparable but co-determinant. While Foucault himself was deeply involved in a number of progressive political causes and maintained close personal ties with members of the far-left, he was also controversial with Leftist thinkers of his day, including those associated with various strains of Marxism, proponents of liberalism. [e.g. Noam Chomsky] and Humanism [e.g. Jurgen Habermas] for his rejection of what he deemed to be Enlightenment derived concepts of freedom, liberation, self determination and human nature. Instead, Foucault focused on the ways in which such constructs can foster cultural begemony, violence and exclusion. In line with his rejection of such positive tenets of Enlightenment era Humanism, he was active, with Gilles Deleuze in Anti-Psychiatry Movement considering much of institutionalized psychiatry and in particular Freud’s concept of repression central to psychoanalysis [which was still very influential in France during the 1960’s and 70’s] to be both harmful and misplaced. Foucault was known for his controversial aphorisms such as language is oppression, meaning that language functions in such a way as to render nonsensical, false or silent tendencies that might otherwise threaten or undermine the distributions of power backing a society’s conventions – even when such distributions purport to celebrate liberation and expression or value minority groups and perspectives. His writings have had a major influence on the larger body of postmodern academic literature.

While no term has greater resonance today among scholars in a wide range of disciplines than does postmodern, there is enormous ambiguity and controversy over exactly what the term means. For clarity it is useful to distinguish among the terms ‘post modernity’, ‘postmodernism’ and ‘post modern social theory’. ‘Post modernity refers to a historical epoch that is generally seen as following the modern era, postmodernism to cultural products [in art, movies, architecture and so on] that differ from modern cultural products and post modern social theory to a way of thinking that is distinct from modern social theory. Thus, the post modern encompasses a new historical epoch, new cultural products and a new type of theorizing about the social world. All these, of course, share the perspective that something new and different has happened in recent years that can no longer be described by the term ‘modern’ and that those new developments are replacing modern realities.

18.3 CENTRAL THEORIES AND METHODS : FOUCAULT’S THEORY OF DISCOURSE :

French social theorist Michel Foucault developed an entirely original notion of discourse in his early work especially the Archeology of knowledge (1972). In Discursive struggles within social welfare : Restaging Teen Motherhood – Iara Lessa summarizes Foucault’s definition of discourse as “systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, course of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak.” He traces the role of discourses in wider social processes of legitimating and power, emphasizing the construction of current truths how they are maintained and what power relations they carry with them.

Foucault later theorized that discourse is a medium through which power relations produce speaking subjects. Foucault argued that power and knowledge are inter related and therefore every human relationship is a struggle and negotiation of power. Foucault further stated that power is always present and can both produce and constrain the truth. Discourse according to Foucault is related to power as it operates by rules and exclusion. Discourse therefore, is controlled by objects what can be spoken of, ritual, where and how one may speak and the privileged who may speak. Coining the phrases power knowledge Foucault stated knowledge was both the creator of power and creation of power.

Foucault's work is greatly concerned with the exercise of power, he distances power relations from both the actions of subjects [the issue of who exerts power] and notions of underlying structures [such as mode of production] or centralized institutions like the state. He rejects top down models of power as well as the model of legitimation and consensus that has been a major theme so far. This now shifts to a concern with organized practices, discourses, discipline and regulation.

In the modern period there was a shift in emphasis from the body to the soul. The collapse of the classical discourse led to the emergence of new domains of psychology and morality and new ideas and practices concerned with diseases of the nerves. In the 'Birth of the Clinic' Foucault again shows how new social institutions and practices are bound up with the emergence of new social discourses. The cohesion of these approaches is provided through discourse while the institution of the clinic is crucial to the maintainance of that discourse. The clinic figures then as a structure that is essential to the scientific coherence and also to the social utility and political purity of the new medical organization.

In "The order of Things" Foucault tries to show how 'rationality' is dependent on a discrusive framework that determines what it is or is not possible to say and what counts as truth or knowledge. This work is concerned with uncovering the laws, regulations and rules of formation of systems of thought. One discrusive paradigm replaces another. The Renaissance, the classical age and the modern age are described as three distinct epistemes or three distinct structures of representation, forming a cohesive unity.

The episteme is a structure of knowledge which determines the way the world is experienced or seen. The classical episteme was organized such that representation was as its centre. This involves the idea of universal measurement and classification. Language is seen as transparent and unproblematic in the way it performs its function of representation. There is a coherence in the classical episteme between the theory of representation, the theory of language, the theory of a natural order and theories of wealth and value. In the classical age, the attempt at a universal method, the system of classification and the process of representation mirror the order of things in the world.

Whereas the classical episteme had no place for the human subject, the modern makes it central. In place of universal classification, certainty and the infinity of God's cosmology there emerges a new humanist paradigm an anthropological episteme founded on human finitude through which history unfolds. The human subject is how trapped within language, life and labour and knowledge becomes finite. The new human sciences and disciplines such as political economy stress the importance of human labour. The 19th C brings with it a new kind of reasoning that throws into question the form of truth and the form of being and this is again related to the question of representation.

