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Innovating Knowledge. Inspiring Success

KARL MARX (1818-1883)

Syllabus:
- ✓ *Historical materialism,*
- ✓ *Mode of production,*
- ✓ *Alienation,*
- ✓ *Class struggle*

SOME BASICS BEFORE UNDERSTANDING KARL MARX'S THEORIES

Karl Marx's (1818- 1883) thought was strongly influenced by: The dialectical method and historical orientation of **Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel;** The classical political economy of **Adam Smith and David Ricardo**; French socialist and sociological thought, in particular the thought of **Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Marx** was born in Trier, Prussia (present-day Germany). While he attended a Lutheran elementary school growing up, he later became an atheist and a materialist. In 1835, Marx enrolled in Bonn University in Germany where he took courses in law, however, he was much more interested in philosophy and literature. One year later, he enrolled him at the University of Berlin. Marx soon felt at home when he joined a circle of brilliant and extreme thinkers who were challenging existing institutions and ideas, including religion, philosophy, ethics, and politics. Marx graduated with his doctoral degree in 1841.

After school, Marx turned to writing and journalism to support himself. In 1842 he became the editor of the liberal Cologne newspaper *Rheinische Zeitung*, but the Berlin government prohibited it from publication the following year. He then moved to Brussels, Belgium, where he founded the German Workers' Party and was active in the Communist League. Here he wrote his most famous work *Communist Manifesto*. After being exiled from Belgium and France, Marx finally settled in London where he lived as a stateless exile for the rest of his life.

In London, Marx worked in journalism and wrote for both German and English language publications. From 1852 to 1862 he was also a correspondent for the New York Daily Tribune, writing a total of 355 articles. He also continued writing and formulating his theories about the nature of society and how he believed it could be improved, as well as actively campaigning for socialism.

MARX'S THEORIES ABOUT SOCIETY, ECONOMICS AND POLITICS, WHICH ARE COLLECTIVELY KNOWN AS MARXISM, ARGUE THAT ALL SOCIETY PROGRESSES THROUGH THE DIALECTIC OF CLASS STRUGGLE. He was heavily CRITICAL OF THE CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC FORM OF SOCIETY, CAPITALISM, WHICH HE CALLED THE "DICTATORSHIP OF THE BOURGEOISIE," believing it to be run by the wealthy middle and upper classes purely for their own benefit, and predicted that it would inevitably produce internal tensions which would lead to its self-destruction and replacement by a new system, socialism. Under

socialism, he argued that society would be governed by the working class in what he called the "dictatorship of the proletariat." HE BELIEVED THAT SOCIALISM WOULD EVENTUALLY BE REPLACED BY A STATELESS, CLASSLESS SOCIETY CALLED PURE COMMUNISM.

While Marx remained a relatively unknown figure in his own lifetime, his ideas and the ideology of Marxism began to exert a major influence on socialist movements shortly after his death. Marx has been described as one of the most influential figures in human history, and in a 1999 BBC poll was voted the "thinker of the millennium" by people from around the world.

In the late 1830s radical criticism for extreme change in existing socio-political conditions was made by the young Hegelians (a group of people following the philosophy of Hegel). This was the group with which Marx became formally associated when he was studying law and philosophy at the University of Berlin.

Hegel's philosophy was humanist in treating humanity as occupying a special, central place in the whole historical process and seeing that the very point of history was to improve and fulfil the human spirit. His ideas certainly had immense impact; he dominated German intellectual life and influenced most young German philosophers of the time. One of these was Marx, who appropriated much of Hegel's scheme, certainly in his early writings.

Hegel: the dialectic of history

Hegel was the most influential thinker of the first half of the nineteenth century in Germany and, arguably, in Europe as a whole. **HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY AIMED TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF HISTORY-AS-A-WHOLE.** The history of all humanity can, he argued, be grasped as a single, unified, organised and rational progress. History might look like a mere accidental succession, one thing after another in a rather disorganised, chaotic sequence, but that impression is only superficial. Seen in the right way, history can be recognised as making up a coherent story about development and progress. Progress is not smooth, continuous and cumulative, but, rather, comes through struggle, conflict and discontinuity, which none the less is of an essentially logical kind.

The crucial idea is that conflict is itself an orderly process, consisting in the creation and overcoming of oppositions. COMPARE THE HISTORY OF HUMAN BEINGS TO THE GROWTH OF A PLANT FROM A SEED. THE SEED CONTAINS THE PLANT, AND OUT OF THE SEED GROWS THE PLANT, DESTROYING THE SEED. THUS THE LIFE OF THE PLANT IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEED INTO WHAT IT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BECOME: FIRST, THE SHOOT, EVENTUALLY THE FULLY GROWN PLANT. IN THE SAME WAY, CONSIDER HISTORY AS THE LIFE OF HUMANITY, AND SEE, THEREFORE, THAT HISTORY IS MERELY THE UNFOLDING OF THE POTENTIAL WHICH WAS PRESENT AT THE EARLIEST STAGE OF ITS BEING. HISTORY IS THE NATURAL EXPRESSION OF THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF HUMAN BEINGS, JUST AS THE PLANT IS THE NATURAL EXPRESSION OF THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF THE SEED. HUMANITY MUST ITSELF DEVELOP INTO WHAT IT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BECOME. Note that Hegel takes it for granted that his history is a collective one, i.e. it is a history of humanity as a whole, or of large groups of people, not of particular individuals. Just as the seed is destined to turn into a plant of a specific kind, human beings— Hegel argues—are destined to develop towards complete freedom.

What human beings essentially are will never be fully expressed if their capacity for development is restricted, inhibited by circumstances; the potential of humanity will only be fully developed

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when they are truly free, which means free of all circumstantial inhibition. Over the course of history, human beings necessarily represent something less than the true or full nature of humanity. For just as the full potential of the seed is only realised when the plant is fully matured, so the full potential of human beings will only be realised after the period of growth—i.e. history—is over. The achievement of complete freedom will be the 'finished growth' of human beings. Consequently, there will be an end to history. Since history is a process of change through which humanity develops its full potential, then when that has been realised there can be no further development and therefore no further history. History is directed towards an end in two senses: (1) in the form of a particular result; (2) in being directed towards a literal end or finish.

In what sense does humanity develop?

 For Hegel, the primary manifestation of development was **THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE,** of **THE MIND OR SPIRIT, THE GERMAN TERM USED BY HEGEL IS ZEITGEIST (I.E. 'SPIRIT OF THE AGE')**. He held it to be plain, if one studied the history of a given people, that their art, religion and philosophy would at any given time have a certain uniformity, a common cast of mind, a shared outlook. This concept reaffirms Hegel's collectivist aspect, for it was his firm conviction that the commonality across many different thinkers was not a matter of mere coincidence; individuals were driven by larger, widespread influences affecting them all in similar ways. In short, the mind or the spirit that drives the historical process is the mind of humanity, as manifested in particular peoples and periods, not the mind of individual thinkers.

Idealism

Hegel's study of the mind was THE STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS, so naturally he concentrated upon those areas of society that were creative or expressive of ideas: art, abstract thought (particularly philosophy) and religion. HENCE HEGEL IS TERMED AN IDEALIST. he thought that the true nature of history and human existence was to be understood in terms of the development of thought, of ideas.

Dialectical logic

Classically, truth is often sought in discussion—in dialogue, or dialectic. Hegel bases his logic on the model of discussion exemplified by Socrates in classical times. Discussion originates in disagreement, the conflict of oppositions, which spurs debate. The argument proceeds by the putting of one position and the countering of it by another, opposed position. The search for truth is not about standing pat on one's own position, but about attempting to reach agreement with one's opponent, to arrive at a conclusion both can accept. It incorporates elements of each of the two previously opposed positions, but now combines them in a third, new position that is improved and superior.

In grossly simplified terms, we may glimpse Hegel's dialectical logic as an exposition of the way in which seeming opposites can be reconciled and combined in a new unity. Of course, arriving at an agreed position might end that discussion, but it does not end all discussion, for this newly agreed position will be put in some other conversation, will provoke a counter-statement, initiate a new debate and a search for yet another more inclusive, mutually acceptable conclusion, and so on.

THIS LOGICAL PROGRESSION IS THE VERY STUFF OF HISTORY. HEGEL IS SAYING THAT HISTORY ARISES FROM CONFLICT. FAR FROM CONFLICT BEING AN UNDESIRABLE AND UNNECESSARY BLEMISH UPON THE FACE OF HUMAN EXISTENCE, IT IS THE DRIVER OF HISTORY, THE ESSENTIAL MOTOR OF PROGRESS. CONFLICT ENGENDERS NEW AND BETTER IDEAS AND PUSHES TOWARDS A MORE COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING. CONFLICT IS

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NOT ONLY NECESSARY, BUT ALSO PRODUCTIVE, FOR CONFLICTS ARE EVENTUALLY RESOLVED AND RESULT IN IMPROVED OUTCOMES BEFORE YET FURTHER CONFLICTS ARE INITIATED.

Marx's reformation of Hegel

Although he was the youngest member of the young Hegelians, Karl Marx inspired their confidence, respect and even admiration. They saw in him a **'new Hegel'**.

He was, however, skeptical of Hegel's significance as a political thinker. **Marx could not accept Hegel's contention that the key to human emancipation lay in the development of philosophy, carrying people to the level of complete understanding of their own nature and thus to complete freedom through This.** After all, this supposed final enlightenment and full elaboration of humanity's progress co-existed with jails filled with political prisoners. Freedom in philosophy, freedom only in the mind, obviously was not the same as real political freedom. **Therefore, Hegel's idea of history could not offer an account of the progression of history to a real, i.e. practical, political freedom if it only resulted in freedom in theory. For Marx, the real history of human development could not be a history solely of thought or ideas; it would have to be a history of human life in the real world, i.e. the world of economic and political being**.

Despite this important reservation, Marx initially adopted much of the form of Hegel's argument, i.e. the idea of a scheme for history-as-a-whole, and of history as a progressive development of the true character of human nature that could only be fully realised when history reaches its final stage.** These ideas were taken over. So was the idea that the driving force of historical change was conflict. Change was structured in the dialectical pattern of conflict, resolution, further conflict and higher, more advanced resolution. It went through a succession of ever higher stages of development, with increasing degrees of freedom, eventually resulting in a final, full enlightenment and emancipation of humankind.

Production and human essence

Of course, Marx's reservation referred to the inequality of the then existing society. At that stage only a very few individuals had participated in the development of human thought, or spirit, in the sense of its intellectual expression; the vast majority were excluded from the process of creating these purported expressions of human essence. This majority had been engaged in producing human history all right, but not by way of intellectual creation and discussion. Rather, it had produced human history through physical, not mental, effort, creating through its labour the actual conditions of human existence and the material conditions under which thinking, for example philosophy, might be done. Marx denied Hegel's view that the human essence was to be found in thinking; he favoured the view that the human essence is to work.

Work: *Work, involving as it does the physical transformation of the world around us, literally changes our world, whereas thinking makes no physical difference to anything. Work also provides the most basic means to freedom, to liberation from necessity For, of course, our labour provides us with food, shelter and clothing, giving us some freedom from the challenges and pressures of nature. Further, progress in labour sets us free from the necessity for labour itself by giving us time and resources to do things other than labour, including the opportunity to engage in intellectual thought.*

This is not to say that thinking does not matter at all, for, of course, thinking is part of labour, part of what Marx calls 'practical consciousness', i.e. the thinking involved in and for the purposes of

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carrying out labour. Indeed, for Marx as for his predecessors, Aristotle and Hegel, the capacity for thought marks out human beings as distinctive; the capacity to think about things and to imagine them being otherwise enables human beings to envisage new (improved) ways of making the physical world meet their needs, bringing about changes in the physical environment itself. In this capacity they differ from animals, whose ability to alter the physical world is fixed in instinct-given ways; animals have no capacity for reflection and foresight.

- THE EPOCH TO WHICH MARX BELONGED HAD ITS BEGINNINGS IN THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. But its historical dimension coincided with those of the whole era of **INDUSTRIAL AND SOCIAL REVOLUTIONS AND EXTENDED INTO MODERN ERA.** This is reason for the lasting appeal of a body of thought (Marxian Thought) that is by no means free from history.
- Before the age of thirty, Marx produced a number of works which together provide a relatively adequate outline of his **"materialist conception of history"**. Though Marx never wrote explicitly on historical materialism, his writings refer to it in a fragmentary fashion. **For him, it was not a new philosophical system. Rather it was a practical method of socio-historical studies. It was also a basis for political action.**
- **THE FRAMEWORK FOR THIS THEORY WAS OBVIOUSLY DERIVED FROM HEGEL. LIKE HEGEL***, Marx recognized that* the history of mankind was simply a single and non-repetitive **process** (Evolutionist). LIKEWISE HE ALSO BELIEVED THAT *THE LAWS OF THE HISTORICAL PROCESS COULD BE DISCOVERED*.
- **MARX DEVIATED FROM HEGELIAN PHILOSOPHY.** Many others among the Young Hegelians found defects in Hegel's ideas and they proceeded to build a new system of thought. BUT ONLY **MARX COULD CONSISTENTLY DEVELOP A NEW SET OF IDEAS WHICH IN FACT SUPERSEDED HEGELIAN THEORIES ABOUT SOCIETY**. ....Hegel was a liberal in the sense that he accepted the rule of law rather than the rule of individual person. His philosophy belonged to **THE IDEALIST TRADITION.** *ACCORDING TO THE IDEALIST TRADITION, REASON (IDEA) IS THE ESSENCE OF REALITY AND THE SPIRIT OF REASON EXPRESSES ITSELF DURING THE COURSE OF HISTORY.* Hegel argued that *HISTORY COMPRISES THE GROWTH OF REASON TO AWARENESS OF ITSELF.* He considered *constitutional state to be the summit or highest point of history.* HEGEL VIEWS HISTORY AS *'PROGRESS IN THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF FREEDOM WHICH IS BEST EXPRESSED IN PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION, AND DEVELOPMENT IN RELIGIOUS CONCEPT AND IDEA SHOWS THE DEGREE OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF FREEDOM IN PARTICULAR FORMS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION. In other words, ADVANCES IN RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL IDEAS-CORRESPOND WITH SOCIO-POLITICAL PROGRESS. For Hegel, HUMAN HISTORY WAS PROGRESSING IN THE DIRECTION OF CHRISTIANITY, THE REFORMATION, THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY.* He also held that only educated state officials, administering a constitutional monarchy, understood the ideas of human progress.

Karl Marx also developed his ideas of human history initially on the basis of Hegel's views. But in course of time he too joined hands with the Young Hegelians and eventually evolved his own ideas on the history of human society i.e. HISTORICAL MATERIALISM. In doing so, he is said to have put Hegel on his head, i.e. Marx criticized Hegel's conservative ideas on religion, politics and law.

- *MARX DENIED HEGEL'S FAITH IN IDEALISM but ADOPTED AND ADAPTED HEGEL'S USE OF DIALECTICAL METHODOLOGY.*

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- According to Hegel, *EACH THESIS HAS ITS ANTITHESIS.* **THE THESIS REPRESENTS THE POSITIVE VIEW AND THE ANTITHESIS REPRESENTS THE OPPOSITE VIEW.** IT MEANS THAT **EACH STATEMENT OF TRUTH HAS ITS OPPOSITE STATEMENT**. The antithesis or the opposite statement is also true. *IN COURSE OF TIME, THE THESIS AND ANTITHESIS ARE RECONCILED IN THE FORM OF SYNTHESIS.* The synthesis is the **COMPOSITE VIEW**.
- AS HISTORY PROGRESSES, *THE SYNTHESIS BECOME A NEW THESIS.* The *new thesis then has an antithesis*, with eventual prospect of *turning into a synthesis*. And thus goes on THE PROCESS OF DIALECTICS.
- While *Hegel* applied this understanding of the process of dialectics to **the progress of ideas in history**, *MARX* ACCEPTED THE CONCEPT OF DIALECTICS but did not, like Hegel, perceive truth in the progress of ideas. He said that **"MATTER IS THE REALM OF TRUTH"** and tried to reach the truth via **"materialism".** This is why Marx's theory is known as "*HISTORICAL MATERIALISM"* while Hegel's system is called "*dialectical idealism".*

What is materialism?

Materialism seeks the scientific explanations of things, including even religion. The idea of materialism may be opposed to the concept of idealism. *Idealism refers* to a theory that ultimate reality lies in a realm of transcending phenomena "Ideas". *Materialism, on the other hand, contends that everything, that exists, depends upon matter.* **HISTORICAL MATERIALISM emphasizes the fundamental and causal role of production of material conditions in the development of human history.**

- **PRODUCTION-** It is not that people produce out of material greed or the greed to accumulate wealth. **BUT THE ACT OF PRODUCING, THE ESSENTIALS OF LIFE, ENGAGES PEOPLE INTO "SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP".** *According to Marx SOCIAL RELATIONS, ARE OVER AND ABOVE INDIVIDUALS.* Marx says that as a general principle, **THE PRODUCTION OF MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS OF LIFE, WHICH IS A VERY BASIC NECESSITY OF ALL SOCIETIES, COMPELS INDIVIDUALS TO ENTER INTO DEFINITE SOCIAL RELATIONS THAT ARE INDEPENDENT OF THEIR WILL.** This is the basic idea of Marx's theory of society.
- MARX stresses that *there are social relations which impinge upon individuals irrespective of their preferences.* He further elaborates that an understanding of the historical process depends on our awareness of these objective social relations. In most of human history, according to Marx, *these relationships are "CLASS RELATIONSHIP"* that creates class struggle. HIS CONTENTION IS *THAT THE PROCESS OF SOCIO-POLITICAL AND INTELLECTUAL LIFE IN GENERAL IS CONDITIONED BY THE MODE OF PRODUCTION OF MATERIAL LIFE.* **On the basis of this logic, Marx tries to construct his entire view of history.**
- He says that "*NEW DEVELOPMENTS OF PRODUCTIVE FORCES OF SOCIETY" COME IN "CONFLICT" WITH "EXISTING RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION".* When people become conscious of the state of conflict, they wish to bring an end to it. *This period of history is called by Marx "the period of social revolution". The revolution brings about "resolution of conflict".* Thus, FOR MARX, "**IT IS THE GROWTH OF NEW PRODUCTIVE FORCE WHICH OUTLINES THE COURSE OF HUMAN HISTORY".** The productive forces are the powers society uses to produce material conditions of life. *For* **Marx, "HUMAN HISTORY IS AN ACCOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEW FORCES OF MATERIAL PRODUCTION". This is the reason why his view of history of "historical materialism".**

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- **Infrastructure and Superstructure:** *According to Marx,* *every society has its infrastructure and superstructure. Social relations are defined in terms of material conditions which he calls "infrastructure".* *THE ECONOMIC BASE OF A SOCIETY FORMS ITS INFRASTRUCTURE.* Any changes in material conditions also imply corresponding changes in social relations. **Forces and relations of production** come in the category of infrastructure. WITHIN THE "**SUPERSTRUCTURE**" FIGURE THE LEGAL, EDUCATIONAL AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AS WELL AS VALUES, CULTURAL WAYS OF THINKING, RELIGION, IDEOLOGIES AND PHILOSOPHIES.
- *According to Marx,* *Forces of production* *comprise two elements: (a) means of production* (tools, machines, factories, and so on); and (b) *labour power* (the skills, knowledge, experience and other human faculties used in the work). *Relations of production are constituted by the pattern of economic ownership of means of production.* At every stage of historical development, the owners of means of production constitute the dominant class and those left with labour power only constitute the dependent class.
- At certain points in time, Marx speaks in terms of transformation of society from one stage to another. In explaining the process of transformation, Marx has given us a scheme of historical movement.
- He develops **the idea of social change resulting from internal conflicts in the theory of class struggle.** For him, **social change displays a regular pattern**. Marx constructs, in broad terms, a historical sequence of the main types of society, proceeding from the simple, undifferentiated society of 'primitive communism' to the complex class society of 'modern capitalism'. He provides an explanation of the great historical transformation which demolishes old forms of society and creates new ones in terms of infrastructural changes which he regards as general and constant in their operation. Each period of contradiction between the forces and the relations of production is seen by Marx as a period of revolution.
- *Dialectical relationship between the forces and relations of production:* In revolutionary period, *one class is attached to the old relations of production. These relations hinder the development of the forces of production. Another class, on the other hand, is forward looking. It strives for new relations of production.* The new relations of production do not create obstacles in the way of the development of the forces of production. They encourage the maximum growth of those forces. This is the abstract formulation of Marx's ideas of class struggle.
- **The dialectical relationship between the forces of production also provides a** *"theory of revolution".* **In Marx's reading of history,** *revolutions are not political accidents. They are treated as "social expression of the historical movement".* Revolution is necessary manifestations of the historical progress of societies. Revolutions occur when the conditions for them mature. Marx wrote, 'No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed; and the new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society'.
- *He has also distinguished social reality and consciousness.* For Marx, reality is not determined by human consciousness. *According to him, "social reality determines human consciousness".* This results in an overall conception in which ways of human thinking must be explained in terms of the social relations of whom they are a part.
- After detailed analysis, we find that **"***historical materialism" is different from "economic determinism". Marx recognized that without culture there can be no production possible. For him "mode of production" includes "social relations of production" which are "relations of domination and subordination" into which men and women are born or involuntarily enter. The "reproduction both*

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of life and of the material means of life" cannot be understood without turning to the "culture, norms the rituals of the working people" over whom the rulers rule.

IN OTHER WORDS:

The human essence is the capacity to labour, to work upon and modify the world about it, to shape it better in accord with human needs, thereby enhancing human existence and potential. In short, labour is human nature—human essence itself. The capacity of labour has a cumulative character, since human beings can contrive new and improved ways of carrying out their work on the world, given their capacity for practical thought; e.g. the creation of tools increases human powers.

Change: quantity and quality.

- The cumulative character of labour, however, is not smooth and continuous. Here another Hegelian notion informs Marx's analysis: **quantity into quality**. Hegel had noted that many changes are continuous up to a point, and then they involve a drastic, discontinuous alteration. For example, if we heat or cool water for a time we get a continuous cumulative change, and the water just gets hotter or colder, but if we continue, then at a certain point there is a change not just of quantity—so many more degrees—but in nature or quality. The water starts to boil and turn into a gas, or freeze and turn into ice. **THIS QUANTITY-INTO-QUALITY CHANGE IS CHARACTERISTIC OF HISTORICAL PROCESSES, WHERE A SOCIETY CHANGES IN A CUMULATIVE WAY. FOR EXAMPLE, AN AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY MIGHT EXPAND THE AREA OF LAND UNDER CULTIVATION BUT, AT A CERTAIN POINT, FURTHER CHANGES ARE NOT POSSIBLE EXCEPT THROUGH A CHANGE IN THE WHOLE NATURE OF THE SOCIETY, AND AN AGRICULTURAL BECOMES AN INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY.**

- **HUMAN BEINGS DEVELOP TOOLS—TECHNOLOGY—TO ENHANCE THEIR LABOUR POWER, AND IN A GIVEN PERIOD OF HISTORY A CERTAIN LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY PREVAILS, WHICH IS AMENABLE TO CONTINUING IMPROVEMENT**. At a certain point, however, a new, different kind of technology is created, which is superior. This emphasis upon the development of technology invites the view that Marx is a technological determinist, i.e. he sees the development of new technologies of production as giving rise to historical change. However, Marx was precisely concerned to oppose this kind of idea of technology as an independent force, since technology in itself is no more than an inert body of practical and technical knowledge. It takes the social relations between human beings to make a technology conceivable and practical. Economic, productive activity is a social, a collective affair. The prevailing form of technology might be among the forces of production, but the social relations of production are most critical.

The social relations of production
A technology implies, so to speak, certain kinds of relations among people. For example, one person can operate a horse-drawn plough, but an industrial plant obviously requires the complex organisation of a team of individuals, involving, among other things, an elaborate division of labour into specialist tasks.

Economic change is never just a change in technology; it also requires a set of changes in social relations, and not just in the social relations involved in production itself. For example, **an individual alone, someone living in isolation, remote from any neighbour, can operate the horse-drawn plough, but an industrial plant cannot be operated by members of a population that is as thinly scattered across a landscape as prairie farmers. People have to be resident near to the plant if they are to work there.** Obviously, there is much more to this idea that economic relations require social relations of specific kinds, but this example indicates its force.

In summary, Marx's idea that economic production is basic to the life of a society has at least a threefold justification:

11A/10, Old Rajender Nagar, Near Agrawal Sweet, Delhi
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1. Productive activity is definitive of human nature.

2. Productive activity is logically prior to other activities, in the sense that we cannot do anything else until we have met the conditions of our physical existence, i.e. we cannot theorise, or paint, or play sport until we have provided food, protection from the environment and so forth.

3. The structure of productive activity has causal consequences for the form taken by other social activities. For example, an aristocrat and a peasant lived completely differently, i.e. the aristocrat could have a leisure-filled existence, but the overwhelming bulk of the peasant's time was consumed in producing what was needed for his or her own (and, ultimately, the aristocrat's) existence.

Ownership of the means of production:

In production, there was often the difference between those who did the physical work, and those who supplied them with the means to do that work—access to land, or raw materials or technology—but did not themselves do it. **The aristocrat controlled land and granted the peasant permission to work, the industrial employer controls the physical plant and machinery and pays workers wages to use them. The one who possesses 'the means of production', therefore, has power over the one who makes use of them.**

Hence for Marx the crucial division in society became not just that between those who worked and those who did not work in physical production, but more specifically one based on the existence of private property, i.e. between those who possessed—who owned—the means of production and those who did not. In production, the latter controlled (and exploited) the former. **The exploitation consisted, in crudest terms, in the fact that those who did not work were able to have at least a portion of the product physically created in work handed over to them, though they had contributed nothing to its actual creation.** The relationship of power, of control, which was found in economic relations based on private property, was reproduced in the wider society. Those who dominated within the process of economic production ruled the society; for example, the aristocrats who controlled the land also made up the ruling group within pre-industrial society. The key positions and relationships in society were those of class.

Class

Under any particular regime of production, there are many people who would stand in the same relationship to one another; in the productive process, as we have said, people either work, or own the means of production. Those people in the same position on one side of this divide were in the same class.

The pattern of this divide not only exists in the economic sphere, but also obtains across all areas of life. Life in society, even in those areas most remote from physical production, is class divided, class based. Hence the concept of class is wider than the analysis of economic relations alone; it involves the analysis of the structure of society as a whole. This is another respect in which economic structures are 'basic' to society for Marx, for it is in terms of the relationships established around a given form of economic production that social class is formed, which, in its turn, becomes the fundamental relation around which all other social activities are structured.

HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

MARX'S GENERAL IDEAS ABOUT SOCIETY are known as his theory of *"HISTORICAL MATERIALISM". Materialism is the basis of his sociological thought because, for Marx,* **MATERIAL CONDITIONS OR ECONOMIC FACTOR AFFECT THE STRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY.** *His theory is that material conditions essentially comprise* **TECHNOLOGICAL MEANS OF**

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PRODUCTION AND HUMAN SOCIETY IS FORMED BY THE FORCES AND RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION.

Why Marx's theory of society, i.e. **HISTORICAL MATERIALISM is historical**? *It is historical because Marx has traced the evolution of human societies from one stage to another. It is called materialistic because Marx has interpreted the evolution of societies in terms of their material or economic bases. Materialism simply means that it is matter or material reality, which is the basis for any change.* **The earlier view that of Hegel** was that ideas were the cause of change. Marx opposed this view and instead argued that ideas were a result of objective reality, i.e., matter and not vice versa.

At the outset historical materialism implies that in any given epoch the ECONOMIC RELATIONS of society – the means whereby men and women provide for their sustenance, produce, exchange, and distribute the things they regard necessary for the satisfaction of their needs – EXERT A PREPONDERATING INFLUENCE IN SHAPING THE PROGRESS OF SOCIETY AND IN MOULDING SOCIAL, POLITICAL, INTELLECTUAL, AND ETHICAL RELATIONSHIP. In other words, all types of social relations prevailing at any stage of historical development are determined by economic conditions.

- Marx's argument in this behalf begins with the simple truth **THE SURVIVAL OF MAN DEPENDS UPON HIS EFFICIENCY IN THE PRODUCTION OF MATERIAL THINGS.**
- *PRODUCTION IS, THEREFORE, THE MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL HUMAN ACTIVITY.*
- **SOCIETY COMES INTO EXISTENCE PRIMARILY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ECONOMIC PRODUCTION BECAUSE MEN IN ASSOCIATION PRODUCE MORE THAN MEN IN ISOLATION.**
- **A PERFECT SOCIETY** will secure all the necessities of life to the satisfaction of all its members. BUT ACCORDING TO THE DIALECTIC CONCEPT, PERFECTION COMES THROUGH A VERY LONG PROCESS.

        As the process of MATERIAL PRODUCTION holds the key to man's social life CHANGES IN THIS PROCESS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT. Marx's description of historical development is based on the concept of historical materialism. As Marx himself observed: *"In the social production of their life men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure, the real basis on which rises a legal and political superstructure."* According to this interpretation, mode of production in a given society constitutes its' 'base'; legal and political institutions, religion and morals, etc. constitute its 'superstructure' which are shaped according to the changing character of the base.

What is the reason behind changes in the mode of production?

Marx's answer is: "at a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production … within which they have been at work hitherto; Then begins and epoch of social revolution."
        Man's constant search for improvement of production **(with a view to overcoming scarcity, etc***.) leads to the development of forces of production.* Means of production are improved by scientific discoveries and invention of new techniques and implements while labour power's developed by the acquisition of new knowledge, education and training. *The development of the forces of production leads to a contradiction between the forces of production and relations of production. The intensification of this contradiction ushers in a stage when the existing relations of production are no*

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longer compatible with the level of development of forces of production. Its result is the breakdown of the existing mode of production and its superstructure. Thus, **for example** with the rise of industrialization in the sphere of forces of production, the pre-existing feudal system in the sphere of relations of production (that is, division of society into lords and serfs) is bound to collapse which is now replaced by a new capitalist mode of production.

This process of historical development can also be explained by dialectical method. According to the dialectic concept, **the established order is a thesis which inevitably produces its own antithesis in the form of a new mode of production.** ………In other words, as a result of some new invention or discovery, the productive forces come into conflict with the existing relations of production, particularly with the prevailing property system, which instead of furthering their development becomes the fetters upon it. As a result of the clash between the existing social relations and the new productive forces, a new revolutionary class emerges which overthrows the existing order in a violent revolution. The old order gives way to the new-slave society, which is replaced by feudal society; feudal society is replaced by capitalist society; capitalist society is replaced by socialist society…………. **According to dialectical logic, every stage of society which falls short of perfection contains the seeds of its own decay.** Marx saw his contemporary capitalist society into antagonistic classes – the "haves" and "have-nots", the bourgeoisie and proletariat, the dominant and dependent classes-and the consequent exploitation of the dependent class. It was, therefore, doomed due interplay of its inherent contradictions.

Marx and Engels identified four main stages of past historical development:
1. **Primitive communism** in which forms of production are light and communally owned;
2. **Ancient slave-owning society** in which the means of production are owned by masters and labour for production is done by the slaves;
3. **Medieval feudal society** in which the means of production are owned by feudal lords and labour for production is done by the serfs; and
4. **Modern capitalist society** in which the means of production are owned by capitalists and labour for production is done by the proletariat – the property less workers.

At each stage, society is divided into antagonistic classes; the class which owns the means of production and controls the forces of production; dominates the rest, thus perpetuating tension and conflict.

At each stage of historical development, the forms of conditions of production determine the structure of society. Thus 'the hand-mill gives you society with the feudal lord, the steam-mill society with the industrial capitalist'.

The structure of society will in its turn breed attitudes, action, and civilizations. *Therefore 'all the social, political and intellectual relations, all religious and legal system, all the theoretical outlooks which emerge in the course of history, are derived from the material conditions of life'.*

The forces of capitalism had heralded a new era of production process by destroying the feudal system. But Marx saw capitalism itself as a transitory phase. As George H. Sabine has elaborated: "The abolition of feudalism meant for Marx, the rise to power of the middle class and the creation of a political system which made its power effective. In its most developed form, as yet only partially reached, this system would be the democratic republic. The French Revolution, therefore, had been essentially political revolution. It had transferred social dominance from the nobility and the clergy to the industrial and commercial middle class; it had created the state as a typical organ of middle class repression and exploitation; and its philosophy-the system of natural rights in politics and economics – was the ideal justification and rationalization of the middle class right to exploit the worker."

Thus, class-conflict was inevitable during the capitalist stage of historical development, and another revolution was in store. *Marx therefore, anticipated a more profound social revolution by*

which the rising proletariat would displace the middle class from power as the middle class had displaced the older feudal class. This revolution would pave the way for the termination of the era of exploitations.

Contribution of Historical Materialism to Sociological Theory

- **The theory of historical materialism played an essential part in the formation of modern sociology.** Marx's ideas had been foreshadowed in the works of earlier thinkers as diverse in other respects as Hegel, Saint-Simon and Adam Ferguson. All of them greatly influenced Marx. **He did so in a more precise and above all more empirical fashion** than did his predecessors. He **introduced an entirely new element to understand the structure of each society**. It was derived from the relations between social classes. These relations were determined by the mode of production. It was this feature of historical materialism which was *widely accepted by later sociologists as offering a more promising starting point for exact and realistic investigation of the causes of social change*.

- Historical materialism introduced into sociology **a *new method of inquiry, new concepts, and a number of bold hypotheses to explain the rise, development and decline of the particular forms of society.*** All of these came to exercise, in the later decades of the nineteenth century, a profound and extensive influence upon the writings of sociologists.

- Originality of historical materialism was in its immense effort to **synthesis in a critical way, the entire understanding of the conditions of human development.** The desired system would be based upon *rational planning, cooperative production, and equality of distribution and most important, liberated from all forms of political and social exploitation.*

- **Historical materialism not only provides a method to understand the existing social reality; it is a method to understand the existence of other methods.** It is persistent critique of the aims and methods of the social sciences.

CRITICISM:

- The philosophic basis of Marxist is purely material. It does not believe in religion, God as the change of heart feelings. His view regarding human nature is very narrow. **In this opinion men is selfish and works only according to his class and interest.** But along with it there are also feelings of mutual cooperation, sacrifice, love and sympathy too. Marx has neglected there aspects. In the words of famous socialist J.P. Narayan when people start suspecting about their morality, tradition philanthropic activities, materialism offers no answer for all this things.

- **According to Marxist thinker's dialectical materialism is a master key to several locks.** It means with the help of this methodology any kind of process of change could to explain and that is why it is purely scientific and universal. **Weber appreciated the works of Marx that undoubtedly by change in infrastructure** (economic structure) brought change into superstructure (human relations/consciousness). But there is possibility that even change in superstructures (religion) would being change in infrastructure (capitalism). Weber has proved in his famous theory 'Protestant ethics and spirit of capitalism.

- **Similarly G. Myrdal** opined that state and its policies are important factors for change and and because of state intervention there is change in infrastructure.

- **Melovan Djilas** criticizes Marx as a utopian thinker because the kind of communist society which Marx talked about could never emerged and the communist society which emerged does not stick to Marxian Ideology.

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MODE OF PRODUCTION (FORCES & RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION)

- **Role of production in human history became a guiding thread in Marx's writings.** People need food, clothing, shelter and other necessities of life in order to survive. They cannot get all these things ready-made from nature. To survive, they produce material goods from objects found in nature. Material production has always been still is the basis of for Karl Marx, the history of human societies is the story of how people relate to one another in their efforts to make a living. He said, *"The first Historical act is….The production a material life. This is indeed a historical act, a fundamental condition of all history"*

- According to Marx, **economic production or production of material life is the starting point from which society as an inter-related whole is structured.** He speaks of reciprocity between economic factors and other aspects of historical development of mankind. The factor of economic production is all the same a key concept in explaining the changes that occur in society. He considers that forces of production along with relations production form the basis of economic and social history of every society.

FORCES OF PRODUCTION

The forces of production are the ways in which material goods are produced. They include the technological know-how, the types of equipment in use and goods being produced for example, *tools, machinery, labour and the levels of technology* are all considered to be the forces of production.

In other words the forces of production include Means of Production and labour power. The development of machinery, changes in the labour process, the opening up of new sources of energy and the education of the workers are included in the forces of production. In this sense science and the related skills can be seen as part of the productive forces.

The development of forces of production reflects the constant struggle of human beings to master nature through their labour. **In every social order there is a continuous change in the material forces of production.** Sometimes, as in tribal societies, this change is produced by some natural and ecological phenomena, such as the dying up of rivers, deforestation in or exhaustion of the soil etc. *Usually, however, this change is produced by a development in the instruments of production.* Human beings have always attempted to better their lives and overcome scarcity.

The motive force is the rational and ever-present impulse of human beings to try to better their situation and overcome scarcity by developing the productive forces. Man is above all an animal that produces in society by acting upon nature through labour. The productive forces compel the creation and destruction of successive system of production relations between men. Productive forces have an intrinsic tendency to develop, as human being's knowledge and mastery over nature increase.

Different socio-economic organisations of production which have characterized human history arise or fall as they enable or impede the expansion of society's productive capacity. The growth of the productive forces thus explains the general course of human history. The productive forces, however include, as we have already noted, not just the means of production (tools, machines, factories and so on), but labour power, the skills, knowledge, experience, and other human faculties used at work. The productive forces represent the powers society has at its command in material production.

According to Marx, **labour power is the capacity to do such useful work which increases the value of products.** Workers sell their labour i.e. their capacity to do work which adds value to commodities. They sell their labour power to capitalist for a wage paid in cash.

Labour is the actual exercise of one's power to add value to commodities. The category of labour power is used by Marx to explain the source of surplus value. Let us say that the capitalist invest money to buy goods and later sells them for more money than he invested. This is possible only if some value is added to those goods, labour power, according to Marx, is precisely that capacity which adds value to a commodity. In buying and using labour power the capitalist is able to extract labour and labour is the source of value.

The source of surplus value in capitalist system of production is located in the process whereby the value paid by capitalists for labour power is smaller than the value which labour power adds to a commodity.

RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION:

According to Marx, in order to produce, people enter into definite relations with one another. Only within these social relations does production take place. *Relations of production are the social relations found among the people involved in the process of production.* These social relations are *determined by the level and character of the development of productive forces.*

'Forces' and 'relations' of production are strongly interrelated. **The development of one leads to a growing incompatibility or contradiction with the other.** In fact, the contradictions between the two aspects of production 'act as the motor of history' (Bottomore). The chain of causation in historical development runs like this. *The forces of production determine the superstructure.* There is, however, quite a good deal of controversy regarding the primacy to the relations of production while in other places he describes forces of production as the prime mover of social change.

These relations are of two broad types. The first refers to those technical relations that are necessary for the actual production process to proceed. The second refers to the relations of economic control which are legally manifested as property ownership. They govern access to the forces and products of production.

Relations of production are the social relations of production. Relations of production are not merely the ownership of means of production. The employer's relation to the worker is one of domination and the worker's relation with co-workers is one of cooperation. The relations of production are relations between people and people whereas means of production are relations between people and things. The relations of production can influence the momentum and direction of the development of the productive forces.

Relations of production are reflected in the economic ownership of productive forces. For example, under capitalism the most fundamental of these relations is the bourgeoisie's ownership of means of production while the proletariat owns only its labour power. The relationship of production can also dominate and generate changes in the forces. For example capitalist relations of production often do revolutionize the instruments of production and the labour process.

MODE OF PRODUCTION

Mode of Production refers to the general economic institution i.e., the particular manner in which people produce and distribute the means that sustain life. The force of production and the relations of production together define the mode of production, e.g., Capitalistic mode of production, feudal mode of production, etc For Marx, the mode of production is the main determinant of social phenomena. Modes of production can be distinguished from one another by the different relationship between the forces and relations of production. For example, in the

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feudal mode of production, the lord does not possess direct control over the peasant's forces of production and the disposition of the product.

In Marx's writings *historical periods are founded and differentiated on the basis of the modes of material production.* In other words, the basis of history is successive modes of material production. **The forces and relation of production are two aspects of mode of production.** *The productive forces or forces of production of society reflect the degree to which human beings control nature. The more advanced the productive forces, the greater is control over nature.* In order to produce, people enter into definite relations with one another. Production is an integral unity between the forces of production and the relation of production. **The forces of production shapes the relations of production and the two together define the mode of production.** The successive modes of production are the basic element of a systematic description of history.

Crucial element in defining mode of production is 'the way in which the surplus is produced and its use controlled' (Bottomore). Surplus means the amount that remains surplus takes the form of profit. *Surplus is produced by exploiting the working class and is sold for more than the wages given to the workers.* Because production of surplus enables societies to grow and change, this factor is taken to be most important in defining mode of production.

Each mode of production has its specific relations of production. These are not developed by chance or by accident. They are deliberately ordered because they help the property owning class extract the surplus from the working people. **Take an example,** the relations of production under feudalism, in which the serf is dominated in all respects by the feudal lord, are necessary to enable the feudal lord to appropriate the surplus from the serf. If such a relationship is continued under capitalism it will fail. Therefore a new set of production relations develop under capitalism that enables the capitalist appropriate surplus value from the workers.

Neither the forces of production nor the relations of production are fixed and static. *Even within a given mode of production the forces of production may change.* In any society, we may find that over the years greater production follows improvements in technology. *The capitalist nations are very different from what they were to hundred years ago, when capitalism was born.* This change in the productive force has resulted in changes in the relations of production. The workers, today, may not be as exploited as the factory workers a hundred years earlier. Marxists would, however, argue that exploitation still remains, because the modern worker, with modern technology, produces more surplus value than his predecessors, and he does not proportionately earn that much more.

The four modes of production, identified by Marx during his studies of human societies

- **PRIMITIVE-COMMUNAL:** The primitive-communal system was *the first and the lowest form of organization of people* and it existed for thousand of years. *Man started using primitive tools; he learned to make fire, cultivation and animal husbandry.* In this system of **very low level of forces of production,** the *relations of production were based on common ownership of the means of production*. Therefore, these *relations were based on mutual assistance and cooperation*. These relations were conditioned by the fact that people with their primitive implements could only withstand the might forces of nature together, collectively.

- **ANCIENT MODE OF PRODUCTION:** Ancient mode of production refers to the forms which precede feudal mode of production. Slavery is seen as the foundation of the productive system. The relation of masters to slaves is considered as the very essence of slavery. *In this system of*

production the master has the right of ownership over the slave and appropriates the products of the slave's labour. The slave is not allowed to reproduction.

- If we restrict ourselves to agricultural slavery, exploitation operates according to the following modalities: *the slave works at the master's land and receives his subsistence in return. The master's profit is constituted by the difference between what the slave produces and what he consumes.* The slave was deprived of his own means of reproduction. The reproduction of slavery depends on the capacity of the society to acquire new slaves, that is, on an apparatus which is not directly linked to the capacities of demographic reproduction of the enslaving population. The rate of accumulation depends on the number of slaves acquired, and not directly on their productivity.
- *Slaves are different from the other members of the community in that they are rightfully deprived of offspring.*

- **FEUDAL MODE OF PRODUCTION:** *Just as capitalist exploited the workers or the 'proletariat', so did the feudal lords exploit their tenants or 'serfs'.* Capitalists grabbed surplus value and feudal lords appropriated land rent from their serfs.
- *Serfs, being legally unfree, were deprived of property rights, though they could use the 'lord's property.* They were obliged to surrender their labour, or the product of their labour, over and above what was needed for family subsistence and the simple reproduction of the peasant household economy. *Serfs or the producers were forced to fulfill the economic demands of an overlord. These demands could be in the form of services to be performer. These could also be in the form of dues to be paid in money or kind.* The dues or taxes were levied on the family holding of the peasants. Thus, feudal rent whether in the form of services or taxes was an important component of the feudal mode of production. The feudal lord was able to force serfs on the basis of military strength. This power was also backed by the force of law. In this mode of production, serfdom implied a direct relation between rulers and servants. In feudal serfdom, the instruments of production were simple and inexpensive.
- *The evolution of the feudal system brought about the development of exchange of agricultural and manufactured products* in regional markets, Special needs of the ruling class and high ranking Church officials gave an impetus to the growth of commodity production, including consumption goods such as silks, spices, fruits and wines. Around this activity developed international trade routes and mercantile centres. *It laid the foundation for capitalist relations of production which were to become the main contradiction of the system and cause its downfall.* In the course of this transformation, many peasants were expropriated from their lands and forced to become wage-labourers.

- **CAPITALIST MODE OF PRODUCTION:** Capitalism refers to a mode of production in which **capital is the dominant means of the production.** Capital can be in various forms. It can take the form of money or credit for the purchase of labour power and materials of production. In capitalist mode of production, the private ownership of capital in its various forms is in the hands of a **class of capitalists (Bourgeosie)**. The ownership by capitalists is to the exclusion of the mass of the population.

- Marx distinguished industrial capitalists from merchant capitalists. Merchants buy goods in one place and sell them in another; more precisely, they buy things in one market and sell them in another. Since the laws of supply and demand operate within given markets, there is often a difference between the price of a commodity in one market and another. Merchants, then, practice arbitrage, and hope to capture the difference between these two markets. According to Marx, capitalists, on the other hand, take advantage of the difference between the labor market and the market for whatever commodity is produced by the capitalist. Marx observed that in practically every successful industry

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input unit-costs are lower than output unit-prices. Marx called the difference "surplus value" and argued that this surplus value had its source in surplus labour.

- The capitalist mode of production is capable of tremendous growth because the capitalist can, and has an incentive to, reinvest profits in new technologies. Marx considered the capitalist class to be the most revolutionary in history, because it constantly revolutionized the means of production. But Marx argued that capitalism was prone to periodic crises. He suggested that over time, capitalists would invest more and more in new technologies, and less and less in labor. Since Marx believed that surplus value appropriated from labor is the source of profits, he concluded that the rate of profit would fall even as the economy grew. When the rate of profit falls below a certain point, the result would be a recession or depression in which certain sectors of the economy would collapse. Marx understood that during such a crisis the price of labor would also fall, and eventually make possible the investment in new technologies and the growth of new sectors of the economy. ***Marx viewed capitalism as a historical phase, to be eventually replaced be socialism.***

Asiatic Mode of Production:
- The Asiatic mode of production is characteristic of primitive communities in which ownership of land is communal. These communities are still partly organized on the basis of kinship relations. State power, which expresses the real or imaginary unity of these communities, controls the use of essential economic resources, and directly appropriates part of the labour and production of the community.
- This mode of production constitutes one of the possible forms of transition from classless to class societies; it is also perhaps the most ancient form of this transition. It contains the contradiction of this transition, i.e. the combination of communal relations of production with emerging forms of the exploiting classes and of the State.
- Marx did not leave behind any systematic presentation of history of India. He set down his observations on certain current India question which attracted public attention, or drew materials from India's past and present conditions to illustrate parts of his more general arguments. The concept of Asiatic Mode of Production is therefore inadequate for an understanding of Indian history and society.

Critics:

Mode of production is an **abstract analytical concept.** In any particular society at a particular point in time there may exist more than one mode of production. ***However, it is possible to identify a dominant or determinant mode of production which gains primacy over all the other production system.***

Particularly during the period of social revolution more than one mode of production co-exist in the same society.

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CLASS AND CLASS CONFLICT

Marx's sociology is in fact, sociology of the class struggle. This means one has to understand the Marxian concept of class, before understanding any study into Marxian philosophy. At a broader level, **society could be divided into two major classes i.e. 'haves' (owners of land and/or capital) often called as bourgeoisie and 'have-nots' (those who own nothing but their own labour power), often called as proletariats. According to him a social class occupies a fixed place in the process of production'.**

CLASS:

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Under any particular regime of production, there are many people who would stand in the same relationship to one another; in the productive process, as we have said, people either work, or own the means of production. Those people in the same position on one side of this divide were in the same class.

The pattern of this divide not only exists in the economic sphere, but also obtains across all areas of life. Life in society, even in those areas most remote from physical production, is class divided, class based. Hence the concept of class is wider than the analysis of economic relations alone; it involves the analysis of the structure of society as a whole. This is another respect in which economic structures are 'basic' to society for Marx, for it is in terms of the relationships established around a given form of economic production that social class is formed, which, in its turn, becomes the fundamental relation around which all other social activities are structured.

Classes and class conflict

The idea of society as composed of classes is the key to the materialist implementation of Hegel's dialectical concept. To reiterate: by 'materialist' we here mean nothing more than a view of history as the product of real, striving human beings, rather than of any occult or supra-individual forces such as God or the human spirit. Classes are relational entities: one class can exist only if there are other classes; a 'one-class' society must be a no-class society, since to speak of a class is to speak of a collection of people who are differentiated from one or more other collections of people. The relationships between such classes are those of opposition.

Class interest

The two classes of owners and workers have opposed interests, for the owning class can only meet the conditions of its physical survival—or, indeed, of its much more luxuriant style of existence—if it takes the means f rom those who create the things that can be consumed.

In Marx's view, someone who does not take part in physical production is not entitled to a share of its product; thus those who do not work exploit those who do.

This conception of the fundamental organising character of class has implications for the way in which the structure of society as a whole is to be understood. The class nature of ownership and exploitation has consequences within the economic structure and also carries implications for the organisation of the rest of the society. Since the inequality between the owning class and the labouring class involves a social relationship of power and control, it cannot be narrowly defined as simply economic, because the difference of interest between these classes refers to freedom. The capacity of the owning class to deprive the physical producers of their physical product is a difference in power, a manifestation of the fact that the owners can restrict the access of labourers to the means of economic activity. When they do grant them access to these means, e.g. by renting land to farm, or hiring them for industrial work, the owners have the capacity to direct what they will do. In other words, those who labour are not free, a fact most starkly apparent in the case of the slave and also, albeit less starkly, in the cases of the peasant legally bound in service to the lord, and of the industrial worker hired for a wage to work under the control and direction of plant management.

Class conflict The conflict of interest between owning and labouring classes is, then, a conflict over power and freedom. It must pervade the rest of society's organisation because the owners wish to protect and preserve their position. For them to realise their own interest requires control not only over the immediate circumstances of economic production, but also over the way the rest of the society is arranged.

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- In Other words we can say that, Marx defined class in terms of the extent to which an individual or social group has control over the means of production. In Marxist terms a class is a group of people defined by their relationship to the means of production. Classes are seen to have their origin in the division of the social product into a necessary product and a surplus product. Marxists explain history in terms of a war of classes between those who control production and those who actually produce the goods or services in society (and also developments in technology and the like).

Criteria for Determination of Class: According to Marxian Literature, a social class has two major criteria: (i) objective criteria (ii) subjective criteria.

- *Objective Criteria (class in itself):* **people sharing the same relationship to the means of production comprise a class.** Let us understand it through an example –all labourers have a similar relationship with the landowners. On the other hand all the landowners, as a class have a similar relationship with the land and labourers. In this way labourers on one hand and land owners on the other hand could be seen as classes. However, **for Marx, this relationship above is not sufficient to determine the class, as according to him it is not sufficient for class to be 'class in itself' but should also be 'class for itself'.** What does this mean? By 'class in itself' he means the objective criteria of any social class. Obviously, Marx is not simply satisfied with objective criteria above. Hence he equally emphasize upon the other major criteria i.e., "Class for itself" or the subjective criteria.

- *Subjective Criteria (Class for itself):* Any collectivity or human grouping with a similar relationship would make a category not a class, if subjective criteria are not included. *The members of any one class not only have similar consciousness but they also share a similar consciousness of the fact that they belong to the same class. This similar consciousness of a class serves as the basis for uniting its members for organizing social action.* Here this similar class consciousness towards acting together for their common interests is what Marx class – **"Class for itself".**

TO UNDERSTAND CLASS STRUGGLE WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND MARX'S DIFFERENTIATION OF STAGES OF HUMAN HISTORY AND CLASS ANTAGONISM.

Marx differentiated stages of human history on the basis of their economic regimes of modes of production. He distinguished four major modes of production which he called, will culminate into a stage called communism. Let us simplify this classification of societies or various stages of human history into– Primitive-communal, Slave-owning, and Feudal, Capitalist and Communist stages.

- **The primitive-communal system:** The primitive-communal system was *the first and the lowest form of organization of people* and it existed for thousand of years. *Man started using primitive tools; he learned to make fire, cultivation and animal husbandry.* In this system of **very low level of forces of production,** the *relations of production were based on common ownership of the means of production*. Therefore, these *relations were based on mutual assistance and cooperation*. These relations were conditioned by the fact that people with their primitive implements could only withstand the might forces of nature together, collectively.

- In such a situation, **exploitation of man by man did not exist because of two reasons**. *Firstly,* the tools used (namely, means of production) were so simple that they could be reproduced by anyone. These were implements like spear, stick, bow and arrow etc. Hence no person or group of people had the monopoly of ownership over the tools. *Secondly* production was at a low-scale. The people existed more or less on a subsistence. Their production was just sufficient to meet the needs of the

people provided everybody worked. Therefore, it was a situation of no master and no servant. All were equal.

……………Gradually with time, man started perfecting his tools, his craft of producing and surplus production started taking place. This led to private property and primitive equality gave way to social inequality. Thus the first antagonistic classes, 'slaves and slave-owners', appeared. This is now the development of the forces of production led to the replacement of primitive communal system by slavery.

- **Slave-owing society:** In the slave-owing society, *primitive tools were perfected and bronze and iron tools replaced the stone and wooden implements. Large scale agriculture, live stock raising, mining and handicrafts developed.* **The development of this type of forces of production also changed the relations of production.** These relations were based on the slave owner's absolute ownership of both the means of production and the slave himself and everything he produced. The owner left the slave only with the bare minimum necessities to keep him from dying of starvation.

- *In this system, the history of exploitation of man by man and the history of class struggle began.* The development of forces of production went on and slavery became an impediment to the expansion of social production. Production demanded the constant improvement of implements, higher labour productivity, but the slave had no interest in this as it would not improve his position.

With the passage of time the class conflict between the classes of slave-owners and the slaves became acute and it was manifested in slave revolts. These revolts, together with the raids from neighboring tribes, undermined the foundations of slavery leading to a new stage i.e. feudal system.

- **Feudal System:** The progressive development of the forces of production continued under feudalism. *Man started using inanimate sources of energy, viz., water and wind, besides human labour. The crafts advanced, new implements and machines were invented and old ones were improved.* The *labour of craftsmen was specialized, raising productivity considerably.* The **development of forces of production** led to **emergence of feudal relations of production.** These relations were based on the feudal lord's ownership of the serfs or landless peasant. The production relations were relations of domination were more progressive than in slavery system, because they made the labourers interested, to some extent, in their labour. The peasants and the artisans could own the implements or small parts of land.

- *These forces of production underwent changes due to new discoveries, increasing demands for consumption caused by population increase and discovery of new markets through colonialism.* All this led to the need and growth of mass scale manufacture. This became possible due to advances in technology. *This brought the unorganized labourers at one place i.e. the factory.*

This sparked off already sharpened class conflict leading to peasant's revolution against landowners. The new system of production demanded free labourer whereas the serf was tied to the land, therefore, the new forces of production also changed the relations of production culminating into a change in the mode of production from feudalism to capitalism.

- *Capitalist System:* Class Conflict intensified under Capitalism. *Large scale machine production is the specific feature of the productive forces of capitalism. Huge factories, plants and mines took the place of artisan workshop and manufacturers.* In a century or two capitalism accomplished much in developing the productive forces than had been done in all the preceding eras of human history.

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- The vigorous growth of the forces of production was helped by the capitalist relations of production based on private capitalist ownership. Under capitalism, the producer (worker), **the proletariat**, is legally free, being attached neither to the land nor to any particular factory. They are free in the sense that they can go to work for any capitalist, *but they are not free from the bourgeois class as a whole. Possessing no means of production, they are compelled to sell their labour power and thereby come under the yoke of exploitation.*

Due to this exploitation the relatively free labourers become conscious of their class interest and organize themselves into a working class movement. Thus working class movement intensified its struggle against the bourgeois class. It begins with bargaining for better wages and working conditions and culminates into an intensified class conflict which is aimed at overthrowing the capitalist system. Marx said that the capitalist system symbolizes the most acute from of inequality, exploitation and class antagonism. This paves the way for a socialist revolution which would lead to a new stage of society i.e. communism.

The Processes Involved Leading to Revolution......

✓ ***Pauperization ……………………………………..*** *Explained in Class*

✓ ***Proletariatization ……………………………………*** *Explained in Class*

✓ ***Homogenity***

✓ ***Class for Itself to Class in Itself…………………………*** *Explained in Class*

✓ ***Polarization of Classes………………………………..*** *Explained in Class*

"History of hitherto existing society is a history of class struggle"

- According to Marx t**he mode of production of economic structure is the base or foundation of society. Any change in this infrastructure fundamental changes in the superstructure and consequently in the society.** The changes in the mode of production are essentially changes in the forces of production and relations of production. In primitive communal stage there was no surplus production and hence it had no inequality and exploitation caused by the private ownership of means of the production. *The means of production were common property of the community. With the development and improvements in the force of production there was increased productivity. This caused private ownership of means of production and change in the relations of production.* This marked the end of the primitive-communal system and thus began the long history of inequality, exploitation and class conflict, coinciding with the emergence of slave-owing society.

- In the slave-owning society the class conflict between the slave owners and slaves reached a peak causing a change in the mode of production from slavery to feudalistic mode of production. **Marx has said that the history of hitherto existing society is a history of class struggle. This means that the entire history of society is studded with different phases and periods of class struggle.** This history of class struggle begins in the slave-owing society, continues through feudal society where this class struggle is between classes of the feudal lords and the landless agricultural laboures or serfs. Due to change in mode of production and class struggle a new stage of society i. e, capitalism replaces the age-old feudal system.

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- **In the capitalistic mode of production the class antagonism acquires most acute dimension. The working class movement gets concretized and reaches its peak. Through a class conflict between the class of capitalists and the class of industrial labourers, the capitalist system is replaced by socialism. This violent change has been termed as revolution by Marx.**

- That **the contradiction between the forces and the relations of production is the basis of this antagonism.** The bourgeoisie is constantly creating more powerful means of production. But the relations of production that is, apparently, both the relations of ownership and the distribution of income are not transferred at the same rate. *The capitalist mode of production is capable to produce in bulk, but despite this mass production and increase in wealth, majority of the population suffers from poverty and misery. On the other hand, there are a few families who have so much wealth that one could not even count of imagine. These stark and wide disparities create some tiny islands of prosperity in a vast ocean of poverty and misery. The onus of this disparity lies on the unequal, exploitative relations of production which distribute the produce in an inequal manner.* This contradiction, according to Marx, will eventually produce a **revolutionary crisis**. The proletariat, which constitutes and will increasingly constitute the vast majority of the population, will become a class that is, a social entity aspiring for the seizure of power and transformation of social relations.

Marx did the admirable task of sifting all this material and constructed anew set of social analysis. His analysis of class-struggle was a unique mix of simple basis principles with down-to-earth details.

- **According to Marx, the bottom rung of the social stratification is the proletariat. Below it there is no class and therefore emancipation of the proletariat will, in fact, is the emancipation of mankind.** Marx accepts the right of the bourgeoisie to fight the final war. But for the proletariat the battle is for its very survival and it has to win.

- **The revolutions of the proletariat will differ in kind from all past revolutions. All the revolutions of the past were accomplished by minorities for the benefit of minorities. The revolution of the proletariat will be accomplished by the vast majority for the benefit of all.** The proletarian revolution will, therefore, mark the end of classes and of the antagonistic character of capitalist society. This would mean that the private ownership of property will be abolished. The proletariat will jointly own means of production and distribute the produce according to the needs of the members of the society. This stage is called the stage of dictatorship of proletariat. This stage will later on convert into a stateless society where the communist system will finally be established in the society. This stage is called the stage of dictatorship of proletariat.

This stage will later on convert into a stateless society where the communist system will finally be established in the society. This will also end all kinds of social classes and of all kinds of class conflicts for future. This will also mean delineation of the proletariat.

CRITIQUES OF KARL MARX:

- *In context of Class and Polarization of Classes:* Unlike Marx, Weber talked about four classes, He defines the class as a group of individual who share a similar position in market economy and by virtue of that fact received similar economic rewards. Thus a person's class situation, which is a market situation, which further shows his life chances. In this way Weber says that apart from two major classes, there is one more class who, though does not have the ownership of means of

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production, But the members receives high salaries because of their demand for services. The four classes are:

i. ***Propertied Upper class (Bourgeoisie)***

ii. ***Propertied while collar workers***

iii. ***Petty Bourgeoisie***

iv. ***Manual worker class.***

Because of distribution of struggle amongst two classes, the class struggle never becomes as acute as more suggested.

- **In context of polarization of these classes** – Weber sees no favour support the idea of polarization of classes. He finds that the petty bourgeoisie will never sink to the level of proletariat but rather they will go upward to the position of propertied white collar collared workers. And even more importantly Weber argues that the white collar middle class expands rather than contracts as capitalism develops. Because in his views the world is tending towards a more and more bureaucratization. Ex- People are going to depend heavily in bureaucrats. It shows the to polarization of two classes will not happen.

- **In context of inevitability of revolution Max Weber** rejects the views held by some Marxist, of the inevitability of the proletariat revolution for them, revolution may or may not happen. Weber suggests that individual manual worker, who is dissatisfied with his class, situation, may respond in following ways-He may grumble, , sabotage industrial machineries (production process), go for strike, etc for this, there will be a trade union. The petty bourgeoisie, will not sink to the level of proletariat. It means the workers will not get a leadership. ***In this way Weber concludes that revolution is not inventible but it may be a possibility, which is remote.***

- **In the context of Superstructure(law, power . authority, :** According to Marx, there is only one source of power and that is economic power but Weber finds three sources of power for this (1) on the basis of class and inequality (economy) (2) on the basis of inequal distribution of prestige status quo (social (3) party (political).

- **In the Context of Class struggle**. In Dahrendorf words "Instead of advancing their claim of members of homogenous group, people are more likely to compete with each other, as individuals for a place in the sun". As a result class solidarity and intensity will reduced and (especially class conflict will reduced). *The gap between social and economic inequalities will be reduced. It means clean struggle will be reduced.* He found in his analysis that there is **"Decomposition of Labour"** (Skilled workers, Semi Skilled Workers and Unskilled Workers) and **"Decomposition of Capital"** (Owners and Managers)

Functionalist of criticizes Marxist theory of stratification on three bases:

i. On the basis of Universality:

ii. On the basis of indispensibity or inevitability.

iii. On the basis of functionality.

- Functionalist argues that there has not been any society in the history of mankind, **free from Class (stratification system)**. This is against the Marxist view point that the primitive community and communist societies are the classless societies. To prove it Parson has given an example of a primitive tribal society known as SIOUX INDIAN of America which was stratified.

11A/10, Old Rajender Nagar, Near Agrawal Sweet, Delhi
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Website : www.vikashranjan.org
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- Functionalist argue that for proper functioning of society, stratification i.e. existence of classes (Stratification System) in society is inevitable. TALCOTT PARSON & DAVIS and MOORE firmly believed in it. They said that in absence of stratification, the society could work on the basis of equality and that will be an injustice for the talents and talented people will come against it. Secondly, without stratification, there will be chaos in society, which is the most unwanted thing for any society. This is a criticism of Marxist that ideology, in which it was opined that Class System (stratification) is exploitating and bad for society.

- Unlike Marxist, the functionalist believed that Class System (social stratification) is functional for society. If there is no stratification, there will not be any development in society. And for development, skill and talent is required which varies from person to person. And so stratification becomes necessary and functional.

- Functionalist like DAVIS & MOORE & MICHAEL YOUNG, argue that talented people must be given important position in society and therefore they are the recipients of maximum rewards. This system brings forth a healthy society

- *In the context of establishment of communism:* Though communism was established in USSR and China, but it was done after making, much manipulation in Marxist theory, so its validity is always questionable. Such critics have become even more important after the disintegration of USSR. In China, also, the kind of communism predicted by Marx does not exist.

- The efforts to bring communist society in other countries like India could not be successful, because of the present of other mechanisms to sort out the problems in the system. The violent behavior and activity commit by Maoist cannot be accepted and a consensus can't be made for such activities. Therefore, Marx is irrelevant as far as communism is concerned and these way difficult violent activities are undertaken to establish such kind of systems.

RELEVANCE of Karl Marx Theory of Class Struggle

- *Political level:* Policies have been formulated to avoid class conflict. And generally democratic and socialist values are being established in all such societies or state to give everyone liberty and equal opportunities, without any discrimination. And it is to avoid any kind of conflict.

- *Economic term:* (1) Agricultures (2) Industry:

   (1)   **Agriculture:** Estate system in Europe and Zamindari system in India have been abolished and peasants have been given lot of benefits so that they could feel free to work in society.

   (2)   *Industry:* To check the conflict between employers and employers, Employees have been given many benefits like fixed wages, hikes in wages, medical facilities, provident fund, gratuity, bonus pension facilities etc. And all together HRD is working all together to make it happen.

- *At international level:* In *Political terms:* preparation of different kinds of policies, so that a powerful state should not take the advantage to exploit the weaker states. To work the rules properly, United Nation has been established as an organisation internationally.

- Globalization, Importance of WTO and World Bank, Interest of workers being taken care of, Child Labour being prohibited worldwide are the initiative to avoid conflict Internationally.

In developing countries special like in India:

- To establish India, **as Democratic, socialist India, the earlier discriminations** on the basis of caste, sex, religion, race, have been completely abolished from the system. Many actions have been taken in this way like:

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- **Removal of practice of untouchability, Abolition of Zamindari System (land reforms**) and to avoid inequalities in economic terms, A guarantee of jobs (MANEREGA) has been provided to rural labourers and Reservation (Protective discrimination) has been extended to downtroden people.

- **Educational right** has been provided to everyone and protection has been given to religious minorities and also there are different policies to eliminate poverty. Such changes are the outcome of struggle, directly or indirectly in societies.

ALIENATION

Marx has conceived of alienation as a phenomenon related to the structure of those societies in which the producer is divorced from the means of production and in which "dead labour" (capital) dominates "living labour" (the worker). Alienation literally means "separation from". This term is often used in literature and Marx has given it a sociological meaning. Let us take **an example of a shoemaker in a factory**. A shoemaker manufactures shoes but cannot use them for himself. His creation thus becomes an object which is separate from him. It becomes an entity which is separate from its creator. He makes shoes not because making shoes satisfies merely his urge to work and create. He does so to earn his living. For a worker this 'objectification' becomes more so because the process of production in a factory is divided into several parts and his job may be only a tiny part of the whole. Since he produces only one part of the whole, this work is mechanical and therefore he loses his creativity.

Given his borrowing from Hegel, it is not surprising that Marx's criticism of his contemporary society was initially cast in terms of one of Hegel's key concepts, alienation.

Alienation refers precisely to the separation of human beings from their very essence. Engagement in productive work should be the expression of human essence, thereby fulfilling the rich potential of human energy, imagination and creativity. It was clear to Marx that work in the developing industrial societies of the nineteenth century was very different. Far from being the fulfilment of their very being, work for industrial workers was experienced, at best, as a necessary evil and undertaken out of the need for survival. For the overwhelming majority it was a deadening experience—physically unpleasant, mentally unrewarding and spiritually numbing.

Further, the members of industrial society are alienated as a population, not just as a collection of individuals. Human essence is not the possession of individual beings, but of the species as a whole, and will be fully realised only when human beings have developed their full potential. The industrial society, however, was divided within itself between those who could enjoy physical comfort and intellectual stimulation, engaging in freely creative activity, e.g. of a cultural and artistic kind, and those who were reduced to being near-sub-humans in the foul and brutal conditions of the factory system.

Another aspect of alienation involves the misrepresentation of reality in the form of the self-denial of human essence when people misapprehend their own true nature. In their thinking, people come to underestimate their own powers, failing to realise that certain things are actually the product of their own, human effort and not of some other source. A leading example is religion, where people often take a fatalistic line towards what occurs because they believe God determines what happens to them and that they can have no control over their own fate. But Marx, the atheist, following another critic of Hegel, Ludwig Feuerbach, maintains that there is no God. God is just an idea made up by human beings, partly to muddle up and mislead people, partly to express unsatisfied human longings. By accepting the idea of God and taking such a fatalistic line, people are resigning their own capacity to control their own destiny, are wrongly thinking of themselves as subordinate to great, supernatural forces over which they can have no control. In fact there are no occult beings or forces, so that everything that human beings can possibly be is within their own (collective) control.

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A further example of this kind of alienation is Hegel's own philosophy, where the human spirit, made up of ideas, achieves an almost occult existence of its own. This strange, superhuman force directs history from behind people's backs, making use of them as unwitting pawns to carry out its plans. It is human beings, however, who produce ideas, including 'the human spirit', not the other way around, and it is human beings, not quasi-supernatural ideas, who make history. In so far as things are done behind people's backs, then, they are done by other people, not 'ideas'.

For Marx, another most important kind of alienation is the way in which people accept their economic situation, e.g. unemployment or badly paid labour, because they suppose that their fate is decided by economic laws over which they can have no control. The recent tendency of many governments to insist that the market is a near-infallible mechanism for regulating all activities, the possessor of greater wisdom than individuals or their governments are capable of, might show the persistence of this kind of conception. For Marx, the market cannot be some super-human, super-wise entity but only a set of relationships between human beings, something which human beings have created (albeit not by any conscious intention) and something which they potentially can control. He maintained that there is no need to accept that we are assigned a miserable fate by the nature of things, to which we simply have to resign ourselves. Human beings make themselves through their labour, they develop their own nature through changing the world about them, and they have (collectively) the capacity to reshape themselves by reshaping their physical, economic and social world.

Alienation manifests itself in four ways:

1. *The worker is alienated from the product of his labour,* since what he produces is appropriated by the capitalist and the worker have no control over it.
2. *The worker is alienated from the act of production* because all decisions as to how production is to be organized are taken by the capitalist. For the worker, labour ceases to offer an intrinsic satisfaction and instead becomes only a means for survival. It becomes a compulsion forced from without and is no more an end in itself. In fact, work becomes a commodity to be sold and its only value to the worker is its sale ability.
3. *Alienation from his real human nature or his species-being.* Man is distinguished form the animal by his creative ability to do labour but due to above mentioned aspects of alienation man looses his distinctly human quality and gets alienated from his real human nature or his species-being. Prevalence of religion and belief in God as an independent power are the result of this self-estrangement of man. "The more man puts into God, the less he retains of himself". The capitalist system stratifies man, destroys the human qualities and renders man to a state worse than animal. No animal has to work for its survival at other's bidding while man has to do that in a capitalist system.
4. *The worker in a capitalist system is also socially alienated* because social relation became market relations in which each man is judged by his position in the market, rather than his human qualities. Capital accumulation generates its own norms which reduces people to the level of commodities. Workers become merely factors in the operation of capital and their activities are dominated by the requirements of profitability rather than by their human needs.

MARX BELIEVED THAT MEN CAN BE FREED FROM HIS ALIENATED EXISTENCE ONLY WITH THE EMERGENCE OF A COMMUNIST SOCIETY WHEREIN EACH MAN SHALL WORK TO AFFIRM HIMSELF RATHER THAN WORKING FOR SELF-DESTRUCTION. SINCE MARX, 'ALIENATION' HAS UNDERGONE A LOT OF CHANGE OF MEANING, THOUGH IT HAS BECOME ONE OF THE IMPORTANT CONCEPTS IN MAINSTREAM SOCIOLOGY, ESPECIALLY IN THE WRITINGS OF THE AMERICAN SOCIOLOGISTS OF 50'S AND 60'S.

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- *Max Weber disagreed with Marx regarding the factors leading to alienation and believed the alienation was an inevitable feature of modern industrial society irrespective of whether the means of production are owned privately or collectively.* For Weber the cause of alienation lies in **the rationalization of social life and predominance of bureaucratic organizations in modern industrial societies. The compulsive conformity to impersonal rules in bureaucratic organizations renders people into mere cogs in giant machines and destroys their human qualities.** The American sociologists after World War II have further changed the meaning of alienation to adapt it to contemporary advanced industrial societies.

- **C.W. Mills** states that **the growth of the tertiary (service) sector in modern industrial societies has contributed to self alienation among the white-collar (non-manual) workers.** In these societies, 'skills with things' have been replaced by 'skills with persons' which the non manual workers have to sell like commodities. Mills calls this 'personality market' since aspects of personality at work is false and insincere. Mills gave the example of a girl working in a department store, smiling, concerned and attentive to the whims of the customers. He states that the sales girl becomes self-alienated in the course of her work, because her personality becomes the instrument of an alien purpose. At work she is not herself.

- **Herbert Marcuse,** talking of work and leisure in advanced industrial societies, says that **both work and leisure alternate people from their true selves.** Work is 'stupefying' and 'exhausting' while leisure involves modes of relaxation which only soothe and prolong this stupyfication and it is largely a pursuit of false needs.

- **Melvin Seeman:** He applied Reputational Approach to study alienation. He has tried to define alienation in a comprehensive way. He argues that **alienation could be decomposed into five separate elements; powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation and self estrangement**. However, Seeman simply treats them as subjective dispositions which can be measured with the help of attitude scales.

- **Robert Blaumer** has further developed four of these conditions and has related them with different type of technology. To him **less technical job has less alienation. He saw less alienation in handicrafts & cottage industries & more in mechanized industries**. He has plotted the relation between technology and alienation in the form of an inverted U-curve. According to him, level of alienation is low in craft industries like printing but it increased to a high level in assembly-line industries of mass production like automobile industry, but in process industries with high degree of automation, alienation tends to decline further because workers feel more involved and responsible.

…………..However, as can be seen from the foregoing analysis the latter-day meaning of alienation has undergone change, it is no longer based upon objective conditions rather it has come to be identified with subjective dispositions.

Conclusion

Karl Marx concept of Alienation is unidimensional explanation of multidimensional phenomena. Different studies provided that in a similar working condition not essentially all people get alienated. **In modern capitalism** where human resource is precious, different measures are taken by the industries and authorities to improve the moral & efficiency of the worker. *Also in today's world democracy recognize trade union, labour laws, arbitration council are there to protect the interest of worker*. So there is less chance of alienation. With globalizations & the rise of service sector, chances of alienation are less because of high value for work culture & professionalism. *Now the workers are not only producer but also share holders of the company.* Rather than getting alienated they are now involved in the management which motivates them to work hand for the company. Workers are also provided with medical and education facilities to their children.

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Innovating Knowledge. Inspiring Success

…………..*But in the changing scenario the exploitation and alienation of working class persists. Recent strikes of workers in many industries are the live examples. So we cannot outrightly deny the Marxist concept of alienation. The nature of alienation change but it still persists*

CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF MARX

- **The theory of Marx is plagued by several methodological and conceptual problems.** His theory about capitalist society's inevitable tendency towards **radical polarization and self-destruction is too simplistic and in error.** The most distinct characteristic of modern capitalism has been *the emergence of a large, "contented and conservative" middle-class consisting of managerial, professional, supervisory, and technical personnel.* **Modern corporations entail a separation between ownership and control;** the capitalists who own the instruments of production are not necessarily the "effective" decision-makers. Also the wide spread ownership of the means of production through investment in stocks, and the great expansion of government role in the regulation of big business, redistribution of wealth and general social welfare functions were not anticipated by Marx.

- **Today's capitalism does not justify Marx's belief that class conflict is essentially revolutionary in character and that structure changes are always the product of violent upheavals; organized labor has been able to sway the balance of power and effect profound structure changes without violent revolution.** Marx's theory of labor and the deductive reasoning which flows directly from it namely the pauperization of these masses are wrong. If the value of surplus labor 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.

- **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.

- **Marx also over emphasized the economic base of political power and ignored other important source of power.** Moreover, **Marx's predictions about the downfall of capitalism have not come true.** Contrary to his belief, socialism has triumphed in predominantly peasant societies whereas capitalist societies show no signs of destructive class war. And Marx's classless and stateless society is an utopia; there can be no society without an authority structure or a regulatory mechanism which inevitably leads to a crystallization of social relations between the rulers and the ruled, with inherent possibilities of internal contradiction and conflict.

- **Marx is leveled as an economic determinist. Basically change is a complex phenomena where multiple factors continue simultaneously which led to change.** If we analyse the human history, a factor at a particular time can be more important than other factor for social change. But Marx neglected other factors of social change except economic factors. *Renaissance of Europe in 15th century period created revolutionary change where ideas were the main factors of change. In contemporary world, the Iranians Revolution under Ayatollah Khomeini was purely Cultural Revolution. Again the Turkish revolution under Mustafa Kamal Pasha was a political revolution.*

- **Again the Gandhi mobilized the Indian marcs against the colonial rule on the basis of non-violence & Satyagraha.** Though the economic exploitation the British era was the cause of the mobilization but other factors like education, modernization & rising nationalism also played as important role. Change in a society is a complex phenomenon; so the Marxian analysis of historical change cannot give the clear picture of society.

11A/10, Old Rajender Nagar, Near Agrawal Sweet, Delhi
www.facebook.com/essayforias=byvikashranjan
E-mail : infovrc2016@gmail.com
Website : www.vikashranjan.org
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8586861046

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- **Independence & the constitutional provisions regarding abolition of untouchability, Zamindari reservation for dispreviliged person has lead structural change in Indian Society.** The social welfare scheme implemented by democratic wefarist states likes India has brought revolutionary change. Again here the basis of change is not the economic factor but the idea of democratic planning & social welfare goals.

…………….*Before criticizing Marx, it is very clear that Marx was neither a scientist nor a sociologist. The historical naturalism is a philosophical representation of Karl Marx world view. Also he never wasted to put a sociological theory. He was a political agitator Marx main agitation is to bring the social reality of his time into the forefront of political debate.*

Before Marx, *Leezing tried* to explain 3 stages of moral evolution of human society. The contemporaries of Marx tried to explain human evolution with the help of religious books. *German thinker Emanuel Kant* said that human history is a history of conflict for the freedom human being. This thought influenced Marx's writings. Before Karl Marx sociologist like *August Comte* tried to explain the evolution of knowledge in history- Theological-metaphysical-positivism. Then Herbert Spencer contributed to the theory of evolution by telling that the society passes through two stages (Military - industry). L.H. Morgan, Oswald Spengler also talks about evolution of human history but **before Karl Marx nobody talked the evolution of human history in materialistic term. Also, Marx was the 1st thinker who talked about how one stages change into another. Marx tried to establish a cause & effect relationship between changes (from one stage to another).** Sociology is the scientific study of human interaction & Marx tried to explain the evolution of human history in a scientific manner. Though he did not use all the methods of science but he was not lacking scientific explanation.

CONTRIBUTION OF MARX TO SOCIOLOGY

Karl Marx never saw himself in the role of a sociologist, his prime concern being to bring about a revolutionary transformation in the then contemporary European society. Nevertheless, ideas of Karl Marx have greatly contributed to the development of modern sociology. In fact, he is the founder of the conflict tradition in modern sociology and his ideas have stimulated a lively debate which has enriched and discipline.

- **New perspective and a new approach:** He contributed a new perspective and a new approach to the study of social phenomena. He highlighted the role of economic factors in shaping various institutions of society. This has been accepted as an academic methodology in social science.

- **Analysis of class and Class conflict:** His theory of class and class conflict, though no longer relevant to a present day society, has been an immensely valuable contribution. It has stimulated further debate and research which enriched sociology as a discipline. *Ralf Dahrendorf has modified the Marxian theory of class and class struggle to make it applicable to contemporary industrial societies.*

- **Theory of social change:** In Marx's ideas, one can also find a theory of social change. Although, Marx's predictions regarding the future of capitalist societies have been largely disproved by the developments of history in 20th century yet. Marx's theory of social change remains a valuable tool to analyse continuity and change.

- The concept of alienation is another important contribution to sociology. The concept of alienation was further developed by other sociologists like C.W. Mills and Herbert Marcuse, etc. to adapt it to contemporary societies.

- *Marxian ideas have influenced the thinking of many sociologists*. Prominent among them being C.W. Mills and the 'critical' theorists of Frankfort School namely, Adorno, Habermas, and Marcuse. The 'critical' theorists have aimed to restore the philosophical dimensions of Marxism. They have developed a series of concepts intended to go beyond Marx to interpret the changes that have taken place in the world since his death. These consists mainly in adding the dimensions of social psychology to Marx's work and emphasizing the basic proposition that, if society is increasingly under the artificial control of technocrats, any purely empirical approach to social reality must end up as a defence of that control. In Eros and Civilization, Marcuse attempted a synthesis of Freud and Marx. But it was One Dimensional Man which made Marcuse famous, particularly when some of its ideas seemed to offer an interpretation of the student revolts of the late 1960's. Marcuse's pessimism about the revolutionary potential of a proletariat dominated (along with the rest of society) by an all-pervasive technocratic ideology led him to place his faith in the substratum of the outcast and the outsiders, the

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exploited and persecuted minorities such as students and blacks which would involve a meeting of the 'most advanced consciousness of humanity and its most exploited force.'

- *Today Marxists are striking back*. They blame imperialism for the failure of Marx's prophecy. They argue that advanced industrialized nations have been able to fortify their capitalist economy by exploiting the rest of the world through colonialism and the "sovereign" multi-national corporations. Conflict sociologists make effective use of Marxian theoretical schema to explain the processes of class conflict and revolutionary movements around the world: conflicts between landless peasantry and landed aristocracy, between political and military elite, between incongruent status groups in newly emerging industrial societies, populist movements and conservative counter-revolutions, colonialism and imperialism, international conservative counter-revolutions, colonialism and imperialism, international conspiracies and ideological warfares, and between socialism and democracy.

- *Contemporary Marxist sociology* has accumulated a considerable amount of "evidence" to substantiate the Marxian postulates that economic position is the major determinant of one's life-style, attitudes, and behaviour, and that strategic position in the economic structure along with access to effective means of production and distribution hold the key to political power. The modern theory of power elite is only a variation of the Marxian theme.

- *Above all, Marx'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: "…the view of societies as inherently mutable systems, in which changes are produced largely by internal contradictions and conflicts, and the assumption that such changes, if observed in a large number of instances, will show a sufficient degree of regularity to allow the formulation of general statements about their causes and consequences."

- Bottomore account for the recent growth of Marxist sociology. One important reason for the present revival of interest is the fact that Marx's theory stands in direct opposition on every major point to the functionalist theory which has dominated sociology and anthropology for the past twenty or thirty years, but which has been found increasingly unsatisfactory. Where functionalism emphasizes social harmony, Marxism emphasizes social conflict; where functionalism direct 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 longer or shorter period of time, a given social order. The contrast between "equilibrium" and "conflict" models of society, which was stated forcefully by Dahrendorf in , has now become commonplace; and Marx's theories are regularly invoked in opposition to those of Durkheim, Pareto and Malinowski, the principal architects of the functionalist theory"

A BRIEFING OF MARXIAN PERSPECTIVE on the basis of Above Descriptions

- According to Marx, **the world, including the social world, is better characterized by flux and change rather than by stability or permanence of phenomena**.
- **Change is not random in the social world (as in the natural world), but orderly**. In that uniformities and regularities can be observed and scientific findings can be made about them.
- In the social world, **the key to this pattern of change can be found in men's relationship in the economic order**. **Subsistence,** the need to make a living, must be achieved in all societies. How, subsistence is achieved, affects the whole structure of any society.
- Society can be viewed as an **interrelated system of parts with the economy** (infrastructure) **influencing the other parts** (superstructure).
- According to Marx, *man is essentially rational, intelligent and sensitive, but these qualities can be changed into their opposites if the social arrangements of a society are so badly designed as to allow some men to pursue their own interest to the detriment of others*. This creates conditions for the conflicts between the deprived (proletariats) and their exploiters (bourgeoisie).
- *Social reality being an external reality, with its own independent existence, is amendable to sense perception and therefore methods of positive science can be employed.* However, mere

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empiricism is not adequate in knowing the essence of human behavior therefore, empirical data have to interpreted from 'historical materialist' standpoint.

- ***Change is a characteristic feature of human society and it takes place in an ordered fashion.*** Thus laws governing change can be discovered.
- ***Change in the relations of production and the superstructure*** is normally preceded by ***conflict between groups*** having mutually opposed interests.
- ***Conflict and changes in society*** must be explained in the light of the forces operating in the economic structure.
- ***Man's thinking and attitudes are shaped by the nature of society*** he lives in, especially, by the way he participates in the process of production, therefore it is very difficult to study one's society in a detached and dispassionate manner as is required of science. Some men can, however succeed in being objective. Marx considered himself to be such a man.

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EMILE DURKHEIM

SYLLABUS:
- *Social fact,*
- *Division of labour,*
- *Suicide,*
- *Religion and society*

Durkheim was born in Epinal, France. He came from a long line of devout French Jews; his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had all been rabbis. He began his education in a rabbinical school, but at an early age, decided not to follow in his family's footsteps and switched schools, realizing that he preferred to study religion from an agnostic standpoint as opposed to being indoctrinated. Durkheim entered the École Normale Supérieure (ENS) in 1879.

Durkheim became interested in a scientific approach to society very early on in his career, which meant the first of many conflicts with the French academic system, which had no social science curriculum at the time. Durkheim found humanistic studies uninteresting, turning his attention from psychology and philosophy to ethics and eventually, sociology. He graduated with a degree in philosophy in 1882. Durkheim's views could not get him a major academic appointment in Paris, so from 1882 to 1887 he taught philosophy at several provincial schools. In 1885 he left for Germany, where he studied sociology for two years. Durkheim's period in Germany resulted in the publication of numerous articles on German social science and philosophy, which gained recognition in France, earning him a teaching appointment at the University of Bordeaux in 1887. This was an important sign of the change of times, and the growing importance and recognition of the social sciences. From this position, Durkheim helped reform the French school system and introduced the study of social science in its curriculum. Also in 1887, Durkheim married Louise Dreyfus, with whom he later had two children.

In 1893, Durkheim published his first major work, The Division of Labor in Society, in which he introduced the concept of "anomie", or the breakdown of the influence of social norms on individuals within a society. In 1895, he published The Rules of Sociological Method, his second major work, which was a manifesto stating what sociology is and how it ought to be done. In 1897, he published his third major work, Suicide: A Study in Sociology, a case study exploring the differing suicide rates among Protestants and Catholics and arguing that stronger social control among Catholics results in lower suicide rates.

By 1902, Durkheim had finally achieved his goal of attaining a prominent position in Paris when he became the chair of education at the Sorbonne. Durkheim also served as an advisor to the Ministry of Education. In 1912, he published his last major work, The Elementary Forms of The Religious Life, a book that analyzes religion as a social phenomenon.

INFLUENCE OF PREDECESSORS on Emile Durkheim:

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- *The father of sociology **Auguste Comte,** wanted to develop sociology as positive sciences so that social faith could be directly observe and proper solution could be given to related problems. Durkheim was highly influenced by his view point the corroboration of which we find in his statement "consider 'social facts as things".*
- ***UTILITARIAN POSITIVISTS:** They are basically economist and for them the social system or society is made up of human beings and everyone has a special quality in oneself and those qualities are useful for the system that is with the help of their utility, social system as properly governed. In this way the focal point of study for utilitarian positivist is an individual.*
- *Durkheim while rejecting this aspect accepted the positive aspect and in this way propounded his self structured positivism. In which he turned down their thinking that individual is important for society. According to Durkheim individual is nothing in himself and society is everything. Thus society is not made up of individuals but rather the existence of individual is very much attached into the existence of society. This is why Durkheim focal point of study is society or social fact with which the collective conscious is attached.*

NATURE AND SCOPE OF SOCIOLOGY ACCORDING TO DURKHEIM

Durkheim was explicitly concerned with outlining the nature and scope of Sociology. *Durkheim considered* social sciences to be distinct from natural sciences *because social sciences deal with human relationship. However* the method used in the natural sciences could be used in the social sciences *as well.*

He was concerned with examining the nature of Sociology as a social science distinct from Philosophy. Philosophy is concerned with ideas and conceptions whereas science is concerned with objective realities. Philosophy is the source from where all science has emerged. Durkheim advocated for positivist method to study social phenomena.

Durkheim laid down **the general conditions for the establishment of a social science** *which also applies to Sociology:*

- **SCIENCE DEALS WITH A SPECIFIED AREA OR A SUBJECT MATTER OF ITS OWN, NOT WITH TOTAL KNOWLEDGE** .He pointed out Science is not concerned with total human knowledge or thought. Not every type of question the mind can formulate can be tested by science. It is possible for something to be the object of the philosopher or artist and not necessarily stuff of science at all.

- **SCIENCE MUST HAVE A DEFINITE FIELD TO EXPLORE.** Science is concerned with things, objective realities. For social science to exist it must have a **definite subject matter.** Philosophers, Durkheim points out, have been aware of 'things' called laws, traditions, religion and so on, but the reality of these was in a large measure dissolved by their instance on dealing with these as manifestations of human will. **Inquiry was thus concentrated on the internal will rather than upon external bodies of data.** So it is **important to look to things as they appear in this world.**

- **SCIENCE DOES NOT DESCRIBE INDIVIDUALS BUT 'TYPES OR CLASSES OF SUBJECT MATTER'.** If human societies classified then they help us in arriving at general rules and discover regularities of behaviour. Social science which classifies the various human societies, *describes the 'normal form of social life in each type of society', for the simple reason that it describes the type itself;* whatever pertains to the type is normal and whatever is normal is healthy.

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- **THE SUBJECT MATTER OF A SCIENCE YIELDS 'GENERAL PRINCIPLES' OR 'LAWS'.** If societies were not subject to regularities, no social science would be possible. Durkheim further points out that since the principle that all the phenomena of the universe are closely interrelated has been found to be true in the other domains of nature, it is also valid for human societies which are a part of nature. In putting forth the idea that there is a **'continuity of the natural and social worlds'**, Durkheim has been strongly influenced by Comte.

Durkheim and positivism

Durkheim argued for his own methods on the grounds that they were essential to the development of a 'positive science', i.e. an approach seeking to find law-like relations among phenomena and modelled on the physical sciences. In this respect, Durkheim was an inheritor of the legacy of his French predecessor Auguste Comte (1798–1857), a founder both of positivism and of sociology in the mid-nineteenth century.

In Suicide, Durkheim subjected official figures on suicide to statistical analysis, indicating how sociology might be taken in a quantitative direction. For a time in the 1950s and early 1960s this approach had ensured Durkheim much attention from methodologically minded social scientists. The idea that sociology could and should be a science was very strong; so was the notion that science required the discipline to be quantitative. However, with the interpretative turn, which began in the mid-1960s, talk about sociology as a positive science and about quantification became hallmarks of the positivist outlook, by then anathema to many in sociology. Indeed, Durkheim came to emblematise all that was politically and epistemologically unacceptable in sociology.

Against individualism

In line with our earlier consideration of the theme of humanism in Marx, we begin with Durkheim predominantly as a critic of individualism. His critique has two main strands:
• It is a fundamental misconception to suppose that society is (only) an aggregate of individuals, i.e. he opposed the view that the properties of society are merely the properties of individuals writ large.
• Individuals cannot pre-exist society, i.e. individualism as a doctrine is only conceivable in a certain kind of society; individuals, as represented by this idea of individualism, are only possible in this kind of society.
Durkheim's major target, then, is the idea, the doctrine, of 'individualism', which he seeks to expose as an ideology, to use a Marxist term.

Individualism

- In Durkheim's sense, individualism prizes unconditionally the distinctness and independence of individual human beings, who are to be treated as inviolable in their freedom and autonomy. The idea that individuals should be subordinate to any collective authority is to be borne, if at all, only in the most limited and necessary circumstances.
- The doctrine of individualism is in many respects a political doctrine—its classical statements remain the political theories of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke—about the relationship of the individual to the rest of society and, in particular, to the putative representative of that society, the state. However, individualism also has a potentially scientific, methodological aspect to it in suggesting that the constituents of social reality are only and exclusively individual human beings.
- According to this view, 'society' is merely a name for the other individuals in relationship with whom a given individual co-exists. The only way to understand society, then, is to understand the general nature of all those individuals as an aggregate. To take a simple example of the kind Marx railed against, the competitive nature of capitalist society is understood as a result of the natural

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competitiveness and acquisitiveness of human beings generally. Indeed, individualism often conceives of human nature as essentially anti-social, for the individual is conceived of as being motivated only by self- interest. In a picture explicitly painted in Hobbes's Leviathan, individuals lack all concern for others; they exist in society most reluctantly, conceding to the collective some of their freedoms and rights only for the sake of the benefits to be derived. Durkheim maintained that such conceptions were quite false: to attempt to apply them was entirely the wrong method for a genuine science of society. Nevertheless, Durkheim was unswervingly confident that society could be studied scientifically.

How is a science of society possible?

- Durkheim assumed that for there to be a science it has to have a subject matter. On the face of it, the appropriate science of society is psychology, the science of the individual mind. After all, if we can understand the mind, we shall understand why individuals behave as they do, and will have no need of an additional science, sociology. Durkheim was eager to dismiss this assumption, but was aware, also, that it has a natural appeal; individual human creatures are tangible, we can encounter and observe them in the flesh, whereas society seems to be no more than an abstraction from their behaviour. We do not meet society in the street, exchange words with it, and watch it going about its activities. Surely individuals are real but society is not. However intuitively true this view may seem, Durkheim insists it is false. True, society is not directly observable, perhaps, but it is observable in its effects. It does exist; it may not be detected by the conscious awareness of those individuals, yet it causally affects their actions.

- In this way Durkheim argues that sociology can be a science that treats of a genuine subject matter because society exists as an authentic natural reality. It is as much a reality as physical nature, though different in character. Early on, in the way he set out in The Rules of Sociological Method (1966), he tried to present the lineaments of his general strategy. There he argued that the way to establish, in principle, the reality of society was to reveal the criteria that define something as a reality. They are general criteria, which include physical reality as a special case.

Criteria for reality

To say something is a reality is to say two main things:
• It is external, i.e. exists outside our individual consciousness.
• It is constraining, i.e. its existence sets limits to our actions.
For example, a brick wall is patently a reality because it exists in the world out there and it resists our actions if we try to walk through it. If these are the criteria of facts, i.e. of real things, then Durkheim says that society satisfies them.

How can this assertion be justified?

- It cannot sensibly be disputed, of course, that the patterns of life in our society are not simply individual inventions. The law is not something that I or any other individual has invented. The law has been developed collectively, built up over a long time by many individuals. It now confronts me as a thing that exists in the world, whether I will it to do so or not. One test for reality is satisfied; such social facts are external. Further, if I try to act in the world, the law may offer me resistance. I cannot simply do anything that I want to do. Yet the law is not necessarily constraining from a subjective point of view, even though objectively this is the case. For many of my actions, I take account of the law in a way which affects those actions, but I do not perhaps experience it as resistance to my individual will. I have simply become accustomed to doing things in ways which comply with the law. For example, when I decide to get some cash, I go into the bank, present a cheque and am given the cash in return. Consequently, it may seem that I freely do what I want. However, I am doing it in conformity with the law, the way I have to do it if I want my actions to be unimpeded. Suppose I decide to do otherwise, by entering the bank armed with a pistol. In that case I will meet resistance, people will try to refuse to give me the money; they will try to capture me and, eventually, to

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incarcerate me in prison. The law exists, then, as something which, in designing my actions, I must take into account as a real consideration, just as much as I take into account the brick wall adjoining the door which I use to pass through to the next room. Consequently, the second test of a social fact is demonstrated, i.e. it constrains actions.

Social unity

If a society is to be said to exist, then it must satisfy certain conditions for unity (otherwise, as a matter of simple tautology, it would not exist, and we could not say that it did).

Durkheim's functionalism originates in the notion that for a society to exist it must be ordered in such a way as to meet these conditions. If a society exists, and is bounded, in what way is it bounded? It must have an inside and an outside, but what does the line between the two differentiate? A tempting idea might be geography, for, of course, societies are often identified with territories. In Durkheim's view this cannot be an answer, not least because of the methodological rule, which he has laid down, that a social fact cannot be explained by any other kind of fact, physical, biological, geographical, climatological or psychological, but only by other social facts. The boundary that demarcates a society must be social: it must relate to membership, which includes or excludes people. For example, French persons visiting England do not, thereby, become part of English society, although they are present on English territory, since they do not have the relevant membership. Further, the boundary is moral in nature. The line of demarcation runs between acceptable and unacceptable conduct; those who transgress basic rules—criminals, the mentally ill—are outside the society. That the very existence of society presupposes such a demarcation, Durkheim illustrates with an ingenious account of the nature of crime.

The foundations of society

- Durkheim's rejection of individualism takes the form of a thoroughgoing critique of the utilitarian school of thought. Some thinkers have argued that individuals make up the ways and practices of society on the basis of their practical usefulness to them. For example, Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) offers the picture of individuals setting up a sovereign authority as a means of regulating their relationship between themselves and restricting the mutually destructive tendencies that unregulated competition would produce. Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) had the idea that society consists of individuals, who devise contractual relationships as a way of facilitating their transactions with one another. This explanation does not work. It is an illusion that a contract is created purely by the individuals who are party to it. Certainly, individual parties do make up any one specific contract, but these parties expect this particular contract to be like all contracts in general, i.e. to be created within a pre-established moral framework. After all, if contracts were merely a matter of individual-to-individual agreement, then what would be the point of creating them? If individuals did not trust one another to do as they say, then there would be no point in attempting to improve one's position towards the other by getting him or her to make an explicit, formal agreement obliging the required actions. If one's word were not to be trusted, then why would a mere signature on an agreement be any more reliable? The value of a contract resides in its being made against the background of institutional arrangements. It does not simply bind the actual parties, but also involves obligations on others who are not party to the contractual agreement. The forces of law and order will support the claims of someone who has made a contract if that contract is validly made. Furthermore, society lays down what a contract can validly be; it is defined in terms of understandings in the society at large so that, for example, in our society one cannot make a contract to sell oneself into slavery.
- Non-contractual elements in contract A framework of moral understandings and of social arrangements of enforcement is presupposed in the making of a contract. The parties to the contract

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do not establish this framework, but it is necessary if their action of making a contract is to have any sense.

- Consequently, the idea of society being founded in some sort of contractual arrangement between individuals—invoked by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78) as well as Hobbes and Spencer—is a non-starter. Hence Durkheim's argument about non-contractual elements in contract opposes the idea that the actions of individuals can antedate the existence of society, since the capacity to perform actions, and not just those of contract- making, extensively presupposes the existence of a social framework, i.e. shared rules and forms of social organisation. The idea of the individual—which we described above as 'political'—is essentially one of distinctiveness and autonomy, of someone entirely independent of others; individuals should, ideally, be left free to do whatsoever they want (within distinct but very broad limits). This idea is not a conception of human nature, though it offers itself as such. Rather, it is only thinkable in a certain kind of society, namely, the complex, modern society we now inhabit. The individual, in this sense, cannot exist in the simplest, most basic form of society—one which Durkheim terms 'mechanical'. In the very simplest societies (as Durkheim conceived them) there is little specialisation; the individual human beings engage in similar activities on a self- sufficient basis. Self-sufficiency means that there is little interdependence within the society: any single part of the society—an individual or family group—is not significant to, or essential for, the group's continued existence. The solidarity of such a group derives from likeness, not interdependence; the members feel bonds of unity because they are much alike in their pattern of life and also in outlook. Under such basic conditions, life is homogeneous, and the space for the development of distinctive patterns of thought or outlook is severely restricted. Individuals learn their convictions from others and have little or no reason to challenge or depart from them. Since the variety of their own experience is so limited, it serves only to confirm those same shared beliefs in the eyes of each individual. The analogy underpinning this notion of mechanical solidarity comes from the conception in physics of the mechanical structure of a gas, which is made up of identical individual and independent atomic units. Of course, in line with Durkheim's argument about crime, it follows that if a mechanical society ensures such standard existence and uniformity of belief, then there will be strong, widely shared sentiments and, therefore, intense, punitive reaction against crime, i.e. against anyone who might become different. Under pressure of population growth, such a society will begin to change its nature, for it cannot simply continue to expand while remaining the same. Here Durkheim is echoing Hegel's idea of quantity into quality. The need for a society to cope with increasing numbers gives rise to the development of specialization, i.e. a division of labour.