In 'The Archaeology of Knowledge' Foucault develops the concept of the archive which refers to the general conditions of possibility that makes knowledge possible in any given period. It is not so much a condition for the validity of statements but a condition for their reality. Discursive relations offer discourse objects of which it can speak, they determine what discourse must establish in order to speak of this or that object. Foucault calls this system a discrusive formation.

The social institutional field only becomes meaningful once articulated within a discrusive formation. In Foucault's early work the unity and cohesion of the social is provided first by discourse then by the episteme and now by the discrusive formation. It is not the individual that given discourse meaning but the discrusive formation that provides an array of subject positions that individuals occupy. Foucault leaves very little room therefore for agency. So little room, in fact, that it is impossible to speak of social consent or consensus. Agents simply do not have this option – they are more or less possible to construct discourse. Their needs, wants, ideas, values and actions are entirely the product of the dominant discourse. This does not mean, however, that social cohesion is entirely guaranteed. Although discourses provide cohesion, the discursive system is always open to change. Foucault is willing to speak of discontinuities, ruptures and gaps and the replacement of one exhausted episteme or discrusive formation by another. But these changes are the product of structural breakdowns and crises, not the result of human actions. It is only in Foucault's middle period that an extremely limited and one sided account of human action emerges.

18.4 MADNESS AND CIVILIZATION :

The English edition of Madness and civilization is an abridged version on “Folie et deraison : Historie de la folie a lage classique” originally published in 1961. A full English translation titled the history of madness has since been published by Routledge in 2006. ‘Folie et deraison’ originated as Foucault’s doctoral dissertation. This was his first major book mostly written while he was the Director of the Maison de France in Sweden. It examines ideas, practices, institutions, art and literature relating to madness in Western history.

Foucault begins his history in the Middle Ages noting the social and physical exclusion of lepers. He argues that with the gradual disappearance of leprosy, madness came to occupy this excluded position. The ship of fools in the 15th C is a literary version of one such exclusionary practice i.e. that of sending mad people away in ships. In 17th C Europe in a movement Foucault famously calls the ‘Great Confinement’, ‘unreasonable’ members of the population were institutionalized. In the 18th C madness came to be seen as the reverse of reason and finally in the 19th C as mental illness.

Foucault also argues that madness was silenced by Reason losing its power to signify the limits of social order and to point to the truth. He examines the rise of scientific and humanitarian treatments of the insane, notably at the hands of philippe Pinel and Samuel Tuke who he suggests started the conceptualization of madness as mental illness. He claims that these new treatments were in fact no less controlling than previous methods. Pinel’s treatment of the mad amounted to an extended aversion therapy including such treatments as freezing showers and use of a strait jacket. In Foucault’s view this treatment amounted to repeated brutality until the pattern of judgement and punishment was internalized by the patient.

Foucault’s early works study social history according to changes in discourse which is the overarching category that explains the cohesion and unity of social practices. His first book looks at the discourse of madness and reason. The foundation of the Hospital general in Paris is identified by Foucault’s as a decisive event. What then was the reality represented by this entire population which almost overnight found itself shut up, excluded more severely than the lepers? Madness becomes an issue because it threatens the foundations of the new bourgeois order. the ambivalence towards madness in medieval society is transformed into a matter of great public concern during early bourgeois society.

Madness was thus torn from that imaginary freedom which still allowed it to flourish on the Renaissance horizon. Not so long ago, it had floundered about in broad daylight. But in less than a half-century it had been sequestered and in the fortress of confinement bound to Reason to the rules of morality and to their monotonous nights.

But what was happening to the insane is really one part of a wider issue – the construction and maintaince of the discourse of reason. In a rational social order madness represents a kind of freedom, something that is outside that order, a radical other that is both in the social world and beyond it.

This shift is reflected in the birth of the asylum. This represents a deeper discrusive shift in that the asylum is associated with a new science of mental disease based on a system of observation and classification, surveillance and judgement. The new treatment of madness shifts away from physical constraint towards self – constraint. The new discourse places emphasis on the recognition of guilt and a new notion of responsibility. Self awareness is now linked to shame, reinforced by perpetual judgement. The truth and cure of madness is located in the moral sphere and the asylum becomes a religious domain without religion, a domain of pure morality of ethical uniformity.

Foucault's second major book "The Birth of the Clinic : An Archeology of Medical Perception" was published in 1963 in France and translated to English in 1973. Picking up from Madness and Civilization, this book traces the development of the medical profession and specifically the institution of the 'clinic'. Its motif is the concept of the medical regard traditionally limited to small specialized institutions such as hospitals and prisons, but which Foucault examines as subjecting wider social spaces governing the population and the masses. Medical discourse is transformed from the classical idea of a pathological essence independent of its manifestations to the modern focus on the visible body. The appearance of the clinic is related to these reorganizations of discourse, from 'what is wrong with you?' to 'where does it hurt?'. This links to Foucault's notion of the gaze which is that which establishes the individual in his irreducible quality. The gaze determines the entire field of possible knowledge.