SOCIAL FACTS

To Durkheim society is a 'reality sui generis'. Hence society represents **a specific reality which has its own characteristics**. This **unique reality of society** is **separate from other realities individuals and is over and above them.** Thus '**this reality of society must be the subject matter of sociology'**. A scientific understanding of any social phenomenon must emerge from the **'collective or associational'** characteristics **manifest in the social structure of a society.** While working towards this end, Durkheim developed and made use of **a variety of sociological concepts.** *"Collective representation"* is one of the leading concepts to be found in the social thought of Durkheim. Before learning about 'collective representations' it is necessary to understand what Durkheim meant by 'social facts'.

Social fact is that way of acting, thinking or feeling etc., which is more or less general in a given society. Durkheim treated social facts as things. They are real and exist independent of this individual's will or desire. They are external to individuals and are capable of exerting constraint upon them. In other words they are coercive in nature. Further social facts exist in their own right. They are independent of individual

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manifestations. The true nature of social facts lies in the collective or associational characteristics inherent in society. Legal codes and customs, moral rules, religious beliefs and practices, language etc. are all social facts.

Analysis of the *Definition:*

- Durkheim saw social facts as *laying in a continuum*. **First,** on the one extreme are **structural or morphological-social phenomena.** They make up the substratum of collective life. By this he meant the number and nature of elementary parts of which society is composed, the way in which the morphological constituents are arranged and the degree to which they are fused together. In this category of social facts following are included: *the distribution of population over the surface of the territory, the forms of dwellings, nature of communication system etc.* All the above mentioned social facts form a continuum and constitute a social milieu of society.
- Further Durkheim made an important distinction in terms of **NORMAL AND PATHOLOGICAL SOCIAL FACTS: A SOCIAL FACT IS** *NORMAL WHEN IT IS GENERALLY ENCOUNTERED IN A SOCIETY OF A CERTAIN TYPE AT A CERTAIN PHASE IN ITS EVOLUTION. Every deviation from this standard is a pathological fact.* **For example**, '*some degree of crime' is inevitable and normal in any society*. Hence according to Durkheim crime to some extent is a normal fact. *However, an extraordinary increase in the rate of crime is pathological. Periodical price rise is normal social fact but economic crisis leading to anarchy in society are other examples of pathological facts.*

- **For Durkheim the 'subject' of sociology is the "social fact", and that social facts must be regarded as 'things'. In Durkheim's view sociology as an 'objective science' must conform to the model of the other sciences.** It posed two requirements: *first* the 'subject' of sociology must be **'specific'**. And it must be **distinguished from the 'subjects' of all other sciences**. *Secondly* the 'subject' of sociology must be such as to be **"observed and explained"**. Similar to the way in which facts are observed and explained in other sciences.

Main characteristics of social facts:

- *Externality,*
- *Constraint,*
- *Independence, and*
- *Generality.*

- **Social facts, according to Durkheim, exist outside individual consciences.** Their existence is external to the individuals. **For example** 'domestic or civic or contractual obligations' are defined, externally to be individual, 'in laws and customs'. 'Religious beliefs and practices exist outside and prior' to the individual. An individual takes birth in a society and leaves it; however "social facts" are already given in society. **For example** language continues to function independently of any single individual.
- **The other characteristic of social fact is that it exercises a constraint on individuals.** "Social fact" is recognized because it **'forces itself'** on the individual. **For example,** the institutions of law, education beliefs etc. are already given to everyone from without. They are **'commanding and obligatory'** for all. Such a phenomenon is typically social because its basis, its subject is the group as a whole and not one individual in particular.
- **A social fact is that which has more or less a general occurrence in a society.** Also it is 'independent of the personal features of individuals' or 'universal attributes of human nature'.

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Examples are the beliefs, feelings and practices of the group taken collectively. **The social fact is specific.** It is born of the association of individuals. It represents a *'collective content of social group or society'*. It differs in kind from what occurs in individual consciousness. Social facts can be subjected to categorization and classification. Above all social facts from the subjects matter of the science of sociology.

There are two related senses in which social facts are independent to the individual.

 First, e*very individual is born into an ongoing society which already has a definite organisation or structure. There are values, norms beliefs and practices which the individual finds readymade at birth and which he learns through the process of socialization. Since these phenomena exist prior of the individual and have an objective reality, They are external to the individual.*

Secondly, *social facts are independent to the individual in the sense that anyone individual is only a single element within the totality of relationship which constitutes of society. These relationships are not the creation of any single   individual, but are constituted by multiple interactions between individuals.* To understand the relationship between the individuals and the society, Durkheim draws a parallel to the relationship. A living cell consists of mineral parts like atoms of Hydrogen and Oxygen; just as society is composed of individuals. Yet life such as, the living beings are more important than their parts. The whole is greater than the collection of parts. The whole (society) differs from individual manifestations of it. In putting forward this criterion Durkheim wanted to show that social facts are distinct from individual or psychological facts. Therefore their study should be conducted in an autonomous discipline independent of Psychology, i.e. Sociology.

        The social facts put moral 'constraint' they exercise on the individual. When the individual attempts to resist social facts they assert themselves. The assertion may range from a mild ridicule to social isolation and moral and legal sanction. However, in most circumstances individuals conform to social facts and therefore do not consciously fell their constraining character. This conformity is not so much due to the fear of sanction being applied as the acceptance of the legitimacy of the social facts.

        Durkheim put forward his view to counter the utilitarian view point which was prevalent during his time that society could be held together and there would be greatest happiness if each individual worked in his self-interest. Durkheim did not agree, Individual's interest and society's interest do not coincide. For social order, it was necessary for society to exercise some control or pressure over its members.
- *To confirm the coerciveness of social facts in their effects on individuals, Durkheim looks at education's efforts "to impose on the child ways of seeing, feeling, and acting which he could not have arrived at spontaneously …..the aim of education is, precisely, the socialisation of human being;* parents and teachers are merely the representatives and intermediaries of the social milieu which tends to fashion him in its own image".
- *Durkheim adds that social facts cannot be defined merely by their universality. Thus a thought or movement repeated by all individuals is not thereby a social fact.* What is important is **"the corporate" or "collective aspects"** of the beliefs, tendencies and practices of a group that characterize truly social phenomena". These social phenomena are *transmitted through the collective means of socialization.*

*Thus social facts can be recognized because they are **external to the individuals** on the one hand, and are **capable of exercising coercion** over them on the other.* Since they are external they are also

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general and because they are **collective**, they can be imposed on the individuals who form a given society.

RULES FOR THE OBSERVATIONS OF SOCIAL FACTS:

The first rule that Durkheim gives us is: **"consider social facts as things"** Social facts are real. As 'things' they have to be studied by **'the empirical method'** and **'not direct intuition'**; and also, they *'cannot be modified by a simple effort of the will'*.

While studying social facts as 'things' three rules have to be followed in order to be objective:

- **All preconceptions must be eradicated.** The sociologist must emancipate himself from the common place ideas that dominate the mind of the layman and adopt an *'emotionally neutral attitude'* towards what he sets out to investigate.

- **The sociologist has to formulate the concepts precisely**. At the outset of the research the sociologist is likely to have very 'little knowledge of the phenomenon in question'. Therefore he must proceed by conceptualizing his subject matter in terms of those properties which are external enough to be observed. Thus in Division of Labour the type of solidarity in a society can be perceived by looking at the type of law – *repressive or restitutive, criminal or civil* – which is dominant in the society.

- **When the sociologist undertakes the investigation of some order of social facts he must consider them from an aspect that in independent of their individual manifestations.** The objectivity of social facts depends on their being separated from individual facts which express them. They provide a common standard for members of society. They exist in the form of legal rules, moral regulations, proverbs, social conventions, etc. It is these that the sociologist must study to gain an understanding of social life.

RULES FOR DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THE NORMAL AND THE PATHOLOGICAL :

- Durkheim makes **a distinction between 'normal' and 'pathological' social facts.** But Durkheim explains that a social fact is considered to be normal *when it is understood in the context of the society in which it exists. Social fact which is 'general' to a given type of society is 'normal' when it has utility for that societal type.*
  As an illustration he cites the case of crime. We consider crime as pathological. But Durkheim argues that though we may refer to crime as immoral because it flouts values we believe in, from a scientific view point it would be incorrect to call it abnormal. **Firstly** *because crime is present not only in the majority of societies of one particular type but in all societies of all types.* **Secondly,** *if there were not occasional deviances or flouting of norms, there would be no change in human behaviour and equally important, no opportunities through which a society can either reaffirm the existing norms or else reassess such behaviour and modify the norm itself.* **To show that crime is useful to the society, Durkheim cites the case of Socrates, who according to Athenian law was a criminal, in** *his country because it served to prepare a new morality and faith which the Athenians needed.* **It also rendered a service to humanity** *in the sense that freedom of thought enjoyed by people in many countries today was made possible by people like him.*

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- *When the rate of crime exceeds what is more or less constant for a given social type, then it becomes an abnormal or pathological fact* i.e. sudden rise in the suicide rate in Western Europe during the nineteenth century was a cause for concern for Durkheim and one of the reasons why he decided to study this phenomenon.

- *Classification of societies into types is an important step towards explanation as problems and their explanations will differ for each type.* It is also needed to decide whether a social fact is normal or abnormal, since a social fact is normal or abnormal only in relation to a given social type. Durkheim uses the term **'social morphology'** for the *classification of social types*. The question is, how are social types constituted? The word **"type"** means *'the common characteristics of several units in a group*' **e.g.** "bachelors" and "married person" belong to two types and Durkheim was able to show that suicide rates are found more among the 'bachelors'. (Please do not apply this to individual cases.)

- *We must study each particular society completely and then compare these to see the similarities and differences.* Accordingly, we can classify them. In order to know whether a fact is general throughout a species or social type, it is not necessary to observe all societies of this social type; only a few will suffice. According to Durkheim, *"Even one well made observation will be enough in many cases, just as one well constructed experiment often suffices for the establishment of a law"* Durkheim wants societies to be classified according to their **degree of organization,** taking as a basis the 'perfectly simple society' or the 'society of one segment' like the 'horde'. Hordes combine to form 'aggregates' which one could call 'simple polysegmental'. These combine to form 'polysegmental societies simply compounded'. A union of such societies would result in the still more complex societies called 'polysegmental societies doubly compounded' and so on.

Rules for the Explanation of Social Facts :

- There are **two approaches** which may be used in the "*explanation of social fact"s – "the causal" and "the functional".* **The former** *is concerned with explaining 'why' the social phenomenon in question exists.* **The latter** *involves establishing the* **"correspondence between the fact under consideration and the general needs of the social organism, and in what this correspondence consist".** **The causes which give rise to a given social fact must be identified separately from whatever social functions it may fulfill.** Normally, one would try to establish causes before specifying functions. *This is because knowledge of the causes which bring a phenomenon into being can, under certain circumstances, allow us to derive some insight into its possible function. Although 'cause' and 'function' have a separate character this does not prevent a reciprocal relation between the two and one can start either way.*

- In fact Durkheim sees a sense in the beginning of his study of Division of Labour with function in Part I and then coming to causes in Part II. Let us take an example of 'punishment' from the same work: crime offends collective sentiments in a society, and the criminal is punished. The act of punishment strengthens the sentiments necessary for social unity.

- **The method by which Social Facts may be developed:** The nature of social facts determines the method of explaining these facts. Since the subject matter of sociology has a social character – it is collective in nature – the explanation should also have a social character. Durkheim draws sharp line between individual and society (society is a separate reality from the individuals who compose it and has its own characteristics) and also a line between psychology and sociology.
  Any attempt to explain social facts directly in terms of individual characteristics or in terms of psychology would make the explanation false. Therefore in the case of causal explanation

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Innovating Knowledge, Inspiring Success

"the determining cause of a social fact should be sought among the social facts preceding it and not among the states of the individual consciousness". In the case of functional explanation "the function of a social fact ought always to be sought in its relation to some social end".

- THE FINAL POINT ABOUT DURKHEIM'S LOGIC OF EXPLANATION IS HIS STRESS UPON **THE COMPARATIVE NATURE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE**. To show that a given fact is the cause of another we have to compare cases in which they are simultaneously present or absent, to see if the variations they present in these different combinations of circumstances indicate that one depends on the other". **SINCE SOCIOLOGISTS NORMALLY DO NOT CONDUCT LABORATORY CONTROLLED EXPERIMENTS BUT STUDY REPORTED FACTS OR GO TO THE FIELD AND OBSERVE SOCIAL FACTS WHICH HAVE BEEN SPONTANEOUSLY PRODUCE, THEY USE THE METHOD OF** *INDIRECT EXPERIMENT OR THE COMPARATIVE METHOD.*

- DURKHEIM, FOLLOWING J.S. MILL'S SYSTEM OF LOGIC, REFERS APPRECIATIVELY TO THE **'METHOD OF CONCOMITANT VARIATIONS'** AS THE PROCEDURE OF THE COMPARATIVE METHOD. HE CALLS IT *'THE INSTRUMENT PAR EXCELLENCE OF SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH'.* FOR THIS METHOD TO BE RELIABLE, IT IS NOT NECESSARY THAT ALL THE VARIABLES DIFFERING FROM THOSE WHICH WE ARE COMPARING TO BE STRICTLY EXCLUDED. *THE MERE PARALLEL BETWEEN THE TWO PHENOMENA FOUND IN A SUFFICIENT NUMBER AND VARIETY OF CASES IS EVIDENCE THAT A POSSIBLE RELATIONSHIP EXIST BETWEEN THEM. Its validity is due to the fact that the concomitant variations display the causal relationship not by coincidence but intrinsically.* It shows them as mutually influencing each other in a continuous manner, at least, so far as their quality is concerned.

- *Concomitant variation can be done at different levels – single society, several societies of the same species or social type, or several distinct societies.* However to explain completely a social institution belonging to a given social species, one will have to compare its different forms not only among the societies belonging to that social type but in all preceding species as well. *Thus to explain the present state of the family, marriage, property, etc. it would be necessary to know their origins and the elements of which these institutions are composed. This would require us to study this institution in earlier types of societies from the time domestic organization was in its most rudimentary form to its progressive development in different social species.* **"One cannot explain a social fact of any complexity except by following its complete development through all social species".**

The comparative method is the very framework of the science of society for Durkheim.

CRITICISM :

- **GABRIEL TARDE:** While criticizing Durkheim's social fact Tarde says that it is very difficult to understand how a society can exists without an individual. Tarde has criticized Durkheim for neglecting individuals and giving much emphasis on society. In this reference Tarde says that if students and professors are evacuated from a college, what will remain their except the name.

- **HARRY ELMER BAYONS** \has criticized Durkheim for putting more thrust on the constant part of social fact. For him individuals do many actions without any societal compulsions. For example helping weaker people, philanthropist activities etc.

Evaluation:

- In the construction of social methodology Durkheim says that the society is not because of individuals, but rather individuals behaviour are shaped by society. **He wants to say that a**

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biological individual is made a social individual only by society. In absence of society, there will be a complete lack of socialization of individual and they will behave like animals there. Durkheim has focused his concentration towards the personality of individuals, which is built by society through formal and informal ways. In this way, it can be said that human personality is a replica of society. Clearly, had there not been, the existence of society, there would not have been the existence of individuals.

- **Durkheim has made it clear that man does certain activities in his own wills and it comes under a purview of social facts. It would definitely have some kind of compulsion might be it in a philanthropist activity which directly may not force an individual but truly speaking individuals can't do any such activity without any indirect compulsion.** The kind of feeling attached with this activities are attainment of salvation, freedom from cycle of birth and death, attainment of social prestige and piety, etc.

RELEVANCE:

- Durkheim has himself used this method in successfully describing his theories like Division of labour, suicide and religion.
- **IT IS A NOVEL AND COMPREHENSIVE WAY IN UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL PROBLEMS. If problems have reached to abnormal situation they have become pathological and so could be diagnosed.**
- **Moreover it paves the way to provide solution to the related social problems. For Example** in India in two different groups, the suicide rate was found at increase recently and they are school children and farmers (cash cropper). For school children, hiplines and support systems have been established.
- **To protect farmers from suicide there debits have been written off and it is suggested to bring them under the security through insurance.** The other problems which have been identified with social facts are crime, smuggling, black marketing, drug addiction, alcoholism prostitution, etc. and the respective solution is provided from time to time.
- Most importantly, it provides the acceptance of social change which is the basis of development and progress.

DIVISION OF LABOUR

Economists *explain the division of labor as a rational device contrived by men to increase the output of the collectivity*. **Durkheim rejects this explanation as reversal of the true order.** To say that men divided the work among themselves, and assigned everyone a different job, is to assume that individuals were different from one another and aware of their difference before social differentiation.

 Durkheim also opposes "contractualists" like Spencer who stressed the increasing role of contracts freely concluded among individuals in modern societies. To Durkheim modern society is defined first and foremost by the phenomenon of social differentiation, of which contractualism is the result and expression. *He also considered and rejected the search for happiness as an explanation, for nothing proves that men in modern societies are happier than men in archaic societies*. Moreover, since division of labor is a social phenomena, the principle of the homogeneity of causes and effect, demands an essentially social explanation.

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DURKHEIM INSISTS THAT DIVISION OF LABOUR, A SOCIAL PHENOMENON, CAN ONLY BE EXPLAINED IN TERMS OF THREE SOCIAL FACTORS–THE VOLUME, THE MATERIAL DENSITY, AND MORAL DENSITY.

- *Volume* refers to the size of the population and *material density* refers to the number of individuals on a given ground surface. **Moral density** means the intensity of communication between individuals. With the formation of cities and the development of communication and transportation, condensation of society, multiplies intra-social relations. *Thus the growth and condensation of societies and the resultant intensity of social intercourse necessitate a greater division of labor. "The division of labor varies in direct ratio with the volume and density of societies and, if it progresses in a continuous manner in the course of social development, it is because societies become regularly denser and generally more voluminous."*
- *As societies become more voluminous and denser, more people come into contact with one another; they compete for scarce resources and there is rivalry everywhere. As the struggle for survival becomes acute*, **social differentiation** *develops as a peaceful solution to the problem.*
- *When individuals learn to pursue different occupations, the chances of conflict diminish.* Each man is no longer in competition with all; each man is in competition with only a few of his fellows who pursue the same object or vocation. *The solder seeks military glory, the priest moral authority, the statesman power, the businessman riches and the scholar scientific renown. The carpenter does not struggle with the mason, nor the physician with the teacher, not the politician with the engineer. Since they pursue different objects or perform different services, they can exist without being obliged mutually to destroy one another.* **The division of labor is thus, the result of the struggle for existence.**

Durkheim identified two forms of solidarity- *mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity* in two types of societies- societies with simple division of labour & societies with complex division of labour:

- **MECHANICAL SOLIDARITY:**

- **Mechanical solidarity is solidarity of resemblance.** People are *homogeneous, mentally and morally; they feel the same emotions, cherish the same values, and hold the same things sacred.* Communities are, therefore, *uniform and non-atomized*. Durkheim suggested that mechanical solidarity prevailed to the extent that *"ideas and tendencies common to all members of the society are greater in number and intensity than those which pertain to each member."* He explained that this solidarity grows only in inverse ratio to personality.

- Solidarity, he suggested, which comes from likeness *"is at its maximum when the collective conscience completely envelops our whole conscience and coincides in all points with it". "Thus, a society having a mechanical solidarity is characterized by strong collective conscience. Since crime is regarded as an offence against 'common conscience', such a society is also characterized by 'repressive law' which multiplies punishment to show the force of common sentiments".*

- *The laws in mechanical solidarity are repressive and penal in character*; they aim at inflicting suffering or loss on the criminal and try to suppress recurrence of crime. **According to Durkheim,** an act is treated as criminal *"when it offends strong and defined states of the conscience collective"*. Thus crime is viewed as an affront to the conscience collective which feels hurt by the criminal act and therefore tries to resist it. Hence one of the important functions of punishments is actions and

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reactions taking place at the collective level. **In the words of Durkheim,** *"We must not say that an action shocks the common conscience because it is criminal, but rather that it is criminal because it shocks the common conscience, we do not reprove it because it is a crime, but it is a crime because we reprove it".*

- **Organic solidarity:**

  With the increase of the volume of population, material density and moral density also increase. **According to Durkheim,** *division of labour is a peaceful solution to the needs created by the increase of population, in size and density.* This increase in division of labour gives rise to organic solidarity. Organic solidarity is characterized by decline of conscience collective. The role of conscience collective become progressively smaller as division of labour becomes specialized. Individuals become increasingly freer, while becoming more aware of their inter-dependence. **It is this heightened sense of inter-dependence that contributes to solidarity.** The freedom of individual becomes a venerated principle of a society based on organic solidarity. **Relations between individuals and groups become contractual.**

- Whereas **mechanical solidarity** arose from similarities of individuals in primitive society, **organic solidarity** on the other hand develops out of differences rather than likenesses between individuals in modern societies. Individuals are no longer similar, but different; their mental and moral similarities have disappeared.

- A society having **organic solidarity** is characterized by *specialization, complex division of labor and individualism.* It is held together by the *inter-dependence of parts, rather than by the homogeneity of elements.*

- It is also characterized by the *weakening of collective conscience and restitutive law.* Organic solidarity, as Durkheim envisioned it develops out of differences rather than likenesses and it is a product of the division of labor. With the increasing differentiation of function in a society come differences between its members.

- With the emergence of division of labor in society, owing to a complex of facts such as *increased population, urbanization, industrialization, and with its concomitant rise in dissimilarities of individuals in society, there was an inevitable increase in interdependence among society's members.* And, as noted earlier, *when there is an increase in mental and moral aptitude and capabilities, there is a decrease corollary in the collective conscience*.

- **The two forms of solidarity correspond to two extreme forms of social organization. Archaic societies** (primitive societies as they were once called) are characterized by the predominance of mechanical solidarity whereas **modern industrial societies,** characterized by complex division of labor, are dominated by organic solidarity. It must, however, be noted that Durkheim's conception of the division of labor is different from that envisaged by economists. **To Durkheim social differentiation begins with the disintegration of mechanical solidarity and of segmental structure.** Occupational specialization and multiplication of industrial activities are only an expression of a more general form of a **social differentiation** which corresponds to the structure of society as a whole.

- **The law that exists in organic solidarity is no longer a law of punishment rather it is a law of restitution.** Unlike the repressive law which seeks to inflict suffering on the criminal, restitutive law simply tries to restore the status-quo. Further, while repressive law remains diffuse through out the community, restitutive law has special organs and institutions tribunals, councils, functionaries, and so on.

- *The operation of restitutive law is in fact the application of general rules to particular cases, and it is, above all general rules, that arise out of the use and want of society.* Even when restitutive sanctions, as Durkheim says, are strangers to conscience collective, the latter is not completely absent. If contracts have power to bind, it is conscience collective that is the source of this power. And further more, it is a power that can be invoked only when the contracts confirm to the general rules of law and have something of a moral value.

- Further comparing the organic solidarity with mechanical solidarity, *Durkheim, suggests that social cohesion is greater in the case of organic solidarity.* **As labour is divided so also does each member of the society depends more and more on this labour.** The labour of one fits into the labour of the other, and produces cohesive community. Thus, as the community becomes more cohesive and better integrated, individual becomes freer and more able to exercise his initiative, being less tightly bound by common sentiments.

    The division of labour thus contributes both to the cohesion of the society and to the self-expression and freedom of the individual. However, the above mentioned discussion refers to what organic solidarity ought to be. It does not describe the situation actually obtaining in modern industrial societies. Durkheim himself was aware of this hiatus between what ought to be and what really happens. Therefore, he called the above description as a normal type of division of labour, at the same time, pointing out to major abnormal forms of division of labour discussed below.

ABNORMAL FORMS OF DIVISION OF LABOUR
Durkheim regarded the chaos 18th and 19th century laissez-faire society, its wholly unregulated markets, its arbitrary and extreme inequalities, which led to the restriction of social mobility and its class wars and trade union conflict, as far from normal division of labour. These aberrations of the industrial society were explained as abnormal forms of divisions of labour viz., the anomic division of labour and the forced division of labour.

- *ANOMIC FORM OF DIVISION OF LABOUR*

- *The essence of the idea of anomie as applied to economic behavior is that **relations between men or groups of men engaged in commercial and industrial enterprises are devoid of regulation by shared moral beliefs or by accepts the existence of classes and the regularity of the class conflicts**.*

- **Class conflict** for Durkheim, was **manifested in a series of disputes and clashes which resulting from the absence of agreed limits or insatiable appetites of manufacturers or entrepreneurs as much as in the unlimited desires of workers.** *Here, he regards trade-unions as replacing individual selfishness by collective selfishness, since competing representative groups could not overcome the anarchy of the economy.*

- However, Durkheim does not regard the conflict of interest between employer and employee as an incurable obstacle and makes certain suggestions to redeem the anomic situation in modern industrial societies.

- He points out the **need for improving the conditions of work and the contractual conditions of employment.** *For example measures like provisions of employment, and legislation aimed at ensuring safety. Healthy condition of work and the replacement of rules by power by the rule of law. Each industry to create a kind of self-governing institutions or corporation, empowered to administer codes of conduct to bind all those engaged in the occupational sphere.*

- *These institutions would be linked with the state. Excessive decentralization of power led to anarchy but the corporations could equally protect their member against arbitrary state interventions.*

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- *Further, he cites the example of professional organizations, such as lawyer's organizations, which create professional ethics governing their work. According to him, this would go a long way controlling the anomic state of professional industrial and commercial life. According to Steve Fenton, Durkheim's solution for the state of anomic prevailing in industrial societies was similar to the concept of guild socialism.*

- *FORCED DIVISION OF LABOUR:*

- Under the heading of the '**Forced Division of Labour**' Durkheim **DISCUSSES THOSE SOCIALLY STRUCTURED INEQUALITIES WHICH UNDERMINE SOLIDARITY.** Durkheim explicitly recognizes that *class inequalities restrict the opportunities of the lower classes and prevent the realization of their abilities. **Resentment accumulates and men are led to revolutionary thoughts. The problem here is not a lack of rules but rather the excess of them in that rules themselves are the cause of evil. The rules have in fact arisen in order to enforce the division of labour coercively***. *Individual specialism and occupations are not freely chosen but forced upon each person by custom, law and even sheer chance. Individuals find themselves estranged, resentful and aspiring to social positions which have been arbitrarily closed off to them.*

- **This is clearly the case, Durkheim observes, where a person can enjoy a special advantage owing to possession of inherited wealth or where 'thanks to the persistence of certain prejudices, a certain distinction is attached to some individual's independent of their merits'.** The forced division of labour then brings about a situation which one modern author has called **"the anomie of injustice"**. *It is this which has produced **class conflict and not, as Marx would have called it, the inherently exploitative nature of capitalism.** Durkheim considers that all **inequality** could not be abolished. But whereas some inequalities are 'natural' and occur spontaneously, others are 'external inequality' which can be mitigated. What in effect he is urging is the creation of what today is called **'equality of opportunity' or a 'meritocracy'.** For this to be possible all forms of hereditary privilege should be abolished. There cannot be rich and poor at birth', he wrote, 'without there being unjust contracts'.*

DOL ANALYSED AFTER DURKHM

- **ELTON MAYO,** studying productivity and industrial relations in an American industrial plant *discovered empirically 'the importance of informal social groups in forming attitudes and practices at work'.* He converted the particular finding that **"informal association"** influenced man's working attitudes, into the general principle that *industrial behavior should be understood through its social contexts. Human behavior was not wholly not even predominantly rational and logical. **The desire to stand well with one's fellows, the so-called human instinct of association, easily outweighs the merely individual interest and the logical reasoning upon which so many spurious principles of management are based.***

  In the Social problems of an Industrial Civilization, he draws on Durkheim's evolutionary model to elaborate his own distinction between 'established' and 'adaptive' societies. Suicide as an example to characterize the decay of established grouping and the failure of a restless modern civilization to create alternative bases of social life.

- In a more recent work by **HAROLD WILIENSKY,** the author speaks of *the relationship between "division of labour and social integration", and examines the variable degree to which work situations and experiences of the labour forces encourage participation in and integration into, secondary social groups*. If we give a man some college education, he puts him on a stable career ladder, and top it with a nice family income, he will get into the community act'.

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- *Wiliensky clearly presents his hypothesis that stable experience in the labour market leads to social integration as a test of 'Durkheim's ideas'.* He argues that men with orderly careers have contacts with kin friends and neighbours that are at once more integrated.
- *He, however, adds that not all group participation is conductive to solidarity. The participation pattern of miners, long shore men and others who in lodge and union, at home and at the bar, reinforces their common alienation and isolation.*

- After Durkheim a literature has developed, with an interest in the world of work that is often known as *'the sociology of occupations and professions'*.

More Examples from Contemporary Society.   ......Explained in Class

SUICIDE: Diagnosing social pathology

Suicide is a major theory of social constraints relating to collective conscience. IT is cited as a monumental landmark in which conceptual theory and empirical research are brought together. Durkheim's use of statistical analysis was for two primary reasons:
- *TO REFUTE THEORIES BASED ON PSYCHOLOGY, BIOLOGY, GENETICS, CLIMATIC, AND GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS, AND*
- *TO SUPPORT WITH EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE HIS OWN SOCIOLOGICAL EXPLANATION OF SUICIDE.*

He speaks of suicidal currents as collective tendencies that dominate some very susceptible individuals and catch them up in their sweep. The act of suicide, at times, is interpreted as a product of these currents. The larger significance of Suicide lies in its demonstration of the function of sociological theory in empirical science.

DURKHEIM REJECTED THE VARIOUS EXTRA-SOCIAL FACTORS SUCH AS HEREDITY, CLIMATE, MENTAL ALIENATION, RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND IMITATION AS THE CAUSE OF SUICIDE. He arrived at the conclusion that *suicide which appears to be a phenomenon relating to the individual is actually explicit to individual and can be analysed logically with reference to the social structure and its ramifying function which may induce, perpetuate, or aggravate the suicide potential.* Durkheim's central thesis is that *suicide rate is a factual order, unified and definite, for, each society has a collective inclination towards suicide, a rate of self-homicide which is fairly constant for each society so long as the basic conditions of its existence remain the same.*

Suicide For Durkheim, suicide was a result of imbalance in the independence/ autonomy relationship. In brief summary, suicides occur among those subject to too much or too little social solidarity.

Suicide is notable in taking what appears to be the most individual of acts, which seems therefore least likely to exhibit any regularities of a social kind, and then going on to demonstrate that suicide varies according to social ties, to their presence or absence, their strength or weakness. It is important to remember that it is differential rates between social groups that Durkheim sought to explain, e.g. Protestants commit suicide proportionately more frequently than Catholics and Jews, single men more frequently than married ones, and urban dwellers more than rural. Durkheim argues that these

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differentials reflect differences between the social groups, i.e. the different ways individuals are connected to society, and the kind of social support that results.

Durkheim proposed four basic types of suicide: the egoistic and anomic reflect social ties that are too weak; the altruistic and fatalistic types arise from connections that are too strong so that in this case the group suppresses individuality.

EGOISTIC SUICIDE results from the social isolation of the individual. It occurs among those who have fewer social ties, such as those who live alone in rooming houses rather than with a family, or those burdened with an intense spiritual loneliness. **FOR EXAMPLE,** Protestants have a higher suicide rate than Catholics since Protestant teachings emphasise that one is face to face alone with God, that one's relationship is entirely direct, and that one must, therefore, carry the entire burden of effort essential to one's salvation. Roman Catholic teachings, however, make the church and its practices the basis for one's relationship with God and provide mechanisms, e.g. the confessional, to share the burden and so to give social support in life.

By contrast, ANOMIC SUICIDE was occasioned by insufficient social regulation of the individual. In effect, the moral code of society fails to maintain its hold over the individual. The seemingly paradoxical feature of suicide is that although suicide rates rose during times of economic recession, as we might expect, they also rose during times of economic boom and prosperity, when we might expect them to decline. The superficial element of the explanation is that both situations—boom and bust—occasion dislocation between the individual's social position and the socially prescribed morals which relate to them. Within a socially stratified society there are different norms (moral standards) for the different social classes, and they specify different tastes and aspirations for the members of the respective groups. **FOR EXAMPLE,** middle-class people may expect to go to university, while lower-class people may not expect or even aspire to do so. Such norms develop on a collective scale and over time; since they arise from the real situations of the group, they have a realistic character. Even if lower-class people aspire to university attendance, they are less likely to succeed. However, economic bust and boom both result in abrupt movement of people up and also down the social scale. Middle-class people find themselves in greatly reduced circumstance in crashes, while lower-class people can be rendered enormously prosperous by economic booms. In other words, the standards to which they have become accustomed become inapplicable, precipitating suicide.

Altruism and fatalism are at the other extreme. *ALTRUISTISM involves individuals seeing the pre-eminence of the group over themselves to the extent that the group's needs seem greater than theirs.*
In **FATALISM,** the group dominates individuals so intensely and oppressively that they are rendered entirely powerless over their fate. *ALTRUISTIC SUICIDE is instanced by cases such as the suicide of military officers for the honour of the regiment, or the self-sacrifice of a leader's family and retinue on the leader's death, or the self- sacrifice of suicide bombers. In such cases the bonds within the social group are so strong and intense that they create among the members a powerful sense of group identity. Individuals are so dependent upon the group for their sense of identity, in fact, that they think themselves less important than the group and are willing to give up their lives in order to respect and preserve it and its values. THE FATALISTIC FORM, which receives barely a mention from Durkheim (one brief footnote), occurs when individuals in a group are placed in a position of such restriction that they feel nothing can be done to control their own life save to exit from it, e.g. suicides among slaves.* This argument for a balance between social regulation and individual autonomy concludes that the problem in modern, i.e. organic, society is that the balance has swung too much towards freedom from social regulation.

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Durkheim's concern was with understanding the mechanisms which structured relations between the individual and society, with a view to working out how to readjust them in the desirable direction. As for making out a case for a science of sociology, in the analysis presented in Suicide Durkheim felt he had succeeded in demonstrating the existence of supra individual patterns in terms of which individual fates were decided. In any given society the rates of suicide did not vary much over time, and Durkheim wrote of society as 'demanding a certain rate' of individual deaths. This kind of remark might seem to justify the impression, which alienated many from Durkheim, that he was giving far too great a reality to society. He seemed to treat it as something not only arising from association among human beings, but also as having a life of its own.

Arguably, however, Durkheim did not intend any such suggestion. After all, he did point to collective phenomena to justify his talk about the reality of society's existence and did seek to avoid conveying the impression that society was something utterly dissociated from its members. From this point of view, his remark about society 'demanding' a certain rate of suicides was really only a way of saying, admittedly loosely, that the conditions which exposed people to the risk of suicide remained constant for comparatively long periods of time. Rather than unjustifiably reifying society, Durkheim can be read as emphasizing the fact that our membership of society is neither of our choosing, nor something we can cast off at will

CRITICAL EVALUATION

- **M. Halbwachs (1930)** concluded that Durkheim's analysis could be **simplified to an inverse relationship between social complexity and suicide rates, demonstrated by the fact that suicide rates were lower in rural areas where life styles were simpler than in towns.** *MODERN THEORIES USUALLY ASSUME THAT RAPID CHANGES OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS ARE THE CAUSE OF SUICIDE. THOUGH UNLIKE DURKHEIM THEY INCLUDE VARIOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS TO EXPLAIN WHY ONLY CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS COMMIT SUICIDE IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.*

- **R. Cavan's (1928):** Outside the Durkheimian tradition, R. Cavan's also *focus on **SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION**, which is conceptualized in terms of **POPULATION VARIABLES SUCH AS HIGH RATES OF SOCIAL MOBILITY AND SOCIAL COMPLEXITY THAT WEAKEN THAT INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL VALUES ON INDIVIDUALS.***

- The devastating criticisms of **Durkheimian theory** made by **J.B. Douglas (1967)** indicate that existing accounts lack foundation and are misguided. *He shows that official statistics are highly inaccurate and systematically biased in ways that support disintegration theories. Suicide are more accurately reported in towns than rural areas, highly integrated groups are more likely, than poorly integrated ones, to conceal suicides by ensuring that other causes of death are recorded, the medical competence of those who categorize deaths for official purposes varies and may be assumed to be greater as societies modernize* (and more complex).

- *Thus Durkheimian and ecological theories simply and uncritically reproduce the distortions inherent in official statistics. **Existing theories are also misguided, because they impute social meanings to suicide such as 'egoistic' and 'anomic', that are based merely on untested commonsense judgments and ignore the actual meanings for those involved.*** In Douglas's view, particular social acts like suicide cannot be explained by abstract social meanings such as 'suicide' lies in its demonstration of the function of sociological theory in empirical science.

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RELIGION AND SOCIETY

Durkheim's last major book, **'The Elementary Forms of Religious Life (1912)',** is often regarded as the most profound and the most original of his works. The book contains **a description and a detailed analysis of the 'clan system' and of "totemism in the Arunta tribe" of Australian aborigines, elaborates a general theory of religion derived from a study of the simplest and most "primitive" of religious institutions, and outlines** *a sociological interpretation of the forms of human thought which is at the heart of contemporary sociology of knowledge.*

DURKHEIM BEGAN WITH A REFUTATION OF THE REIGNING THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION. Tyler, the distinguished English ethnologist, who supported the notion of **"animism'**, i.e., spirit worship as the most basic form of religious expression. **Max Muller,** the noted German linguist, put forth the concepts of "naturism", i.e., the worship of nature's forces.

DURKHEIM REJECTED BOTH CONCEPTS BECAUSE HE FELT THAT THEY FAILED TO EXPLAIN THE UNIVERSAL KEY DISTINCTION BETWEEN "THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE" AND BECAUSE THEY TENDED TO EXPLAIN RELIGION AWAY BY INTERPRETING IT ASS AN ILLUSION, THAT IS, THE REDUCTIONIST FALLACY.

- Moreover, to love spirits whose unreality one affirms or to love natural forces transfigured merely by man's fear would make religious experience a kind of collective hallucination. Nor is religion defined by the notion of mystery or of the supernatural.
- Nor is the belief in a transcendental God the essence of religion, for there are several religions such as Buddhism and Confucianism, without gods. Moreover, reliance on spirits and supernatural forces will make religion an illusion.

- **To Durkheim it is inadmissible that system of ideas like religion which have had such considerable place in history, to which people have turned in all ages for the energy they needed to live, and for which they were willing to sacrifice their lives, should be viewed as so profound and so permanent as a correspond to a true reality. And, this true reality is not a transcendent God but society.**
- Thus the central thesis of Durkheim's theory of religion is that **throughout history men have never worshipped any other reality, whether in the form of the totem or of God, than the collective social reality transfigured by faith.** (Collective Conscience, Social Fact)
- **THE ESSENCE OF RELIGION: According to Durkheim, the essence of religion is a division of the world into two kinds of phenomena, the sacred and the profane.**
- **The sacred** refers to things human beings have set apart, including religious beliefs, rites, deities, or anything socially defined as requiring special religious treatment. **Participation in the sacred order, such as in rituals of ceremonies, gives a special prestige, illustrating one of the social functions of religion**. **"The sacred thing, is par excellences that which the profane should not touch and cannot touch with impunity."** The profane is the reverse of the sacred. **"The circle of sacred objects, cannot be determined once for all. Its existence varies infinitely, according to the different religions."**

ACCORDINGLY, **DURKHEIM DEFINES RELIGION as a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden-beliefs and practices which unite in one simple moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to it."**

11A/10, Old Rajender Nagar, Near Agrawal Sweet, Delhi
www.facebook.com/essayforias=byvikashranjan
E-mail : infovrc2016@gmail.com
Website : www.vikashranjan.org
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- *Beliefs and practices unite people in social community by relating them to sacred things. This collective sharing of beliefs, rituals, etc., is essential for the development of religion.*
- *The sacred symbols of religious belief and practice refer, not to the external environment or to individual human nature but only to the moral reality of society.*

- **THE ORIGINS OF RELIGION:** Instead of animism or naturism, Durkheim took "**TOTEMISM**" among the Australian tribes as the key concept of explain the origins of religion. Ordinary objects, whether pieces of wood, polished stones, plants or animals, are transfigured into sacred objects once they bear the emblem of the totem. Durkheim writes: **Totem***, refers to an implicit belief in a mysterious or sacred force or principle that provides sanctions for violations of taboos, inculcates moral responsibilities in the group, and animates the totem itself.*
- *The emphasis here, in keeping with his overall emphasis upon social analysis of social phenomena, was upon the collective activities as the birthplace of religious sentiments ideas.*
- **According to Durkheim,** *the essence to Totemism is the worship of an impersonal, anonymous force, at once immanent and transcendent. This anonymous, diffuse force which is superior to men and very close to them is in reality society itself.*
- MOREOVER, **DURKHEIM CLAIMS THAT JUST AS SOCIETIES IN THE PAST HAVE CREATED GODS AND RELIGION, SOCIETIES OF THE FUTURE ARE INCLINED TO CREATE NEW GODS AND NEW RELIGIONS WHEN THEY ARE IN A STATE OF EXALTATION**. When societies are seized by the sacred frenzy, and when men, participating in ritualistic ceremonies, religious services, feasts and festivals, go into a trance, people are united by dancing and shouting and experience a kind of phantasmagoria. *Men are compelled to participate by force of the group which carries them outside of themselves and gives them a sensation of something that has no relation to every day experience. During such moments of sacred frenzy and collective trance, new gods and new religions will be born.*
- **DURKHEIM BELIEVED HE HAD SOLVED THE RELIGIOUS-MORAL DILEMMA OF MODERN SOCIETY**. *RELIGION IS NOTHING BUT THE INDIRECT WORSHIP OF SOCIETY. MODERN PEOPLE NEED ONLY EXPRESS THEIR RELIGIOUS FEELING DIRECTLY TOWARD THE SACRED SYMBOLIZATION OF SOCIETY.* **The source and object of religion,** Durkheim pointed out, are the collective life – the individual who feels dependent on some external moral power is not a victim of hallucination but a responsive member of society.

THE SUBSTANTIAL FUNCTION OF RELIGION, said Durkheim, *is the creation, reinforcement, and maintenance of social solidarity. Religion act as an agency of social control and provides solidarity.* He argued that religious phenomena emerges in any society when a separation is made between the sphere of the profane-the realm of everyday utilitarian activities-and the sphere of sacred-the area that-pertains TO THE TRANSCENDENTAL, THE EXTRAORDINARY.

- **RELIGION, AS DURKHEIM SAW AND EXPLAINED IT, IS NOT ONLY A SOCIAL CREATION, BUT IS IN FACT SOCIETY DIVINIZED.** Durkheim stated that the deities which men worship together are only projections of the power of society. *If religion is essentially a transcendental representation of the powers of society, then the disappearance of traditional religion need not herald the dissolution of society,* Furthermore, Durkheim reasoned that all that is required for modern men now was to realize directly that dependence on society, which before, they had recognized only through the medium of religious representation.

On the most general plane, religion as a social institution serves to give meaning to man's existential predicaments by typing the individual to the supra individual sphere of transcendental value which is ultimately rooted in his own society.

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CRITICAL EVALUATION:

- With his study of religion, *Durkheim successfully demonstrated the application of functionalist methodology in sociology which subsequently influenced the works of B. Malinowski and A.R. Radcliffe-Brown.*
- **DURKHEIM'S** view, that **the idea of sacred and the beliefs associated with it** are a symbolic representation of society itself has been corroborated by the later researches of *GUY SWANSON. Swanson carried out a comparative study of religious beliefs in simple societies organized on kinship principle and the complex and highly differentiated societies of the present day.*
- **SWANSON** FOUND THAT **KINSHIP BASED SOCIETIES HAD NO CONCEPT OF SINGLE GOD AND NEITHER DID THEY HAVE ANY ECCLESIASTICAL ORGANISATION WHICH COMPETED WITH KINSHIP ORGANISATION FOR OBESISANCE.** Instead they tended to practice totemic type of religion which symbolized and strengthened the kinship organization. **ON THE OTHER HAND, HIGHLY DIFFERENTIATED TYPES OF SOCIETIES, LIKE KINGDOM OR A NATION TENDED TO HAVE A BELIEF IN A SINGLE SUPREME GOD.** Such a belief in a single God provided a rallying point for the members of the society and thus helped in maintaining solidarity. **Thus the nature of religious belief corresponded with the nature of social structure as postulated by Durkheim.**

Despite this, Durkheim's work on religion has been criticized on various grounds.
- **Durkheim's view that religion act as an agency of SOCIAL CONTROL AND PROVIDES SOLIDARITY is true only for simple small scale societies which practice a single common religion. In the case of modern industrial societies religion has lost both these function.** Given the **highly differentiated and diversified nature of modern societies,** religion can no longer act as an agency of social control. **Next, the existence of a plurality of religions, quite often lead to inter religious conflict and therefore endanger solidarity rather than enhancing it.**
- **DURKHEIM'S ABSOLUTE DISTINCTION BETWEEN SACRED AND PROFANE HAS ALSO BEEN CRITICIZED.** Critiques have objected that the distinction is faulty at an empirical level that is, as an account of what aborigine religious were actually like. They also complained that it fails at the conceptual level. **For example,** it is not clear why there can only be two classes of objects. Is there not also at least one other class which consist of things which are neither sacred nor profane but, simply 'mundane'. Again, critiques asked whether the relationship between the two classes of objects one of total hostility or one of a division between two complimentary systems of thought. **EDMUND LEACH** insists that *actions fall in between the two extremes on a continuous scale*. At one extreme are actions which are entirely profane, at the other actions which are entirely sacred. Between the two extremes fall the majority of social actions.
- *Further* **WORSLEY** *has criticized Durkheim's explanations of religious beliefs and rituals. Despite the length and detail of 'Elementary Forms' the explanation is casting a very general form. **The origins of the actual religious systems are not accounted for at all, but treated as if, say, the choice of the sacred object or of the actual ritual prescription themselves were arbitrary and unimportant.*** This is especially regrettable in the case of rituals since it has been argued that rituals do, in fact, always contain an important material basis in the agricultural technology of the tribe or the group which implies them.
- **NEXT CRITICISM IS RELATED TO DURKHEIM'S VIEWS ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIETY AND RELIGION.** Durkheim's views on this aspect are irritatingly ambiguous and even tautological. At various points, he seems to be claiming that social organisation exerts a casual influence over religious thoughts. At others, as when he asserts that 'nearly all the great social institutions have been borne' in religion'. **It is religious thought which is seen as the determining element.** He appears to be arguing that religion end societies are the same thing. This does not exhaust the list. Steven Lukes has identified no less than six distinct hypotheses, none of them

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reducible to the other about the relationship between society and ideas which can be found within Durkheim's sociology of knowledge as a whole.

AN ASSESSMENT OF DURKHEIM

- **ONE OF THE MAIN PROBLEMS IN SOCIOLOGY WAS DEFINING "THEORY (SUBJECT MATTER) AND METHOD", DURKHEIM GAVE CLEAR ANSWERS, BOTH FOR THEORY AND METHOD.** Durkheim faced up to complex methodological problems and demonstrated by implementing in his works, the necessity of empirical research for a science of society. Durkheim defined sociology as the science of social facts and of social institutions. Social facts, in turn, are analysed in their capacity as constraining forces in the determination of human conduct or in more modern terms, as part of the apparatus of social control.

- In this connection, **HIS DISCUSSIONS OF THE COLLECTIVE CONSCIENCE, IN SPITE OF SOME VARIATIONS, CALL ATTENTION TO THE WAYS IN WHICH SOCIAL INTERACTION AND RELATIONSHIPS SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCE INDIVIDUAL ATTITUDE, IDEAS AND SENTIMENTS**. For Durkheim, the reality of society preceded the individual life. Durkheim frequently, especially in discussions on the collective conscience, reached a degree of sociological realism that seemed to deny altogether the social significance of individual volition or decision. Society is real, to be true, but so is the individual. And the two, it should be remembered, are always in interaction. Giving priority to one or the other is misleading in the long run.

- **DURKHEIM SHOWED CONVINCINGLY THAT SOCIAL FACTS ARE FACTS SUI GENERIS**. He brought out vividly the social and cultural importance of division of labour. He analysed the nature and many of consequences of social solidarity. He indicated the role of social pressure in areas of human activity where it had previously escaped detection. Along with Max Weber he brought the attention of sociologists to the significance of values and ideals in social life.

- **DURKHEIM BELIEVED IN FORMULATION OF CAUSAL EXPLANATIONS (POSITIVISM).** It is argued by him that it is the business of the sociologists to establish causal connections and causal laws. Although many are skeptical about this approach, a great number of causal connections and functional correlations have been established by sociology with a reasonable degree of probability. Moreover, those who are skeptical about finding causal relations concede the existence of such trends in sociology. While pleading for causal explanations, Durkheim argued that since laboratory experimentation is impossible in sociology, we should go in for *indirect experimentation, by using the comparative method.* This particular method continues to be used by sociologists.

- **DURKHEIM IS THE PIONEER OF FUNCTIONAL APPROACH IN SOCIOLOGY**. After Durkheim the functionalist approach was pursued by Talcott Parson and R.K. Merton. It is in the context of functionalism that Durkheim distinguished between normal and pathological functions. This opening in sociological research has been further elaborated by later thinkers. Closely following Durkheim, Merton distinguished between 'Manifest' and Latent' functions. Also, the idea of 'dysfunction' goes back to Durkheim's idea of 'pathological' functions. Although Durkheim claimed that religion contributes to social solidarity, Merton pointed out that it can be dysfunctional in some societies since it can be very frequently, a source of discord and social conflict.

- **DURKHEIM ESTABLISHED A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUICIDE RATES AND THE DEGREE OF INTEGRATION OF INDIVIDUALS IN A SOCIAL GROUP IN HIS THEORY OF SUICIDE.** This part of the work of Durkheim has been found to be useful, and it has been confirmed by later studies like those of Douglas and Giddens.

- **ONE OF THE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS OF DURKHEIM IS IN DISTINGUISHING THE PHENOMENA STUDIED BY PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY.** According to him, sociology must study social facts, those which are external to individual minds and which exercise coercive action on them. Taking a cue from this view of Durkheim, many sociologists have developed their thoughts.

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Ginsberg concedes this point. There might be psychological generalization firmly established by relating them to general psychological laws. In the same manner, Nadal argues that some problems of social enquiry might be eliminated by a move to a lower level of analysis into the fields of psychology sociology and biology.

- **Durkheim made population size an important factor in the study of sociology.** Societies can be classified according to their volume (individual) and density (number of social relations). He thought that increase in volume generally brought about increase in density and the two together produced variations in the social structure. In recent sociology this particular problem has been taken up in a different way in the book 'The Lonely Crowd' by Riesman. Modern sociologists attach considerable importance to the problem of population. The influence of population movements upon economic growth is examined by Lexis in his book 'The Theory of Economic Growth'.

- **Durkheim did contribute to the typology of societies.** He distinguished between mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity. Besides, Durkheim was aware that societies might be classified in other ways also. He classified them as a simple societies (the hordes), simple poly segementary societies (the three tribes which founded Rome) and doubly compounded poly segmental societies (The Germanic tribes). This attempt of Durkheim was further elaborated in terms of scale and internal differentiation by Marret and Davy.

- **Durkheim argued that division of labour was the primary sources of social solidarity.** In mechanical solidarity law would be repressive, while in organic solidarity, law would be restitutive. Durkheim also discussed abnormal forms of division of labour that is those which go against the promotion of social cohesion. In the abnormal forms he found two, the anomic and the forced. By the first he meant examining specialization. As a remedy Durkheim proposed contact through professional association and negotiation between capital and labour. What Durkheim anticipated is very true of modern times. This approach is greatly followed by a number of thinkers who discount Marx's ideal of social or class conflict.

  Finally, after Durkheim very little work has been done on the importance of religion. However, there are a number of empirical studies of particular sects in terms of their relation with and response to the social milieu in which they exist just as those of Wilson and Peter Berger, etc.

CRITICS ASSESSMENT:

- *DURKHEIM'S APPROACH HAS BEEN CRITICIZED FOR ITS EXTREME FORM OF SOCIAL REALISM.* He has been condemned for over emphasizing society and the group at the expense of the individual. Durkheim has adopted a determinist point of view according to which individual has been subordinated almost totally to the collectively. Religion, law, moral etc., are the aspects of conscience collectively which according to Durkheim, shaped individual behavior and his values. Thus individual's choices, meanings and motives have no independent place in Durkheim's scheme of things **(Weber)**. In fact, they themselves are viewed as shaped by the social forces. Thus, exaggerating the importance off collectivity over individuals Durkheim has inadvertently ended up legitimizing fascism.

- *THIS EXTREME FORM OF SOCIAL REALISM IS MANIFESTED IN HIS WORK OF SUICIDE,* where he speaks of suicidogenic currents as collective tendencies which dominate individuals and force some of them to commit suicide. Here, as pointed out by Douglas, Durkheim totally ignores the meanings and motives which the individual impute to their circumstances before they take the extreme step of committing suicide.

- *DURKHEIM HAS ALSO BEEN CRITICIZED FOR HIS EXTREME POSITIVISM AS CAN BE SEEN IN HIS ATTEMPT TO MAKE SOCIOLOGY A NATURAL SCIENCE.* It has been argued that the study of the phenomena of suicide can never rely exclusively upon statistical data, because such data can never be authentic. The official records reveal what the police, the doctor or the coroner regard

as the case for suicide. Sometimes, the deaths caused due to accidents or murders may get registered as suicide in the official records and vice-versa.

- Further, the positivist emphasis on explaining phenomena exclusively on the basis of outwardly observable characteristics ignores the human side of social behavior. It fails to take into account the subjective dimension of human behavior manifested in the meanings, choices and motives of an individual.

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MAX WEBER (1864-1920)

Syllabus:
- ✓ Social action,
- ✓ Ideal types,
- ✓ Authority,
- ✓ Bureaucracy,
- ✓ Protestant ethics and the spirit of capitalism.

Max Weber was born in Erfurt, Prussia (present day Germany) in April 21, 1864. Weber's father was greatly involved in public life and so his home was constantly immersed in both politics and academia. Weber and his brother thrived in this intellectual atmosphere. In 1882, he enrolled at the University of Heidelberg, but after two years left to fulfill his year of military service at Strassburg. After his release from the military, Weber finished his studies at the University of Berlin, earning his doctorate in 1889 and joining the University of Berlin's faculty, lecturing and consulting for the government.

In 1894, Weber was appointed professor of economics at the University of Freiburg and then was granted the same position at the University of Heidelberg in 1896. His research at the time focused mainly on economics and legal history. After Weber's father died in 1897, two months after a severe quarrel that was never resolved, Weber became prone to depression, nervousness, and insomnia, making it difficult for him to fulfill his duties as a professor. He was thus forced to reduce his teaching and eventually left in the fall of 1899. For five years he was intermittently institutionalized, suffering sudden relapses after efforts to break such cycles by travelling. He finally resigned his professorship in late 1903.

Also in 1903, Weber became the associate editor of the Archives for Social Science and Social Welfare where his interests lied in more fundamental issues of social sciences. Soon Weber began to publish some of his own papers in this journal, most notable his essay *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, which became his most famous work and was later published as a book.

In 1909, Weber co-founded the German Sociological Association and served as it's first treasurer. He resigned in 1912, however, and unsuccessfully tried to organize a left-wing political party to combine social-democrats and liberals. At the outbreak of World War I, Weber, aged 50, volunteered for service and was appointed as a reserve officer and put in charge of organizing the army hospitals in Heidelberg, a role he fulfilled until the end of 1915.

Weber's most powerful impact on his contemporaries came in the last years of his life, when, from 1916 to 1918, he argued powerfully against Germany's annexationist war goals and in favor of a strengthened parliament. After assisting in the drafting of the new constitution and in the founding of the German Democratic Party, Weber became frustrated with politics and resumed teaching at the University of Vienna and then at the University of Munich.

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Max Weber (1864-1920) argued against abstract theory, and he favored an approach to sociological inquiry that generated its theory from rich, systematic, empirical, historical research. This approach required, first of all, an examination of the relationships between, and the respective roles of, history and sociology in inquiry. Weber argued that sociology was to develop concepts for the analysis of concrete phenomena, which would allow sociologists to then make generalizations about historical phenomena. History, on the other hand, would use a lexicon of sociological concepts in order to perform causal analysis of particular historical events, structures, and processes. In scholarly practice, according to Weber, sociology and history are interdependent.

- *Weber's sociology is much closer to Marx than Durkheim's is, comprising a critique of so-called vulgar Marxism, i.e. the idea that social life, including culture, is a simple function of the economic structure. Weber took Marx for a vulgar Marxist— understandably, given the unavailability to him of Marx's early writings, which unequivocally contradict such vulgar readings.*

- *Coming from a very different philosophical background from that of Marx, Weber was allied to the Neo-Kantian rather than the Hegelian tradition in German thought. Neo-Kantians were philosophers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who followed the teachings of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). Kant saw human beings as existing only partly in the world of natural causality, and partly in a realm of freedom, governed by moral rules rather than causes. Consequently, human beings could not be understood entirely by natural science; the study of their moral and spiritual life would have to be pursued by other means. Nevertheless, Weber shared some of Marx's key assumptions and also his core concern with the nature of capitalism. However, he held very different conceptions of the nature of history, and also of the methodology of historical and sociological studies.*

- *One legacy of Immanuel Kant's philosophy is a sharp distinction between the realm of physical nature and that of human mental life. Physical nature is a realm of rigid, mechanical determination, while human mental life is one of freedom and the absence of causality. At the end of the nineteenth century, this distinction gave rise in German culture to a hot debate over the limits to scientific inquiry: were cultural phenomena, the topics of history, by their very nature precluded from the kind of scientific study applied to natural phenomena? This debate framed Weber's own preoccupations. For him, the difference between natural science and history was not basically a result of the different natures of natural and social phenomena; rather, it came out of our relationship to them, out of the interests that we take in them. With respect to nature, we have, on the whole, an interest in understanding its general patterns; the difference between one rock and another hardly matters at all to us and certainly does not matter for its own sake. Rather, we are interested in the way in which rocks in general behave; we can therefore be satisfied with an understanding that is abstract and generalised. However, when it comes to human beings, their individuality captivates us. For example, our interest in Adolf Hitler derives not from the characteristics he had in common with other human beings, but from his distinctiveness, the extent to which he was quite unlike other politicians.*

- *Weber did not conclude that there is no room for generalities in the social sciences; rather, that they are not their be-all and end-all in the way they are within the natural sciences. Generalities can be useful in the study of history and society as means to another end, i.e. in so far as they help us to understand better the individual case.*

Individuality:

For Weber, sociology as a generalising approach was subordinate to history; it provided abstract concepts, which could be useful in understanding concrete, complex, individual historical cases. Such concepts were created not for their own sake but precisely for their usefulness in informing historical studies.

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Weber's own studies were wide-ranging geographically and historically; they encompassed the civilisations of the West from the time of the Greeks, and Asiatic societies such as India and China over thousands of years, and were meant to include the world of Islam also (though his study of Islam was barely launched, and most of the other studies, though lengthy, were unfinished). Their purpose was to tackle questions about the role of religion in social and economic change, and also the relationship between ideas and economic conditions of the sort posed by Marx. Nevertheless, understanding of the general issues and of the other societies was not sought for its own sake, but gathered with respect to its relevance to the situation at home, i.e. understanding the individuality of the Western European and North American capitalist civilizations (especially Germany, for Weber was strongly nationalist in sentiments) in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The 'individuals' with whom history was concerned could be quite large complexes, such as 'Western civilization in the modern world', and not just individual human beings. Further, historical/scientific knowledge had only a relatively subordinate role in relationship to politics. Weber wrote two major essays on politics and science as vocations, putting views that provoke controversy to this day.

Objectivity and value freedom

Most contentious is the idea that science should be 'value free'. A major political concern of Weber's was to ensure civic responsibility within modern society, where technical and scientific expertise was assuming ever-increasing importance.

Weber worried about the blurring of the roles of scientist and citizen and the use of the prestige of science to bolster the claims of demagogues. He feared that those who occupied the role of scientist would often be irresponsible enough to take advantage of the prestige given them by their position of scientific eminence, and of the authority deriving from their expertise, in order to advocate political policies, which can have no scientific basis or authority. He believed that in the universities of his time the professors were exceeding the bounds of their scholarly competence in the lecture hall by delivering impassioned speeches about political issues in the guise of scholarly disquisitions. Academics and scientists are no less entitled to the right to present their political viewpoints than anyone else, but they are no more privileged in the political arena than anyone else and should therefore confine their political persuasion to the public, political arena. There the greatest historian, physicist or sociologist is just one more citizen, one more voice. The responsible discharge of scientific obligations requires sober compliance with the usual rules of scholarly investigation and evidential proof, and abstinence from political polemics in the classroom.

Facts and values

The distinction between the scientific and the political was, for Weber, the recognition of a long-standing philosophical distinction between facts and values. A very standard position, which Weber shared, is that values cannot logically be deduced from facts. Scientists can only report upon what happens and how things are; they cannot tell us how they should be, how we should live, or what we should do. The provision of research and evidence cannot relieve us of the necessity to make choices at the level of values.

This distinction was a key to Weber's conception of human existence as well as sociological method: there is an irreducible variety of incompatible human values; and there is no possibility of a scientific or rational basis upon which to choose between them. We cannot excuse ourselves from the need to make a choice by arguing that science shows one value to be preferable to another, for science cannot do this. We have to make up our own minds about which 'Gods or Demons', as Weber put it, to affiliate ourselves to, which gods to worship, which leaders to follow and which causes to fight for. Such choice is a tragic aspect of human existence and surely a source of terrible conflicts within and between individuals. Consequently, Weber is sometimes spoken of as a decisionist, i.e. we have to choose our values, the things we treasure and strive for, from a range of possible and irreconcilable values, and must

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therefore make a decision to go one way rather than another and, having made it, live with its consequences.

Therefore, science can never displace politics, and the scientist can never, acting purely as scientist, be a political leader. The (legitimate) role of science in politics can only ever be advisory. Scientists understand what happens and how things work causally. They can, therefore, give good advice on how to make a certain thing happen. They can tell us, on the basis of their expertise, that certain ways of attempting to make something happen are more likely to bring about the desired result, but they cannot, from that same expertise, tell us whether we should desire that result or a different one. The question whether we want X or Y is a political decision, a matter for the political leadership to deal with. Scientific knowledge can be of great value to politics, but it cannot displace or substitute for politics. It is an illusion to think that politics can be made scientific, for politics entails struggle between values, not the facts of empirical knowledge.

Weber never sought to keep the social scientist out of politics but merely to keep distinct the two roles a scientist might play, as disciplined inquirer and as active citizen. Within the sphere of scholarship, the scientist can be objective, since objectivity requires only sober compliance with the obligations of the scientific role to proceed according to the standard rules of evidence and proof. Within politics, the danger is that the difference between the scientific and political roles is obscured, giving a false authority to someone who just happens to be a scientist. In the administration of politics, those serving as scientific advisers to politicians might exceed their role, might begin to usurp the decision-making prerogative of the legitimate political leader through attempting to reduce real issues of value decision to matters of mere technical choice or by obscuring the political issues in talk that sounds like science. Science itself, as Weber recognized, also rests upon values. For example, if we do not value knowledge for its own sake, then what would be the point of pursuing scholarship? 'Value freedom' as Weber understood it operates within the framework of accepted scientific values. He himself was not abashed at being politically active or in seeking to use scientific knowledge in the formation of social policy. Indeed, he was concerned about the absence of decisive, heroic political leadership, leading some critics to see in his ideals a prefiguration of the kind of leadership Hitler would shortly offer the German people.

The rationalisation of social life

On several occasions we have used the term rational, persistently mentioning it as a leading feature of modern Western capitalism. The rational In Weber's usage, 'rational' refers to the attempt to work out means to ends, and to the attempt to develop a systematic understanding of things so that ends can also be worked out systematically and can even be ranked by calculation.

Weber thought that all actions could take only a few basic forms. Many actions are traditional or habitual in character, i.e. they are done without thought or calculation. There are two kinds of action worthy of the title 'rational'. One type he calls value rational actions, where the means have no practical relationship to the end, but are simply a way of acting out, of realising, a value the actor holds. His own example is the captain who goes down with the ship; his action does not achieve anything practical, but it does continue the commitment to dignity, integrity and honour which the captain may have made the hallmark of a whole life. The other kind of rationality is the practical: the working out of the best, most effective means of getting towards the end that one desires. It is most prevalently exhibited in our economic affairs and our civilisation, drawing extensively and dependently upon scientific understanding. Because we have such a worked-out understanding of the natural world, we are able to calculate with great effect and in very fine detail the best technical solution to any practical business, administrative or other problem.

In the West there has been a progressive process of rationalisation, i.e. the extension of this practical kind of action, thereby giving a systematic understanding and calculability of practical means-ends relationships throughout the whole of society. This development has been massively accelerated under capitalism and has been especially associated with the rise of science. Though distinctive in its

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particular character and in the sheer extent of its development in the modern Western world, the process has very deep roots in Western culture. Weber traced its origins not only to early Greek civilisation—with its scientific mentality—but also, as part of the comparative studies of world religions, to the traditions of ancient Judaism, which were formatively influential upon Christianity. For example, he argued that Judaism was notably hostile to magic, a hostility that it bequeathed to Christianity. In itself, magic is intensely traditionalizing in binding people to the repetitive performances of prescribed actions; to be effective, the magical action must be done in the same way on every occasion. Consequently, the possibility of attempting to think out the conditions of effective action, of envisaging how the action might be made more effective by being reorganized, is inhibited. In these ways, the rationalizing process has remote roots in Western civilisation and a long history of development. Its apotheosis came with the capitalist phase, when we have not only rationalised our understanding of nature and our mastery of practical actions, but also rationalized our human relations in the form of bureaucracy. For bureaucracy is nothing other than an attempt to rationalise, i.e. to make calculable, predictable and controllable, our own relations and activities. For Weber, it was the one of most inimical features of life today.

While Weber's work has had a profound impact on sociology - as well as other disciplines - it is not without its critics. Some critics question the consistency and applicability of Weber's method of verstehen. Others are puzzled by Weber's methodological individualism as it is applied to macro-sociology. Some critics have rebuked Weber for failing to offer any alternatives to rationalization, capitalism, and bureaucracy. Finally, many critics decry Weber's unflagging pessimism about the future of rationalization and bureaucracy.

*According to him, **behavior of man in society is qualitatively different from that of physical objects and biological organism.** (**What accounts for these differences?**)*

The presence of **'meanings and motives'** which underlie the social behavior of man. *Thus any study of human behavior in society must take cognizance of these meanings to understand this behavior.*

- *The objectives of sociological study are, therefore, different from those of positive science, while positive science seeks to discover the underlying patterns of interactions between various aspects of physical and natural phenomena, **the social science, on the other hand, seek to understand the meanings and motives to explain the social phenomena in terms of these motivations**.*
- *Hence positive science method alone would prove inadequate to study the social behavior. However, Weber was not opposed to building generalization in social sciences, but, he pointed out that given the variable nature of social phenomena, only limited generalization can be made.*

SUBJECT MATTER

- *Weber conceived of **SOCIOLOGY** as a comprehensive science of social action which constitutes the basic unit of social life.*
- In consonance with his general perception of the nature of social reality, he defined social action as the *'the meaningful act oriented towards other individuals.' Presence of **MEANINGS** as well AS OTHER INDIVIDUALS* is equally important for any behavior to qualify as social action.
- However, an insolated social act does not exist in real social life. Only at the analytical level can one conceptualized an isolated social act. What exists in reality is an on-going chain of reciprocal social actions.

METHODOLOGY

- According to Weber the aim of Sociology is different from those of Physical and Natural Sciences. Natural Sciences are primarily interested in search for laws or the underlying patterns of interconnections. **Sociology seeks to understand social behavior in terms of meanings and motives,** though sociology also attempts to arrive at **limited generalization**. Therefore, social science cannot rely on positive science method alone.

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- Weber advocated **'Verstehen method'** to study the social phenomena. *This method seeks to understand social action* **at the 'level of meanings'** *and then tries to sequence of motive which underlie the social action.* First step involved in this method is **'Direct Observational Understanding'** of the obvious subjective meanings of actor's behavior. Second step involves, establishing an **empathetic liaison with the actior**.

- Here, the observer identifies himself with the actor by imaginatively placing himself in the actor's situation and then tries to interpret the likely meanings which the actor might have had given to the situation and the consequent motives which would have given rise to the action. Weber argues further that application of this method is not confined to the study of present social behavior; it can be applied equally to understand historical events. In Weber's words, "one need not be a Caesar in order to understand Caesar."

- Further, **Weber states that social reality by its very nature is infinitely compiled and cannot be comprehended in its totality by the human mind. Therefore, sociologists should build "ideal types".** Ideal type is a one-sided view of social reality which takes into account certain aspects of social life while ignoring others. Which aspects are to be given importance to, and which are to be ignored depends upon the object of study.

- **Thus, although ideal type is rooted in reality, it does not represent reality in totality.** It is a mental construct. *Weber claims that ideal type in a social science equivalent of experimentation in physical and natural sciences. Thus, the methodology of sociology consists in building ideal types of social behavior and applying Verstehen method to explain these ideal types for value neutrality.* This means that subjective meanings and motives of the actor should be interpreted by the observer in an objective manner.

- According to Weber, the social reality is extremely complex and therefore no social phenomena can be explained adequately in terms of a single cause. An adequate sociological explanation must therefore be based on the principle of **causal pluralism.** *Weber's thesis on "the Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism" is a very good example of the application of this methodology.* Besides contributing directly to the development of sociology by suggesting the 'Verstehen' approach and 'ideal types', Weber's general conception of the nature of social reality influenced the emergence of other approaches in sociology. For example, Alfred Schutz, a German Social Philosopher was inspired by the ideas of Max Weber. He contributed to the rise of phenomenological approach which in turn gave rise to ethnomethodological approach in sociology.

SOCIAL ACTION

Weber defined sociology as *"a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effect".* For Weber, the combined qualities of 'action' and 'meaning' were the 'central facts' for sociology's scientific analysis. The technical category of 'action' described in Weber's work is all human behavior to which an actor attaches subjective meaning. *According to Weber "Action is social, in so far as, by virtue of subjective meaning attached to it by the acting individual, it takes account of the behavior of others and is thereby oriented in its course."* The refinement and utilization of this technical category of 'action' provided Weber with an objective facticity necessary to apply his other subjective category called 'meaning,' a term which refers to the *rationalized reasons put forth by an individual as explanation for specific action.*

What intrigued Weber was the actually assigned 'reason' for identifiable behavior given by actors themselves. These behavior complexes, oriented by individuals within specifiable socio-historical settings, were the subjects of sociological analysis. In the absence of assigned 'meanings' by the individuals, the

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actions are meaningless and thus outside the purview of sociology. The behavioral complex or matrix fell into one of four types in Weber's work:

- **ZWECKRATIONAL ACTION OR RATIONAL ACTION IN RELATION TO A GOAL:** The actor determines the goal and chooses his means purely in terms of their efficiency towards achievement of goal. *In this action both means and ends are rational. It means that in a specific situation, by determining once goal, a person acts in a planned way that is why this action is completely rational. For example building up of a structure by an engineer, actions done in bureaucracy, actions done by modern man in a planned way for his bright future. In modern era, the importance of this action his substantially increased because, in Weber's words, the world is tending towards more and more bureaucratization, which means our dependency of bureaucracy is thoroughly increasing day by day. Obviously rationality is also increasing.*

- **WERTRATIONAL ACTION OR RATIONAL ACTION IN RELATION TO A VALUE:** *Here means are chosen for their efficiency but the ends are determined by value. The action of a captain who goes down with the sinking ship or that of a gentleman who allows himself to be killed rather than yield in a duel are examples.* It is that action which is *performed on any artistic religious or moral basis and which is accepted without any logical reasons.* It means that in this action, means are rational, but not the ends and ends are accepted on the basis of social values. Actions related with attainment of salvation or heaven come under the purview of this action.

- **AFFECTIVE FOR EMOTIONAL ACTION:** Here emotion or impulse determines the ends and means of action as in the case of a mother who slaps her child or a player who throws a punch at a partner in a game. They are those which are instigated by emotions and invitation. Such behaviour is affected by love, hatred, and enmity or angry and they are mostly rational. **For example** a father gets angry suddenly on the failure of his son.

- **TRADITIONAL ACTIONS WHERE BOTH ENDS AND MEANS ARE DETERMINED BY CUSTOMS.** Rituals, ceremonies and practices of tradition fall in this category. They are those which are controlled by that social action, which have been followed by several people over a long period of time. Such actions are followed for a reason, like many people have been doing likewise since long past, there is no place of logic, and value, sentiment in the action. The examples of such action can be seen in the kinship and in the patriarchal or matriarchal families. The quantity of such actions has decreased in due course of time and it is being replaced by rational legal actions.

WEBER ARGUED PERSUASIVELY THAT "BECAUSE INDIVIDUALS IN A SOCIAL SITUATION UNDERGO CERTAIN EXPERIENCES, THE SOCIOLOGIST CANNOT AVOID INCLUDING IN HIS PURVIEW THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF THESE EXPERIENCE" UNLIKE DURKHEIM, WEBER WANTED TO ENTER INTO THE SUBJECTIVE DYNAMICS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN ORDER TO GRASP MORE FULLY ITS INTENDED PURPOSE OR MEANING AS THOUGHT OF AND PERCEIVED BY THE ACTING INDIVIDUAL HIMSELF.

Of course, for Weber, the ability to grasp the subjective quality of human behavior is dependent upon the scientist's ability to interpret the causal meaning of human action. According to Weber *"A CORRECT CAUSAL INTERPRETATION OF A CONCRETE COURSE OF ACTION IS ARRIVED AT WHEN THE OVERT ACTION AND THE MOTIVES HAVE BOTH BEEN CORRECTLY APPREHENDED AND AT THE SAME TIME THEIR RELATION HAS BECOME MEANINGFULLY COMPREHENSIBLE."*

RELEVANCE

- Max Weber himself has talked about the role of social action, indirectly in the formation of social system and directly in the formation of different authorities specially bureaucratic authority.

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- **Bureaucracy (Rational-Legal Action)is growing day by day and in that way it is making the whole social action as relevant everything is done in the frame of interaction which is possibly in social action only.**
- **The interaction is not only important at domestic level but also internationally.** In the context of globalization, it has become even more important, though earlier we were having many regional and continental organizations. In this way the international organization and globalization both are making the whole world as one having the similar culture, which is entirely possible with social action only. This shows that the whole world had consider similar kinds of actions and in this way, it is going to finish all kinds of problems related with particular interpretation. This shows the great significance of social actions.
- **Another important point related with it is that after identifying similar traits of culture, we are now in a position to trace some of the unwanted activities like separatist activities, terrorist activities and for that cause also, the world is becoming one-to fight against it to eradicate it from the system.** Now The terrorist attacks anywhere in the world receive worldwide condemnation and also help to fight it.

Criticism:

- **IN THE CONTEXT OF "EMPATHETIC LIAISON" THEODRE OBEL** criticizes Weber that Verstehen is not easy to be followed because it is highly based on subjectivity and in that way. Subjective perception may come in frequently. And it will be difficult for the investigator to considers the action properly.
- **IN CONTEXT OF RATIONAL ACTION IN RELATION TO A GOAL:** *Since everything is rational and is not based on one's emotion or sentiment*. Then why not all bureaucrats successfully accomplish their task. Only few achieve Excellence.
- **RATIONAL ACTION RELATED WITH VALUES AND IN RELATION TO TRADITION, BECOMES VERY MUCH SITUATIONAL FOR OBSERVER.** If the observer belongs to some traditions and value he can empathies it to some extent. But if he does not belong to the same tradition and value it would be quite difficult for him to empathies.
- **AFFECTIVE ACTION ARE VERY SENSITIVE** *because they attached emotions, impulses* and so the outburst and therefore they cannot be followed easily.
- **In the context of Value Neutrality, i**t is tough for an observer to empathies the action done before. And in this way values of the observer come in his studies. But even though, he is successful in this part he cannot stop the values of the actor to come in. Weber himself was very much conscious of this situation. *He wanted to establish sociology as value neutral. For this he suggested one thing that the observer should not orient himself to the end but rather focus heavily in the means use by the actor.* And if to gets the same result it will show that he has not taken actors values come in the studies. And in this way his studies would be value neutral.
- **IN THE CONTEXT OF DIFFERENT SITUATION,** Weber did not talk about one thing that how should an actor decide to act in a particular situation. In case of dilemma between two actions, how would he resolve the problem? Talcott Parson in his concept of pattern variables talked about this situation and explains it very systematically.

IDEAL TYPES

Ideal type may conceptualise as a kind, category, class or group of objects, things or persons with particular character that seems to be the best example of it. Weber used ideal type in a specific sense.

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To Weber, **ideal type is a mental construct, like a model, for the scrutiny and systematic characterization of a concrete situation.** Indeed, he used ideal type as a **methodological tool** to understand analyse social reality.

- **Methodology** is **the CONCEPTUAL AND LOGICAL RESEARCH PROCEDURE** by which knowledge is developed. **Max Weber was particularly concerned with the *problem of* OBJECTIVITY *in social sciences. Hence he used ideal type as a methodological tool that looks at reality objectively.* It SCRUTINIZES, CLASSIFIES, SYSTEMATIZES AND DEFINES SOCIAL REALITY without subjective bias**.

- The ideal type has nothing to do with values. Its function, **as a research tool, is for classification and defines social reality without subjective bias.** To quote **Max Weber:** "**THE IDEAL TYPICAL CONCEPT WILL DEVELOP OUR SKILL IN RESEARCH. IT IS NOT A DESCRIPTION OF REALITY BUT IT AIMS TO GIVE UNAMBIGUOUS MEANS OF EXPRESSION TO SUCH DESCRIPTION**".

- In other words, **IDEAL TYPES ARE CONCEPTS FORMULATED ON THE BASIS OF FACTS COLLECTED CAREFULLY AND ANALYTICALLY FOR EMPIRICAL RESEARCH.** In this sense, ideal types are constructs or concepts which are used as methodological devices or tools in our understanding and analysis of any social problem.

Construction of Ideal Type:

- *Ideal types are formulated by* THE ABSTRACTION AND COMBINATION OF AN INDEFINITE NUMBER OF ELEMENTS WHICH FOUND IN REALITY, ARE RARELY OR NEVER DISCOVERED IN SPECIFIC FORM. Therefore, Weber does not consider that he is establishing a new conceptual method. He emphasizes that **he is making explicit what is already done in practice.**

- For the construction of ideal types, **THE SOCIOLOGISTS SELECTS A CERTAIN NUMBER OF TRAITS FROM THE WHOLE WHICH IS OTHERWISE CONFUSING AND OBSCURE, TO CONSTITUTE AN INTELLIGIBLE ENTITY.**

FOR EXAMPLE, if we wish to **study the state of democracy in India** (or for that matter of secularism, communalism, equality, and court of law) then our first task will be to **define the concept of democracy with the help of its essential and typical characteristics.** Here we can mention some of the essential characteristics of democracy, viz., existence of a multi-party system, universal adult franchise, formation of government by people's representatives, people's participation in the decision making, equality before law, respect to majority verdict and each others view as well. ***This formulation of a pure type or an ideal type concept of democracy will guide as and work as a tool in our analysis. Any deviation from or conformity to it will unfold the reality.***

- **Ideal types, therefore, focus on the typical and the essential characteristics. Though ideal types are constructed from facts existing in reality, they do not represent or describe the total reality, they are of pure types in a logical sense.** ……According to Weber in its conceptual purity, this ideal mental construct may not be found empirically anywhere in reality'.

Characteristics of Ideal Type :

- *IDEAL TYPES ARE NOT GENERAL OR AVERAGE TYPES.* THAT IS, THEY ARE NOT DEFINED BY THE CHARACTERISTICS COMMON TO ALL PHENOMENA OR OBJECTS OF STUDY. *They are formulated on the basis of certain typical traits which are essential to the construction of an ideal type concept.*

- **Ideal types are not a presentation of total reality or they do not explain everything. They exhibit partial conception of the whole.**

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- *IDEAL TYPES ARE NEITHER A DESCRIPTION OF ANY DEFINITE CONCEPT OF REALITY, NOR A HYPOTHESIS, BUT THEY CAN AID BOTH IN DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION.* Ideal types are different in scope and usage from descriptive concepts. Its descriptive concepts can be used, for instance, in the classification of different sects, and if one wants to apply the distinction in order to analyse the importance of these for the economic activity *then one has to reformulate the concept of sect to emphasise the specific components of sectarianism which have been influential in the economic pursuit. The concept then becomes an ideal typical one, meaning that any descriptive concept can be transformed into an ideal type through abstraction and recombination of certain elements when we wish to explain or analyse rather than describe a phenomenon*.

- *In this sense we can say that* IDEAL TYPES ARE ALSO RELATED TO THE ANALYTIC CONCEPTION OF CAUSALITY, THOUGH NOT, IN DETERMINISTIC TERMS. THEY ALSO HELP IN REACHING TO GENERAL PROPOSITIONS AND IN COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS*. Ideal types serve to guide empirical research, and are used in systematization of data on historical and social reality.*

Purpose of Ideal Type*:*

- **IDEAL TYPES ARE CONSTRUCTED TO FACILITATE THE ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL QUESTION*.*** Most researchers are not fully aware of the concepts they use. As a result their formulations often tend to be imprecise and ambiguous, or as Weber himself says' the language which the historians talk contain hundreds of words which are ambiguous constructs created to meet the unconsciously conceived need for adequate expression, and whose meaning is definitely felt, but not clearly thought out'.

- **Ideal types are not formed out of a nexus of purely conceptual thought, but ARE CREATED, MODIFIED AND SHARPENED THROUGH THE EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF CONCRETE PROBLEMS.** *This, in turn, increases the precision of that analysis.* Ideal types are a methodological device which not only helps us in the analysis of empirical question, *but also in avoiding obscurity and ambiguity in the concepts used, and in increasing the accuracy of our analysis.*

- **DEVICE IN UNDERSTANDING HISTORICAL CONFIGURATIONS OR SPECIFIC HISTORICAL PROBLEMS.** For this we construct ideal types, that is, to understand how events had actually taken place and to show that if some antecedents or other events had not occurred or had occurred differently, the event we are trying to explain would have been different as well, **For example**, *because of the implementation of the land reform laws and penetration of other modernizing forces, like education, modern occupation etc. the joint family system has broken down in rural India. This means that there is a causal relation between the event (land reform, education and modern education) and the situation (the joint family). In this ideal type concept also helps in the causal explanation of a phenomenon.*

- *In Weber's work such analysis of causal relations was related to his interest in world wide comparisons or in analysis of events and establishment of general preposition.* That is, he used ideal types to build up a conception of a particular historical case, and used the same ideal type conceptions for a comparative analysis. This interdependence of history and sociology appears most clearly in Weber's conception of the ideal type.

- *Besides examining any particular case Max Weber also used idela types to analyse the abstract elements of social reality and to explain particular kinds of social behaviour.*

IDEAL TYPES IN WEBER'S WORK

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Innovating Knowledge. Inspiring Success

PROTESTANT ETHICS & RISE OF CAPITALISM

Weber constructed ideal type of capitalism by selecting a certain number of traits from the historical whole to constitute intelligible entity. This was to show that there was a spiritual affinity between Calvinism and the economic ethics of modern capitalist activity. For this he identified those components of Calvinist doctrine which he considered as of particular and significant importance for the formation of capitalist spirit.

✓ *The essence of capitalism according to Weber is embodied in those enterprises whose aim is to make maximum profit or to accumulate more and more. These are based on the rational organization of work and production. It is the conjunction of desire for profit and rational discipline which constitutes the historically unique feature of western capitalism. The desire for profit is satisfied not by speculation or conquest or adventure, but by discipline and rationality. This is possible with the help of legal administration of the modern state or rationality. This is possible with the help of legal administration of the modern state or rational bureaucracy. Hence capitalism defined as an enterprise working towards unlimited accumulation of profit and functioning according to bureaucratic rationality.*

✓ *Weber tried to show that there was a close affinity between this type of economic activity and elements of Calvinist doctrine. **According to the Calvinist ethic**, God is all powerful and above common man. Man has to work for God's glory on earth and this can be done through handwork and labour which are rational, regular and constant. The calling of the individual is to fulfill his duty to God through the moral conduct of his day to day life whether he is rich or poor. For him work is worship and there is no room for idleness and laziness. This specific character of Calvinistic belief accounted for the relation between Calvinist doctrine and the spirit of capitalism which was characterized by a unique devotion to the earning of wealth through legitimate economic activity. This is rooted in a belief in the value of efficient performance in the chosen vocation as a duty and a virtue.*

Bureaucracy

Weber's ideal type of bureaucracy comprised various elements…. such as a high degree of specialization and a clearly-defined division of labour, with tasks distributed as official duties. Hierarchical structure of authority with clearly circumscribed areas of command and responsibility. Establishment of a formal body of rules to govern the operation of the organization and administration based on written documents. Impersonal relationships between organizational members and the clients. Recruitment of personnel based on ability and technical knowledge. Long term employment, promotion on the basis of seniority and merit, fixed salary and the separation of private and official income.

Though examples of developed bureaucracies existed in different parts of the world prior to the emergence of modern capitalism, it is only within this that organizations are found which approximate to this deal typical form. Weber used these abstract elements of bureaucracy to explain a concrete phenomenon.

Types of Authority

To understand the various aspects of authority Max Weber constructed its ideal types in terms of three types of authority. These are traditional, rational and charismatic.

- *Traditional authority is based upon the belief in the sanctity of age old customs and rules.*

- *Rational authority is maintained by laws. Decrees, regulations.*

- *Charismatic authority is characterized by exceptional virtue possessed by or attributed to the leader by those who follow him, have confidence in him and are devoted to him.*

These three ideal type of concepts may be used to understand concrete political regimes, most of which contain certain elements of each.

Type of Action

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According to Max Weber "Sociology is a science which attempts the interpretative understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effect". Here we can point out a few important elements of social action:

- *It includes all human behaviour*

- *It attaches a subjects meaning to it.*

- *The acting individual or individuals take into account the behaviour of others*

- *It is oriented in its course.*

Hence the construction of an ideal type of social action helps the sociologists social action"which has the merit of clear understandability and lack of ambiguity".

Weber has talked about four types of social action……… Since reality present a mixture of the four pure types of action, for out analysis and understanding we separate them analytically into pure or ideal types. For instance, the use of rational ideal types can help in measuring irrational deviation and we can understand particular empirical action by interpreting as to which of the four types of action it most closely approximates.

POWER AND AUTHORITY

In ordinary usage, the term 'power' means strength or the capacity to control. ***Sociologists describe it as the ability of an individual or group to fulfill its desires and implement its decisions and ideas.*** It involves the ability to influence and/or control the behaviour of others even against their will.

- For Max Weber, ***power is an aspect of social relationship.*** It refers to the possibility of imposing one's will upon the behaviour of another person. **Power is present in social interaction and creates situations of inequality since the one who, has power imposes it on others. The impact of power varies from situation to situation. On the one hand it depends upon the extent to which it is opposed or resisted by the others.** Weber says that power can be exercised in all walks of life.

- *It is not restricted to a battlefield or to politics. It is to be observed in the market place, on a lecture platform, at a social gathering, in sports, scientific discussion and even through charity. For example, giving alms or 'daan' to a beggar is a subtle way of exercising your superior economic power.*

- Weber discusses two contrasting sources of power. These are as follows:

- Power which is derived from a constellation of interests that develop in a formally free market. For example, a group of producers of sugar controls supply of their production in the market to maximize their profit.

- An established system of authority that allocates the right to command and the duty to obey. For example, in the army, a jawan is obliged to obey the command of this officer. The officer derives his power through an established system of authority.

EXTRA READINGS

POWER AND THE FORMS OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Weber also provided some general concepts for sociological analysis, which shaped the form taken by his descriptions of the world religions. Most basically, Weber looked upon the organization of society as involving struggles for power. For Weber, no less than for Marx, social life is about inequality, which can take many forms. In a given situation, inequality is not necessarily economic. Economic inequality is

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important and frequently plays a leading part, but it is only one form taken by inequality. Inequalities are the basis for the organization of groups, and the struggle over inequalities is most commonly between groups. Therefore, the key element in Weber's account of society is his account of stratification.

Stratification

Inequalities are arranged on three dimensions, but all are forms of power. In Weber's terminology, power is the capacity to get done what you want despite resistance from others. For example, economic wealth is a form of power, giving the capacity to get what one desires. All forms of inequality are inequalities in power. The three dimensions of power are (1) economic, (2) prestige and (3) pure power. They are the basis for three characteristically different forms of grouping: the class, the status group and the party. It is among and between these three kinds of groups that the historically decisive struggles over power are apt to take place.

Weber's conception of social class is much akin to Marx's. Class is defined in terms of position in the process of economic production, specifically in terms of one's relationship to a market: what does one have to sell on the market? Is it labour power, or does one have products, or what? Weber does not think of classes as real groups, i.e. persons self- consciously interacting with one another; rather, they are merely categories, the product of a sociological analyst's definitions.

CLASSES

A class is more a category than a group, i.e. a collection of people identified together on the basis of some common characteristic. We can have as many or as few classes as we like, depending on how grossly or finely we draw the criteria.

We can reduce the number of classes basically to two, by making the distinction between those who sell labour power on the market and those who buy it, i.e. Marx's proletariat and bourgeoisie. Within just the one category, e.g. those (workers) who sell labour power, we can increase the number of categories by distinguishing the broad kinds of labour power sold, e.g. is it skilled or unskilled, manual or non-manual? We can multiply it up to an enormous number of classes by making the criterion of common position the specific kind of labour power being disposed of, e.g. is it the capacity to fix plumbing, to repair electronic wiring, to lay bricks, or to dig ditches? Contrary to Marx's assumption, there is nothing naturally unified about a class, and the social conditions which cause classes to act as co-ordinated social units in the struggle for power only rarely arise. The members of a class often react to situations in the same way—what Weber termed 'mass action'—because, of course, they share a similar background and experience, but they are not aware of one another's response and are certainly not acting out of any sense of a joint venture in so responding.

The second form Weber describes is the status group. Status groups are real groups: the very specification of such a group involves and is dependent upon mutual recognition by its members. The inequality which separates classes is economic, the kind of returns which can be expected from the market relative to the things to be sold there, but status groups are differentiated by prestige, i.e. the level of esteem in which people hold themselves and are held by others.

STATUS GROUPS

A status group is a collection of people who recognise themselves as equals, who look upon one another as equally worthy, and who look up to and down on other social groups. A status group involves shared understandings, mutual recognition among its members and, of course, acknowledgement from its superiors and inferiors of its standing in the general scale of social position.

Thus there is mutual awareness and some—at least diffusely—co-ordinated action integral to the very existence of a status group. The mechanism of such a group's existence is closure. It includes some and excludes others; it takes steps to ensure that those who are not equals are kept out.

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From an economic point of view, a status group is defined in terms of consumption, not production. What makes someone an equal is how he or she lives, the lifestyle, as Weber termed it. For example, to lead the life of an educated, cultured and leisured person might be the basis for mutual acknowledgement. In the end the status group is dependent upon economic inequality because the capacity to lead a certain kind of life presupposes the wealth to fund it. It is not the wealth as such, however, that is decisive. Further, the status group's attempt to preserve its existence and identity through closure characteristically involves economic intervention in attempts to restrain the operation of the market in order to prevent the hallmarks of a lifestyle becoming available to mere purchase (which would directly link them to wealth). The Indian caste system is the extreme case of a status group system, where the operation of the market has been restricted to such an extent that even jobs are retained within the various caste groups through inheritance. Inevitably, class and status are mutually inimical forms of social organisation, since the existence of one—status group—involves some reduction in the operation of the conditions—the market—conducive to the formation of class. The conditions under which the status group can thrive, Weber held, are those of long-term social stability—which is why they occupy such prominence in his discussion of traditional China and India. In situations of rapid social and economic change, social class possesses greater prominence.

The party is the third element in Weber's scheme. Whereas the status group has a diffuse sense of solidarity and common interest, providing a more promising basis for the organisation of co-ordinated collective action than that available to the class, this capacity for collective action is not easily going to amount to the focused, carefully calculated pursuit of common interest, which is what the party is all about.

PARTIES

The party is a self-conscious organisation for the pursuit of power. As a body created specifically for the purpose of struggling for power, it therefore works out its objectives and organisation to maximise its chances of attaining power.

The party, as Weber intends this term, is an analytical notion and does not just refer to formal political parties. It includes any and all associations developed purely for the sake of winning power. For example, it can include factions in business, leisure and religious organisations as well as large-scale political power. Such a group has self-awareness, mutual recognition among its members of shared specific purposes, and the capacity for closely concerted action in pursuit of them. It is the most effective vehicle in the struggle for power in society. Parties can, of course, attempt to base themselves in specific social groups; they can set out the goal of winning power in society for a specific category, e.g. a socialist party might aim to take political power for the working class, setting out to recruit from among its members, and therefore actively seek working-class members. However, they need not do so, and may seek power for goals and interests that are not those of one, or any specific, class, and may draw their membership from different social categories.

ELEMENTS OF AUTHORITY

For a system of authority to exist the following elements must be present:

- An individual ruler/master or a group of rulers/masters

- An individual/group that is ruled

- The will of the ruler to influence the conduct of the ruled which may be expressed through commands

- Evidence of the influence of the rulers in terms of compliance or obedience shown by the ruled.

11A/10, Old Rajender Nagar, Near Agrawal Sweet, Delhi
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E-mail : infovrc2016@gmail.com
Website : www.vikashranjan.org
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> - Direct or indirect evidence which shows that the ruled have internalized and accepted the fact that the ruler's commands must be obeyed.
>
>   We see that authority implies a reciprocal relationship between the rulers and the ruled. The rulers believe that they have the legitimate right to exercise their authority. On the other hand, the ruled accept this power and comply with it reinforcing its legitimacy.

TYPES OF AUTHORITY

According to Weber are **three systems of legitimation,** each with its **corresponding norms** which justifies, the power to command. It is these *systems of legitimation* which as designated as the *types of authority.* They are:

- Traditional authority
- Charismatic authority
- Rational-legal authority

- **TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY:** *This system of legitimation flows from traditional action. In other words, it is based on customary law and the sanctity of ancient traditions. It is based on the belief that a certain authority is to be respected because it has existed since time immemorial.*

- In traditional authority, rulers enjoy personal authority by *virtue of their inherited status*. *Their commands are in accordance with customs and they also possess the right to extract compliance from the ruled.* Often, they abuse their power. The persons who obey them are 'subjects' in the fullest sense of the term. They obey their master out of personal loyalty or a pious regard for his time-honoured status.

- *Why did the 'lower' castes bear the atrocities inflicted by the 'upper' castes for centuries?* One way of explaining this is *because the authority of the 'upper' castes had the backing of tradition and antiquity.* The 'lower' castes, some say, had become socialized into accepting their oppression. Thus, we can see that traditional authority is based on the belief in the sacred quality of long-standing traditions. This gives legitimacy to those who exercise authority.

- Traditional authority *does not function through written rules of laws.* It is *transmitted by inheritance down the generations*. Traditional authority is carried out with the help of relatives and personal favorites.

- *In modern times, the incidence of traditional authority has declined.* Monarchy, the classic example of traditional authority still exist, but in a highly diluted form. The Queen of England is a traditional figure of authority but as you may be aware, she does not actually exercise her authority. The laws of the land are enacted in her name, but their content is decided by the legislators, the representatives of the people.

- Briefly, traditional authority derives its legitimacy from longstanding traditions which enable some to command and compel others to obey. It is hereditary authority and does not require written rules. The 'masters' exercise their authority with the help of loyal relatives and friends. Weber considers this kind of authority as irrational. It is therefore rarely found in modern developed societies.

- **CHARISMATIC AUTHORITY:** *Charisma means an extraordinary quality possessed by some individuals. This gives such people unique powers to capture the fancy and devotion of ordinary people. Charismatic authority is based on extraordinary devotion to an individual and to the way of life preached by this person. The legitimacy of such authority rests upon the*

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belief in supernatural or magical powers of the person. The charismatic leader 'proves' his her power through miracles, military and other victories or the dramatic prosperity of the disciples. As long as charismatic leaders continue to prove 'their miraculous powers in the yes of their disciples, their authority stays intact, type of social action that charismatic authority is related to is affective action.

- Charismatic authority is not dependent on customary beliefs or written rules. It is purely the result of the special qualities of the leader who governs or rules in his personal capacity. Charismatic authority is not organized; therefore is no paid staff or administrative set-up. The leader and his assistants do not have a regular occupation and often reject their family responsibilities. These characteristics sometimes make charismatic leaders revolutionaries, as they have rejected all the conventional social obligations and norms.

- Based, as it is, on the personal qualities of an individual, the problem of succession arises with the death of disappearance of the leader. In order to transmit the original message of the leader, some sort of organization develops. The original charisma gets transformed either into traditional authority or rational legal-authority. Weber calls this **ROUTINISATION OF CHARISMA**.

- If the charismatic figure is succeeded by a son/daughter or some close relative. Traditional authority results. If on the other hand, charismatic qualities are identified and written down, then it changes into rational legal authority, where anyone acquiring these qualities can become a leader. Charismatic authority can thus be described as unstable and temporary.

- Saints, prophets and some political leaders are examples of such authority, Kabir, Nanak, Jesus, Mohammed, Lenin and Mahatma Gandhi, to name a few were charismatic leaders. They were revered by people for their personal qualities and the message they preached, not because they represented traditional or rational-legal authority.

- **RATIONAL-LEGAL AUTHORITY:** *The term refers to a system of authority which is both, rational and legal. It is vested in a regular administrative staff who operate in accordance with certain written rules and laws. Those who exercise authority are appointed to do so on the basis of their achieved qualifications which are prescribed and codified. Those in authority consider it a profession and are paid a salary. Thus, it is a rational system.*

- It is legal because it is in accordance with the laws of the land which people recognize and feel obliged to obey. The people acknowledge and respect the legality of both, the ordinance and rules as well as the positions or titles of those who implement the rules.

- Rational-legal authority is a typical feature of modern society. It is the reflection of the process of rationalization. Remember, Weber consider "**rationalization as the key feature of western civilization"**. It is, according to Weber, a specific product of human thought and deliberation. **Example of rational-legal authority-** We obey the tax collector because we believe in the legality of the ordinances he enforces. We also believe that the tax collector has the legal right to send us taxation notices. We stop our vehicles when the traffic policemen order us to do so because we respect the authority vested in him by the law. Modern societies are governed not by individuals, but by laws and ordinances. We obey the policeman because of his position and his uniform which represents the law, not because he is Mr. 'X' or Mr. 'Y'. Rational-legal authority exists not just in the political and administrative spheres, but also in economic organizations like banks and industries as well as in religious and cultural organizations.

RELEVANCE:

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Max Weber's Concept and Types of Power and authority is relevant in modern era in following ways:

✓ **Bureaucratic authority is unusually accepted phenomenon and mostly its works on the basis on of the model of Max Weber.** It works as a controlling and regulating mechanism for human being.

✓ **Charismatic authority also functions worldwide even today.** Political leaders,
religious leaders, sports person put a charismatic impact on the mind of the people. Pope, Shankaryacharya, Dalai Lama are a few examples to quote here. There are some new emerging ones like Nirmal Baba etc.

✓ **Traditional Authority is seen in families.** In India the situation is seen in the form of caste politics for which Andre Beteille has given the term Caste Arithmetic, Whereas Dipankar Gupta has described it in the form of Caste Chemistry. Apart from it, caste Associations and parties based on caste are also prevalent in India.

CRITICISM:

J. Haebermas has criticized Weber's concept of authority under the title Legitimation Crisis in different ways:

✓ Weber has talked about three kinds of authority and that people community work under different authorities in different situations. Apart from it Weber has defined authority as legitimate power and legitimacy is nothing but the acceptance given by people on certain traits.