18.5 SUMMARY :

In the late 1970's political actionism in France tailed off with the disillusionment of many left using intellectuals. A number of young Maoist abandoned their beliefs to become the so called New Philosophers, often citing Foucault as their major influence – a status Fourcault had mixed feelings about. Foucault in this period embarked on a six volume project 'The history of Sexuality which he never completed.'

Foucault died of an AIDS – related illness in Paris on 25th June 1984. He was the first high profile French personality who was reported to have AIDS. Prior to his death, Foucault had destroyed most of his manuscripts and in his will had prohibited the publication of what he might have overlooked.

18.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

1. Explain the postmodernist social theory.
2. Discuss Michel Foucault's theory of discourse.
3. What does Foucault's central theory of madness and civilization emphasize on?

18.7 QUESTIONS :

1. Discuss in detail Foucault Post Modern Theory.
2. Explain Foucault theory of discourse.

18.8 REFERENCES :

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6. Fletcher Ronald, 2000, The Making of Sociology – A Study of Sociological Theory Beginnings and Foundations, New Delhi, Rawat Publications.
7. Ritzer George, 1988, Sociological Theory (2nd ed.), New York, McGraw Hill Publication.

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Syllabus

T.Y.B.A. Paper IV

SOCIAL THEORY

Objectives :

- To provide the students of Sociology with the understanding of Sociological Theory.
- To train students in the application of these theories to social situations.

1. Historical Content of Sociological Theory

- Enlightenment and French Revolution
- Ideals of St. Simon
- Auguste Comte – Law of Three Stages, Positivism
- Herbert Spencer – Organismic model

2. Karl Marx

- Dialectical and Historical Materialism
- Models of Production and Theory of Class
- Class Conflict
- Marx’s concept of Alienation

3. Emile Durkheim

- Social Facts
- Division of Labour
- Theory of Suicide
- Elementary Forms of Religious Life

4. Max Weber

- Social Action, Power and Authority
- Methodology – Verstehen approach, Ideal Types
- The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism
- Sociology of Religion (India, China)

5 Social System Theory

- Parsons Theory of Social Action and Pattern Variables

- Theory of Social System
- Merton’s Middle Range Theory
- Theory of Function

6 Ethnomethodology

- Dramaturgy of Erving Goffman
- The ideas of Alfred Schutz
- Examples of Phenomenology and Ethnomethodology

7 Frankfurt School

- Origin of the Frankfurt School
- Main tenets of Critical Theory
- Habermas critique of Science and Rationality

8 Gidden’s Critique of Social Theory

- Naturism and Positivism
- The Theory of Structuration, Agency and Actions
- Reconceptualizing, Structure and System
- Reconceptualizing Institutions

9 What is Postmodernism

- Postmodernism – An Introduction
- Michel Foucault’s Central Theories and Methods Foucault Theory of Discourse
- Madness and Civilization

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QUESTION PAPER

T.Y.B.A. Paper IV
SOCIAL THEORY

3 Hours **Total Marks : 100**

N.B. : (1) Attempt any five questions.
(2) Figures on the right indicate full marks.

1. (a) Briefly explain Enlightenment and the French Revolution. (10)
   (b) Elaborate on the Ideals of St. Simon. (10)

2. (a) Explain Karl Marx's theory of Class Conflict. (10)
   (b) Discuss Marx's concept of Alienation. (10)

3. Discuss Emile Durkheim's theory of –
   (a) Social Facts (10)
   (b) Division of Labour (10)

4. (a) Explain Max Weber's theory of Social Action, Power and Authority. (10)
   (b) Sociology of Religion (India, China) (10)

5. (a) Explain Parsons' "Theory of Social Action and Pattern Variables". (10)
   (b) Discuss Merton's Middle Range Theory (10)

6. (a) Briefly explain Phenomenology and Ethnomethodology with examples. (10)
   (b) Elaborate on the ideas of Alfred Schutz. (10)

7. (a) Explain the main tenets of Critical Theory. (10)
   (b) Elaborate on Habermas critique of Science and Rationality. (10)

8. (a) Explain Giddents' Theory of Structuration, Agency and Actions. (10)

   (b) Briefly discuss his ideas on Reconceptualzing Structure and System. (10)

9. (a) Elaborate the meaning of Post-Modernism. (10)

   (b) Elaborate on Michel Foucault's Central Theories and Methods emphasizing Discourse. (10)

10. Write Short notes on any two of the following. (20)

    (a) Auguste Comte – Law of Three Stages, Positivism

    (b) Dialectical and Historical Materialism

    (c) Emile Durkheim's Theory of Suicide

    (d) The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.

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