✓ **BUT IT IS VERY MUCH CLEAR THAT THE CO-EXISTENCE OF RATIONAL LEGAL AUTHORITY AND TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY IS NOT POSSIBLE BECAUSE IN MOST OF CASES, THEY ARE IN CONTRADICTION WITH EACH OTHER. IN THIS WAY WEBER HAS CREATED CRISIS OF LEGITIMACY WHILE DESCRIBING THERE UNDER THE SAME HEAD AUTHORITY. ACTUALLY BOTH ARE DIFFERENT AND THEY MUST HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED DIFFERENT NAMES.**

✓ Haebermas, says that Weber has not appropriately presented the distinction between authority and power forexample **the description of attaining power through party is wrong in the sense that, it is rather authority and not power.**

✓ **It is also wrong to say that a particular persons in a party gets enormous power because that person himself acts under the indentation of legitimacy.**

BUREAUCRACY

*Bureaucracy is the machinery which implements rational-legal authority. MAX WEBER WAS THE FIRST TO GIVE AN ELABORATE ACCOUNT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF BUREAUCRACY AS WELL AS ITS CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES. His work is usually taken as the starting point in the sociology of organizations. Weber believed that bureaucracy is the defining characteristic of modern industrial society. His work is mainly concerned with a comparison of bureaucracy and the forms of organisation found in pre-industrial societies. WEBER'S VIEW OF BUREAUCRACY MUST BE SEEN IN THE CONTEXT OF HIS GENERAL THEORY OF SOCIAL ACTION. HE ARGUED THAT ALL HUMAN ACTION IS DIRECTED MEANINGS. THUS IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND AND EXPLAIN ACTION, THE MEANINGS AND MOTIVES WHICH LIE BEHIND IT MUST BE APPRECIATED. Weber identified various types of action which are distinguished by the meanings on which they are based. These include 'affective' or 'emotional a*ction', traditional action' and 'rational action'.

Rational action involves a clear awareness of goal. Rational action also involves a systematic assessment of the various means of attaining a goal and the selection of the most appropriate

means. Thus a capitalist in the building trade aimed to maximize profit would carefully evaluate factors such as alternative sites raw materials, building techniques, labour costs and the potential market in order to realize his goal. This would entail precise calculations of costs and careful weighing of the advantages and disadvantage of the various factors involved. His action is rational since, in Weber's words, rational action is the methodical; attainment of a definitely given and practical end by means of an increasingly precise calculation of means.

Weber believed that rational action had become the dominant mode of action in modern industrial society. He expressed it in a wide variety of areas: in state administration, business, education, science and even in western classical music. He referred to the increasing dominance of rational action as the process of rationalization.

Bureaucratization is the prime example of this process. A bureaucratic organisation has a clearly define goals. It involves precise calculation of the means to attain this goal and systematically eliminated those factors which stand in the way of the achievement of its objectives. Bureaucracy is therefore rational action in an institutional form.

Bureaucracy is also a system of control. It is a hierarchical organisation in which superiors strictly control and discipline the activities of subordinates. Weber argued that in any large-scale task, some must coordinate and control the activities of others. He states that "the imperative coordination of the action of a considerable number of men requires control of staff persons".

In order for this control to be effective it must be regarded as legitimate. There must be a 'minimum of voluntary submission' to higher authority. Legitimacy can be based on various types of meanings. This legitimacy can take the form of traditional authority or rational authority. The form of the organizational structure derives from the types of legitimacy on which it is based. In Weber's words 'according to the kind of legitimacy which is claimed, the type of obedience, the kind of administrative staff developed to guarantee it and the mode or exercising authority, will all differ fundamentally'. To understand bureaucracy, it is therefore, necessary to appreciate the type of legitimacy on which bureaucratic control is based.

Weber attributed the following characteristics to bureaucracy:

- **Formal Organization of Work.**

- **The principles of FIXED AND OFFICIAL JURISDICTIONAL AREAS which are generally ordered by rules**. The regular activities associated with each status are distributed in a fixed way as **OFFICIAL DUTIES.**

- **The STRUCTURE OF AUTHORITY IS CLEARLY DELINEATED AND STRICTLY DELIMITED** by rules.

- The principle of office hierarchy and of levels of graded authority with a firmly ordered **SYSTEM OF SUPER-ORDINATION AND SUBORDINATION** in which there is a supervision of the lower offices by the higher ones.

- A **DIVISION OF LABOR** based on **specialized functions and responsibilities.**

- **A SYSTEM OF WRITTEN DOCUMENTS ('THE FILES)** defining the procedure as well as the rights and duties of people in all positions.

- Office management based on **THOROUGH AND EXPERT TRAINING.**

- Selection for **EMPLOYMENT AND PROMOTION BASED ON TECHNICAL COMPETENCE, SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE OR SKILL.**

- **OFFICE-HOLDING AS A 'VOCATION.'** Official work is no longer a secondary activity but something that demands **the full working capacity of the official**.

- Provision for **PECUNIARY COMPENSATION AS A FIXED SALARY.**

- **APPOINTMENT OF EMPLOYEES** by **higher officials, rather than by election.**

- **THE SYSTEM OF TENURE FOR LIFE.** Normally the position of the bureaucrat is held for life as specified by contract.

- **A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE SPHERE OF OFFICE AND THAT OF THE PRIVATE AFFAIRS OF THE INDIVIDUAL.** The bureaucratic official is not an owner of the enterprise and therefore not entitled to the use of official facilities for personal needs except as defined by strict rules.

- **The practice of performing specialized administrative functions according to purely objective considerations and the official discharge of business according to calculable rules and 'without regard for persons.'**

Weber mentions the following characteristics of officials in bureaucratic set-up*:*

- **Office-work is a 'vocation' for officials**

- **They are specially trained for their jobs.**

- **Their qualifications determine their position or rank in the office**

- **They are expected to do their work honestly.**

Their official positions also have a bearing on their personal lives. Let us see how.

- Bureaucratic officials enjoy a high status in society.

- Often, their jobs carry transfer liabilities. By this we mean that they may be transferred from one place or department to another leading to some instability in their professional and personal lives. Officials receive salaries not in accordance with productivity but status. The higher their rank, the higher their salaries. They also receive benefits like pension, provident fund, medical and other facilities. Their jobs-are considered very secure.

- Officials enjoy good career prospects. They can move from the lower rungs of the bureaucratic ladder to higher ones if they work in a disciplined manner.

Causes of development of Bureaucracy

- **MONEY ECONOMY:** Weber maintains that a developed money economy is necessary before a bureaucratic administrative can come into being. **A BUREAUCRATIC ADMINISTRATION REQUIRES A STABLE SYSTEM OF TAXATION; THE LATER IN TURN REQUIRES A MONEY ECONOMY.** No proper bureaucratic administration could develop in olden days due to the prevalence of barter system and the absence of a money economy.

- **INCREASE IN ORGANIZATIONAL SIZE:** The large size of the **MODERN NATION STATE, THE JOINT STOCK COMPANY AND THE INDUSTRIALIZED FACTORY GAVE RISE TO BUREAUCRATIC ADMINISTRATION. A LARGE SIZE NECESSARILY REQUIRES DIVISION OF**

- LABOUR. **TECHNICAL EFFICIENCY REQUIRES EXPERTISE. COORDINATION REQUIRES HIERARCHY AND RULES.** Hence bureaucratic administration tends to grow up in every large-scale organization.

- **NATURE OF ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS:** The increasing complexity of civilization and the consequent demands upon administration also led to bureaucratization. **THUS THE GROWING WEALTH OF THE INFLUENTIAL STRATA AND THE DESIRE FOR THE POSSESSION AND CONSUMPTION OF GOODS AND SERVICES OF VARIOUS KINDS LED TO THE PERFORMANCE OF NEW FUNCTION REQUIRING NEW EXPERTISE AND WIDESPREAD NETWORKS.**

- The increased emphasis on law and order and the demand for functions of social welfare give rise to new agencies and development of old ones. Modern means of transport and communication, such as highways, railways, telegraph and telephone, facilitate the functioning of bureaucracies and help bureaucratization.

- **REQUIREMENT OF EFFICIENCY:** Capitalist **market economy is based upon competition and competition compels increasing efficiency among all competitions. Since efficiency requires bureaucratization,** modern capitalist enterprises are unequalled models of strict bureaucratic organisation.

- **MARKET ECONOMY:** A market functions without regard for person. **Hence a market economy necessarily leads to impersonality, which in turn helps bureaucratization.**

- **RULE OF LAW:** The emergence of the conception of the rule of law in modern times has also led to bureaucratization. The rule of law means equality before the law, or lack of arbitrariness, which is ensured by bureaucratization to some extent.

- **CONCENTRATION OF THE MEANS OF ADMINISTRATION: The rise of the bureaucratic structure has been associated with the concentration of the means of management in the hands of the master.** Thus the bureaucratization of the army took place after the transfer of army service from the propertied to the propertyless. Earlier, the soldier was himself the owner of the material means of warfare that the army took a bureaucratic form. Before the rise of the national state, feudal vassals and tax farmers owned the means of administration. **In the nation state, feudal vassals and tax farmers owned the means of administration. In the nation state these means came to be owned by the central authority resulting in bureaucratization.**

- **LEVELLING OF SOCIAL DIFFERENCES:** Bureaucracy has mainly **resulted from modern mass democracy,** which has involved the leveling of economic and social difference. **Mass democracy makes a clean sweep of feudal privileges in administration, and replaces these with equality before the law.**

- **Permanent Character of the Bureaucratic Machine:** Weber points out that once it is fully established, bureaucracy is among those social structures which are hardest to destroy. It is powerful instrument of the first order, and hence is used to fulfill societal objectives and the objectives of those who happen to capture power.

A Critical Evaluation Weber's theory of bureaucracy:

Weber's theory of bureaucracy may be said to be classical. It has come to be widely accepted. In particular it has come to be adopted by bureaucrats in justification of their behaviour. However, it has been subjected to much criticism also. We deal with some of the criticisms below.

- **R.K. MERTON: DYSFUNCTIONS OF BUREAUCRACY:** R.K. Merton argued that certain aspects of the bureaucratic procedure may be dysfunctional to the organization. In particular, this may encourage behavior that inhibits they realization of organizational goals.

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- *Firstly the bureaucrat is trained to* **COMPLY STRICTLY WITH THE RULES.** *But when the situation arises which may not be covered by the rules, then this training may lead to* **INFLEXIBILITY AND TIMIDITY.** The bureaucrat has **not been taught to improvise and innovate and in addition he may well be afraid to do so**. His career incentives such as promotions are designed to reward. Thus he may be inclined to bend the rules.

- *Secondly, THE DEVOTION TO THE RULES encouraged in bureaucratic organizations may lead to DISPLACEMENT OF GOALS.* There is a tendency for conformity of official regulation to become an end in itself rather than means towards an end. In this way so called bureaucratic red tape may stand in the way of providing an efficient service to the clients of the organisation.

- *Thirdly, THE EMPHASIS ON IMPERSONALITY in bureaucratic procedures may lead to FRICTION BETWEEN OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC.* For example, clients in a job centre or maternity clinic may expect concern and sympathy for their particular problems. The business like and impersonal treatment they might receive can lead to bureaucratic being seen as unsympathetic and arrogant. As a result clients sometimes feel that they have been badly served by bureaucratic.

- **PETER BLAU AND ALVIN GOULDNER:** *FORMAL AND INFORMAL STRUCTURE:* Peter Blau and Gouldner have criticized Weber for his **over emphasis on elements of formal structure in the ideal type. According to Weber, the bureaucracy with the former type of organizational structure is likely to be more efficient in attaining organizational goals.** *On the basis of his study of the functioning of* **FEDERAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCY IN WASHINGTON** *PETER BLAU argues that* **the presence of both formal and informal structures in the organisation may together enhance the efficiency of the organization,** *on the other hand the* **presence of formal structure may act as a hindrance towards the attainment of organizational goals.**

- *ALVIN GOULDNER* on the basis of his studies of the **GYPSUM PLANT IN USA shows that** *formal structures may not always be effective in attaining the organizational goals.* In fact the types of organizational structure depend on the nature of goals to be attained and the nature of the environment in which the goals are to be pursued. *GOULDNER FOUND THAT ENFORCEMENT OF FORMAL REGULATIONS IN THE PROCESSING UNIT OF THE GYPSUM PLANT PROVED FUNCTIONAL FOR ATTAINING GREATER EFFICIENCY BUT SIMILAR EFFORTS IN MINING UNIT PROVED DYSFUNCTIONAL. IT WAS REALIZED THAT THE MINING UNITS FUNCTIONED MORE EFFICIENTLY WITH AN INFORMAL ORGANISATION SET UP THAN A FORMAL ONE.* Thus both these studies highlighted fact that formal structure alone is not always the most efficient way to attain the organizational goals.

- **TOM BURNS AND G. M. STALKER: MECHANISTIC AND ORGANISMIC SYSTEM:** Gouldner conclusions are supported by the finding of research by Burns and Stalker. **From a study of 20 Scottish and English firms mainly in the electronics industry, Burns and Stalker argue that bureaucratic organizations which are formal and rigid and are termed as MECHANISTIC SYSTEM. They are suitable for dealing with predictable familiar and routine situations. They are not well suited to the rapidly changing technical and commercial situations of many sectors of modern industry such as electronic industries.** Since change is a hall mark of a modern society, mechanistic type of bureaucratic organizations may well be untypical of the future. **Instead ORGANIC TYPE OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES are more likely represent the future trend. IN THE ORGANIC TYPE IF ORGANIZATIONS THE AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY ARE NOT CLEARLY DEFINED, THE RIGID HIERARCHIES AND SPECIALIZED DIVISION OF LABOUR OF MECHANISTIC SYSTEMS TEND TO DISAPPEAR, THE INDIVIDUAL IS ALSO MOTIVATED TO EMPLOY HIS SKILLS TO FURTHER THE GOALS OF THE ORGANIZATION RATHER THAN SIMPLY CARRY OUT A PRE DETERMINED OPERATION. When a problem arises all those who have knowledge and expertise to contribute to the solution. Tasks are**

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shaped by the nature of the problem rather than being pre defined. **COMMUNICATION** consists of information rather than command of information, advice rather than instruction and decision. Although a hierarchy exists, decision tends to become blurred as communication travels in all directions and top management no longer has the sole prerogative over important decisions nor is it monopolized knowledge necessary to make them.

- **Bureaucracy: a Marxian perspective:** To Weber, bureaucracy is a response to the administrative requirements of all industrial societies. Whatever, capitalistic or communist, the nature of owners of the factors of production makes relatively little difference to the need for bureaucratic control? **BUT FROM THE MARXIAN PERSPECTIVE, BUREAUCRACY CAN ONLY BE UNDERSTOOD IN RELATION TO THE FACTORS OF PRODUCTION. THUS IN CAPITALISTIC SOCIETIES, WHERE THE FORCES OF PRODUCTION ARE OWNED BY A MINORITY, THE RULING CLASS, THE STATE BUREAUCRACY WILL INEVITABLE, REPRESENT THE INTEREST OF THAT CLASS. THEREFORE FROM THE MARXIAN POINT OF VIEW BUREAUCRACY IS AN AGENT OF EXPLOITATION OF ONE CLASS BY THE OTHER.** According to Marxian theory, in socialist society, the bureaucracy should be replaced by new truly democratic institutions.
- **LENIN BELIEVED THAT AFTER THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT WAS ESTABLISHED THERE WOULD BE A STEADY DECLINE IN STATE BUREAUCRACY.** *He recognized that some form of administration was necessary but look forward to the proposal outlined by Marx and Engels. He thought that administrators should be directly appointed and should be simplified to the point where basic literacy was sufficient for their performance.* In this way everybody would have the skills necessary to participate in the administrative process.
- An even more valiant attempt to remove bureaucratic control as made in China under the leadership of Chairman Mao during the cultural revolution wherein **MAO INTRODUCED CERTAIN INNOVATIVE IDEAL LIKE ROLE SHIFTING SYSTEM AND COLLECTIVE DECISION MAKING TO FREE THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATIONS FORM THE RIGID HIERARCHY AND CENTRALIZED DECISION MAKING.** Similar attempts have also been made in Yugoslavia and some other countries.
- HOWEVER, NEITHER LENIN NOR MAO SUCCEEDED IN DOING AWAY BUREAUCRACY FROM RUSSIAN AND CHINES SOCIETIES RESPECTIVELY. **Milovan Dijilas** *also draws a similar picture about the erstwhile USSR with particular emphasis on what he sees as exploitative nature of bureaucratic control.* According to Dijilas political bureaucracy in the erstwhile USSR directed the economy for their own benefits. The mass of population appeared to have had little opportunity to participate in or control the state administration. Thus the Marxian dream of democratically governed society freed from bureaucratic control remains only a dream.

PROTESTANT ETHICS AND THE SPIRIT OF CAPITALISM

In order to overcome the methodological problem of defining Capitalism and Protestant Ethic (Religion and Economy), Max Weber made use of the concept of ideal type. **Protestant Ethic does not refer to any particular theological doctrine but a set of values and belief system that make up a religious ideal. Capitalism, in its ideal type, is thought of by Weber to be that complex activity designed specifically to maximize profit through the careful and intentional exercise of rational organization and management of production.** But capitalism as an economic enterprise designed to maximize profit existed all over the world. **However, there is something unique about Western capitalism – the idea of unlimited accumulation beyond the notion of maximum profit and the conviction that the desire for profit must be tempered (mediated) by discipline and science, not by speculation and adventure.**

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- **HIS THEORY IS ONE OF IMPORTANT STUDIES OF WEBER'S HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGY. THIS IS ONE OF THE BEST MANIFESTATIONS OF THE APPLICATION OF WEBER'S METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES I.E.** *CAUSAL PLURALISM, IDEAL TYPE AND VERSTEHEN APPROACH.* Besides exploring the nature of two important sociological phenomena, religion and modern capitalism, **IT ALSO ENUNCIATES THE BASIS FOR AN ALTERNATIVE THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE WHICH FOCUSES ON IDEAS AS AN INDEPENDENT SOURCE OF CHANGE.**

- **WEBER BEGINS WITH THE REJECTION OF THE THEN CONTEMPORARY MARXIST VIEW WHICH REGARDED ECONOMIC SUBSTRUCTURE AS THE ULTIMATE CAUSE OF ALL SOCIAL CHANGE.** According to Weber, **SUCH A ONE SIDED VIEW IS OVER SIMPLIFICATION OF THE COMPLEX SOCIAL REALITY. NO SOCIAL PHENOMENON CAN BE ADEQUATELY EXPLAINED IN TERMS OF A SINGLE CAUSE ALONE. IN FACT EACH SOCIAL PHENOMENON IS THE RESULT OF A NUMBER OF CAUSES INTERACTING SIMULTANEOUSLY.** According to Weber, Marxian view on the development of capitalism can at best be regarded as an ideal type construction highlighting the role of economic factor which contribute to the rise of capitalism.

- **HE ALSO REJECTED ENGEL'S VIEW THAT PROTESTANTISM ROSE IN EUROPE AS A LEGITIMIZING IDEOLOGY TO NASCENT CAPITALISM WHICH HAD ALREADY COME INTO EXISTENCE.** Instead he emphasized the role of ideal as an independent source of change. **Refuting Engel's argument he further states that capitalism existed in an embryo form in Babylon, Roman, Chinese and Indian societies and in China and India other material conditions required for the development of capitalism also existed at certain stages in their history. But nowhere does it characterize the development of modern capitalism. This phenomenon is peculiar to western society alone. THE QUESTION ARISES AS TO WHY THESE EMBRYOS DEVELOPED INTO THE MODERN FORM OF CAPITALISM ONLY IN THE WEST AND NOWHERE ELSE.** An explanation in terms of the internal dynamics of economic forces alone is unable to account for this peculiarity. It is necessary to take into account specific ethos of the early European capitalistic entrepreneurs and realize that this was precisely what was absent in other civilizations.

- **ON THE BASIS OF AN ANALYSIS OF STATISTICAL RECORDS WEBER BEGINS WITH THE STATISTICAL FACT – BUSINESS LEADERS AND OWNERS OF CAPITAL AS WELL AS THE HIGHER GRADES OF SKILLED LABOUR PERSONNEL OF MODERN ENTERPRISES WERE OVERWHELMINGLY PROTESTANT.** This was not merely a contemporary phenomenon but also a historical fact, tracing the association back to early centers of capitalistic development in the 16th and the 17th centuries. **AFTER ESTABLISHING THE STATISTICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROTESTANT POPULATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM, WEBER PROCEEDS TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF A LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO.** Weber started to search for *the ideas which contribute to form psychological motivations manifested in the spirit of capitalism.* For Weber, these ideas lay in the beliefs and the practices of certain Protestant groups – Calvinists, whose manner of life was characterized by asceticism. Weber elaborated these motivations in the form of an ideal type which should be as coherent as possible without aspiring thereby to reflect historical reality. He sought by means of this rational utopia to understand how these motivations operated in the actuality to.

According to Weber, Capitalists needs a great desire of having more and more property. And this desire did not only come with the advent of industrialization. But rather it was in the system inn one of the other forms. Followings types of capitalism are noted:

- Booty Capitalists: When capital is acquired by theft, robbery etc, it is called booty capitalists. It was popular in ancient days.

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- Pariah Capitalists: This kind of capitalism where money was lent to earn more interest and so more profit.
- Traditional Capitalists: This kind of capitalism was proved in Medieval Europe in which capital was gained by traditional methods. That is why there informal relations between masters and workers.
- Modern Capitalists: Efficiency and discipline are necessary for modern capitalism. The labourer are greatly controlled and so they consider hard work as their religion. The development of modern capitalism is the result of the industrial revolution in which new model of production were developed like Mechanization, factory system, formal rules and regulations and the only reason of high inclination of people towards this system was profit making.

- The initial impetus for Weber's famous work, (1904-1905), "The Protestant Ethnic and the Spirit of Capitalism", centered around two general observations, viz, **IN COUNTLESS PLACES IN THE WORLD GREAT MATERIAL ACHIEVEMENTS HAD RESULTED FROM THE WORK OF MONASTIC ORDERS DEDICATED TO A LIFE OF THE SPIRIT, AND SPECIFICALLY ASCETIC PROTESTANT SECTS WERE NOTED FOR THEIR ECONOMIC SUCCESS**. "There appeared to (be) a paradoxically positive relationship between **ASCETIC RELIGIOUS BELIEF AND ECONOMIC ENTERPRISE.** *By looking specifically at Calvinism, Weber began to see indisputable signs of causal correlations.*

  Weber identified a number of values embedded in Protestantism which are in harmony with the spirit of capitalism.

- **THE SHIFT FROM RITUALISTIC AND OTHER-WORLDLY ORIENTATION TO DOWN-TO-EARTH PRAGMATISM:** The **finite mind of man cannot comprehend the infinite mind of the absolute and transcendent God who created the world for His own glory. Therefore, there is no point in indulging in mysticism; rather, man should seek to understand the natural order.** This is essentially an anti-ritualistic attitude that favors **the development of science and rational investigation**.

- **CHANGED ATTITUDE TOWARD WORK (HARD WORK):** Protestant Ethic proclaims **WORK AS A VIRTUE, SOMETHING NOT ONLY GOOD AND DESIRABLE BUT CONTRIBUTING TO THE GLORY OF GOD AS WELL.** Since Adam and Eve were evicted from the Garden of Eden with the punishment that they should henceforth earn their livelihood with the sweat, the Catholic ethic regarded work as a punitive necessity, the reminder of the original sin, and hence valued leisure. **The Protestant Ethic not only encourages gainful enterprises but also insists that work is a virtue in itself since it contributes to the glory of God.**

- **THE CONCEPT OF CALLING:** This idea emerged from the Calvinist doctrine of predestination according to which EVERY SOUL IS PREDESTINED AT BIRTH FOR HEAVEN OR HELL AND THAT NOTHING AN INDIVIDUAL DOES IN THIS LIFE CAN CHANGE HIS ULTIMATE FATE. BUT THERE ARE SIGNS BY WHICH GOD INDICATES TO EVERY INDIVIDUAL WHETHER HE IS AMONG THE ELECT, SUCCESS IN LIFE BEING THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE. SINCE EVERY MAN IS ANXIOUS TO KNOW IF HE IS MARKED FOR SALVATION OR DAMNATION, HE SHOULD SELECT A CALLING, VOCATION, WORK HARD AT IT AND BE SUCCESSFUL. The economic impact of this doctrine was profound indeed. No longer was it necessary for 'religious' men to take the vow of poverty, enter a monastery, undertake a pilgrimage or indulge in self-torture, some of the Catholic means of salvation popular in the Middle Ages. The new doctrine exhorts men to seek gainful enterprises, accumulate wealth and prove their destiny.

- **THE NEW ATTITUDE TOWARD THE COLLECTION OF INTEREST ON LOANS:** The theological doctrine of Catholicism proscribed the collection of interest on loans. **This prohibition discouraged the operation, at least open and legal operation, of lending houses and accumulation of**

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capital. Approving in Calvinism a practice that had been proscribed in Catholicism. This promoted **a spurt of economic activity: establishment of lending houses, new investments, and new floating capital**.

- **STRICTURES ON ALCOHOLISM:** Protestant ethic **prohibits the consumption of alcoholic beverages; there is no comparable theological doctrine in Catholicism.** Indeed, prohibition movement in Western societies was always spearheaded by Protestant.

- **ENCOURAGEMENT OF LITERACY AND LEARNING:** Based on the conviction that **every man should read his own Bible rather than depend on priestly interpretations, Protestant ethic placed great emphasis on literacy and learning which led to significant breakthrough in the sphere of education, leading to the development of mass education** (rather than education of the clergy) and of specialized skills.

- **REJECTION OF HOLIDAYS:** The Catholic calendar is full of holy days and almost every holy day is a holiday. This is consistent with the Catholic belief that one needs leisure to honor God with ritualistic celebrations. **However, since work contributes to the glory of God in Protestant ethic, there is no need for holy days and celebrations. This means factories and other business enterprises can function seven days week throughout the year, thus making maximum utilization of capital** and other investments leading to greater productivity.

- **PROTESTANT ASCETICISM:** Protestant ethic also incorporates the notion that **earthly things and flesh belong to the order of sin and death and therefore, one should abstain from the pleasures of the world. Thus, on the one hand, Protestant ethic exhorts people to "accumulate and accumulate" and on the other hand, it forbids the use of wealth for enjoyment.** This means a ceaseless pursuit of profit, not for the sake of enjoying the pleasure of life, but simply for the satisfaction of producing more and more, undoubtedly a condition par excellence for development of capitalism.

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF OTHER RELIGION

Now having established the essential harmony between Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, Weber turned to other religions to see if there is in them a discernible cluster of values comparable to Protestant ethic that is favorable to the rise of capitalism. HE FOUND A VARIETY OF NON-RELIGIOUS SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS CONDUCIVE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM IN CHINA AND INDIA BUT THE ETHICAL SYSTEM OF CONFUCIANISM AND THE DOCTRINE OF KARMA IN HINDUISM WERE NOT PARTICULARLY FAVORABLE. Moreover, the combination of religious values that constituted the Protestant ethic was unique: an unusual blend of two apparently inconsistent notions; NAMELY LIMITLESS ACCUMULATION OF WEALTH AND ABSTENTION FROM ENJOYMENT.

THE FOLLOWERS OF HINDUISM DID NOT HAVE ANY INTEREST IN MATERIAL AND WORLDLY SUCCESS. FOR THE SAME REASON, THE FOLLOWERS OF HINDU RELIGION STOOD FIRST IN THE WORLD FOR SPIRITUAL PROGRESS, INSTEAD OF WORLDLY PROGRESS. Hindu religion is based on the doctrine of (Dharma Karma and Punarjanama). The principle of Karma says that man gets the fruit of sin and piety in the next birth. But to get rid of cycle of birth and rebirth he will have to devote to religion and to God at maximum. In this way, Hinduism stresses on other worldly asceticism.

Similarly Islam, has been emphasized proper use of wealth in that no single people can have the disproportion to property.

In Confucianism or Buddhism there is a focus on right knowledge through right action and right mediation. It says that only right knowledge will solve all kinds of problems and related with life and not the wealth which will do so.

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In Catholicism people are discipline in the way that they couldn't think about change and self constructions. These valus have been obstructions in the development of capitalism.

The followers of Judaism have always migrated from one place to another with the desire of getting lot of money and everywhere they work hard and but were highly greedy so were left isolated from the system. Therefore, they couldn't become capitalists.

Was it possible that Capitalism gave rise to Protestant ethics?

It would be erroneous to assume that Weber replaced a one-sided economic determinism with a one-sided "ideological determinism." He considered a variety of factors-social economic, and political—**but the confluence of values inherent in religion played a central role in the matrix of inter-relationships.**

Weber called scientific attention to three forms of relationship which exist between social organization and religious ideas, and which he believed warranted further investigation. These ideas were as follows:

- **FIRST,** social groups with particular economic interests often show themselves to be more receptive to some religious ideas than to others. For example, peasants typically incline toward some form of nature worship and aristocrats toward religious ideas compatible with their sense of status and dignity.
- **SECOND** religious ideas lead to the formation of certain groups, such as monastic orders, guilds of magicians, or a clergy, and these groups may develop quite extensive economic activities.
- **THIRD,** the distinction between the elite and the masses is as pertinent to the religious sphere as to others—the gap between the elite and the masses poses a problem with which each of the great world religions has had to cope.
- The origin of protestant religion is traced back to 15th-16th century by data, while the modern capitalism in 18th century. In this way, we find that modern capitalism which came late can't place any role in the creation of Protestant Ethics. But if we talk about capitalism itself than we would have a different argument to support that its elements had been responsible for the origin of Protestant Ethics.
- Weber himself has added that the capitalism was their since earlier time but it was not rational, that's why the growth of capitalism was unpredictable. Booty capitalism, Pariah capitalism traditional capitalism were all rational form of capitalism*. It was during the period of 15th-16th century that some people organized themselves to make capitalism, stable and rational. For this purpose, they wanted to qualify the basic elements of capitalism in one form and they did it so in the form of protestant ethics, which in turn created protestant religion.* In this way it can be aptly said that the elements of capitalism would have definitely being responsible in the origin of Protestant Ethics.

CRITICAL EVALUATION

- **R H TAWNEY**: Famous English historian R H Tawney has pointed out that THE EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE ON WHICH WEBER'S INTERPRETATION OF PROTESTANTISM WAS BASED WAS TOO NARROW. According to him, England was the first country to develop capitalism. However, the English Puritans did not believe in the doctrine of pre destination.
  Secondly THERE WERE ASPECTS OF TRADITIONAL CATHOLIC TEACHING WHICH WERE EQUALLY COMPATIBLE WITH CAPITALISM. Yet capitalism was extremely slow in some Catholic dominated areas. **Weber seems to have ignored crucial developments in Catholicism which occurred after reformation and which modernized Catholicism form within**.

- **Next Weberian thesis of Capitalism seems to be contradictory in that it requires the consumption of commodities as well as saving for future investment.** Protestant asceticism aids the latter but the former may require hedonism. **Finally the present day Capitalists are no**

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longer guided by inner worldly asceticism.   The modern day life style is increasingly hedonistic.

- Criticizing Weber's theory **T.C. HALL** says that ALL THE TIME CALVINIST SHOULD BECAME RICH BECAUSE OF THEIR VALUES. CALVINISM IS STRONGLY SUPPORTED AMONG THE PEOPLE OF HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND AND HILLY REGIONS OF SOUTH AMERICA, BUT THEY ARE POOR. It shows that a religious beliefbelieve does not make a person wealthy but situations make him so.

- ***WEBER'S THESIS CAN BE DEFENDED AGAINST SOME OF THE CRITICISM BY POINTING OUT THAT IT WAS ONLY AN IDEAL TYPE CONSTRUCTION WHICH SOUGHT TO ESTABLISH A CONNECTION BETWEEN CERTAIN ASPECTS OF PROTESTANTISM WITH ONLY SOME ASPECTS OF EARLY ENTREPRENEURIAL TYPE OF CAPITALISM.*** All that Weber was trying to say was PROTESTANT ETHIC CONTRIBUTED TO THE RATIONALIZATION WHICH PRECEDED MODERN CAPITALISM. AT NO STAGE DID WEBER CLAIM IT TO BE THE SOLE CAUSE, IN FACT, WEBER DID ADMIT TO THE POSSIBILITY OF BUILDING OTHER IDEAL TYPES LINKING OTHER CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS TO CAPITALISM. Thus Weber's thesis should not be treated as a general theory of capitalism development.   **Further Weber clearly states that the spirit of capitalism was only one component, albeit an important one. There are other components too which together with the spirit constituted the modern capitalism. These components are:**

- Private ownership of the means of production.

- Technological progress to the degree that production can be calculated in advance. For example Mechanization or automation.

- Formally free labour.

- The organization of capitalist producers into joint stock companies.

- Calculable law that is the universalistic legal system which applied to everyone and is administered equitably.

These elements form the basis of the ideal type of modern capitalism.

EVALUATION:

- Weber has focused on *hard work and rational organization of production*, process in his theory of *Protestant Ethics and Rise of Capitalism* (religion and economy). Weber believes that both this conditions were visible in Calvinists because their religious ethics motivated them to do so.

- **Weber has also talked about one specific characteristics of Calvinist that they were so progressive that they have been given the opportunity to make changes everywhere and in that way, they change their religious elements as a whole. Now if the same phenomenon becomes visible on other parts of the world, in the following of other religions that is they become change oriented, this could be called a parallel process to Calvinism.** In this way, it can be said that even those people who are unaware of Calvinism become capitalists because they accepted all those elements knowingly or unknowingly of protestant religion.

- In the way the development of capitalism in other parts of world, prohibited. The situation talked by T.C. Hall is meant for 'physical resources'. It is clear that Weber has not neglected this aspects he has emphatically made this point in his theory that two element are necessary in the development of modern capitalism. **Substance and spirit.** Hence substance means physical resources itself. It means that capitalism did not grow in certain circumstances appear to have of lack of physical resources.

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RELEVANCE:

Weber Theory economy is relevant in two ways:

- **In the form of Capitalism:** Capitalist has grown in the entire world and among the followers of all the religions, in many Asian countries like in Japan, China, India, Asian Tigers, Islamic countries. Capitalism is working and growing, inspite of the fact that different religions are followed in these countries. **It is so because, changes are seen in all religions and people are becoming progressive which in orienting them towards Capitalism.** The same happens in other continents as well. **WEBER IS RELEVANT IN THE SENSE THAT WHEREVER HARD WORK IS PUT IN, THE RELIGION WILL BECOME AN INSPIRATIONAL ELEMENT TO MAKE PEOPLE CAPITALISTS.**
- **In other fields,** Weber's Relevance is seen in all walks of life and in different fields where in people want to excel that is in political, in Civil services or bureaucracies, in media, in film industry, in management, in fashion industries in social work, etc. In all this fields, people are getting name and fame with their hard work and motivation & inspiration from religious values..

AN ASSESSMENT OF WEBER

- A prolific writer and original thinker, **Weber made extensive use of his knowledge of history, philosophical tradition, religious system and social structures to refine his concepts and to develop general theoretical schema** dealing with a variety of social phenomena.
- Wary of the kind of the conceptual ramification he observed in the works of Marx and Durkheim, Weber refused to conceptualize the whole social reality with its variegated complexity and manifold ramifications.
- However, **he analyzed structures and processes and their inter-relationship and developed a cogent sociological mosaic, giving a coherent image of the whole retaining the functional independence of the elements. Weber was a man of values but not a man of faith; while he passionately upheld certain values, he insisted on objectivity in scientific enterprises**;
- **Weber's contribution to modern sociology is multidimensional so much so that he can be legitimately considered as one of the founding fathers of modern sociology. He contributed a** *new perspective on the nature of subject matter of sociology* **and laid down the foundations of interpretative sociology.** In addition, he carried out penetrating analysis of some of the crucial features of western society like social stratification, bureaucracy, rationality and growth of capitalism.
- *Also he devoted his efforts to building up typologies especially in the studies of political sociology.* **One major shortcoming of his work lies in the fact that although he defined sociology as an interpretative understanding of social action yet most of his efforts were directed primarily towards building typologies and generalizations of empirical nature rather than investigating social phenomenon through interpretative understanding of behavior.**
- *By viewing the subject matter of sociology in terms of social action, he highlighted the significance of subjective meanings and motives in understanding social behavior.* THIS VIEW OF WEBER PRESENTED AN ALTERNATIVE AND A CORRECTIVE TO THE POSITIVIST APPROACH IN SOCIOLOGY. **THE POSITIVISTS LIKE DURKHEIM BY ASSUMING A DETERMINISTIC PERSPECTIVE HAD ALMOST TOTALLY IGNORED THE ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S SUBJECTIVITY IN SHAPING SOCIAL BEHAVIOR. THEY HAD RESTRICTED THE STUDY OF SOCIAL BEHAVIOR TO EXTERNALLY OBSERVABLE ASPECTS ONLY.** THUS, WEBER'S EMPHASIS ON EXPLORING THE SUBJECTIVE DIMENSION PROVIDED A CORRECTIVE TO THE OVERTLY SOCIAL DETERMINIST PERSPECTIVE OF THE POSITIVIST.

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- *ANOTHER GREAT CONTRIBUTION OF WEBER LIES IN ENRICHING METHODOLOGY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES.* **THREE IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF WEBER'S METHODOLOGY ARE:**

- *Causal pluralism:* According to Weber, the social reality is extremely complex and therefore no social phenomena can be explained adequately in terms of a single cause. An adequate sociological explanation must therefore be based on the principle of causal pluralism.

- *Ideal type:* Given the complex and variegated nature of social reality, Weber believed that it cannot be comprehensively understood by the human mind in a single attempt. Therefore an attempt to study social reality must take one aspect of social reality into account at a time. Thus the social scientists should build a one sided model of the phenomenon taking into account and highlighting only those aspects which are to be explored. This one sided model has been termed as ideal type. Although Weber conceded that in advocating the ideal type he was not suggesting something very new in fact social scientists had often been building ideal types without being aware of it. Thus the importance of Weber's contribution lies in the fact that he for the first time articulated the need for building ideal types.

- *Verstehen approach:* This was the method he advocated for interpretative understanding of social action. Weber thought that methods of positive science alone are inadequate for a comprehensive study of social behavior and needed to be supplemented by new methods which are characteristic of social science. However, Weber has been criticized on this account by Alfred Schultz. According to him, Verstehen is not a method but a particular form in which human thinking takes cognizance of the social and cultural world while having nothing to do with interpretation.

- *WEBER'S STUDY OF POWER, AUTHORITY, BUREAUCRACY ETC. HAVE STIMULATED RESEARCH IN POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY.* Studies of political parties, political elite and pressure groups, voting behavior, bureaucracy and political changes in developed and developing societies both are inspired by Weber's studies.

- *WEBER WAS ONE OF THE EARLIEST SOCIOLOGISTS TO TRY TO STUDY ECONOMIC BEHAVIOR IN ITS SOCIAL CONTEXT.* This approach initiated by Weber influenced many scholars. Sombart, Schumpeter and John Strachey have attempted to deal with economic phenomena in the context of the social structure as a whole rather than treating it in isolation, as had been the practice before.

- **A direct influence of Weber can be seen in Schumpeter's work.** At one place Weber wrote that puritans wanted work as a calling: we are forced to do so. This point has been elaborated by Schumpeter also. He argues in his book that the decay of capitalism will be largely caused by the rejection of bourgeoisie values and not economic breakdown. **Further on the lines suggested by Weber's work Parsons and Smelser have attempted to show in their book 'Economy and Society' that economic theory is only part of the general sociological theory.** The role of sociological factors in economic development has been realized by economists like Arthur Lewis who in his book 'The theory of Economic Growth' has highlighted the significance of sociological factors like the desire for goods, attitude to work, influence of property system, social mobility, the religious and family structures, population growth, the role of government etc in determining economic growth.

- **Weber conceded at the outset that perfect causality is not possible in social sciences. General statements indicating trends alone can be formulated, as for example, the one between Protestant ethics and capitalism.** This view has been supported by a later day social scientists. **According to Bottomore such statements would run like this, whenever there are conditions of the kind C there will be a trend of the kind T.** This approach is exemplified in Weber's studies on the origin of capitalism, development of modern bureaucracy the economic influence of world religions. **The same approach has been followed by C W Mills in his work White Collar.**

11A/10, Old Rajender Nagar, Near Agrawal Sweet, Delhi
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E-mail : infovrc2016@gmail.com
Website : www.vikashranjan.org
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- **Weber's emphasis on causal pluralism and on the role of ideas in social change has provided a corrective to the orthodox Marxist view. Weber's theory of social stratification and his views on the nature of socialism show a greater correspondence with empirical reality as compared to those of Marx.** Weber's revision of the Marxists account of the origin of capitalism has been continued by historians and sociologists form Tawney up to the present time. The important representatives of this approach to social problems are Birnbaum, Austin and Turner.

CONCLUSION

Although, he founded no schools, he influenced every school and branch of sociology with his erudite studies which are rich in insights, far-reaching in scope and based on a mass of data both historical and contemporary. Although the foundations of the conflict approach to the study of social phenomena were laid down by Karl Marx. However to adapt this approach to contemporary societies, it had to be interpreted in the light of the criticism and modification suggested by Weber. Thus, the imprint of Weber's ideas is clearly visible in the works of contemporary conflicts theorists like C W Mills and Ralf Dahrendorf. Even those belonging to the Frankfurt School of thought namely Adorno, Marcuse, Habermas etc. have also been influenced by Weber's ideas.

TALCOTT PARSONS (1902-82)

Syllabus*:*
- ✓ *Social system,*
- ✓ *Pattern variables.*

Talcott Parsons was born in Colorado. His father at the time was a professor in English at Colorado College and vice-president of the college. Parsons studied biology, sociology, and philosophy as an

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undergraduate at Amherst College, receiving his Bachelor's degree in 1924. He then studied at the London School of Economics and later earned his Ph.D. in economics and sociology from the University of Heidelberg in Germany.

Parsons taught at Amherst College for one year during 1927. After that, he became an instructor at Harvard University in the Department of Economics. At the time, no sociology department existed at Harvard. In 1931, Harvard's first sociology department was created and Parsons became one of the new department's two instructors. He later became a full professor. In 1946, Parsons was instrumental in forming the Department of Social Relations at Harvard, which was an interdisciplinary department of sociology, anthropology, and psychology. Parsons served as the chairman of that new department. He retired from Harvard in 1973, however he continued writing and teaching at Universities across the United States.

He was the best-known sociologist in the United States, and indeed one of the best-known in the world. He produced a general theoretical system for the analysis of society that came to be called structural functionalism.

The impact of 'the classics' on Anglo-American sociology was, in the first instance, very much the achievement of Talcott Parsons (1902–79), whose graduate studies in the UK and Europe in the 1920s had familiarised him with the work of, among others, the trio of Marx, Weber and Durkheim . In the 1930s Parsons set out to construct a major work of theoretical synthesis, drawing especially upon the work of Weber and Durkheim. The result of his efforts, The Structure of Social Action, appeared in 1937. The work consisted in large part in the presentation of four thinkers, two of whom—Alfred Marshall, the economist, and Vilfredo Pareto, the economist/sociologist—have not enjoyed such continuing significance for sociology. This book provided the world of English-speaking sociology with its first significant and systematic presentation of the ideas of Weber and Durkheim.

Parsons acknowledged Marx to be a great thinker, but argued that he remained firmly within the prevailing nineteenth-century way of thinking in the social sciences, while Weber and Durkheim had, by contrast, contributed to breaking it down.

ONE OF THE MAIN TARGETS OF PARSONS'S CRITICISM WAS UTILITARIANISM, which, involves the idea that people's actions follow fundamentally practical objectives, and that the human mind is essentially a mechanism for calculating the most effective way to get the most rewarding results. This picture captures the very essence of economics, where 'the economic human' is an individual with a clear set of wants and the economic capacity to fulfil some of them; he or she then sets out to figure out a way to get the most rewarding assortment of goods in terms of the resources available. In constructing its theories upon the assumption of such a rational, maximizing individual, economics is building upon the model that was very widespread in pre-twentieth-century social thought.

THIS MODEL, AS PREVIOUSLY NOTED, FOUND ITS MOST EXPLICIT AND, IN SOME WAYS, MOST CRUCIAL EXPRESSION BACK IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, IN THOMAS HOBBES'S

LEVIATHAN (1994). VERY BRIEFLY, *HOBBES'S ARGUMENT WAS THAT HUMAN BEINGS ARE SELFISH CREATURES LIVING IN A WORLD OF SCARCE SATISFACTIONS. EACH INDIVIDUAL HAS WANTS, AND SEEKS TO SATISFY AS MANY OF THEM AS POSSIBLE. IN WORKING OUT THE MOST EFFICIENT WAY OF GETTING WHAT THEY WANT, INDIVIDUALS REALISE THAT THEY ARE IN COMPETITION WITH ONE ANOTHER, THAT ONE PERSON CAN ONLY GAIN AT ANOTHER'S EXPENSE.* Thus individuals are by nature truly selfish and see others only as obstacles or possible resources in their own pursuit of maximum satisfaction. The most logical way to achieve one's ends, then, is either to eliminate the competition—remove others by killing them—or to turn them towards the service of one's own ends, by forcing or deceiving them into compliance with one's will.

HOWEVER, IF EVERY INDIVIDUAL IS CONCEIVED AS A RATIONAL BEING, I.E. SOMEONE WHO OPERATES LOGICALLY, THEN EACH PERSON WILL REACH THE SAME INEVITABLE CONCLUSION, MAKING SOCIAL LIFE INTO A STATE OF PERPETUAL STRUGGLE. Hobbes called it a 'war of all against all', colourfully characterising it in a justly famous passage as 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short'. Of course, for most of us human life is not that bad, as Hobbes himself explained: valuing their own lives above all else, these rational individuals can perceive the slippery slope to mutual misery and destruction, down which they would slide if they did not accept some restrictions on their freedom of competition. These restrictions are in the form of society, as represented by the sovereign ruler to whom individuals effectively cede their autonomy.

PARSON ALSO REFUTED POSITIVIST AND IDEALIST: *The positivists* believe that social actors have complete knowledge of their social situation. This leaves no room for error on the part of actors or even for variation among actors. *The idealists* position that social action is that realization of the social spirit and the ideas such, as of a nation or a people, and consequently pay scant attention to real everyday impediments on the ground that obstruct the free realization of ideas. Similarly, in the idealist treatment of social system, Democracy is seen simply as the fulfillment of the spirit of national. Idealism places too much emphasis on values and ideas and not enough on social practice. Weber too, in a way, belonged to this tradition for he argued that capitalism was aided in its early stages by the Protestant ethic. But it must be admitted that Weber elaborated at length certain values such as those of 'rational asceticism' or inner worldly asceticism' but neglected the role of needs of search for utilities.

The positivists go to the other extreme and insist that true human action is born out of full information of the situation. There is thus a finality and inflexibility in their scheme for there is only one way to act; the correct way. Consequently there is no room for values, error and variations social action.

PARSONS WAS INTERESTED IN DURKHEIM, WEBER, PARETO AND MARSHALL BECAUSE THEY WERE ALL, IN THEIR DIFFERENT WAYS, CONCERNED TO THINK THEIR WAY OUT OF THE FRAMEWORK OF UTILITARIAN ASSUMPTIONS.

The key move, which they all made, was to reject the utilitarian assumption that people's ends are random. *In a scheme like Hobbes's, it does not matter what kinds of things people want, only that they have plenty of wants, more than can collectively be satisfied by the finite resources of the world, and it is this simple fact which makes them competitors.* In such reasoning, the way people come by their wants, or the nature of these wants, is essentially irrelevant; viewed as a theoretical system, the ends might as well be random.

DURKHEIM, WEBER AND THE OTHERS HAD PERCEIVED, HOWEVER, THAT PEOPLE'S ENDS ARE NOT RANDOM; THEY ARE SOCIALLY ACQUIRED AND, IN CONSEQUENCE, ARE RELATED TO ONE ANOTHER IN SYSTEMATIC WAYS. FOR EXAMPLE, Durkheim examines the notion of anomic suicide in terms of the way people's wants are patterned; they are shaped by ocial

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arrangements which accord with the hierarchy of stratification and embody normative requirements which prescribe proper and acceptable wants.

On this basis, Parsons thought that a start could be made on developing a general scientific scheme for understanding human life. Between his first major work and his next there was a fourteen-year break—though Parsons did publish many essays in that time. Then, in 1951, he published two books, one self-authored, **The Social System,** the other a collaborative work, **Toward a General Theory of Action.** In a way, Parsons had retreated from the ambitions he had held in 1937, but the plan laid out in these two books was none the less grandiose. Toward a General Theory drew its contributors from across several disciplines; necessarily so, for Parsons sought to lay out a ground plan for a large range of the social sciences—or 'sciences of action', as he called them. *Thus psychology, sociology, economics, political science and other disciplines were all to be unified within a single theoretical framework, which was basically devised by Parsons.* The Social System was the sociological element in the project, showing how this general scheme, this general theory of action, would be developed in sociology. **Parsons drew from the work of his four theorists a picture of social life involving motivated compliance.**

Motivated compliance: Social life does work, rather than disintegrating into Hobbes's war of all against all. It works not only because people go about their activities in ways that are socially prescribed, but also because they believe these ways to be right and therefore they actually want to follow them.

SOCIAL SYSTEM

Parsons concept of the social system is DEVELOPED IN THE NATURE OF A GENERAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY WHICH CAN BE APPLIED FOR THE STUDY OF BOTH THE SIMPLE PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES AS WELL AS THE COMPLEX MODERN INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES. *Parsons has developed his theory from the level of action to the social system.* HIS CONCEPTUAL SCHEME IS PROVIDED TO ANALYZE THE STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES OF SOCIAL SYSTEM.

PARSONS FORMULATES HIS APPROACH TO **THE SOCIAL SYSTEM** THROUGH HIS **THEORY OF SOCIAL ACTION** WHICH IS AN INTRINSIC ELEMENT OF THE SOCIAL SYSTEM. Parsons own **APPROACH TO THE SOCIAL SYSTEM IS INTEGRATIVE IN NATURE** since he not only brought out the significance of motivational factors, such as those present in the utilitarian perspective in the formation of the system, but also that of values.

ACTION, according to Parson DOES NOT TAKE PLACE IN ISOLATION. IT IS NOT EMPIRICALLY DISCRETE BUT OCCURS IN CONSTELLATIONS" WHICH CONSTITUTE SYSTEM. The concept of action, according to Parson, is derived from behaviour of human beings as living organisms. As living organisms they interact (orientate) with outside reality as well as within their own mind.

Behaviour becomes action when four conditions are present:

- *It is ORIENTED TO ATTAINMENT OF ENDS OR GOALS or other anticipated affairs,*
- *It occurs in SITUATIONS,*
- *It is REGULATED BY NORMS AND VALUES OF SOCIETY, and*
- *It involves in investment of '*ENERGY' OR MOTIVATION OR EFFORT*.*

For example, a lady driving an automobile to go to a temple. She is probably going to offer prayers. In this case then **the offering of the prayer is her end or goal to which she is oriented.** Her **situation is**

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the road on which she is driving and the car in which she is sitting. Moreover, her behaviour is **regulated by social norms or values** in which the offering of prayers is recognized as desirable. In addition, she is **applying her intelligence in the skill of driving which is learnt from society**. Finally, the very act of driving the car implies expenditure of energy, holding the wheel, regulating the accelerator and skilful negotiation through the traffic on the road. **WHEN BEHAVIOUR IS SEEN IN THIS ANALYTICAL CONTEXT, IT CAN BE DEFINED AS ACTION.**

As mentioned earlier, action according to Parsons does not occur in isolation but occurs in constellations: THESE CONSTELLATIONS OF ACTION CONSTITUTE SYSTEM. These systems of action have three modes of organization which Parsons describes as THE PERSONALITY SYSTEM, THE CULTURAL SYSTEM AND THE SOCIAL SYSTEM.

He proposed that the actual operating life of a society is made up of the following elements:

1. **THE ABSTRACT PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOUR (CULTURAL SYSTEM)** *which prescribe what individuals should properly or appropriately do in particular cases.* **FOR EXAMPLE,** the highway code prescribes how fast drivers should drive under what conditions and how they should co-ordinate with fellow motorists;

2. **THE PATTERN OF ONGOING ACTIVITY, (SOCIAL SYSTEM)***i.e. how actual people in actual situations behave in ways, which (roughly, more or less) accord with the abstract patterns.* **FOR EXAMPLE,** in traffic on the road, drivers are busy looking out for what others are doing, and tactically adjusting their driving to accommodate and avoid one another, such action depending in various ways upon the conventions of the highway code being respected by most, if not all, drivers;

3. **THE PERSONALITIES, OR CHARACTERISTIC PATTERNS OF PREFERENCE, OF REACTION AND SO FORTH OF THE INDIVIDUALS CARRYING OUT THESE PATTERNS (PERSONALITY SYSTEM).** For **EXAMPLE,** in traffic they act as drivers, and they interact with one another in terms of their characters: some drive much more quickly than others, some are more respectful of others' rights on the road, some get angry with traffic conditions, and others remain calm.

However, the great majorities of these drivers abide broadly by the rules of the road **(Motivated Compliance)** and do so not merely from prudence, for safety's sake, or from nicely calculated considerations as to just how much adherence to the rules would maximise their self-interest, but because they think it is the right thing to do. They regard these rules as binding on themselves and on others. They can become indignant with other drivers just because those drivers show disregard for the rules of the road, even though the infraction of these rules may cause them no danger, nor harm them in any way.

'Motivated compliance' means no more than the drivers being motivated to abide by the rules of the highway code, but this illustration of the idea draws attention to the way actual situations in society are made up of three 'action systems', as Parsons called them:
• **Cultural System—**the pattern of ideas, principles, etc. which abstractly specifies how people should behave;
• **Social system—**the ordered patterns of activity and relationship among individuals as they go about their affairs in conjunction, even collaboration, with one another;
• **Personality System**—the psychic make-up of individuals which affects how they behave in actual situations, how they go about doing things and how they react to other people. Parsons argues that any society has to provide somehow for the integration of these three elements.

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INTEGRATING CULTURE, SOCIAL SYSTEM AND PERSONALITIES

Somehow, things will have to work out so that:
• Culture will prescribe what people should do in ways which will prove practically effective, relative to what people want to do.
• The pattern of activities and relationships in which people engage will prove capable of allowing the prescriptions of the culture to be effectively followed out (a good deal of the time).
• The personality structures of the parties to social life will have that which will enable them to associate with others, to participate in conjoint, collective ventures, and to accept and comply with the demands that the culture lays on them.

Cultures, social systems and personalities have to interact in integrated ways if there is to be any social order.
Cultures have to be organised in ways such that their prescriptions will be viable in practical affairs (if cultures demand impractical things of their members, then those members will soon either abandon the culture or die out). The different prescriptions for the actions of an individual have to fit together with those that other individuals abide by, otherwise they would always be acting at cross purposes, nothing requiring their joint participation would ever get done, and no social system would have even temporary stability. Imagine if drivers had different cultural instructions as to which directions they were to drive in on the roads.

Social activities themselves have to be organised in ways that will offer sufficient involvement of the personality types who will participate in them; if people are utterly frustrated and completely alienated by the demands of participation in some activity, e.g. a pathological fear of competition, they are going to be very resistant to being involved in society, e.g. competitive sports. Parsons insists that these are the minimal condition for social order. A society can, of course, tolerate the fact that there will be some, relatively few, people who follow different prescriptions, or have personalities incongruous with (say) the generally competitive character of American culture, but it can only operate if the 'lack of fit' in such cases is confined to the relatively few.

Without sufficient integration between the culture, the social system and the individual personality, social relationships cannot be organised and carried on. Of course, 'sufficient' is far from being a precise notion. In view of the hostile response which Parsons's work eventually met, we should draw attention here to the fact that he does not see the integration of culture, social system and personality as either automatic or complete—far from it. In dealing with something as complex as the order of a society, its pattern of institutions and relationships, its culture built up over its history, and the varied personalities of its numerous members, we should recognise that integration is highly problematic.

In any ongoing society which is not collapsing into internecine strife, it must be the case that there is a level of integration, since things are getting done, people are acting broadly in line with their cultural prescriptions, and many individuals are engaged in and committed to activities. The perceptible stability of society indicates that its members (or the great majority of them, for most of the time) are not alienated, in the sense of 'turned off'. However, there may not be thoroughgoing integration, since some aspects of the culture may conflict with the way the social system is organized, and the way both are organized may impose deprivations on participants' personalities.

In any real society, many people may not be so disenchanted with their jobs that they would rather give them up, so opposed to authority that they would rather fight their supervisor

than do what he or she says, or so contemptuous of the law that they would happily violate it. Nevertheless, those same people may be unhappy in their work, reluctant to comply with their supervisor, and so uncommitted to a law-abiding existence that they may not pass up every temptation to transgress. Parsons recognizes just such possibilities. They are partly what we mean by the integration of culture, social system and personality being problematic, i.e. the working out of the interconnections between them is neither automatic nor guaranteed. Although any real society must have exceeded the 'minimal' requirements of integration—as testified to by the sheer fact of its existence—none the less it is an empirical question as to how far beyond this minimum the integration extends.

It is also a logical consequence of Parsons' systems analysis that there will be tendencies for the system to counterbalance tendencies towards disintegration, to contain dissidence, to keep dissidents isolated from one another, thereby preventing them from building up collectively organised opposition to the dominant culture, and redirecting their deviations into ways that do not damage overall integration. The system 'handles and channels' social disturbances, although there is no theoretical guarantee that disturbances will never overwhelm the system. In talking about the achievement and surpassing of this 'minimal' level, Parsons is not discussing the ways the members of the society, through conscious, deliberative processes, 'work out' solutions to the problem of integration between these three aspects of social reality. Such matters do not exercise the members. The terms in which these issues are formulated are analytical and sociological; Parsons is talking from a 'system standpoint' about the way things work themselves out; how the social order through the interaction and mutual effects of the culture, social system and personality becomes at least minimally integrated. If societies did not satisfy these minimal requirements then they would not be there for us to study; the fact that there is a society to study means that it has somehow met the minimal requirements of social integration. How far it is integrated depends on how much more than the minimum has been effected. It is important to note that the three elements Parsons identifies are 'integrated' in the minimal sense that any actual, concrete social situation is made up of all three of them. These three elements are all mixed up in actual situations. In fact, says Parsons, they interpenetrate one another. People in social relations do not just stand in purely personal relationships, but relate to one another on the basis of social positions (the status, or status roles) they occupy.

Hence two individuals in a workplace stand not just as 'Joe' and 'Jim' but as, say, a worker and his supervisor. *Their respective positions are not just a matter of what they are doing, but of rights and entitlements, e.g. Jim may be entitled to give Joe orders, and Joe required to do as Jim tells him. In other words, a work relationship, like any other, is a matter of rights and responsibilities, i.e. it includes cultural elements, and these cultural elements go to make up the social system.* In its turn, the social system becomes part of the personality of its participants; the position that one holds, the job one occupies, is not merely a matter of external requirements, but is, obviously, bound into and constitutive of the way one thinks of oneself. The kind of position one occupies is contributory to one's self-esteem. Further, in so far as one identifies with one's job, then of course one comes to regard the things one is entitled to do and to be responsible for not simply as things to be done because they are formally required, but as things one would want to do even if not required to do them. In this way, the cultural requirements and responsibilities of a job become part of one's personality.

In Parsons's terms, the social system is made up of cultural elements and of personalities. The social system and the culture interpenetrate because the latter is institutionalised in the former. In one sense, a social system is a pattern of institutionalised culture, i.e. a set of rules and requirements which have become accepted as defining how people should act and relate to one another, just as the highway code is ubiquitously accepted as saying how drivers should handle their vehicles and communicate with and respect the drivers of other vehicles. The connection between the social system and the personality is through internalisation.

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Internalisation

This concept refers to the ways the members of society come to make the requirements of their various positions an integral part of their personality by 'taking over' these requirements and building them into their own convictions about how and what they should do. *FOR EXAMPLE, when we see other persons breaking a rule of the road we may become indignant because we feel that we personally have been affronted by what was done. Since a social system is itself significantly institutionalised culture, when people internalise the social system, i.e. identify with their position in it, they also internalise culture because their position in the social system is made up of institutionalised culture.*

BASIC UNIT OF ORGANISATION OF A SOCIAL SYSTEM

The social system has a mode of organization of action which is called **ROLE**. It is the basic conceptual unit of the social system and it incorporates the individual actor's total system of action. It is also a point of intersection between the system of action of an individual actor and the social system. The primary element of role, according to Parsons is **role-expectation.** It **implies reciprocity between the actor and his/her alter (the other persons), and is governed by a** *range of motivational and value orientations.*

THE ORGANISATION OF UNIT ACTS INTO SOCIAL SYSTEMS INVOLVES THE **MOTIVES AND VALUES** WHICH LINK IT TO THE PERSONALITY SYSTEMS IN THE FIRST CASE AND TO THE CULTURAL SYSTEM IN THE SECOND.

Orientation of action can be divided into two components: *the motivational orientation and the value orientation.*

- **Motivational orientation** refers to a situation in which action takes place taking into account needs, external appearances and plans.

- **Value orientation** is based on considerations of standard of values, aesthetics, morality and of thinking.

- **THE RANGE OF MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS IS THREE.** *These are the cognitive, the cathetic and the evaluative orientations.*

- **THE COGNITIVE ORIENTATION** makes actors see their environment or subject in relation to their need dispositions as a mental object. They, i.e. the actors, attempt to understand objectively the subject matter of observation.

- **THE CATHETIC ORIENTATION** involves emotional attitude of actors towards their object, and

- **THE EVALUATIVE ORIENTATION** leads the actors to organize their effort in realization of their object with optimum efficiency.

    Take **FOR EXAMPLE** *the bahaviour of a housewife going to the market to purchase vegetables. The cognitive orientation enables her to judge the quality of vegetables in relation, to her need and need in relation to its prices; the cathetic orientation would determine her likeness for a particular vegetable and Evaluative orientation would make it possible for her to make a choice of a vegetable which gives her maximum satisfaction.*

- **THE RANGE OF VALUE ORIENTATIONS ALSO COMPRISES THREE PARTS.** *These are the cognitive, the appreciative and the moral.*

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- **THE COGNITIVE ORIENTATION** is one which relates to the issue to validity of judgments.

- **THE APPRECIATIVE ORIENTATION** is that which makes it possible for actors to judge their emotional response to object, its appropriateness or consistency.

- **THE MORAL ORIENTATION** is one which refers to value commitment of an actor towards his or her objects.

The example of a housewife buying vegetables reveals only the motivational orientation of the housewife. But in *value orientation it is the value system and the cultural pattern of the society which is involved. The individual actors act in the context of this cultural-pattern.* **For example,** the role and status of a son in his family is guided by certain values & norms of the society. As a son in a patriarchal family, he was a different status than as a son in a matriarchal family. His bahaviour will be guided by the values & norms of the society.

 Thus*, the motivational orientation involves only the motives or psychological aspects of the individual while the value orientation involves the cultural system*. *Both, the psychological and the cultural aspects of individual behaviour* are, however, interlinked and interdependent.

- **Institutionalization of Roles in a Social System:** In a social system roles are institutionalized. Institutionalization means that expectations from a specific role, its values and motivational orientations are integrated within the culture of a society. Society sets common standards for role expectations from its members, and when an actor imbibes these standards common to society in the orientations and performance of his/her roles, the roles are said to have been institutionalized.
     To explain the choices of action available to individuals in the social systems as a collectivity, Parsons has developed the concepts of pattern variables.

PATTERN VARIABLES

 ROLE being **THE MOST VITAL ELEMENT OF THE SOCIAL SYSTEM,** *ITS PERFORMANCE GENERATES FORCES OF STRAIN OR TENSION.* The extent of strain depends on the way role-expectations are institutionalized in society and also on the degree to which the values of role-expectations are internalized by social actors. In relation to motivational orientation and value orientation, in the performance of roles, each actor faces dilemmas. **These dilemmas emanate from strains in an individual's choice of or preference within a range of orientations both related to needs and to values**. If these dilemmas were dichotomous in character, the actor must choose between the options, before she or he can act with respect to the situation. *For example, in a situation which requires an actor to choose between universalistic values or particularistic values, the actor can choose only one of them.*

There are five pattern variables of role-definition that Parsons discusses, although he says that there are many more possibilities.

- *Affectivity versus affective neutrality*
- *Self-orientation versus collectivity orientation*
- *Universalism versus Particularism*
- *Ascription versus Achievement*

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- *Specificity versus diffuseness.*

- **AFFECTIVITY VERSUS AFFECTIVE NEUTRALITY :** The dilemma here is in deciding whether one expresses their orientation in terms of immediate gratification (affectivity) or whether they renounce immediate gratification in favor of moral interests (affective-neutrality). parsons says, "no actor can subsist without gratifications, while at the same time no action system can be organized or integrated without the renunciation of some gratifications which are available in the given situation"

- **SELF-ORIENTATION VERSUS COLLECTIVITY ORIENTATION:** The main issue is that of moral standard in the procedure of evaluation. The moral standard arises from the fact that *actor has to make a choice between his or her own gratification and its determent for the good of a larger number of people, a collectivity.* Some form of altruism and self-sacrifice is involved. The dilemma of this pattern variable has always been present in human life from primitive mode of economy and society to modern civilization. *The notion of socialist society offers us a good example where a whole social system and patterns of its institutions are based on the dominant choice in favour of collectivity orientation.* But as Parsons has rightly pointed out, institutionalization of such values is always fragile.

- **UNIVERSALISM VERSUS PARTICULARISM:** Defines the role situation where the *actor's dilemma is between the cognitive versus the cathetic (or emotional standards) evaluation.* Examples of roles adhering to universalistic standards of human behaviour are role performance which goes strictly- be legal norms and legal sanctions. *If one abides by the rule of law irrespective of personal, kinship or friendship considerations' then that would be an example of the universalistic mode of role performance. If one violates legal norms only because the person involved is a kin or a friend, then particularistic considerations would be said to be operating.* Parsons says that in societies where the role of the bureaucracy of the formal organisations and modern institutions has become widespread there the dilemmas of universalisms and Particularism have become a matter of choice in everyday life.

- **ASCRIPTION VERSUS ACHIEVEMENT:** Dilemma in the ascription versus achievement pattern variable is based on *whether or not the actor defines the objects of his or her role either in terms of quality or performance.* In India a very good example of this pattern variable is the *role performance governed by the caste system.* **Ascription** is based on assigning certain quality to a person either by birth, or age, or sex or kinship or race. **Achievement** is based on personal acquisition of skills and levels of performance in society.

- **SPECIFICITY VERSUS DIFFUSENESS:** The specificity versus diffuseness pattern variable *concerns the scope of the object of role performance.* Scope, in this case, is to be understood in terms of the nature of social interaction. *Some social interaction, such as between doctors and patients, or between buyers and sellers of goods in the market, has a very specific scope.* The nature of these interactions is defined in terms of very precise context of interaction. *Some role relationships are very general and encompassing in nature. Such roles involve several aspects of the object of interaction. Some examples of such role relationship are friendship, conjugal relationship between husband and wife, relationship between kin of various degrees.* The scope of interaction is flexible, open and encompassing in nature.

ANALYSIS:

The pattern variables, not only define the nature of role interaction and role expectations in social system but provide, in addition the overall direction in which most members of a social system choose their roles. It also gives us in idea about the nature of the social system. **For Example**, *take the family as a social system: the role expectations within the family amongst its members can be said to be affective, largely collectivity oriented, particularistic, ascriptive and diffuse.*

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On the contrary,we can take the example of our membership in a medical association or bar association, or student association: here role expectations and standards of role performance would largely be oriented towards pattern variables of affective neutrality, self-orientation (due to competition), universalism, achievement and specificity. But these are extreme examples. In real life the dilemma of choices in terms of pattern variables are much more precarious and full of strain than we find in the examples we have mentioned.

The dilemma of role performance where evaluation involved in relation to a situation. How much a situation should be evaluated in emotional terms of with a degree of emotional neutrality? This poses a difficult choice in most roles that we are expected to perform in society. *Take for example the mother-child relationship. It has high degree of affective orientation, but discipline is also required. So on many occasions a mother would have to exercise affective-neutral role in relation to her child's socialization. But mother-child relationship is essentially dominated by affectivity. In comparison, doctor-patient relationship brings out the aspect of affective neutrality that characterizes a doctor's role. Affective-neutrality is essential for proper medical care, especially where surgical treatments are involved.* But according to Parsons in all role performance situations the dilemma of choice and its degree of expression or commitment remains.

Talcott Parsons' concept of pattern variables bridges the gap between social action and social system . Social system may be characterised by the combination of solutions offered to these dilemmas. These pattern variables structure any system of interaction.

Systems theory

In Parsons's usage the idea of system is important. It is an abstract general term used to capture anything from a two-person conversation to the international system of nation states and underpins Parsons's whole analysis.

Systems

A system has persistent identity in an environment; it is distinct from its environment, but must transact with it so it is an open system. For example, a mouse as a living creature is an open system; the mouse is not the same as its environment, but it must take in necessities (air, food) from the environment and must release waste products into it. The overriding task of the system to maintain its own identity in the face of that environment involves two main aspects:
• the regulation of transactions with the environment;
• the maintenance of effectively operating relations inside the system itself.

On the basis of these very simple assumptions, Parsons attempted to provide a completely general analysis of the way social systems operate. *After the books of 1951 Parsons saw a new way to develop his analysis, largely (or so he claimed) as a result of an association with Robert F. Bales, a social psychologist who had been trying to develop a general model to describe the behaviour of task-oriented small groups.* **Bales saw such groups as going through four phases: (1) they gather together the things they need to do a task; (2) then they organise themselves into carrying out the task; and, in doing so, (3) they manage their own internal relations, e.g. stifling quarrels and keeping people interested; and when they have successfully completed their task (4) they relax for a while into task-unrelated activities before gathering themselves for the next task.** Parsons adapted these four phases into the four-phase model of system exchanges.

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The elaboration of this model and its application to various situations was the abiding focus of his subsequent work.

Talcott Parsons was The single greatest contributor, and practitioner, of structural functionalism. **The heart of Parsons's theory is built on the four functional imperatives, also known as the AGIL system. According to him all system such as the family, the economy or the polity has a boundary which they maintain in order to subsist. This self-maintenance of systems is possible because human actors as social beings are socialized in society and their motivational and value orientations accordingly are patterned. In order to maintain itself, social systems have to perform some indispensable adjustment between is internal organization and outer environment.**

Social systems, Parsons argues, also have *a self-adjustive and self-maintaining quality. These adjustment processes which maintain the social system internally and through its boundary conditions are called functions.* Functions are processes of system's self-maintenance.

There are certain functions without which a social system cannot subsist: these are called *'functional prerequisites'* by Talcott parsons.

- *Adaptation*
- *Goal attainment*
- *Integration, and*
- *Latency*

The scope of functioning of these functional prerequisites is further defined in terms of whether they deal with *processes external or internal to the system*. They are also defined in terms of the nature of interaction as such, whether it is Consummatory or whether it is instrumental. ***Consummatory is where the emphasis is on achieving some desired end and instrumental is where the emphasis is on the acquisition and incorporation of means to achieve ends.***

- **Adaptation:** Adaptation as a functional prerequisite *implies generation and acquisition of resources from outside the system, its external environment and to effect its distribution in the system. External environment in this case means land, water, etc.* **As an example** we can *mention the economic system, which involves resource utilization, production and distribution in the society. Adaptation is oriented to factors external to the system and it has an instrumental character.*

- **Goal-Attainment:** Involves; **firstly,** the determination of goals, **secondly**, the motivating of members of the system of attain these goals, and **thirdly**, the mobilizing of the members and of their energies for the achievement of these goals. Its processes are Consummatory in character although it does involve external interaction. *The organization of the power and authority structure in a social system is an example of an institution where goal attainment is the primary thrust.* The political processes are its examples. It needs to be goal attainment is related to the ideological and organisation set up of the social system.

- **Integration:** *Functional prerequisite which helps to maintain coherence, solidarity and coordination in the system. In the social system this function is mainly performed by culture and values.* Integration ensures continuity, coordination and solidarity within the system; it also helps in safeguarding the system from breakdown or disruption. This functional prerequisite is internal to the system and has a Consummatory character.

- **Latency:** Functional prerequisite of the social system which stores organizes and maintains the motivational energy of elements in the social system. *Its main functional are pattern maintenance and tension management within the system. This function is performed by the socialisation process of the*

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members of the social system. Its main functions are *pattern maintenance and tension management within the system.* Parsons's view the function of tension management must take place internally in all institutions.

Of course, within a complex system not all parties will be involved to the same extent in all phases, and different parts of the system will specialise predominantly in one or other of these activities on behalf of the rest of the system. We can structurally dismember a system in terms of the priorities that the different parts give to the functional phases of the system as a whole. It is important to note that for Parsons it is systems all the way down, i.e. the question of 'what is the system?' is relative, depending upon the purposes of analysis. *FOR EXAMPLE, the family can be treated as a part, i.e. a sub-system, of the society's social system; or it can be treated as the system itself, so that the relation of husband and wife, of father to daughters, of mother to daughters, and so on, are seen as sub-systems of the family system.* Thus Parsons's categories apply to systems and their sub-systems and their sub-sub-systems. Of course, any sub-system will not engage purely in one of the four functions, for each sub-system will have to satisfy its own functional requirements. **FOR EXAMPLE,** within the four phases of society the family can be allocated to the latency phase, for people at home with their families are often taking time out from other social commitments, relaxing, engaging in leisure pursuits and building up their capacity to face another day at the office or whatever. *However, if we decide to analyse the family as a system in its own right, then its activities will also have to go through the AGIL cycle, and we might find that within the family some members specialise in one or other of these functions. FOR EXAMPLE, in the traditional nuclear family the wife/mother specialised rather more in integrative activities than other members; she was held responsible for smoothing relations between the others, providing comfort and support for those in distress or under pressure.*

In the AGIL model the issue of internal relations within the system came to dominate the latter phase of Parsons's work. He sought to understand the interchanges between the functionally differentiated phases. **FOR EXAMPLE,** the adaptive phase (A) involves the accumulation of the means for transforming the environment for the system, but if these means are to be put to use in goal attainment (G), then they have to be handed over to those engaged in these goal-attaining activities. There has to be some incentive, some return, if those involved in the A phase are to make resources—or facilities, as Parsons often talks of them—available to the G phase. If people keep on handing over things without any reward or return, they are likely to feel resentful and, eventually, will become fully alienated. For any system to work there have to be some (at least minimally) balanced exchanges between the various phases. For an overly simple **EXAMPLE**, the government fulfils the goal-attainment function for the society, seeking to direct the society as a whole towards its objectives (such as economic growth or national glory, or some combination of both). The economy is the adaptive component of the society, i.e. producing resources out of the society's natural and social environment. Obviously, the running of government consumes resources, both to support its existence as an organised structure and to pursue its policies, so the adaptive system must hand over some of its product to government. Equally clearly, the government has to deliver something to the economy, and we can see that some of its policies sustain, enhance and gratify those who work in business.

Parsons's scheme is intended to be used in subtler, delicate ways, but it should be possible to see how it can be elaborated. One way is with reference to the patterns of interface and exchange between the different phases (for **EXAMPLE,** the I and L phases also need facilities). Another is the way that these exchange patterns are nested inside each other, as we uncover by investigating the hierarchy of sub-systems, their interrelations with the system in which they are included, and their own internal exchanges.

Since the AGIL model applies to a two-person situation as well as to the level of the total society, and to everything in between, the elaboration of these patterns is necessarily complex and sophisticated.

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Complementing this are *four action systems*, each of which serve a functional imperative: **the *behavioral organism*** performs the adaptive function; **the *personality system*** performs goal attainment; **the *social system*** performs the integrative function; and the ***cultural system*** performs pattern maintenance. *Parsons saw these action systems acting at different levels of analysis, starting with the behavioral organism and building to the cultural system. He saw these levels hierarchically, with each of the lower levels providing the impetus for the higher levels, with the higher levels controlling the lower levels.*

Parsons was concerned primarily with *the creation of social order, and he investigated it using his theory based on a number of assumptions, primarily that systems are interdependent; they tend towards equilibrium; they may be either static or involved in change; that allocation and integration are particularly important to systems in any particular point of equilibrium; and that systems are self-maintaining*. These assumptions led him to focus primarily on order but to overlook, for the most part, the issue of change.

.PATTERN VARIABLES ILLUSTRATE IN A PRECISE MANNER THE PRINCIPAL TYPES OF CLUSTERING OF SOCIAL STRUCTURES. PARSONS MENTIONS FOUR SUCH TYPES.

- The universalistic-achievement pattern

- The universalistic-ascription pattern

- The particularistic-achievement pattern

- The particularistic-ascription pattern

● **The Universalistic-Achievement Pattern:** It is a type of structure of social system in which those value-orientations are dominant which encourage achievement based on legal rational methods among members of society. *It exemplifies modern industrial societies where the governing values are those of equality, democracy, freedom of enterprise, rational management and openness in social interaction*. Divisions of society based on caste, ethnicity or other particularistic values do not go well with this social system. **EXAMPLE*.. the American society.***

● **The Universalistic-Ascription Pattern:** *Type of configuration of roles which makes a kind of social system in which **values of legal rationality are encouraged in performance of roles but the distribution of authority is not on the basis of equality or democracy.*** Modern principles of science and technology are employed in work and occupation in industry and communication but the distribution of these takes place on ascriptive principles, such as membership to particular principles, such as membership to a particular ideological association, or party, or cult. Parsons believes that *Nazi Germany is an* **EXAMPLE** *of one such society.*

● **The Particularistic-Achievement Pattern:** This society was dominated by values of familism'. By 'familism' we mean the notion of continuity with ancestors (ancestor worship), strong ties of kinship, but where the female subordination in the society. But at the same time, the society also emphasized achievement and a "code of propriety" in the conduct of roles which was equivalent to legal rationality (universalistic principle). This type of social structure, according to Parsons, is best seen in the classical Chinese society. All these features were contained in Confucianism which was the official ethic in classical China. The dominance of universalism along with the ascription principle can be seen in the recruitment of government servants in China who mostly belong to Communist Party of China.

● **The Particularistic-Ascription Pattern:** Types of social structure in which the roles are organized in terms of values which are associated with kinship, birth and other ascriptive features. *In social structures of this kind, achievement through individual effort is not encouraged. Work, in this type "is considered as necessary evil just as morality is a necessary condition of minimum stability" says*

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*Talcott Parsons. Overwhelming emphasis, in this kind of society, is placed on expressive or artistic orientations. Society is traditionalistic as there is no incentive to disturb tradition and a strong vested interest exist in favour of stability. **Spanish Americans" in the USA** exemplify this type of social structure.*

ANALYSIS:
- *The early approaches to the study of social systems, such as the utilitarian, the positivist and the idealist approaches.* Parsons did not accept these approaches because the utilitarians stressed too much on external, motivational factors, the positivist left no room for error on the part of social actors or values and the idealist stressed to much on values. Thus, as an alternative, Parsons, developed his own action approach' theory which is integrative in nature. In this theory he has included the motivational orientation as well as the value orientations.
- *Parsons has described role as the most vital element of social systems.* In performance of roles individuals are confronted with dilemmas which in turn emanates from choices offered by the society within a range of orientations, both motivational and value. The dichotomy in the nature of orientations described by Parsons in his pattern variables determines the course of action followed by individuals in society.
- *Functional prerequisites, such as, adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latency without which a socials system cannot exist.* The types of structures of social system analysed by Parson based on the criteria of universalism, Particularism, ascription and achievement, Parsons has given the **EXAMPLE**s of these types of social systems from real societies.

……….. AN ASSESSMENT OF PARSONS ……….
- *Parsons has powerful influences on American sociology for more than two decades and shaped a whole generation of sociologists.* Some of his important students included Robert Merton, Kingsley Davis, Wilbert Moore, Marion J. Levy, Neil Smelser, Harold Garfinkel etc.
- *Parsons achievements lie in the fact that he made a successful break with the empiricist tradition of American sociology which was bogged down into minute.* He started with the ambitious objective of synthesizing diverse element into a single conceptual structure for the whole of sociology which also serve to integrate all other social sciences. Constituent elements of his theoretical system were drawn from British utilitarian economics, French positivism and German historicism. While such an enterprise provided a corrective to over empiricism of American sociology, his theoretical model became too grand to be of any empirical value.
- *Parsons attempted to blend action theory with functionalism by using the concepts of 'pattern variables' and 'systemic analyses.* However, due to these very concepts, he ended up in subordinating action theory of system. His whole analysis is based upon an over-socialized conception of man
- *He has shown too much of a preoccupation with order and equilibrium.* This has rendered his theory status-quo oriented. Social conflict and social change have not been given adequate importance in his scheme.
- *His concept of power is also characterized by a functionalist bias and his functionalism is teleological.* Too much of importance has been attached to values and norms.
- Parsons was much criticised, more so than any other figure in modern sociology, even his inability to write plain, concise English being held against him. Much of this criticism is superficial as well as repetitive and can be placed aside without too much difficulty. Three initial points of criticism need to be dealt with:
  - • Society is portrayed as a perfect harmony, devoid of conflict.

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- • This portrayal partly derives from Parsons's neglect of the source of social conflict, namely, the unequal distribution of power.
  - • By emphasising harmony and excluding conflict, Parsons's theory cannot explain social change.
- All three of these criticisms have limitations. That Parsons did not consider change, conflict and power in the same way as his critics is not to say that his theory could not deal with them. In fact, in his later writings Parsons went out of his way to do so. From the start, the assumption behind Parsons's theorising is that the functional organisation and integration of the society are problematic; the integration of such complex arrangements involved in a whole society must take place in an intricate and thorough way, with difficulties and failures. Any real society has to be less than completely integrated, and it is only to be expected that there are many discontinuities and incongruities in society between and within its different spheres and their organisation. Such discontinuities and incongruities show up as tensions, if not outright conflicts.
- *Further, Parsons does not assume that a highly (though not perfectly) integrated society would not and could not change. After all, to assume in biology that a living organism must be meeting its functional requisites for survival does not translate into the assumption that the organism is immortal, continuing interminably to fulfil its functional requirements, or that while surviving it will remain unchanged, never ageing, or developing illnesses.* An idea of a functional system attaining an internal balancing between its parts introduces an idea of equilibrium, of things developing to a stable point and then remaining unchanged, and Parsons's model might suggest that this is what he has in mind. Though the idea of equilibrium certainly has its place, he eschews the idea that there is only one kind of equilibrium, for there is the type known as the moving equilibrium, commonly found with respect to living organisms. An organism can be in equilibrium in that its organs or parts are all healthy and functioning well, but it does not mean that the organism does not change, for, of course, the organism, while remaining healthy and surviving, grows and ages. Parsons had this kind of equilibrium in mind for society, and change is integral to this idea. Among his very last works were two short books (1966, 1971) prepared for an introductory series in which Parsons sought to give a general account of the long-term evolution of Western society, from its origins in (particularly) ancient Greek and Judaic culture (an interpretation heavily indebted to Weber).

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R. K. MERTON

Syllabus:

✓ *Latent and manifest functions*

11A/10, Old Rajender Nagar, Near Agrawal Sweet, Delhi
www.facebook.com/essayforias=byvikashranjan
E-mail : infovrc2016@gmail.com
Website : www.vikashranjan.org
7840888102
8586861046

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✓ *Conformity and Deviance,*

✓ *Reference Groups*

Merton is an American Sociologist, a one time student and famous critic of Talcott Parsons. Among the wide range of ideas to which he contributed, the important ones are relating to THE NATURE OF SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY AND A RECODIFICATION OF THE FUNCTIONAL APPROACH. Most of his writings have been in essay form. An important compilation of these essays is 'THE SOCIAL THEORY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE'. He was a distinguished sociologist perhaps best known for having coined the phrase "self-fulfilling prophecy." He also coined many other phrases that have gone into everyday use, such as "role model" and "unintended consequences". He was heavily influenced by Pitrim Sorokin who tried to balance large-scale theorizing with a strong interest in empirical research and statistical studies. This and Paul Lazarsfeld influenced Merton to occupy himself with middle-range theories.

Merton launched a critique of Parson's functional strategy or building sociological theory. At the heart of his criticism was **MERTON'S CONTENTION THAT PARSONS' CONCERN FOR DEVELOPING AN ALL ENCOMPASSING SYSTEM OF CONCEPTS WOULD PROVE BOTH FUTILE AND STERILE.** *FOR MERTON SUCH GRAND THEORETICAL SCHEMES ARE PREMATURE, SINCE THE THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL GROUND WORK NECESSARY FOR THEIR COMPLETION HAD NOT BEEN PERFORMED.* In the absence of these foundations what passes for sociological theory in Merton's view consists of general orientation towards data, suggesting types of variable which sociologists must somehow take into account **rather than** clearly formulated statements of relationships between specified variables.

According to Merton, *Sociology, in the present state of its development, needs theories of the Middle Range. SUCH THEORIES WOULD BE GROUNDED IN EMPIRICAL DATA AND AT THE SAME TIME SHOULD USE CONCEPTS WHICH ARE CLEARLY DEFINED AND OPERATIONALIZED. MIDDLE RANGE THEORIES ARE SO FORMULATED THAT SPECIFIC AND VERIFIABLE HYPOTHESIS CAN BE DEDUCED FROM THESE THEORIES AND CAN BE SUBJECTED TO EMPIRICAL VERIFICATION.* Further, **Merton suggested that the functional approach would be utilized in formulating the theories of middle range. Thus the functional approach for Merton was primarily a method for sociological research in order to build theories.**

MERTON PRESENTED THE STEPS INVOLVED IN FUNCTIONAL APPROACH IN THE FORM OF A SYSTEMATIC ARRANGEMENT KNOWN AS THE FUNCTIONAL PARADIGM.

THEORIES OF THE MIDDLE RANGE:

- *Middle range theories of R.K Merton came as rejection of mega theory of Parsonian sociology. HIS THEORY ADVOCATES THAT THEORY BUILDING IN SOCIOLOGY SHOULD NOT BE GOVERNED BY INTELLECTUAL AGGRESSION OR ACADEMIC SPECULATION. SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES CANNOT AFFORD TO BE ROGUE, UNREALISTIC, JARGON FOCUSED AND SIMPLY LOGICAL. RATHER THEORIES ARE DEVELOPED IN SOCIOLOGY TO ARRANGE THE EMPIRICAL FACTS IN A CONSOLIDATED MANNER. HENCE SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES SHOULD BE FACT DRIVEN. THE SOCIAL THEORIES SHOULD BE COMING OUT OF*

FACTS TO EXPLAIN THE FACTS IN A SYSTEMATIC MANNER. Instead of being concerned about mega speculations that there is a social system where there is exchange, negotiation, convergence, consequently control and integration sociology must look into the actual problems and issues related to empirical situations.

- **DURING 1960S IN AMERICA, POLITICAL CORRUPTION, ETHNIC CONFLICT, DEVIANT BEHAVIOR WAS LARGELY MANIFESTED AND MERTON TOOK INTEREST IN STUDYING THEM AND EXPLAINED ALL THE EMERGENT CONDITIONS USING SIMPLY DESIGNED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS.** Subsequently he identified these theories as middle range theories. As a reaction to mega theories Merton advocates that these theories are highly speculative and do not correspond to the empirical realities. They make an attempt to study every possible dimension of social reality that is not possible in the field of sociology. The degree of abstraction is quite high when concepts are chosen to develop such theories therefore these kind of mega theories do not have much of relevance to understand the essence of social reality. Hence sociology must have to reject mega theoretical constructs replacing them by middle range theories.

- *Merton is not comfortable with the use of natural science theories in the field of sociology.* He advocates that theories in natural science come out of cumulative research made on a given problem by large body of scholars in time and space. It is possible on part of a natural scientist to modify, amend or revise the theories of his predecessors applying such theories to contemporary problems and issues. Natural phenomena being static, cumulative research on them become possible and a broad agreement among the researchers studying the same problem gives rise to the growth of unified theories in the field of natural sciences.

- *In the field of sociology the form of capitalism, patterns of democracy, role of family as a group keeps changing in time and space. Therefore cumulative research should largely speak about diversity, variabilities present in their structure and functions for which mega theories in sociology may be necessity to natural science but it is absolutely unwanted for sociological research.* Sociology must have to go for middle range theories than striving for scientific status extending natural science theories into the field of sociological research. Sociology should not be compared with natural sciences. Merton borrows substantive ideas from sociology of Weber as the basic problem with ideal type construct is that it asserts that totality of reality cannot be studied by sociology therefore sociology must have to study the essence of reality. To Merton sociology is encountering with the problem of identification of the issues for conducting research that needs to be resolved. The weberian sociology is committed to macroscopic issues that are difficult to study in every possible detail. If sociological research considers that it must have to address to microscopic structures then it will not be difficult for sociologists to understand various dimensions to a given social reality therefore Merton takes interest in the study of political corruption, machine politics considering these issues/problems are subjected to complete scientific investigation.

- *Middle Range theories in sociology advocate that how sociological research facts are important than theories. It gives rise to a situation where facts speak for themselves.* These theories are small understandable, on controversial universally acceptable conceptual devices coming out of a given empirical situation having capacity to explain same or different types of situations without any possible ambiguities or controversies. *For instance* reference group theory, concept of in-group or out-group are defined as middle range theories which can provide a guide to sociological research in time and space.

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Paradigm for functional analysis:

MERTON PRESENTED THE STEPS INVOLVED IN FUNCTIONAL APPROACH IN THE FORM OF A SYSTEMATIC ARRANGEMENT KNOWN AS THE FUNCTIONAL PARADIGM. MERTON BEGINS HIS DISCUSSION WITH THE REVIEW OF THE MISTAKES OF THE EARLY FUNCTIONALISTS' PARTICULARLY **MALINOWSKI AND RADCLIFFE BROWN.** MERTON SAW FUNCTIONAL THEORIZING AS EMBRACING THREE QUESTIONABLE POSTULATES:

✓ The functional unity of social sciences
✓ The functional universality of social items and
✓ The indispensability of functional items of social systems.

- *THE FUNCTIONAL UNITY POSTULATE:* According to Merton, functionalists so far have frequently *transformed the hypothesis that social systems may reveal social integration into a necessary condition or need for social integration.* While it is difficult to argue that human society does not possess some degree of integration. To assume that a high degree of functional unity must exist in a social system is to negate the possibility of its empirical verification. *It is due to such a presumption regarding high degree of functional unity that the functional approach has come to acquire a conservative bias and an ideological colouration which can be discovered in the works of functionalists from Durkheim to Talcott Parsons.* Thus the degree to which functional unity exists in the social system should be a matter subject to empirical investigation.

- *THE POSTULATE OF FUNCTIONAL UNIVERSALITY:* One result of an emphasis on high degree of functional unity was that the early functionalists assumed that if a social item exists in an on going system, it must therefore have had positive consequences for the integration of the social system. In its most extreme form, Malinowski extended this form of reasoning to the point of asserting that every custom, material object, idea and belief, fulfils some vital function. *For Merton, however, if an examination of actually existing systems is undertaken, it would be clear that there is a wide range of empirical possibilities.*

  First, items may not be only positively functional for a system or a part thereof, but can also be *dysfunctional for either the part or the whole system.*
  Secondly, some consequences, whether functional or dysfunctional are intended and recognized by the systems and thus are *manifest* whereas other consequences are not intended or recognized and are therefore *latent.* *Functional analysis therefore should arrive at the calculation of a net balance of consequences of the part of the social system under study.*

- *THE POSTULATE OF FUNCTIONAL INDISPENSABILITY:* An automatic consequence of the assumption that 'all parts are functional' is that existence of all parts is essential of the survival of the social system. Therefore, all parts are functionally indispensable. *Merton contends emphatically that such conclusions which have been taken for granted by various functionalists are unwarranted as can be seen from empirical evidence. Examination of the empirical world reveals quite clearly that alternative structures can exist to fulfill basically the same perquisites in similar and diverse social systems.* This fact leads Merton to postulate the importance in functional analysis of various types of *functional alternatives or functional equivalents within the social systems. Furthermore in looking for functional alternatives, attention is to be drawn to the questions about the range of the item that would serve as a functional equivalent within the existing structural constraints of the social systems.*

Having critically analysed the limitation of functional analysis, Merton suggests the following steps for his functional paradigm. He insists that functional analysis should begin with sheer description of the

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activities of individuals and groups under study. In describing the pattern of interaction and activity among units under investigation, it will be possible to discern clearly the social items to be subjected to functional analysis. Such descriptions can also provide a major clue to the functions performed by such patterned activity.

In order for these functions to become more evident, however additional steps are necessary :

- **THE FIRST OF THESE STEPS** IS FOR INVESTIGATORS TO INDICATE **THE PRINCIPAL ALTERNATIVES** THAT ARE EXCLUDED BY THE DOMINANCE OF A PARTICULAR PATTERN. Such description of the excluded alternatives provides an indication of **the structural context** from which an observed pattern first emerges and is now maintained – thereby offering further clues about the functions or consequences, the item might have for other items and perhaps for the systemic whole.

- **THE SECOND ANALYTICAL STEP** BEYOND SHEER DESCRIPTION INVOLVES **AN ASSESSMENT OF THE MEANING OR MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ACTIVITY FOR THE MEMBER OF THE GROUP**. Description of these meanings may offer some indication of the motives behind the activities of the individual involved and thereby shed some tentative light on the **Manifest & Latent functions** of an activity.

- THESE DESCRIPTIONS REQUIRE **A THIRD ANALYTICAL STEP** OF **DISCERNING SOME ARRAY OF MOTIVES FOR CONFORMITY OR FOR DEVIATION AMONG PARTICIPANTS**. Yet by understanding the configuration of motives for conformity and deviation among actors, an assessment of the psychological needs served or not served by a pattern can be understood – offering an additional clue to the various functions of the pattern under investigation.

- Thus **a final analytical step** involves the **description of how the patterns under investigation reveal regularities not recognized by participants, but which appear to have consequences for both the individuals involved and the system.**

ANALYSIS :

(i) *RECOGNITION OF THE ELEMENTS, IMPORTANT FOR REAL FUNCTIONS:* First of all the observers should include, only those items in his study, which are functional and necessary for related tasks. Unnecessary elements should not be inducted. He can make out the degree of necessity of elements from his study material/pattern. Thus in the study of development of rural structure, the level of awareness campaign should be included a long with infrastructures.

(ii) *IMPORTANCE OF OBJECTIVE CONSEQUENCES:* According to Merton in a single activity, both functional and dysfunctional elements are present and observer should make a balance between the two on the bases of objectivity.

Net balance = function + dysfunction: Eg: television is a main source information and knowledge, apart from one of the best means of entertainment, in a positive way. But negatively, it also causes consumerism, vulgar and violent activities. And in this way, the observer should pay attention on net balance.

(iii) CONCEPTS OF UNITS UNDER FUNCTIONS:

- **FUNCTIONS:** are those which are based on *observed consequences and are helpful in making proper adjustment in the system/associative elements*.

- **DYSFUNCTIONS:** Those observed consequences, *which lessened the levels of adaptation and adjustment in the system and so are dysfunctional* for the system.

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- **Manifest Function:** Those observed consequences, *which keep proper coordination in the system. And are intended by the system.* It means that the knowledge about that activity is equally known by everyone.
- **Latent:** Such functions are unintended and also they are not given acceptance in the system. It means, people hardly acknowledge such activities. Basically, they are the consequences of manifest functions.

Latent And Manifest Functions

According to Robert Merton **manifest functions are those that are intended and recognized. These are functions which people assume and expect the institutions to fulfil.** *For example schools are expected to educate the children in the knowledge and skills that they need. The manifest functions are obvious, admitted and generally applauded. ,,,,,,,,,,,,***Latent functions are unrecognized and unintended functions. These are the unforeseen consequences of institutions.** *For example schools not only educate young they also provide mass entertainment. Latent functions of an institution or partial structure may support the manifest functions for example the latent functions of religious institutions in the modern society include offering recreational activities and courtship opportunities to young people. Latent functions may be irrelevant to manifest functions for example the big functions organized by schools may not impact the purpose of the education. Latent functions may even undermine manifest functions. For example the manifest function of civil service regulations is to secure a competent dedicated staff of civil servants to make government more efficient. But the civil service system may have the latent function of establishing more rigid bureaucracy. The distinction between manifest and latent functions is essentially relative and not absolute. A function may appear to be manifest for some in the social system and latent for others.*

For Merton, the difference between Manifest and Latent function is so important that it reveals so many hidden elements in the system. **Merton has presented the difference in the following way:**

- *FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES BECOME RATIONAL:* To explain it Merton has presented an example of rain ceremony among American Hopi Indian. In this ceremony, people gather around one place and sprinkle water on the ground with the hope that clouds would imitate such activity and rain will occur. This seems to be an irrational act at the first glance, but Merton's presents its another picture that the gathered, people at one place, enhance their group identity, unity and solidarity. This analysis shows that, an irrational activity his become rational and meaningful.
- *ENHANCES SOCIAL KNOWLEDGE:* To explain it Veblen's theory of leisure class can be presented here. In which he has talked about conspicuous consumption people purchase commodities further comfortable life but in a single household, the presence of plenty of such commodities, shows conspicuous consumption. Through which show off their status in society. Apart from it, the rate of inflation is affected with such activities, which is harmful for the economy of the country. Interestingly, a sociologist can provide such kind of knowledge, which can be used by the government. For e.g. Singapore government has provided, very nice facility for transportation. But despite, if someone wants to purchase a car, then, he will have to pay the double price.
- *OPEN NEW VISTAS FOR RESEARCH:* A sociologist searches hidden consequences in any manifest functions and in this way provides new ways for researches, not only to himself, but also is others which could be definitely, functional and effective for society, in future.

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- *REVEALS THE INSTITUTIONAL FAULTS BY SOMETHING ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES:* Merton has explained it with example of American political system. America is a democratic country in which people are given equal opportunity, but there are many, **deprived from such opportunities** and **so they get a low level of lifestyle**; but there is one more group which Merton calls **political machine** which works illegally i.e.-they pilferage smuggle etc and distribute the accumulated money in the group, through which basic needs of those people are fulfilled. *In this way, people become capable to achieve opportunities.*
- Merton says that where American democracy failed to perform, political machine accomplishes it. The real consequences of such activity are that the democratic government should take a lesson from them and work for the development of the deprived people. This would be highly functional for the society.

Limination of Merton's theory of functionalism :

- *LACK OF RATIONALITY:* Merton has not told what is functional is dysfunctional specially for a modern society. It is a difficult question not resolved by Merton. Apart from it, the relevancy of objective consequence is also questionable became, their also it is difficult to tell rationally, to what extent any activity is functional of dysfunctional.
- *LACK OF OBJECTIVITY AND UNIVERSALITY:* Like Brown and Malinowski, Merton also presented an example of simple societies (Hopi Indians). In that way, *his universality is questionable he has also presented the example of a group (political machine) to which, he himself was a member.* It means, has studies suffer from subjective experiences. And so it lacks objectivity. Apart from it, the political machine acting illegally can't be approved in all societies and so its universality is also questionable.

MERTON'S THEORY OF CONFORMITY & DEVIANCE

Analysis of Deviance before Merton:

Biological Theorist :

- Among the earliest attempt to account for deviance was in the field of Biology. Dr. Lombroso (an Italian) in the late 19th century tried to account for deviance in terms of biological factors. Size of jaw, limbs, body built etc. were the parameters to explain deviance.
- **Sheldon & Eleanor Gleuck**: They identify mesomorphs, a particular body-build as deviance. A research in Britain among criminals lodged in prison saw an extra Y- Chromosome. Percentage of extra Y- Chromosome was high security prison. They concluded that biological factors lead to deviance.

According to Psychological Theories deviance is the result of:

- inherited psychic abnormality,
- acquired as result of inadequate socialization or
- Undesirable experience in social life.
- British psychologist Hans Eysenck identified a personality type i.e. extra-version. It is an inherited tendency. Such individuals have a craving for excitement. They do unusual things and end up as deviants.
- Neo-Freudians relates deviants to socialization failure or incomplete socialization. John Bowlby in his study of 44 juvenile thieves found that chronic redivists (juvenile delinquents) have habitual tendency to commit crime. Even if they are punished they continue to commit crime. He found that most

juvenile delinquents tech intimate relations with their mother in their childhood. They become indifferent to pain & sufferings of others.

- **Robert G. Andry:** Male children who have hostile relation with their father usually show hostility to others. Hitler was such a person. Hitler grew up intensely hating his father because his father maltreated his mother.

Sociologist tends to question above mention theories. Because they treated deviant as abnormal being in a normal society. This prepares the ground for above mentioned theories. Durkheim was one of the earliest sociologists to address the issue of deviance. According to him deviants is unavoidable. There can never be complete socialization. Conscience collective cannot be fully followed by all. Deviance is also normal and healthy that some degree of deviance may exist if collective conscience becomes too repressive. It may suppress tendency of reform and innovation.

MERTON BEGINS WITH THE PREMISE THAT DEVIANCE RESULTS FROM THE CULTURE AND STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY. *Merton starts from the functionalist premise that for the smooth functioning of a society, VALUE CONSENSUS among the members is essential. However, SINCE MEMBERS OF SOCIETY ARE PLACED IN DIFFERENT POSITIONS IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE, FOR EXAMPLE THEY DIFFER IN TERMS OF CLASS POSITION; THEY DO NOT HAVE THIS SAME OPPORTUNITY OF REALIZING THE SHARED VALUES.* This situation can generate deviance. In Merton words, "the social and cultural structure generated pressure for socially deviant behavior upon people variously located in the structure."

- Merton states that *a state of* **ANOMIE MAY EXIST IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE**. One form of anomie is that *there might be lack of co-ordination between culturally approved goals and structurally permitted means to attain these goals.* The members of the society placed variously in the social structure may adapt differently to this anomic situation. **FOR EXAMPLE,** the Americans variously share the goal of success in American society which is equated with wealth and material position. The 'American Dream' states that all members of society have an equal opportunity of achieving success, of owning a Cadillac, a Beverly Hills mansion and a substantial bank balance. *In all societies, there are institutionalized means or reaching culturally defined goals. In America, the accepted way of achieving success is through educational qualification, talent, hard work, determination and ambition.*

- IN A BALANCED SOCIETY AN EQUAL EMPHASIS IS PLACE UPON BOTH CULTURAL GOALS AND INSTITUTIONAL MEANS AND MEMBERS ARE SATISFIED WITH BOTH. ***BUT IN AN ANOMIC SITUATION SUCH EQUAL EMPHASIS MAY NOT EXIST. INDIVIDUALS WOULD ADAPT TO THE ANOMIC SITUATION IN VARIOUS WAYS.*** The anomie lies in the fact that simply by hard work, education and determination alone an average American member cannot attain the success goal. *Merton outlines five possible responses to this state anomie.*

– *THE FIRST AND MOST COMMON RESPONSE IS 'CONFORMITY'.* Members of society conform both to success goals and the normative means of reaching them. They strive for success by means of accepted channels.

– *THE SECOND POSSIBLE RESPONSE IS 'INNOVATION'.* This response rejects normative means of achieving success and turns to deviant means to attain success goals. Thus, the public servant who accepts bribe to get rich quickly indulges in innovative type of deviance. So does the politician who accepts commission in arms deals. *Merton argues that members of relatively proper sections of society are most likely to select this route.* They are least likely to succeed by conventional channels. Thus there is a greater pressure upon them to deviate, because they have little access to conventional and legitimate means for becoming successful. Since their ways are blocked, they

innovate, turning to crime which promises greater rewards than legitimate means. Merton argues that they abandon institutionalized means while retaining success aspirations.

– *FOR THE THIRD POSSIBLE RESPONSE MERTON USES THE TERM 'RITUALISM'*. Those who select this alternative are deviant because they make a fetish of the means and cling to them even though it means loosing the sight of the goals. *The pressure to adopt this alternative is greatest for members of lower middle class.* Their occupations provide less opportunity for success than those of other members of the middle class. However, compared to the members of the working class they have been strongly socialized to conform to the social norms. This prevents them from turning to deviant means.   Unable to innovate and struck up with jobs that offer little opportunity for advancement, their only solution is to abandon their success goals. Merton paints the following picture of the typical lower middle class ritualist. He is a low grade bureaucrat, ultra respectable but struck in a rut. He is stickler of rules given to follow the book to the letter, clings to red tape, conforms to all the outward standards of middle class respectability, but has given up striving for success. The ritualist is deviant because he has rejected the success goals held by most members of society.

– *MERTON CALLS THE FOURTH TYPE OF RESPONSE AS 'RETREATISM'.* It applies to psychotics, artists, outcasts, vagabonds, tramps, chronic drunkards and drug addicts. They have strongly internalized both the cultural goals and the institutional means yet are unable to achieve success due to the existence of the anomic situation. They resolve the conflict of their situation by abandoning both the goals and means of reaching them. They are unable to cope with life and hence drop out of society defeated and are resigned to their failures. They are deviants in two ways. They have rejected both the cultural goals and the institutionalized means.   Merton does not relate Retreatism to social class position.

– *THE FIFTH TYPE OF RESPONSE IS 'REBELLION'.* It is a rejection of the success goals, the institutionalized means and their replacement by different goals and means. Those who adopt this alternative wish to create a new society. *Lenin, Christ and Gandhi are examples of rebel type of deviants. Even terrorists in different types of societies are in illustration of the rebel type of deviants.* Merton argues that rebellion is typical of members of a rising class rather than the most depressed strata, who organize the resentful into a revolutionary group.

Cultural goals	Institutionalized means	Modes of adaptation
+	+	Conformity
+	-	Innovation
-	+	Ritualism
-	-	Retreatism
±	±	Rebellion

Robert K. Merton's Deviance Typology

 To summarise, *Merton claims that his analysis shows how the culture of the society generates deviance due to lack of coordination between the cultural goals and institutionalized means created by the state of anomic.* This tendency exerts pressure for deviance, a pressure for deviance, pressure which varies

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depending on a person's position in the class structure. The way the person responds to this pressure will also depend on his position in the class structure. *Thus he explains deviance in terms of the nature of the society rather than the nature of the individual and hence his theory is a sociological theory of deviance.* Subsequently, Merton's theory has been modified by others to explain other types of deviance and covered by Merton's theory of deviance.

Analysis of Deviance after Merton

- According to **ALBERT COHEN**, Merton's theories can explain only Pecuniary deviance i.e. directed towards financial gains. It doesn't explain senseless violence, vandalism, non-pecuniary deviance. Such kind of deviance is a safety valve from frustration. In the case of poor and slum dwellers borne out of status frustration, mainstream cultural goals are of no use. Deviance acts as a safety value to them.

- **CLOWARD & OHLIN,** further criticized Merton. For them his theory does not explain why some people should become innovators, ritualistic etc. They talked about criminal sub-culture, which is solely responsible for deviance.

- According to **WALTER MILLAR**, criminals are not always those who failed to gain legitimate opportunity structure. They may do deviant acts out of thrill i.e. to become smart-pick pocketing, boxing etc.

- According to **DAVID MATZA,** there is minor difference between criminal and non-criminals. Even deviants believe in values of society. Most of the time, they try to disown the responsibility for example – they argue that 'everybody is corrupt only I am caught'. Resorting to technique of neutralization deviants show partial acceptance of societal norms. In his theory of delinquent drift Matza argue that young people flow with deviant behaviour. Crimes become a way of overcoming the mood fatalism i.e. feeling of utterly helpless.

- **HOWARD BECKER :** In his *"Lebelling Theory"* argue that society applies label in context of behaviour. The behaviour becomes deviants when others label it as such i.e. Give the dog a bad name; there are all chances that he will live up to that expectation.

- **EDWIN M. LEMART** made distinction between primary and secondary deviation Primary deviance consist of deviant acts before they are publicly labeled. Secondary deviance is the response individual or group to societal reaction.

- **BERNARD LANDER** of Chicago School in his study of Baltimore city, found that social disorganization provides key to explain deviants.

REFERENCE GROUP

A REFERENCE GROUP IS ONE TO WHICH YOU ALWAYS REFER IN ORDER TO EVALUATE YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS, YOUR ROLE-PERFORMANCE, YOUR ASPIRATIONS AND AMBITIONS. IT IS ONLY A REFERENCE GROUP THAT TELLS YOU WHETHER YOU ARE RIGHT OR WRONG, WHATEVER YOU ARE DOING; YOU ARE DOING BADLY OR WELL.

So one might say that the membership groups to which you belong are your reference groups.

- *Even non-membership groups-the groups to which you do not belong-may act like reference groups.* This is not really very surprising. Because life is mobile and time and again you come to know of the lives and ways of those who do not belong to your group. At times, this makes you wonder and ask why it is that there are others who are more powerful, more prestigious than you…

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- *It is because of this comparison that you often tend to feel deprived. You aspire to become a member of a group to which you do not belong but which is more powerful or more prestigious.* As a result, this time in order to evaluate your achievements, performance; you refer to a non-membership group. *therefore, is that not only membership groups, even non-membership groups act like reference groups.* Human beings look at themselves not solely through the eyes of their group members, but also through the eyes of those who belong to other groups.

- Merton's understanding of **relative deprivation** is closely tied to his treatment of reference group and reference group behavior. *Essentially, Merton speaks of relative deprivation while examining the findings of 'The American Soldier', a work published in 1949. In this work an attempt was made to examine how the American soldiers looked at themselves and evaluated their role-performance, career achievements, etc."Comparing himself with his unmarried associates in the Army, the married man could feel that their induction in army demanded greater sacrifice; and comparing himself with the married Soldiers, he could feel that he had been called on for sacrifices which unmarried soldiers were escaping altogether".* Here we find the kernel of what Merton called **relative deprivation.**

- This is not surprising. Happiness or deprivation is not absolutes: they depend on the scale of measure as well as on the frame of reference. The married soldier is not asking what he gets and what other married soldiers like him get. Instead, he is asking what he is deprived of.

- Now his unmarried associates in the army are relatively free. They don't have wives and children, so they are free from the responsibility from which married soldiers cannot escape. In other words, married soldiers are deprived of the kind of freedom that their unmarried associates are enjoying. *Likewise, the married soldier feels deprived when he compares himself with his civilian married friend.* Because the civilian friend can live with his wife and children and fulfill his responsibility. The married soldier therefore, feels deprived that by virtue of being a soldier he cannot afford to enjoy the normal, day to day family life of a civilian

- *It is precisely because of the kind of reference group with which the married soldier compares his lot that he feels deprived. Likewise, as another finding shows. "The overseas soldier, relative to soldier still at home, suffered a greater break with home ties and with many of the amenities of life to which he was accustomed".*

Concept of Group Membership & group Non-Membership:

Merton speaks of three characteristics of a group and group memberships:

– *First, there is an objective criterion, viz.,* the frequency of interaction. In other words, the sociological concept of a group refers to *a number of people who frequently interact with one another.*

– A second criterion is that *the interacting persons define themselves as members. In other words, they feel that they have patterned expectations or forms of interaction which are morally binding on them and on other members.*

– The third criterion is that *the persons in interaction are defined by others as 'belonging to the group'. These others include fellow members as well as non-members.*

Membership groups shape human beings 'day-do-day behavior more clearly and more concretely. In Group members are conscious of their identities, they are aware of what to do and what not to do. As a result, for them, group norms are morally binding.

It is at this juncture that Merton wants us to appreciate the dynamics of non-membership. It is true that non-members are those who do not meet the interactional and definitional criteria of

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membership. But, at the same time, as Merton says, all non-members are not of the same kind. Broadly speaking, non-members can be divided into three categories.

– Some may aspire to membership in the group.
– Others may be indifferent toward such affiliation.
– Others may be motivated to remain unaffiliated with the group.

Anticipatory Socialization:

Merton speaks of anticipatory socialization in the context of non-membership reference groups. It is like preparing oneself for the group to which an individual aspires but does not belong. It is like adopting the values, life-styles of a non-membership reference group. For an individual, says Merton, anticipatory socialization *'may serve the twin functions of aiding his rise into that group and of easing his adjustment after he has become part of it'.*

Suppose a village boy born in a lower middle class household accepts Indus world School boys as his reference group. As a process of anticipatory socialization he begins to emulate the 'smartness' of Indus World School boys. Now if this village boy really succeeds in getting an entry into Indus World School, his anticipatory socialization would indeed be functional, it would be easier for him to adjust himself to his new role.

While Merton speaks of the possibility of functional consequences of anticipatory socialization, he, however, does not fail to see its dysfunctional consequences. If the system is much closed then this lower middle class village boy would never get an entry into Doon School. **In that case, anticipatory socialization would be dysfunctional for him.** There are two reasons

First, he would not be able to become a member of the group to which he aspires……….And *secondly,* because of anticipatory socialization-imitation of the values of a non-membership group-he would be disliked by the members of his own group. As Merton says, he would be reduced to being a *'marginal man'*! That is why, **anticipatory socialization is functional for the individual only 'within a relatively open social structure providing for mobility'. By the same token it would be dysfunctional, in a 'relatively closed social structure'.**

Merton makes another interesting point. *In a closed system the individual is unlikely to choose a non-membership group as a reference group. That is why, in a closed system where the rights, prerequisites and obligations of each stratum are generally held to be morally right-an individual, even if his objective conditions are not good, would feel less deprived i.e. untouchables, schedule castes, tribes in India. ………But in an open system in which the individual always compares his lot with relatively better off and the more privileged non-membership reference groups he remains perpetually unhappy and discontented.*

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE REFERENCE GROUPS:

Reference groups, says Merton, are of two kinds. *First, a positive reference group is one which one likes and takes seriously in order to shape one's behavior and evaluate one's achievements and performance. Secondly, there is also a negative reference group which one dislikes and rejects and which, instead of providing norms to follow, provokes one to create counter-norms.*

As Merton says, **"the positive type involves motivated assimilation of the norms of the group or the standards of the group as a basis for self-appraisal; the negative type involves motivated rejection, i.e. not merely non-acceptance of norms but the formation of counter- norms".**

It is not difficult to think of an example. Imagine reaction of the colonized to their colonial masters. Now you would always find some "natives" who get hypnotized by the success story of the colonizers:

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they follow their life-style, speak their language, and emulate their food habit. In other words, for them, the colonizers act like a ***positive reference group.***

But then again, we find some natives who hate the colonizers for their exploitation, arrogance, and brutality. Instead of emulating their norms, they create counter-norms in order to separate themselves from the colonizers. In other words, for them, the colonizers act like a ***negative reference group.***

Self-fulfilling prophecy: *Sociologist Robert K. Merton (1957) defined a self-fulfilling prophecy as a false definition of a situation that is assumed to be accurate. People behave, however, as if that false definition is true. In the end, the misguided behavior produces responses that confirm the false definition. Merton argued that the "tragic, often vicious, cycle of self-fulfilling prophecies can be broken" if the initial definition that set the circle in motion is abandoned. Only when that definition is questioned and a new definition is introduced will the situation correct itself.*

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SYLLABUS:
✓ *Self and Identity*

Symbolic interactionism is a sociological perspective on self and society based on the ideas of George H. Mead (1934), Charles H. Cooley (1902), W. I. Thomas (1931), and other pragmatists associated, primarily, with the University of Chicago in the early twentieth century. The central theme of symbolic interactionism is that human life is lived in the symbolic domain. Symbols are culturally derived social objects having shared meanings that are created and maintained in social interaction. Through language and communication, symbols provide the means by which reality is constructed. Reality is primarily a social product, and all that is humanly consequential—self, mind, society, culture—emerges from and is dependent on symbolic interactions for its existence. Even the physical environment is relevant to human conduct mainly as it is interpreted through symbolic systems.

Importance of Meanings

The label symbolic interactionism was coined by Herbert Blumer (1969), one of Mead's students. Blumer, who did much to shape this perspective, specified its three basic premises: (1) Humans act toward things on the basis of the meanings that things have for them; (2) the meanings of things derive from social interaction; and (3) these meanings are dependent on, and modified by, an interpretive process of the people who interact with one another. The focus here is on meaning, which is defined in terms of action and its consequences (reflecting the influence of pragmatism). The meaning of a thing resides in the action that it elicits. For example, the meaning of "grass" is food to a cow, shelter to a fox, and the like. In the case of symbols, meanings also depend on a degree of consensual responses between two or more people. The meaning of the word husband, for example, depends on the consensual responses of those who use it. If most of those who use it agree, the meaning of a symbol is clear; if consensus is low, the meaning is ambiguous, and communication is problematic. Within a culture, a general consensus prevails on the meanings associated with various words or symbols. However, in practice, the meanings of things are highly variable and depend on processes of interpretation and negotiation of the interactants.

The interpretive process entails what Blumer refers to as role-taking, the cognitive ability to take the perspective of another. It is a critical process in communication because it enables actors to interpret one another's responses, thereby bringing about greater consensus on the meanings of the symbols used. The determination of meanings also depends on negotiation—that is, on mutual adjustments and accommodations of those who are interacting. In short, meaning is emergent, problematic, and dependent on processes of role-taking and negotiation. Most concepts of symbolic interactionism are related to the concept of meaning.

The origins of symbolic interactionism: Mead's conception of behaviour

Symbolic interaction is a very loose categorization not particularly welcome to many of the sociologists commonly counted as part of it. The name itself provides a succinct summation of the key claim of Mead's social psychology, which holds that interaction between people is a matter of communication, through symbols. Mead aimed to understand how the capacity for communication by symbols developed among humans, and how it develops in the maturation of each human individual.

MEAD'S VIEW OF THE SELF

The human mind—which Mead termed the self—develops in and through the process of symbolic interaction, **enabling an individual to acquire a sense of "HIMSELF OR HERSELF" as an individual.**

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The development of the human mind was to be understood in strictly Darwinian terms as a product of the evolutionary process; the evolution of the human organism and the social nature of human individuals were both part of their biological nature. Hence Mead was certainly confident that social life could be studied scientifically, since his social psychology was in essence an application of biology, but he was none the less critical of many attempts to understand human social life scientifically. This was not because they sought to be scientific, but because they had an impoverished conception of:

• What science involves (the methods); and/or
• What the science is to study (the subject matter) in the case of human life.

For Mead, the mind can be studied scientifically because its workings are displayed in people's conduct, not concealed behind it. The capacity of humans to respond in a more complex and flexible way to their environment than other animals is a product of human biology and its evolution into its specific form. For example, no small part of the crucial linguistic/symbolic capacity of humans is a result of the evolution of the vocal cords.

Mead emphasizes the contrast between the way animal response is tied to the immediate situation and the way humans can transcend it; they are able to reflect upon and respond to past situations well after they have occurred, and can anticipate and prepare for future situations before they happen. How we shall react in a situation can depend on our preparation and planning, not just on an automatic link between a certain occurrence and a fixed, instinctual reaction as in the case of a reflex action, e.g. the knee's reaction on being hit. We do have reflex reactions, but not only those. **Thus Mead is putting the case that we ourselves can control our own behaviour; we do not simply react to a stimulus that provokes our reaction. The capacity to transcend immediate circumstance in this way requires the development of SYMBOLIC CAPACITY.**

SYMBOLIC CAPACITY

This is our ability to be able to represent, i.e. recall or envisage, past and future situations to ourselves, to conjure them up when they are not actually present, are in the past, or have not yet happened.

Part of this capacity for representation involves our ability to represent ourselves to ourselves. If we are to prepare our conduct for future situations then we must be able to imagine not just those situations but, also, what we would do in them. Thus we must have the capacity to think of ourselves in the way that we think about (other) objects; in Meadian terms, we can be objects to ourselves. That is, we can think about ourselves in just the same way as we can think about the objects (including other people) in the world about us, we can step back from our immediate involvement in a situation and reflect on it, and we can also envisage how others in our situation will look upon us and see ourselves as others see us. This, then, is the capacity for self-consciousness.

THE INDIVIDUAL IS NOT, OF COURSE, MERELY A BODY, BUT AN IDENTITY, A PERSON WITH A DISTINCT CORE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTER, WHICH MEAD TERMS 'THE SELF'. It is the basis of, the driving force for, an individual's conduct. Mead refers to 'the social self' to emphasise that the self develops in interaction with and is modelled on other people and their ways of acting. The child, for example, learns first by imitation, by copying the behaviour of others in playful form, acting now like the postman, now the shopkeeper, then the mother, and so on. In this way, the individual learns what is involved in social roles, i.e. learns what people expect of one another. Through imitating these roles, the child is learning how other people look upon the world, how they see it relative to their role responsibilities. The child is learning not only to take account of things from its own situated, particular point of view, but also to assess its situation from the point of view of others. Such assessment is a basis for the co-ordination of activities with others, allowing one to adjust one's own actions to what one can expect/anticipate, because one can consider things from their point of view as well as one's own. The

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child does not develop a detailed conception of how every other kind of person in a society would view things, for that is far too complicated a task, but forms, rather, a general sense of how other people, broadly and typically, look upon things. Mead called this general orientation '**THE GENERALIZED OTHER**'. This is an important element in the individual's psychology. It is the standard outlook of the community in which the child grows up, and the attitudes that are shared within it form part of each individual's personality.

SELF-IDENTITY: CONCEPT FORMATION

- **Along with symbols, meaning, and interaction, the** *self* **is a basic concept in symbolic interactionism.** The essential feature of the self is that it is a reflexive phenomenon. Reflexivity enables humans to act toward themselves as objects, or to reflect on themselves, argue with themselves, evaluate themselves, and so forth. This human attribute (al-though dolphins and the great apes show some evidence of a self as well), based on the social character of human language and the ability to role-take, enables individuals to see themselves from the perspective of another and thereby to form a conception of themselves, a self-concept.

- **Two types of** *others* **are critical in the development of the self**. *The significant other refers* to people who are important to an individual, whose opinions matter. **The** *generalized other* **refers** to a conception of the community, group, or any organized system of roles (e.g., a baseball team) that are used as a point of reference from which to view the self.

- The importance of others in the formation of self-concepts is captured in Cooley's (1902) influential concept, the *looking-glass self.* Cooley proposed that to some extent individuals see themselves as they think others see them. Self-conceptions and self-feelings (e.g., pride or shame) are a consequence of how people imagine others perceive and evaluate them. Within contemporary symbolic interactionism, this process is called *reflected appraisals* and is the main process emphasized in the development of the self.

- **The self is considered a social product in other ways, too. The content of self-concepts reflects the content and organization of society. This is evident with regard to the roles that are internalized as role-identities (e.g., father, student).** Roles**,** as behavioral expectations associated with a status within a set of relationships, constitute a major link between social and personal organization. *Sheldon Stryker (1980) proposes that differential commitment to various role-identities provides much of the structure and organization of self-concepts.* To the extent that individuals are committed to a particular role identity, they are motivated to act according to their conception of the identity and to maintain and protect it, because their role performance implicates their self-esteem. Much of socialization, particularly during childhood, involves learning social roles and associated values, attitudes, and beliefs. Initially this takes place in the family, then in larger arenas (e.g., peer groups, school, work settings) of the individual's social world. The role identities formed early in life, such as gender and filial identities, remain some of the most important throughout life. Yet socialization is lifelong, and individuals assume various role identities throughout their life course.

- **Socialization is not a passive process of learning roles and conforming to other's expectations. The self is highly active and selective, having a major influence on its environment and itself**. When people play roles, role-making often is as evident as is learning roles. In role-making, individuals actively construct, interpret, and uniquely express their roles. When they perceive an incongruity between a role imposed on them and some valued aspect of their self-conception, they may distance themselves from a role, which is the disassociation of self from role. A pervasive theme in this literature is that the self actively engages in its own development, a process that may be unpredictable.

- **Mead talks about three forms of inter-subjective activity: Language, play and the game.** These forms of symbolic interaction (social interactions that take place via shared symbols such as words,

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definitions, roles, gestures, rituals etc) are the major paradigms in his theory of socialization and are the basic social processes that render the reflexive objectification of the self possible. Language is communication vie significant symbols and it is through significant communication that the individual is able to take the attitudes of others toward oneself*. Language is not only a necessary mechanism of mind but also the primary social foundation of self.* Within the linguistic act the individual takes the role of the other i.e. responds to his/her own gestures in terms of the symbolized attitudes of others. This process of "**TAKING THE ROLE**" of the other within the process of symbolic interaction is the primal form of self-objectification and is essential to self-realization. Mead's self as object is the basic structure of human experience that arises in response to other persons in an organic social –symbolic world of internal relations.

- **This becomes even clearer in Mead's interpretation of PLAY STAGE AND GAME STAGE. In playing and gaming as in linguistic activity the key to the generation of self-consciousness is the process of role-playing**. *In play the child takes the role of another and acts as though she/he were the other. This form of role playing involves a single role at a time. Thus the other which comes into the child's experience in play is a specific other*. *The game involves a more complex form of role playing than that involved in play. In the game the individual is required to internalize not merely the character of a single and specific other but the roles of all others who are involved with him in the game. He must comprehend the rules of the game which condition the various roles. This configuration of roles-organized according to the rules brings the attitude of all participants together to form a symbolized unity: this unity is the generalized other.* The generalized other is an organized and generalized attitude with reference to which the individual defines her/his conduct. When the individual can view himself from the standpoint of the generalized other, self-consciousness in the full sense of the term is attained. The game is the stage of the social process at which the individual attains selfhood. One of the Mead's most outstanding contributions to the development of critical social theory is his analysis of games. Mead says that the full social and psychological significance of game playing and the extent to which the game functions is an instrument of social control.

The 'Me' and the 'I'

- **Although the self is a product of socio-symbolic interaction it is not merely a passive reflection of the generalized other**. The individual's response to the social world is active; he decides what he will do in the light of the attitude of others but his conduct is not mechanically determined by such attitudinal structures. There are two phases of the self- that phase which reflects the attitude of the generalized other and that phase which responds to the attitude of the generalized other. Here Mead distinguishes between the 'me' and 'I'. The 'me' is the social self and the 'I' is the response to me. **The 'I' is the response of the organism to the attitudes of the others; the 'me' is the organized set of attitudes of others which one assumes. Mead defines the 'me' as a conventional habitual individual and the 'I' as the novel reply of the individual to the generalized other. There is a dialectical relationship between society and the individual and this dialectic is enacted on the intra-psychic level in terms of the polarity of the 'me' and the 'I'.**

- **The me is the internalization of roles which derive from such symbolic processes as linguistic interaction, playing and gaming whereas the I is a creative response to the symbolized structures of the me. The 'I' appear as a symbolized object in our consciousness of our past actions but then it has become part of me.** The 'me' is in a sense that phase of the self that represents the past. The I which is a response to the me represents action in a present and implies the restructuring of the me in a future. Because of the temporal historical dimension of the self, the character of the 'I' is determinable only after it has occurred; the 'I' is not therefore subject to predetermination. Particular acts of the 'I' become aspects of the 'me' in the sense that they are

objectified through memory but the 'I' as such is not contained in the 'me'. The human individual exists in a social situation and responds to that situation. The situation has a particular character but this character does not completely determine the response of the individual there seem to be alternative courses of action. The individual must select a course of action and act accordingly but the course of action he selects is not dictated by the situation. It is this indeterminacy of response that gives the sense of freedom of initiative.

- **The action of the 'I' is revealed only in the action itself; specific prediction of the action of 'I' is not possible.** The individual is determined to respond but the specific character of the response is not fully determined. The individual's response are conditioned but not determined by the situation in which he acts. Human freedom is conditioned freedom. Thus the 'I' and the 'me' exist in dynamic relation to one another. The human personality arises in a social situation. This situation structures the me by means of inter –subjective symbolic processes – language,gestures,play and games etc and the active organism as it continues to develop must respond to its situation and to its me. This response of the active organism is the 'I'. The individual takes the attitude of the 'me' or the attitude of the 'I' according to the situation in which he finds himself. For Mead both aspects of the 'I' and the 'me' are essential to the self in its full expression. Both community and individual autonomy are necessary to identity. The 'I' is process breaking through structure. The 'me' is a necessary symbolic structure which renders the action of the 'I' possible and without this structure of things; the life of the self would become impossible.

The dialectic of 'self' and other

- The self arises when the individual takes the attitude of the generalized other toward herself. This internalization of the generalized other occurs through the individual's participation in the conservation of significant symbols and in other socialization processes. The self then is of great value to organized society: the internalization of the conservation of significant symbols and of other interactional symbolic structures allow for the super coordination of society as whole and for the increased efficiency of the individual as a member of the group. The generalized other is a major instrument of social control; it is the mechanism by which the community gains control over the conduct of its individual members. Social control is the expression of the 'me' over against the expression of the 'I'.

- The genesis of the self in social process is thus a condition of social control. The self is a social emergent that supports the cohesion of the group individual will is harmonized by means of a socially defined and symbolized reality with social goals and values. *Thus there are two dimensions of Mead's theory of internalization: The internalization of the attitudes of others toward oneself and toward one another. The internalization of the attitudes of others toward the various phases or aspects of the common social activity or set of social undertakings in which as members of an organized society or social group they are all engaged.* The self then has reference not only to others but to social projects and goals and it is by means of the socialization process (the internalization of the generalized other through language, play and the game that the individual is brought to assume the attitudes of those in the group who are involved with him in his social activities.

Critique Symbolic interactionism

- Interactionists have often been accused of examining human interaction in a vacuum. They have tended to focus on small-scale face to face interaction with little concern for its historical or social settings. They have concentrated on particular situations and encounters with *little reference to the historical events which led up to them or the wider social framework in which they occur. Since these factors influence the particular interaction situation, the scant attention they have received has been regarded as a serious omission.*

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- *While symbolic interactionism provides a corrective to the excesses of societal determinism, many critics have argued that it has gone too far in this direction. Though they claim that action is not determined by structural norms, interactionists do admit the presence of such norms. However, they tend to take them as given rather than explaining their origin.*
- As **William Skidmore** comments, the interactionists largely fail to explain 'why people consistently choose to act in given ways in certain situations, instead of in all the other ways they might possibly have acted'. In stressing the flexibility and freedom of human action the interactionists tend to downplay the constraints on action**. In Skidmore's view this is due to the fact that 'interactionism consistently fails to give an account of social structure'.** In other words it fails to adequately explain how standardized normative behavior comes about and why members of society are motivated to act in terms of social norms.
- Similar criticism has been made with reference to what many see as the failure of interactionists to explain the source of the meanings to which they attach such importance. Critics argue that such meanings are not spontaneously created in interaction situations. Instead they are systematically generated by the social structure. *Thus Marxists have argued that the meanings which operate in face to face interaction situations are largely the product of class relationships. From this viewpoint, interactionists have failed to explain the most significant thing about meanings: the source of their origin.*
- Symbolic interactionism is a distinctly American branch of sociology and to some this partly explains its shortcomings. Thus **Leon Shaskolsky** has argued that interactionism is largely a reflection of the cultural ideals of American society. He claims *that 'Symbolic interactionism has its roots deeply imbedded in the cultural environment of American life, and its interpretation of society is, in a sense, a "looking glass" image of what that society purports to be'. Thus the emphasis on liberty, freedom and individuality in interactionism can be seen in part as a reflection of America's view of itself*. **Shaskolsky** argues that this helps to explain why the interactionists perspective finds less support in Europe since there is a greater awareness in European societies of the constraints of power and class domination. By reflecting American ideals, **Shaskolsky** argues that interactionism has failed to face up to and take account of the harsher realities of social life. *Whatever its shortcomings however, many would agree with William Skidmore that, 'On the positive side, it is clearly true that some of the most fascinating sociology is in the symbolic interactionists tradition'.*

Social Stratification & Mobility

11A/10, Old Rajender Nagar, Near Agrawal Sweet, Delhi
www.facebook.com/essayforias=byvikashranjan
E-mail : infovrc2016@gmail.com
Website : www.vikashranjan.org
7840888102
8586861046

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Syllabus:

✓ *Concepts – equality, inequality, hierarchy, exclusion, poverty and deprivation.*

✓ *Theories of social stratification – Structural functionalist theory, Marxist theory, Weberian theory.*

✓ *Dimensions –class, status groups, gender, ethnicity and race.*

✓ *Social mobility – open and closed systems, types of mobility, sources and causes of mobility.*

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Social Stratification: meaning, nature characteristics and theories of social stratification!

Men have long dreamed of an egalitarian society, a society in which all members are equal. No one will be placed in a position that will be higher or lower, superior or inferior in relation to other. No one will suffer the indignity of being related to a position which commands little respect. Wealth will be distributed equally among the population. The rich and poor, have and have-not's will be a thing of the past. In an egalitarian society, the phrase' power to the people' will become reality. No longer will some have power over others. Exploitation and oppression will be the concepts of the history which have no place in the description of contemporary social reality.

Clearly the egalitarian society remains a dream. In no society people are absolutely equal in all respects. All human societies from the simple to the most complex have some form of social inequality. In particular, power and prestige are unequally distributed between individuals and groups.

In many societies there are also marked differences in the distribution of wealth. Wealth may include land, livestock, buildings, money and many other form of property owned by individuals or social groups. Societies are marked by inequalities. Societies may differ in the degree of inequalities and nature of stratification.

Social inequality is a universal phenomenon in all societies. It can exist either in form of a hierarchy of groups or individuals or it may exist without the creation of a hierarchy. In the former case it is called social hierarchy. While in the latter case it is known as social differentiation for in almost all societies men and women are treated unequally. If social inequality manifests itself in the form of a hierarchy involving ranking of groups then it is known as social stratification, thus social stratification is a particular case of the social inequality. Social stratification is essentially a group phenomenon.

Let us first discuss the basic Concepts before we discuss **meaning, nature characteristics and theories of social stratification!**

CONCEPT of EQUALITY

The study of social stratification is invariably associated with the concepts of *equality* and *inequality,* which in sociological context mean *"social equality"* and *"social inequality"*. Both these concepts seem to be as old as social thought for they are inextricably linked with our *value system.* Human history is marked by endless efforts of a large number of social leaders and reformers who toiled and struggled to establish equality in society and to remove, or at least, reduce inequality. Despite their efforts, inequality still persists and establishment of equality remains an unfulfilled dream.

- *"Equality" has been one of the cherished values of the people since times immemorial. But, social inequality has been the fact of human* **group life**. *J.J. Rousseau, one of the intellectuals behind the French Revolution of 1789, had recognized this fact when he said that* **"men are born free and equal but everywhere they are in chains".** *The quest for equality and the struggle against inequality and injustice continue even today.*

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- Broadly the tern equality refers to *"the state of being equal in some respect. Equality or social equality refers to a condition in which members of a group or society have equal access to, wealth, prestige, or power. Social equality exists when all people have equal access to, or share power, wealth or prestige.*

- Though the term *'equality' has political, legal and philosophical overtones,* most of the **sociological discussions have focused on equality as an aspect of social context.** Ever since the time of the French Revolution and the growth of liberal democracies in Europe, **equality has usually been interpreted mostly as political equality. For example,** *liberal democracy assumes that equality means equality between individuals as citizens. Here, equality includes constitutional rights, that is, the fundamental Rights, the right to hold political office, the right to exercise all civic rights, etc.*

- **Social Equality Emphasizes the Fair Distribution of Income and Wealth:** The liberal democratic concern with **individual equality** does **not give prominence for equality of income and wealth**. The critics have argued that **the unequal distribution of income and wealth undermine all the other attempts *at* equality.** Because, **the holders of material wealth or resources, always have an advantage over other citizens. Sociologists have demonstrated how material resources affect people's life chances**. *For example,* they have shown how material resources have been affecting child's progress in the educational system. Such an access to material resources also affects one's access to education and legal representation.

- **Equalitarian Objectives of welfare Still Remain Unfulfilled :** Various empirical researches have clearly shown that DESPITE THE attempts to provide various social services to the needy people particularly in the fields of education, housing, health care, income maintenance, etc. inequalities have persisted and in some cases, actually increased. It is surprising to note that the western experience with the liberal democracies has revealed that the equalitarian objectives of welfare are not acceptable to the majority.

SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Inequality is found in all societies irrespective of time or place. Personal characteristics such as beauty, skill, physical strength and personality may all play a role in the perpetuation of inequality. However, there are also patterns of inequality associated with the social positions people occupy.
We can say that there are two types of inequality:
1. Natural and
2. Man Made

So far as the natural inequality is concerned with reference to age, sex, height, weight etc. the man made inequality may be horizontal or vertical e.g. different occupational groups perform different activities but when these groups become social groups in the sense that they are placed hierarchically and they have interaction within the group and at the inter-strata level, then such type of inequality is called social inequality.

Usage of the Concept of Social inequality in the Analysis of Social Stratification: *The term social inequality refers to the socially created inequalities. Stratification is a particular form of social inequality. It refers to the presence of social groups which are ranked one above the other in terms of the power, prestige and wealth their members possess. Those who belong to a particular group or stratum will have some awareness of common interest and common identity.* They will share a similar life-style which will distinguish them from the members of other social strata. Hindu society in traditional India was divided into five main strata: four Varnas and fifth group, the out caste or untouchables. These strata are arranged in a hierarchy with the Brahmins at the top and untouchables at the bottom. Such inequality has been perceived by the earlier thinkers in different terms like economic, political, religious etc.

PLATO was one of the first to acknowledge that inequality is inevitable and to suggest ways in which the distribution of money, status and power could be altered for the betterment of both the individual and the society.

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The society that Plato envisioned is explicitly meant to be class-structured, so that all citizens belong to one of three classes:
(i) (a) ruling (b) non-ruling (ii) Auxiliaries or the workers.
He eliminated inheritance of class status and provided equality of opportunities regardless of birth.

Aristotle was clearly concerned with the consequences of inequality in birth, strength and wealth. He talked about three classes: (i) Very Rich, (ii) Very Poor, and (iii) Moderate.
St. Thomas and St. Augustine made distinction based on power, property and prestige.

Machiavelli asked who is fit to rule and what form of rule will produce order, happiness, prosperity and strength. He saw tension between elite and the masses. He preferred democratic rule. About the selection for ruling positions he advocated inequality in situation is legitimate so long as there has been equality of opportunity to become unequal.

Thomas Hobbes saw all men equally interested in acquiring power and privileges, which leads to chaotic conditions, unless there is a set of rules by which they agree to abide. These rules constitute "Social Contract", under which people give the right to one man to rule, who has collective desire and will. The sovereign can be removed if he fails to come up to the maintenance of equality for safety of all men.

Max Weber emphasized the existence of three types of groups based on different forms of inequality and the fact that they may be independent of one another. Weber suggested three types of market situations (i) labour market, (ii) money market, and (iii) commodity market. Weber termed the second from of inequality social honour or prestige and the third form of inequality for Weber was power.
As exemplified by caste, social stratification involves a hierarchy of social groups. Members of a particular group have common identity, like interests, and similar life-style. They enjoy or suffer from the unequal distribution of rewards in societies as members of different social groups.

Social stratification however is only one form of social inequality. It is possible for social inequality to exist without social strata. It is stated that a hierarchy of social groups has been replaced by a hierarchy of individuals. Although many sociologists use the term inequality and social stratification interchangeably, social stratification is seen as a specific form of social inequality.

Some Salient Aspects of Social Inequality:

• *Social Inequality is the Result of Differentiation :* All societies differentiate among their members. Some people who have certain characteristics are treated differently from other, people. *Every society for that matter differentiates between the old and the young and between males and females. Society treats its members in different ways on various grounds such as skin colour, religion, physical strength, or educational achievement.* The result of this differentiation is nothing but inequality.
• **Social Inequality is Universal :** In no society of the world all people have equal recognition. It is in this simple sense; inequality is universal in human societies. Thus, in all societies known to us, large or small, modern or extinct, there have been distinct differences in the statuses of the individual members. *Social inequality is apparent when a society values males over females, the rich over the poor, Christians over Muslims, or Brahmins over the Dalits or Whites over Blacks, and so on. It goes without telling that those with the higher status have a superior access to whatever rewards the society offers. At the same time, those with the lower status are deprived of these advantages.*
• **Social Inequality is Normally Built into the Social Structure :** In all the modern societies, *social inequality takes a much elaborate and structured form in which different categories of people have different statuses. In these societies, inequality is built into the social structure, and unequal statuses are passed down from*

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generation to generation. Like the layers of rock, people in these societies are grouped into "strata". People in anyone stratum have a different access to social rewards than people in any other stratum, so the society as a whole is said to be stratified.

- **Social Inequality is a Source of Social Conflict and Social Change:** Inequality Is one of the most pressing social problems of the present day society. *Throughout history, social inequality has been a source of tensions, revolutions and social change. It has generated bloody conflict between slave and master, peasant and noble, worker and capitalist, poor and rich.* Ever since Karl Marx brought the issue of social inequality to the fore front of political debate with his Communist Manifesto in 1848, these tensions and conflicts have assumed global 'importance. Social inequality is strongly related to various other problems of our society such as - social instability, economic ups and downs, political conflicts, potential violence, status insecurities, fear and uncertainties, and so on.

- **Social Inequalities are Normally Sustained by the Power of Ideas :** It is significant to note that *"social inequalities are rarely maintained primarily through force. Instead, they are sustained by the power of ideas. Members of both the dominant and sub-ordinate groups are inclined to accept unquestionably the ideologies, or sets of ideas that justify the inequalities and make them seem "natural" and even moral.* **For example,** *the sex roles in our society show how traditional roles have ensured the dominance of men over women. Similarly, the caste roles in India reveal that normally the upper castes tend to dominate the lower castes by virtue of their traditionally ascribed superior status.*

- **Social Inequalities are not Necessarily based on Natural or Biological Inequalities :** Many stratification systems are accompanied by beliefs which state social inequalities are biologically based. **For example,** Whites claim biological superiority over Blacks, and see 'this as the basis for their dominance. Similarly followers of Adolf Hitler in Germany believed in the inborn superiority of the people of Aryan race. In India also, the higher castes claimed biological superiority over the untouchable castes. **According to Rousseau** *"biologically based inequalities between men were small and relatively unimportant whereas socially created inequalities provide the major basis for Systems of social stratification. Most sociologists would support this view.*

The beliefs that social inequalities are caused by natural or biological inequalities seem to sense as rationalizations to justify the stratification system. The beliefs serve to make social inequality appear rational and reasonable. Currently, the existence of inequality, its causes and consequences as related to social class, genders, ethnicity, and even region or locality, continues to assume sociological prominence.

CONCEPT OF HIERARCHY

The literal meaning of term "hierarchy" is gradation or a ranking system. This term is very commonly used in the discussions of social stratification. **It signifies that individuals and groups in any society are not socially treated equally but graded differently**. *The concept of hierarchy denotes that people in a society are graded or ranked differently depending upon the type of the statuses that they occupy.*

Hierarchy refers to *"Any relationship of individuals, groups, or classes involving a system of ranking"*. *Broadly speaking* **Hierarchy** refers to *"ranking of statuses within society or an organization according to some criterion of evaluation accepted as relevant within the system".*

Usage of the Concept of Hierarchy in the Analysis of Social Stratification:

- *Any system, social or otherwise, is said to be hierarchical or gradational in nature if it consists of different strata or layers one on top of another. **The more hierarchical a system is, the greater the number of layers and, generally, the greater the distance between the top and bottom are found. In a system for say Caste system hierarchy help us understand social Inequality and Social distance among Castes.***

- *Hierarchy is an important concept because, by making use of the hierarchical principle it is comparatively easier to trace out the relative status or position of an individual or group in a particular society.* Thus, for

example, *it is through the principle of hierarchy, we can say, that in a caste system, the Brahmins as a caste group occupy the top-most position enjoying the privileges associated with it, while the untouchable castes occupy the bottom most position suffering from all the disabilities related with it.* A large number caste, often referred to as *'intermediary castes'* occupy different positions which lie in between these two extreme positions.

- *Similarly, class system, is also hierarchical in which the capitalists and the rich occupy the top position in the hierarchy while the workers and the poor occupy the bottom most position.* The position in between these two is occupied by the middle class. Sociologists have also spoken of a six-fold division of class hierarchy.

Hierarchy and its Relations with Power and Authority

- The principle of hierarchy is also important in the area of operation of power and authority. Normally, power and authority flow from higher level to lower level as we witness it in all types of bureaucracies. The exercise of power and authority and the control of people and resource become organized in a hierarchical way. The higher the position of an individual in the hierarchy, the greater the power and control of resources that he has access to and vice versa. This kind of hierarchical principle can be seen in virtually every area of social life, from politics and economics to religion and education.   .

CONCEPT OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Social exclusion refers to "A process by which individuals or households experience deprivation, either of resources such as income or of social links to the wider community or society". "Social exclusion refers to the ways in which individuals may become cut off from full involvement in the wider community."

- In order to live full and active life individuals must not only be able to feed, clothe and house themselves but should also have access to essential goods and services such as education, health, transportation, insurance, social security, banking and even access to the police or judiciary.

Nature of Social Exclusion*:*

- **Social exclusion is systematic –it is result of structural features of society**. Exclusion is practiced regardless of the wishes of those who are excluded. **For example rich people are never found sleeping on the pavements or under bridges like thousands of homeless poor people in cities and towns**. This does not mean that the rich are being excluded from access to pavements and park benches because they could certainly gain access if they wanted to but they choose not to. *Social exclusion is sometimes wrongly justified by the same logic –it is said that the excluded group itself does not wish to participate. The truth of such an argument is not obvious when exclusion is preventing access to something desirable*. Prolonged experience of discriminatory or insulting bahaviour often produces a reaction on the part of the excluded who then stop trying for inclusion. *For example upper caste Hindu communities have often denied entry into temples for the lower castes and specially the dalits. After decades of such treatment the Dalits started building their own temple or convert to another religion like Buddhism, Christianity or Islam.* After they do this they may no longer desire to be included in the Hindu temple or religious events. But this does not mean that social exclusion is not being practiced.

- **Social Exclusion Indicates Deprivation of Opportunities:** The concept focuses attention on a broad range of factors that prevent individuals or groups from having opportunities open to majority of the population. *It indicates that some are denied of having access to essential goods and services such as education, health, transportation, insurance, social security, banking and even access to the police or judiciary. It is not enough if individuals are just provided with food, clothing and shelter. A fuller and an active involvement in life demands greater freedom and better access to all the essentials of civilized life on par with all the others in the society.*

- **Social Exclusion is Not Accidental :** *Social exclusion in most of the cases is found to be an in-built mechanism to deprive a few of their social rights. It is the result of the structural features of society.* The 'untouchables' in

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India, were excluded from doing many things, for example, entering temples, sharing food along with higher caste people, drawing water from public wells, receiving education on par with others, etc as a matter of caste rule.

- **Social Exclusion is Involuntary :** *Social exclusion is practiced regardless of the wishes of those who are excluded.* In the case of the untouchables of India, for example, it is trusted upon them. They are prevented from having access to something desirable, say for example, having access to education, or entering religious institutions, etc.

- **Prolonged Exclusion Leading to a Reaction Against Inclusion :** Prolonged experience of discrimination and insult underwent by an excluded group often compels it to develop a reaction against inclusion. As a result, it may stop making attempts for inclusion. *For example,* the denial of temple entry for the *dalits* in India for decades together by the upper castes may ultimately compel *the dalits* to build their own temple, or to convert to another religion like Buddhism, Christianity, *or* Islam. When once they start doing it, they may no longer desire to be included in the Hindu temple or religious events. However, it cannot be concluded that all the excluded would think and act on the same line. Instances of this kind point out that social exclusion occurs regardless of the wishes of the excluded.

- The point is that the exclusion occurs regardless of the wishes of the excluded. India like most societies has been marked by acute practices of social discrimination and exclusion. At different periods of history protest movements arose against caste, gender and religious discrimination. Yet prejudices remain and often new ones emerge. Thus legislation alone is unable to transform society or produce lasting social change. A constant social campaign to change awareness and sensitivity is required to break them.

Three Broad Overlapping Usages of the Concept:

- **Social Exclusion in Relation to Social Rights :** This usage refers to the context in which people are prevented from exercising their rights due to certain barriers or processes.

- **Social Exclusion in Relation to Social Isolation :** This usage throws light on the context in which some people or some section of the population is kept away or distanced from others in most of the social dealings. *Example:* Practices of social discrimination and exclusion during the British rule in South Africa which led to the social isolation of the natives.

- **Social Exclusion in Relation to Marginalisation :** This usage refers to the social exclusion of the extreme kind in which some "are denied of opportunities and avenues under the pretext of educational credentials, party membership, skin colour, religious identity, proper manners and style of life, social origins, etc.

- **Exclusion is not Always Deprivation and Inclusion is not Always Justice :** It is a common practice to equate exclusion with inequality, deprivation, unfairness and injustice; and inclusion with equality, fairness and justice. *In our practical life this is not necessarily so. There are situations in which even inclusion would lead to painful experiences. For example,* successfully fighting against exclusions and discriminations, some women members maybe recruited as employees to a men-dominated company. After getting included or recruited also these women may find it highly embarrassing to work in the company which is dominated by men who are not that co-operative.

CONCEPT OF POVERTY

Poverty *is a social problem and it is one of the manifestations of inequality. The study of poverty is central to any examination of social equality, including an analysis of who is poor and the reasons for their poverty.* **Poverty refers to** *"A low standard of living that lasts long enough to undermine the health, morale, and self respect of an individual or group of individuals. A state in which resources, usually material but sometimes cultural, are lacking. Poverty is insufficient supply of those things which are requisite for an individual to maintain himself and those dependent upon him in health and vigour'*.

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Absolute Poverty and Relative Poverty:

The term poverty is relative to the general standard of living in the society, the distribution of wealth, the status system, and social expectations. It is common to distinguish between absolute and relative definitions of poverty.

- ✓ *Absolute Poverty:* Poverty defined in absolute terms refers to *a state in which the individual lacks the resources necessary for subsistence.*
- ✓ *Relative Poverty:* Relative definitions of poverty, frequently favoured by sociologists, refers to *the individuals or groups with lack of resources when compared with that of other members of the society - in other words, their relative standard of living.*
- Absolute poverty is often known as **"subsistence poverty"** for it is based on assessment of minimum subsistence requirements such as food, clothing, shelter, health care, etc. Subsistence definitions of poverty [or definitions of absolute poverty] are of considerable value in examining, Third World poverty.
- International studies show that the overall level of poverty measured in subsistence terms is very high. Some studies suggest that almost half of those in low-income countries live in absolute poverty. Even in India, poverty is still posing a challenge.

DEPRIVATION

"Deprivation" is one of the concepts closely associated with the discussions of social inequality. Sociological analysis defines deprivation broadly as inequality of access to social goods. It includes poverty and wider forms of disadvantage.

- *"In general, deprivation refers to a condition in which people lack what they need" …the lack of economic and emotional supports generally accepted as basic essentials of human experience. These include income and housing, and parental care for children,"*
- The above mentioned definitions make it clear that some human needs [such as income, care, shelter and security are very basic and their fulfillment leads to fuller and more comfortable life experience. Satisfactory fulfillment of these needs is believed to contribute to more complete Development of the individual's potential.

Absolute Deprivation and Relative Deprivation :

- *Absolute deprivation* refers to the **lack of life necessities i.e. food, water, shelter and fuel. It means the loss or absence of the means to satisfy the basic needs for survival - food, clothing and shelter.**

- *Relative deprivation* refers **to deprivations experienced when individuals compare themselves with others.** In this case, **individuals who lack something compare themselves with those who have it, and in so doing feel a sense of deprivation.** Consequently, **relative deprivation not only involves comparison, it is also usually defined in subjective terms**. **The concept is intimately linked** with that of **"reference group"** - the group with whom the individual or set of individuals compare themselves.
- **Deprivation or disadvantage is measured not by objective standards** but **by comparison with the relatively superior advantages of others, such as members of reference group with whom one desires to emulate**. Thus, **the mere millionaire can feel relatively disadvantaged among his multi-millionaire friends**.
- **The concept of relative deprivation has been used in the study of social movements and revolutions**, where it is argued that **relative, not absolute deprivation is most likely to lead to pressure for change.**.

THEORIES OF POVERTY

The culture of poverty: Oscar Lewis

- *Many researchers have noted that the life style of the poor differs in certain respects from that of other members of society. They have also noted that poverty life styles in different societies share common characteristics. The circumstances of poverty are similar, in many respects, in different societies.*

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- *Similar circumstances and problems tend to produce similar response, and these responses can develop into a culture, that is the learned, shared, and socially transmitted behaviour of a social group. This line of reasoning has led to the concept of a 'culture of poverty' (or, more correctly, a subculture of poverty), a relatively distinct subculture of the poor with its own norms and values.* **Oscar Lewis** developed the concept from his fieldwork **among the urban poor in Mexico and Puerto Rico**. Lewis argues that the culture of poverty is a **'design for living' which transmitted from one generation to the next.**

- As a design for living which directs behaviour, the culture of poverty has the following elements. In Lewis's words, '*On the level of the individual the major characteristics are a strong feeling of marginality, of helplessness, of dependence and inferiority, a strong present-time orientation with relatively little ability to defer gratification a sense of resignation and fatalism'. On the family level, life is characterized by 'free union or consensual marriages, a relatively high incidence in the abandonment or mothers and children, a trend towards mother-centred families and a much greater knowledge or maternal relatives'. There are high rates of divorce and desertion by the male family head resulting in matrifocal families headed by women. On the community level, the lack of effective participation and integration in the major institutions of the larger society is one of the crucial characteristics of the culture of poverty'. The urban poor in Lewis's research do not usually belong to trade unions or other association, they are not members of political parties, and 'generally do not participate in the national welfare agencies, and make very little use of banks, hospitals, department stores, museums of art galleries'. For most, the family is the only institution in which they directly participate.*

✓ **The culture of poverty is seen as response by the poor to their position in society. According to Lewis it is a 'reaction of the poor to their marginal position in a class-stratified and highly individualistic society'.** However, the culture of poverty goes beyond a mere reaction to a situation. **It takes on the force of culture since its characteristics are guides to action which are internalized by the poor and passed on from one generation to the next. As such the culture of poverty tends to perpetuate poverty since its characteristics can be seen as mechanisms which maintain poverty: attitudes of fatalism and resignation lead to acceptance of the situation; failure to join trade unions and other organization weakens the potential power of the poor.** By the time slum children are age six or seven, they have usually absorbed the basic values and attitudes of their subculture and are not psychologically geared to take full advantage of changing conditions or increased opportunities which may occur in their lifetime'.

  – Lewis argues that the culture of poverty best describes and explains the situation of the poor in colonial societies or in early stages of capitalism as in many Third World countries. He suggests that it either does not exist or is weakly developed in advanced capitalist societies and socialist societies, although other have argued that the idea of a culture of poverty can be applied to the poor in advanced industrial societies.

Situational Constraints Theory – an alternative to a culture of poverty

- *Rather than seeing the behaviour of the poor as a response to established and internalized cultural patterns, many researchers view it as a reaction to 'situational constraints'. In other words the poor are constrained by the facts of their situation, by low income, unemployment and the like, to act the way they do, rather than being directed by a culture of poverty. The situational constraints argument suggests that the poor would readily change their behaviour in response to new set of circumstances once the constraints of poverty were removed.*

- Thus Hylan Lewis, an American sociologist who has conducted considerable research on the behaviour of the poor, argues, 'It is probably more fruitful to think of lower class families reacting in various ways to the facts of their position and to relative isolation rather than the imperatives of a lower class culture'. The situational constraints thesis also attacks the view that the poor are largely insulated from mainstream norms and values. It argues that the poor share the values of society as a whole, the only difference being that they are unable to translate many of those values into reality. Again, the situational constraints argument suggests that once the constraints of poverty are removed, the poor will have no difficulty adopting mainstream behaviour patterns and seizing available opportunities.

POVERTY AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

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To explain the basic causes of poverty, sociologists are increasingly focusing their attention on society as a whole and particularly on the stratification system, rather than studying the poor in isolation. As Peter Townsend states, 'the description, analysis and explanation of poverty in any country must proceed within the context of a general theory of stratification'. From this perspective the poor must be seen in terms of the stratification system as a whole. Questions about the nature and functioning of stratification systems are directly related to questions about poverty.

MARXIAN PERSPECTIVE ON POVERTY

From a Marxian perspective, poverty in capitalist society can only be understood in terms of the system of inequality generated by a capitalist economy. Wealth is concentrated in the hands of a minority: those who own the forces of production. Members of the subject class own only their labour which they must sell in return for wages on the open market. Capitalism requires a highly motivated workforce. Since the motivation to work is based primarily on monetary return, those whose services are not require by the economy, such as the aged and the unemployed, must receive a lower income than wage earners. If this were not the case, there would be little incentive to work. The motivation of the workforce is also maintained by unequal reward for work. Workers compete as individuals and groups with each other for income in a highly competitive society. In this respect, the low wage sector forms the base of a competitive wage structure. Low wages help to reduce the wage demands of the workforce as a whole, since workers tend to assess their income in terms of the baseline provided by the low paid.

Since, from a Marxian perspective, the state in capitalist society reflects the interests of the ruling class, government measures can be expected to do little except reduce the harsher effect of poverty. Thus **Kincaid** argues that, 'It is not to be expected that any Government whose main concern is with the efficiency of a capitalist economy is going to take effective steps to abolish the low-wage sector'.

Westergard and Resler argue that *the ruling class has responded to the demands of the labour movement by allowing the creation of the Welfare State, but the system operates, 'within a framework of institutions and assumptions that remain capitalist'.* In their view, 'the keyword is "containment"; the demands of the labour movement have been contained within the existing system. Westergaard and Resler argue that poverty exist because of the operation of a capitalist economic system which prevents the poor from 'obtaining the financial resources to become non-poor.

J.C. Kincaid he argues that *'widespread poverty is a direct consequence of the limited effectiveness of social security provision'.* Like Westergaard and Resler, Kincaid sees poverty resulting from the operation of a capitalist economy which produces a particular from social stratification. Kincaid summarizes the situation in the following way, 'It is not simply that there are rich and poor. It is rather that some are rich because some are poor'. Thus poverty can only be understood in terms of the operation of the class system as a whole since the question 'Why poverty?' is basically the same question is 'Why wealth?' Therefore from a Marxian perspective, poverty like wealth is an inevitable consequence of a capitalist system.

WEBERIAN PERSPECTIVE ON POVERTY :

Weber argues that *an individual's 'class situation' is dependent upon his 'market situation', on the favour and on the rewards his skills and expertise can command in a competitive market. From this perspective groups such as the aged, the chronically sick and single parent families have little power in the market and therefore receive little reward. Indeed, their circumstances largely prevent them from competing in the market. However, not all members of these groups are poor, and this is referable to their market situation prior to their present circumstances.*

- The poverty of the old, sick, handicapped and single parent families is largely working-class poverty. Members of other social classes have sufficient income to save, invest in pension schemes, insurance policies and in shareholdings for themselves and their dependents and so guard against the threat of poverty due to the death of the breadwinner, sickness or old age. In this sense, social class rather than personal disability, inadequacy, or misfortune accounts for poverty.

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- **Kincaid argues that**, 'A crucial factor determining wage levels is the bargaining power of workers'. Low paid workers are usually order, female, and as a result, traditionally less militant. They often belong to weak trade unions or none at all. Low wages are concentrated in the non-unionized sectors of the workforce.
- **Ralph Miliband** examines the bargaining position of the poor in an article entitled Politics and Poverty. He argues that in terms of power, the poor are the weakest group competing for the scarce and valued resources in society. Miliband states that, 'The poor are part of the working class but they are largely excluded from the organizations which have developed to defend the interests of the working class'.
- Efforts by the poor to promote their interests and secure public support are weakened by the 'shame of poverty', a stigma which remains alive and well. **Ralph Miliband** concludes that the key to the weak bargaining position of the poor is simply their poverty. He states that 'economic deprivation is a source of political deprivation; and political deprivation in turn helps to maintain and confirm economic deprivation'.
- As **Westergaard and Resler** argue, it diverts attention from the larger structure of inequality in which poverty is embedded'. Thus the poor must be seen in relation to the class system as a whole, not simply as an isolated group. **Ralph Miliband** makes a similar point. He argues that the position of the poor is not that dissimilar from that of the working class as a whole. The poor are simply the most disadvantaged section of the working class rather than a separate group. TO understand poverty, it is therefore necessary to understand the nature of inequality in a class stratified society.

FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON POVERTY :

Herbert J. Gans argues that 'poverty survives in part because it is useful to a number of groups in society'. Poverty benefits the non-poor in general and the rich and powerful in particular. They there fore have a vested interest in maintaining poverty. From this perspective, Gans outlines the following 'functions of poverty' for the non-poor.

– **Firstly,** every economy has a number of temporary, dead-end, dirty, dangerous and menial jobs. The existence of poverty ensures that such work is done. Gans argues that 'poverty functions to provide a low-wage labour pool that is willing – or rather, unable to be unwilling – to perform dirty work at low cost'. Without the low paid, many industries would be unable to continue in their present form. Gans claims that hospitals, the catering trade, large sections agriculture and parts of the garment industry are dependent on low wage labour.

– **Secondly,** poverty directly provides employment financial security for a fast growing section of the labour force. In Gans's words, 'Poverty creates jobs for a number of occupations and professions that serve the poor, or shield the rest of the population from them'. Police, probation officers, social workers psychiatrists, doctor and the administrators who over see the 'poverty industry'.

– **Thirdly,** Gans argues that the presence of the poor provides reassurance and support for the rest of society. They provide a baseline of failure which resources the non-poor of their worth. Gans claims that 'poverty helps to guarantee the status of those who are not poor'. It does this by providing 'a reliable and relatively permanent measuring rod for status comparison.

Gans argues that the poor function to reinforce mainstream norms since norms 'are best legitimated by discovering violations'. From a somewhat different perspective, Gans has reached a similar conclusion to those who argue that poverty must be analysed in terms of class inequality. Form both viewpoint poverty exist because it benefits the rich and because the poor are powerless to change their situation. Gans concludes that poverty persists 'because many of the functional alternatives to poverty would be quite dysfunctional for the more affluent members of society'.

SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF POVERTY :

- Once poverty is recognized as an aspect of inequality, and not merely a problem of the poor, solutions involve restructuring society as a whole. It can now be argued that the main obstacle to the eradication of poverty is not the behaviour of the poor but the self interest of the rich. Thus **Herbert J. Gans** maintains that, 'the prime obstacles to the elimination of poverty lie in an economic system which is dedicated to the maintenance and increase of wealth among the already affluent'. From **the perspective of stratification of theory, the solution to poverty involves a change in the stratification system. This war on poverty would be far**

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harder to wage than the previous one since it would require considerable sacrifice by the rich and powerful.

- **Westergaard and Resler** argue that many politicians make the fundamental error of assuming that 'the *causes of poverty can be read off from the characteristics of the poor'. This has led to the conclusion that poverty is largely the result of old age, family break-up, large families, unemployment, physical or mental handicap or chronic sickness. In this way, "individual conditions' are regarded as the 'causes' of poverty. It therefore follows that remedies must be directed towards the individual and particular conditions are given particular aid and treatment*. **For example** the unemployed receive financial aid and 'problem families' receive the services of social workers and psychiatrists. **This diagnosis of the problem forms the basis of government policy. Westergaard and Resler argue** that **the diagnosis 'is false precisely because it closes one eye firmly to the total pattern of inequality. Poverty is not an individual condition, it is a class phenomenon.** The poor are working class, not middle class. The mechanisms which generate inequality throughout society are the same mechanisms which generate poverty.

- The Welfare State has largely failed to redistribute wealth from rich to poor. It simply shuffles resources within social classes rather than between them. **Kincaid** argues that the only solution to poverty involves a **'massive redistribution of resources away from the wealthier classes'**. This view sees poverty as a social problem rather than as an individual condition. It argues that the problem is society as a whole and therefore society must be changed. Westergaard and Resler adopt a similar position. They argue that government measures to deal with poverty cannot succeed because 'they are not designed to produce wholesale change in the general structure of inequality'.

- **From a Marxian perspective**, **the official identification and treatment of poverty can be seen as a means to disguise the true nature of exploitation and oppression. Westergaard and Resler** argue that the state, by focusing on one aspect of inequality- situation of the poor-tends to obscure reality' by diverting attention from the larger structure of inequality. The definition of poverty as an individual condition rather than a class phenomenon has the same effect. **In this way the privileged position of the wealthy, which rests ultimately on working-class poverty, is protected.** In addition, the creation and development of the Welfare States has contained working-class demands for an improvement in their position. Governments have conceded just enough to take the edge off working class militancy. The role of welfare professionals can also be seen as a means to control the working class and protect the privileged. **Kincaid** argues that 'most of the individual problems which social workers currently set out of solve are essentially of the sort generated by a society which is not organized on the basis of people's needs'. He argues that many social workers still attribute poverty to a 'defective personality structure, inability to relate to others, and impaired capacity to make realistic judgments of self and others'. This places the blame for poverty squarely on the shoulders of the poor. Some Marxists go even further by seeing welfare professionals as agents of the ruling class.

- **From a Marxian perspective,** the solution to poverty does not involve reforms in the social security system; in the provision of additional payments or service to those defined as poor. **Instead it requires a radical change in the structure of society. Thus, Ralph Miliband argues that poverty will only be eradicated with the removal of inequality in general which 'requires the transformation of the economic structures in which it is embedded'.**

- **Westergaard and Resler** take a similar view maintaining that no substantial redistribution of wealth can occur until capitalism is replaced by a socialist society in which the force of production are communally owned. **As long as the free market system of capitalism determines the allocation of reward, they argue that inequality will remain largely unchanged.**

- **Kincaid** concludes that since capitalism is based on the maximization of profit rather than the satisfaction of human need**, 'Poverty cannot be abolished within capitalist society, but only in a socialist society under workers' control, in which human needs, and not profits, determine the allocation of resources'.**

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

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Social stratification is an inherent character of all societies. It is historical as we find it in all societies, ancient and modern; and it is universal as it exists in simple or complex societies. The social differentiation on the basis of high and low is the historical heritage of all societies.

These social strata and layers, divisions and subdivisions have over the time been accepted on the basis of sex and age, status and role, qualification and inefficiency, life chances and economic cum political ascription and monopolization, ritual and ceremony and on numerous other basis. It is of varied nature. It is no less based on the considerations of superiority and inferiority, authority and subordination, profession and vocation.

Social stratification has remained despite the revolutionary ideas and radicalism, equality and democracy, socialism and communism. Classless society is just an ideal. The stratification has something to do; it appears with the very mental makeup of man.

The origin of the social stratification cannot be explained in terms of history. The existence or nonexistent of the stratification in early society cannot be pin pointed. The differentiation between classes existed as early as the Indus Valley society. They, it appears, had the priestly and other classes.

Meaning and Nature:

By stratification we mean that arrangement of any social group or society by which positions are hierarchically divided. The positions are unequal with regard to power, property, evaluation and psychic gratification. We add social, because positions consist of socially defined statuses.

Stratification is a phenomenon present in all societies that have produced a surplus. Stratification is the process by which members of society rank themselves and one another in hierarchies with respect to the amount of desirable goods they possess.

The existence of stratification has led to the centuries old problem of social inequality. In societies that have closed stratification systems, such inequalities are institutionalised and rigid. An individual born into a particular economic and social stratum or caste, remains in this stratum until he dies. Most modern industrial societies have open or class stratification systems. In open stratification systems, social mobility is possible, although some members of the population do not have the opportunity to fulfill their potential.

The term stratification refers to a process by which individuals and groups are ranked in a more or less enduring hierarchy of status. It refers to the division of a population into strata, one on the top of another, on the basis of certain characteristics like inborn qualities, material possessions and performance.

According to **Raymond W. Murray** "Social stratification is a horizontal division of society into higher and lower social units. As **Malvin M. Tumin** says, Social stratification refers to arrangements of any social group or society into a hierarchy of positions that are unequal with regard to power, property, social evaluation, and/or social gratification.

Lundberg writes, "A stratified society is one marked by inequality, by differences among people that are evaluated by them as being lower and higher". As **Gisbert** says, "Social stratification is the division of society into permanent groups of categories linked with each other by the relationship of superiority and subordination.

According to **Bernard Barber,** "Social stratification in its most general sense, is a sociological concept that refers to the fact that both individuals and groups of individuals are conceived of as constituting higher or lower differentiated strata or classes in terms of some specific or generalised characteristic or set of characteristics." Sociologists have been able to establish several strata or layers which form a hierarchy of prestige or power in a society.

The consequence of layering process in a society is the creation of structural forms – social classes. Where society is composed of social classes, the social structure looks like a pyramid. At the bottom of the structure lies the lowest social class and above it other social classes arranged in a hierarchy.

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THUS, STRATIFICATION INVOLVES TWO PHENOMENA, (1) DIFFERENTIATION OF INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS WHERE BY SOME INDIVIDUALS OR GROUP COME TO RANK HIGHER THAN OTHER AND (2) THE RANKING OF INDIVIDUALS ACCORDING TO SOME BASIS OF VALUATION.

Viewed in this way it can be stated that every society is divided into more or less distinct groups. There is no society known which does not make some distinction between individuals by ranking them on some scale of value. There has been no society in which every individual has the same rank and the same privileges.

As **Sorokin** pointed out, "Unstratified society with | real equality of its members is a myth which has never been realised in the history of mankind". In simpler communities we may not find any class strata apart from the distinction between members of the groups and strangers, distinction based on age, sex kinship.

But in the primitive world chieftainship, individual prowess and clan or family property introduce an incipient stratification. However, modern stratification fundamentally differs from stratification in the primitive societies.

Among the primitive people class distinctions are rarely found. In the modern industrial age estates pass into social classes. Hereditary ranks are abolished but distinctions of status remain and there are great differences in economic power and social opportunities.

Every know society, past and present, thus differentiates its members in terms of roles they play in the group. These roles are determined by the formal positions or statuses in which a society places its members.

Society compares and ranks individuals and groups on the basis of some differences in values it attaches to different roles. When individuals and groups are ranked according to some commonly accepted basis of valuation, in a hierarchy of status levels based j upon inequality of social position, we have social stratification.

Characteristics of Stratification:

Melvin M. Tumin has mentioned the following characteristics of social stratification:

1. It is Social:

Stratification is social in the sense that it does not represent inequality which are biologically based. It is true that factors such as strength, intelligence, age, sex can often serve as the basis on which status are distinguished. But such differences by themselves are not sufficient to explain why some statuses receive more power, property and prestige than others.

Biological traits do not determine social superiority and inferiority until they are socially recognised. For example, manager of an industry attains a dominant position not by physical strength, nor by his age, but by having socially defined traits. His education, training skills, experience, personality, character etc. are found to be more important than his biological qualities.

2. It is Ancient:

The stratification system is very old. Stratification was present even in the small wandering bands. Age and sex wear the main criteria of stratification. Difference between the rich and poor, powerful and humble, freemen and slaves was there in almost all the ancient civilisation. Ever since the time of Plato and Kautilya social philosopher have been deeply concerned with economic, social, political inequalities.

3. It is Universal:

Social stratification is universal. Difference between rich and poor, the 'haves' or 'have notes' is evident everywhere. Even in the non-literate societies stratification is very much present.

4. It is in diverse Forms:

Social stratification has never been uniform in all societies. The ancient Roman society was stratified into two strata: the Patricians and the Plebians .The Aryan society was divided into four Varnas: the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and the Sudras, the ancient Greek society in to freemen and slaves, the ancient Chinese society into mandarins, merchants, Farmer and soldiers. Class and estate seem to be the general forms of stratification found in the modern world.

5. It is Consequential:

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The stratification system has its own consequences. The most important, most desired and often the scarcest things in human life are distributed unequally because of stratification. The system leads to two kind of consequences: (i) Life chances and (ii) Life style.

Life chances refer to such things as infant mortality, longevity, physical and mental illness, marital conflict, separation and divorce. Life styles include the mode of housing, residential area, education, means of recreation, relation between parent and children, modes of conveyance and so on.

ELEMENTS OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION:

All stratification systems have some common elements. These elements have been identified as differentiation, ranking, evaluation and rewarding. Here Tumin has been referred to discuss the elements of social stratification.

Status Differentiation:
Status differentiation is the process by which social positions are determined and distinguished from one another by way Of associating a distinctive role, a set of rights and responsibilities such as father and mother.

Status differentiation operates more effectively when:
(1) Tasks are clearly defined.
(2) Authority and responsibility are distinguished.
(3) Mechanism for recruiting and training exists.
(4) Adequate sanctions including rewards and punishment exist to motivate persons.

Responsibilities, resources and rights are assigned to status not to particular individuals. For only by doing so societies can establish general and uniform rules or norms that will apply to many and diverse individuals who are to occupy the same status e.g. all the different women who will play the role of a parent.

Differentiation is not independent process in itself. The most important criteria for understanding the process of differentiation is ranking.

Ranking:
Ranking is done on the basis of:
(i) Personal characteristics that people are thought to need if they are to learn and perform the roles effectively such as intelligence, aggressiveness and politeness.
(ii) The skills and abilities that are believed necessary for adequate role performance such, as surgical, numerical or linguistic skills.
(iii) General qualities of the task e.g. difficulty, cleanliness, danger and so forth.

Purpose of ranking is to identify the right person for the right position.

Ranking non-valuative i.e. jobs are rated as harder or easier, cleaner or dirtier, safer or more dangerous and people are judged slower, smarter or more skillful than others without implying that some are socially more important and others less because of these characteristic.

Ranking is a selective process in the sense that only some statuses are selected for comparative ranking and of all criteria of ranking only some are actually used in ranking process e.g. the status of Father-Mother is not ranked.

Evaluation:
Differentiation and ranking are further solidified by the evaluation process. Whereas the ranking procedure pivots about the question of more of or less of, the evaluation process centres in the question better and worse. Evaluation is both a personal and societal attribute.

That is, individuals assign a relative worth, a degree of preference and a priority of desirability to everything. To the extent that evaluation is a learned quality, a consensus tends to develop within a

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culture individuals tend to share a common set of values. This value consensus is the societal dimension crucial to evaluation stratification.

There are three dimensions of evaluation:

(i) Prestige:

Which refers to honour and it involves the respectful behaviour. Radcliffe Brown says that among hunting societies three groups usually are accorded special prestige: the elderly, those with supernatural powers, those who have special personal attributes such as hunting skill. In the more advanced society, prestige is the commodity that is in scarce supply and it is, therefore, more valued.

(ii) Preferability:

Those positions i.e. status roles which are preferred by majority of I the people are evaluated higher e.g. ". I would like to be a doctor."

(iii) Popularity:

Those status roles which are popular, about which people know to be very prestigious are evaluated higher e.g. nowadays there is fashion among students to go for Engineering job. It is the most popular occupation.

Rewarding:

Statuses which are differentiated, ranked and evaluated are allocated differential rewards in terms of good things in life.

Social units such as families, subcultures, social classes and occupations that are socially differentiated are differentially rewarded in various ways. Health care, education,' income and positions of prominence are a few of the advantages.

Rewards can be of two types:

(i) Abundant:

Which are spiritual or psychic rather than material and are secured in the process of role performing e.g. pleasure, love, and respect.

(ii) Scarce:

Social stratification becomes relevant in this area of desired and scarce rewards. In society where there is an unequal distribution of rewards, those who have power take hold these rewards.

In conclusion it can be said that differentiation, ranking, evaluation and rewarding are the social process which bring about shape and maintain the system of stratification.

BASIS OR FORMS OF STRATIFICATION:

Social stratification may be based on a variety of forms or interpenetrating principles such as free and unfree, class, caste, estate, occupation, administrative hierarchy or income level.

1. Free and unfree:

The population of a society may be divided into freemen and slaves. In certain communities the slaves do not enjoy rights and privileges. The slave is practically at the disposal of his master. He is the property of his master. The slave can always be brought and sold, though his treatment and the degree of protection accorded him vary from place to place and from time to time. He comes from various sources: war, slave-capture, purchase, birth or seizure for debt.

In the middle ages in Europe serfs usually possessed some plot of land and they might cultivate the land for themselves. But they were bound to till the fields of their immediate land lord and pay additional dues under certain circumstances. In Europe society was divided into land lords and serfs. A serf is less unfree than a slave.

2. Class:

Class is a principal basis of social stratification found specially in the modern civilised countries. In societies where all men are free before the law, stratification may be based upon accepted and self estimation of superiority or inferiority.

Social classes, says Ginsberg, may be described as portions of the community, or collection of individuals, standing to each other in the relation of quality and marked of from other persons by accepted standards of superiority and inferiority. A social class as defined by MacIver and Page, "is any portion of a community forked off from the rest by social status".

A structure of social class involves (1) a hierarchy status groups, (2) the recognition of the superior – inferior positions and (3) some degree of permanency of the structure. Where a society is composed of social classes, the social structure looks like a truncated pyramid.

At the base of the structure lies the lowest social class arranged in a hierarchy of rank. Individuals composing a particular class stand to each other in the relation of equality and are marked off from other classes by accepted standards of superiority and inferiority. A class system involves inequality, inequality of status.

3. Caste:

Social stratification is also based on caste. In open society individuals can move from one class or status level to another, that is to say equality of opportunity exists. The class structure is 'closed' when such opportunity is virtually absent. The Indian caste system provides a classic example, A 'caste' system is one in which an individual's rank and its accompanying rights and obligations are ascribed on the basic of birth in to a particular group.

Hindu society in traditional India was divided into five main strata: four Varnas or caste and a fifth group, the out caste, whose members were known as untouchables. Each class is subdivided in to sub castes, which in total number many thousands. The Brahmins or priests, members of the highest caste, personify purity, sanctity and holiness. They are the sources of learning, wisdom and truth.

At the other extreme, untouchables are defined as unclean and impure, a status which affects all other social relationships. They most be segregated from members of other castes and live on the outskirts of the villages, In general the hierarchy of prestige based on notions of ritual purity is mirrored by the hierarchy of power. The Brahmins were custodian of law and the legal system which they administered was based largely on their pronouncements. Inequalities of wealth were usually linked to those of prestige and power.

4. Estate and Status:

Estate system is synonymous with feudalism, which remained basis of social stratification in Europe from the fall of Roman Empire to the rise of the commercial classes generally and to the French Revolution (1989) particularly. In Russia, in one form or another it continued to exist down to the October Revolution (1917).

Under the system, the land was taken to be the gift of God to King, who in the absence of any local administrative systems made grants of it, called Estates or fiefs, to nobles, called lords temporal, for military service; they in turn made similar grants to the inferior class on oath of loyalty and military support.

The holder of the land was called vassal; the multitudes who cultivated were the serfs and the people still lower to the serfs were slaves. These grants with the privileges attached to them in the beginning, were personal in character. Latter with the weakening of the central authority, the estate and the privileges attached to it became hereditary. The church followed suit. Over the time there developed the three estates – the lords temporal, lord spiritual and the commons.

The multitudes were serfs. They were somewhat better than slaves who in law, were chattels. They had no civic rights. In Russia, for example, about nine-tenth of arable land consisting of large estates belonged to the Czar, the royal family and to about one lakhs of the noble families. It was cultivated by the millions, called serfs. The serfdom continued till 1861, when it was finally abolished.

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The Estate system was the basis of social stratification in all the countries of Europe. It was based on inequality of all sorts; Economic – there were few landlords and the multitudes of serfs and slaves; social – estate determined the social status and role, and the landless worked just for their protection.

They were a mere service class; Political – the estate having been given for military service, made the holder the prop and pillar of the state, and allowed him full authority over men and goods within his estate.

The nobility and their important vassals enjoyed the privileges and the rest lived in misery. Mobility paid no taxes, neglected the feudal duties but secured all the dues for themselves. They had juristic immunities and political privileges; they made law their handmade and held men under bondage.

5. Occupation and Income:

Occupation is an aspect of economic systems which influences social class structure. Rogoff in her study of "Social Stratification in France and United States" stressed that "of all the criteria mentioned in determining class position, occupational position is the most consistently named among the various strata in both societies.

Talcott Parsons also confirmed this for United States by saying that "the main criteria of class status are to be found in the occupational achievements of men, for prestige is attached to occupation. In advanced societies occupations are related to social status. Attempts have been made by P.K Hatt and C.C. North to rank occupations in USA.

In this state of nationwide sample of adult was asked to rate ninety occupations in accordance with prestige associated with each occupation. The 'physician' had the highest prestige and shoe shiner, the lowest. In between them were other occupation like clerical and sale occupation etc.

Society is also stratified on the basis of income. Difference in income leads to very unequal standard of life. The distribution of income, both cash and real income among individuals or families, in all capitalist countries takes the form of a gradient, with a relatively small group at the top receiving huge amounts and at the other extreme, a somewhat larger but still a small number of persons in the "negative income" bracket.

6. Race and Ethnicity:

Over the time, and at some places even now, race and ethnicity was and is taken to be the basis of inequality and stratification. The Western people, wherever they went, claimed racial superiority and attributed their success to it. They took the 'natives' to be of inferior racial origin.

The race conflict in Africa, the U.S.A. and in some of the European countries remains a dominant factor in stratification and inequality. In South Africa, the whites constitute a status- group; membership of which cannot be acquired by Africans; no matter how wealthy or skilled they may be.

The Greeks and the Romans had also the racial notions; and the Turks in our country had no less. The Turko-Afghans considered Indian Mussalmans to be an inferior class and offices of responsibility and trust were not generally conferred upon them. Balban (1266- 86), a Turk by origin, was full with the notion of racial superiority, and held that a Turk alone had the qualities to rule. The British in their heyday of imperialism had similar notions. They gave to all others in theirs colonies, and to us an unequal treatment.

7. Ruling Class:

The ruling class always holds itself superior to those over whom it rules. This explains the psychology behind the 'lord' and 'servant' relationship. Democracy did not demolish the distinctions. The political parties and pressure groups are the instruments in the hands of the ruling class to influence the community and to keep themselves in power.

In newly independent countries such as ours, political power rests with a political class of 'new men' of no great substance who by founding and dominating the party and the Government, become a new ruling elite. They have acquired such areas of influence, that a new entrant can hardly proceed on his own. He needs their support: the 'blessings' of the establishment the masses have hardly any say. They have to agree with what they are told is good for them.

8. Administrative Position:

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Stratification is sometimes based on administrative position. The Civil service personnel command a status higher than the members of the provincial Service. Within the services too, members of higher rank command greater respect The stratification is more distinctly clear in police and military service where the uniform, badges and ribbons distinguish the officers. Sprott has indicated that "in the Civil Services, grades are distinguished by the shape of chair upon which the official sits and the size of the desk at which he writes".

FUNCTIONS OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION:

For the proper functioning of society, it has to work out some mechanism by which people engaged in different occupations get different recognition. If each activity is associated with same type of economic returns and prestige, there will be no competition for different occupations.

Stratification is that system by which different positions are hierarchically divided. Such a system has given rise to different classes like Upper, Middle, Working and Lower or caste groups like Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. The importance of stratification can be seen with regard to the functions it performs for the individual and society.

I. For the Individual:

No doubt system of stratification is applicable to the whole society yet it serves some functions for the individual also.

1. Competition:
Individuals based on their attributes compete with each other and only those individuals who have better attributes get greater recognition. This may be in the field of sports, education, occupation etc.

2. Recognition of Talent:
The persons with more training skills, experience and education are given better positions. The deserving individuals are not treated at par with deserving candidates. Such a system helps people to acquire better talents.

3. Motivation:
The system of stratification motivates the individuals to work hard so that they can improve upon their social status. It is more true in case of those societies in which statuses are achieved.

4. Job Satisfaction:
As the jobs are given to the individuals according to their skills and education, the workers get job satisfaction. In case, a person with higher qualification is not allowed to move higher in the social ladder, he feels dissatisfied with his job.

5. Mobility:
The system of achieved status also provides an opportunity for upward and downward mobility. Those persons who work hard and are intelligent move up in the social ladder. On the other hand, those who fail to come up to the expectations move downward. Hence, the possibility of change in the position keeps the people always alert and makes them work hard.

II. Functions for the Society:
The system of social stratification is also useful for the progress and the well-being of the society. This can be seen if we take into account two forms of stratification.

1. Ascriptive Form of Stratification:
Under the caste system, the status of the individual is fixed at birth and different castes are hierarchically arranged. However, even within the caste system those members who perform their caste roles effectively and efficiently occupy higher' status. On the other hand, those members who do not perform their role properly occupy lower status even when they belong to the same caste. This functional base

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has given rise to sub castes. In other words, one caste is further divided into different sub castes and these sub castes are hierarchically divided within a caste group.

Fixation of status of a caste group also facilitates better training of the members. As the members are made aware about the future roles, they start getting training from the childhood. Such a situation was more applicable in the traditional societies where knowledge was foil knowledge and it could be acquired through membership of a caste group.

In this way we find that under ascriptive form of stratification, society was being well-served and there was interdependence of the caste because of the specialization of their roles.

2. Achieved Form:

Under the achieved form of social stratification, the social statuses are assigned according to the worth of the individual. This system serves the following functions for the society:

(a) Occupational Hierarchy:

Depending upon the importance of a particular occupation, different occupations are hierarchically divided. The occupations which are very important for the well-being of the society are associated with high prestige and those occupations which do not need specialized training are given low status. Such a system is free from confusion, and motivates the people to work hard, so that they could take up occupations of high prestige.

(b) Division according to Intelligence:

All persons are not equal with regard to their intelligence. Those persons with higher level of intelligence can perform more complicated functions of the society. Hence they are provided with different opportunities and high prestige.

(c) Training:

Society makes elaborate arrangements for the training of younger generation. Those who spend more time on training and acquiring new skills are compensated with high returns. Even though such persons start working later yet the economic returns and social prestige associated with their work is higher than others.

(d) Work Efficiency:

Persons with appropriate knowledge and training occupy appropriate positions. Hence, their work efficiency is also higher. Under this system there is no place for parasites and those who shirk work. The fittest to survive is the rule which is followed.

(e) Development:

The competition to move higher in the social ladder has resulted into new inventions, new methods of work and greater efficiency. This system has led to progress and development of the country. The Western societies are highly developed; it is attributed to the fact that these societies adopted open system of stratification.

In this way we find that system of stratification helps in the progress of the society. There are some sociologists who are of the opinion that social stratification is also associated with dysfunctions e.g. giving rise to frustration, anxiety and mental tension. In short, we can say that social stratification has both positive and negative functions. But no society can survive unless it has some system of stratification.

THEORIES OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

STRUCTURAL FUNCTIONALIST THEORY

The Structural- functionalist perspective seeks to explain social stratification in terms of its contribution to the maintenance of social order and stability in society.

TALCOTT PARSONS believed that order and stability depends upon the value consensus in the society. Individuals who conduct themselves in accordance with these values are ranked above others. A successful business executive would be ranked above others in a society which values individual achievement while individuals who fight battles and wars would be ranked above others in a society which values bravery and gallantry.

Functionalists uphold that relationship between social groups in society is one of cooperation and inter-dependence. Parsons explains that in a highly specialized industrial society, some people specialize in organization and planning while others follow their directives. Certain positions are functionally more important in society than others. These are often ranked higher in the social hierarchy and fetch greater rewards than others. This inevitability leads to inequality in distribution of power and prestige.

KINSLEY DAVIS AND WILBERT MOOR:

They discussed the issues **of functional necessity of stratification,** determinants of positional rank, societal functions and stratification, and variation in stratified system at length. They explained that **unequal distribution rights and perquisites making for social inequality provides the motivation to people to perform duties associated with a given position and to achieve position that affords more prestige and esteem**. Social inequality therefore ensures that **"the most important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons.** Hence every society, no matter how simple or complex, must differentiate persons in terms of both prestige and esteem, and must therefore possess a certain amount of institutionalized inequality" (Davis and Moore). **The positions that carry the best reward and highest rank are those that are excessively important for society, and require greatest training or talent.** They clarify that in effect, a society needs to accord sufficient reward to position of high rank only to ensure that they are filled competently. It may also be understood that a position important in one society may not be equally important in another one.

Kinsley Davis and Wilbert Moor summarizes their central argument in the following words :

- **"Certain positions in any society are functionally more important than others**, and require special skills for their performance. Only a certain number of individuals in any society have the talents which can be trained into the skills appropriate to these positions.

- The **conversion of talents into skills involves a training period during which sacrifices** of one kind or another are made by those undergoing the training. **In order to induce the talented persons to undergo these sacrifices and acquire the training, their future positions must carry an inducement value in the form of differential reward,** i.e., privileged and disproportionate access to the scarce and desired rewards which the society has to offer.

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- These scarce and desired goods consist of the rights and perquisites attached to, or built into, the positions, and can be classified into those things which contribute to a sustenance and comfort, (b) humor or diversion, (c) self-respect and expansion.
- *This differential access to the basic rewards of the society has a consequence the differentiation of the prestige and esteem which the various strata acquire.*
- Therefore, *social inequality among different strata in the amounts of scarce and desired goods, and the amounts of prestige and esteem which they receive, is both positively functional and inevitable in any society".*

Melvin Tumin Critisises the functional proposition of Davis and Moore.

- **He** argues that at the outset **it is not proper to treat certain positions as functionally more important than others,** e.g. it is not appropriate to judge that the engineers in a factory are functionally more important because of special skills than unskilled workmen. Surely, some labour force of unskilled workmen is as important and indispensable to the functioning of the factory as some labour force of engineer furthermore, *relative indispensability and respectability of a set of skills among a people largely depends upon the bargaining power of those who possess it.* This power depends on the prevalent system of rating. **Motivation is determined by several factors** out of which rewards and other inducements are only some.

- The other criticism is regarding ranges of talent and the presence of limited number of individuals with talents. This proposition is contested by Tumin on the ground that in any society **there is no adequate knowledge to determine and judge that amount of talent present in society.** He explains that societies that are rigidly stratified are less likely to be able to discover new facts about the talents of its members. **If the differential rewards and opportunities are socially inherited by the subsequent generation, then the discovery of talents in the next generation becomes particularly difficult.** More importantly, motivation depends on distribution of rewards in the previous generation. **This means that unequal distinctive motivation in a generation is because of unequal distribution of rewards in the preceding generation**. Access to privileged position is restricted by the elites in society. For example Indian Caste System.

- **The other proposition of Davis and Moore introduce the concept of sacrifice which Tumin States.** He challenges the prevalence of sacrifice by talented people undergoing training since **it involves losses that arise out of surrender of earning power and cost of the training**. One of the basis issues here is the presumption that the training period in a system is essentially sacrificed. **This is not always true because the costs involved in training people may be born by the society at large.** If this happens, the need to compensate someone in terms of differential rewards when the skilled positions are staffed makes no sense.

- **Tumin argues that even if the training programme is sacrificed and the talent in society is rare, the other proposition of Davis and Moore suggesting differential access to desired rewards does not hold.** *The*

allocation of differential rewards is not the only the most efficient way of inviting appropriate talent for top position is itself questionable. **The joy in work, work satisfaction, institutionalized social important positions. This aspect has been overlooked by Davis and Moore.**

- **Davis and Moore classify rewards into three categories, those that contribute to sustenance and comfort, those that contribute to humor and diversion, and those that contribute to self respect and ego-expansion.** He says that it is not possible to determine whether one type of reward or all three of them induced motivation. Societies, emphasis different kinds of rewards in order to maintain balance between responsibility and record.

  The other proposition of Davis and Moore focuses on social inequality among different strata in term of scarce and desired goods and the amount of prestige and esteem they incur. These are positively functional and inevitable in society. Tumin writes, "If such differential power and property are viewed by all as commensurate with the differential responsibilities, and if they are culturally defined as resources and not as rewards then, no differentials in prestige and esteem need to follow.

Davis and Moore's Argument:

- Davis, in turn, asserts that **Tumin seeks to demolish the concept of institutionalized inequality**. *He offers no explanation of the Universality of stratified inequality. While the interest of Davis and Moore lay in understanding why stratification exists in society, Tumin argues that stratification does not have to be.* Evidently, they are addressing different issues further; Davis alleges that ***Tumin's critique suffers from confusion about abstract or theoretical reasoning with raw, empirical generalizations.*** *He defends his own position by stating that the chief concern was with stratified inequality as a general property of social systems involving high degree of abstraction again.*

- Tumin's critical appraisal of the theory proposed by Davis and Moore is based on only one article conveniently ignoring other publications that answer several question raised by him. His own understanding and presentation of Davis and Moore theory is inadequate. This in fact, is why Tumin's concept of stratification is inconsistent. Moore too explicitly states that Tumin has not defined social stratification clearly. This led him to wrongly assume that differential rewards and inequality of opportunity was the same thing.

Critique to Structural-Functional Theory of Stratification:

Tumin proposed the following critique:

- "Social stratification systems function to **limit the possibility of discovery of the full range of talent available in a society.** This results from the fact of unequal access to appropriate motivation, channels of recruitment and centers of training.

- In foreshortening the range of available talent, social stratification systems function to set limits upon the possibility of expanding the productive resources of the society, at least relative to what might be the case under conditions of greater equality of opportunity.

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- Social stratification systems **function to provide the elite with the political power necessary to procure acceptance and dominance of an ideology which rationalizes the status quo, whatever it may be as "logical", "natural", and "morally right".** In this manner social stratification systems function as essentially conservative influences in the societies in which they are found.

- Social stratification systems function to distribute favorable self-image unequally throughout a population. **To the extent that such favorable self- image are requisite to the development of the creative potential inherent in men, to that extent stratification systems function to limit the development of this creative potential.**

- To the extent that inequalities in social reward cannot be made fully acceptable to the less privileged in a society, social stratification systems function to encourage hostility, suspicion and distrust among the various segments of a society and thus to limit the possibilities of extensive social integration.

THE MARXIST PERSPECTIVE

The Marxist perspective differs from the functionalist perspective in focusing on divisive rather than integrative aspect of social stratification. Marxists regard social stratification as a means through which the group in the upper rungs exploits those in the lower rungs. Here the system of stratification is based on the relationship of social groups to the forces of production.

- More clearly stated Marxists identify two major strata in society: one that controls the forces of production (*Bourgeoisie*) hence rules over others, second that works for the ruling class (*Proletariat*). Form Marxian standpoint, economic Power governs political power. The ruling class derives its power form ownership and control over *forces of production*. The *relations of production* prevail over major institutions, values and belief systems. Evidently the political and legal system pursues the interests of the ruling class. The ruling class oppresses the serving class. *Thus, stratification in society serves to foster exploitation and hostility between the two major strata.*

- According to Karl Marx in all stratified societies there are two major social groups**: a ruling class (Haves) and a subject class(Have Nots).** The ruling class derives **its power from its ownership and control of the forces of production.** The ruling class exploits and oppresses the **subject class.** As a result there is a basic conflict of interest between the two classes. **The various institutions of society such as the legal and political system are instruments of ruling class domination and serve to further its interests.** Marx believed that western society developed through four main epochs-primitive communism, ancient society, feudal society and capitalist society.

11A/10, Old Rajender Nagar, Near Agrawal Sweet, Delhi
www.facebook.com/essayforias=byvikashranjan
E-mail : infovrc2016@gmail.com
Website : www.vikashranjan.org
7840888102
8586861046

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- *Primitive communism is represented by the societies of pre-history and provides the only example of the classless society.* From then **all societies are divided into two major classes** - **master and slaves in ancient society, lords and serfs in feudal society and capitalist and wage labourers in capitalist society.**

• The critical terms in the Marxian framework of social stratification are :

– **Class consciousness** by which is meant the awareness, the recognition by the people belonging to a class (e.g., workers) of their place in the production process and of their relation with the owning class. Class consciousness also subsumes the awareness of the extent of exploitation by the owning class in terms of their deprivation of and appropriate share in the 'surplus value' of goods produced by them. Over time, workers realize that the way to relieve themselves of the exploitation and oppression is overthrowing the capitalist owners through unified, collective revolution

– **Class solidarity** by which is meant the extent to which the workers join together in order to achieve their economic and political objectives; and

– **Class conflict** by which is meant struggle when class consciousness has not matured or it may be conscious struggle in the form of collective assertions and representations of workers intended to improve their lot.*(Detail in 'Sociological Thinker's)*

THE WEBERIAN PERSPECTIVE

    The third is the Weberian perspective according to which **social stratification** is based on **Class, Status and Power.** *class* is based on *market situation (Economic)-, Individuals position in the market*. Those who share common class situation also share similar **life chances**. They constitute a strata.

The crucial characteristics of class are;

– *Individuals share a particular causal facet of their lives;*

– *These facets are represented exclusively by economic drive in the possession of goods and opportunities for property accrual, and*

– *Class situation is essentially a market situation. Classes are not communities; they merely represent possible bases for communal action.*

Weber identified four groups in a capitalist society;

– The propertied upper- class

– The property- less, white collar worker class

– The petty bourgeoisie and

– The manual working class.

Status groups

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- **Weber did agree with Marx on the significance of the economic dimension of stratification.** He, however, added the aspects of prestige(Status) and Power (Party) to the understanding of social stratification. **Weber was convinced that differences in status led to differences in lifestyles**. *"As distinguished from the consequences of property differences for life chances, status differences, according to Weber, lead to differences in life styles which form an important element in the social exclusiveness of various status groups. Status groups acquire honour primarily by usurpation. They claim certain rewards and act out their claims in terms of certain manners and styles of behavior and certain socially exclusive activities. status groups are usually communities. Status situation is determined by a specific, positive or negative, social estimation of honor; it is not necessarily linked with class situation. The highest prestige in particular social group does not always belong to the richest. Status symbols, special attire, exclusive clubs and unique lifestyles distinguish the status groups.* Much like Marx, Weber agreed that property differences are important in forming of Class. Property differences also define the lines of distinction and privileges among them. Unlike Marx, Weber assigned greater importance to **status groups.**

Party:

- Weber also laid stress on **party** which often represents interests determined through 'class situation and status situation. *According to Weber, the economic aspect is crucial in classes, honour is crucial in status groups, and power is crucial in parties.* Party arise form the nature of domination which is present in one form or another in all the societies

- Weber analytically distinguished there orders within society—**economic, social and political**—and corresponding to these, identified three dimensions of stratification: class, status and power. On the fundamentals, there was little difference between Weber and Marx in defining class. Denying that a unified theory of social stratification was even possible, Weber went beyond a critical rejection of Marx's simplistic unilinear theory of class.

DIMENSIONS – SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF CLASS, STATUS GROUPS, GENDER, ETHNICITY AND RACE.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF CLASS & STATUS GROUPS

- The class system is universal phenomenon denoting a category or group of persons having a definite status in society which permanently determines their relation to other groups. **The social classes are de facto groups (not legally or religiously defined and sanctioned) they are relatively open not closed. Their basis is indisputably economic but they are more than economic groups. They are characteristic groups of the**

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industrial societies which have developed since 17th century. The relative importance and definition of membership in a particular class differs greatly over time and between societies, particularly in societies that have a legal differentiation of groups of people by birth or occupation.

- **Marx defined class in terms of the extent to which an individual or social group has control over the means of production. In Marxist terms a class is a group of people defined by their relationship to the means of production. Classes are seen to have their origin in the division of the social product into a necessary product and a surplus product.**

- Marxists explain history in terms of a war of classes between those who control production and those who actually produce the goods or services in society (and also developments in technology and the like). In the Marxist view of capitalism this is a conflict between capitalists (bourgeoisie) and wage workers (proletariat). Class antagonism is rooted in the situation that control over social production necessarily entails control over the class which produces goods -- in capitalism this is the exploitation of workers by the bourgeoisie. Marx saw class categories as defined by continuing historical processes.

- Classes, in Marxism, are not static entities, but are regenerated daily through the productive process. Marxism views classes as human social relationships which change over time, with historical commonality created through shared productive processes. A 17th-century farm labourer who worked for day wages shares a similar relationship to production as an average office worker of the 21st century. In this example it is the shared structure of wage labour that makes both of these individuals "working class".

In the well-known example of socioeconomic class, many scholars view societies as stratifying into a hierarchical system based on occupation, economic status, wealth, or income.

- *"Maclver and Page defines social class as any portion of the community marked off from the rest by social status.* MacIver says whenever social intercourse is limited by the consideration of social status by distinctions between higher and lower there exists a social class. *According to Ogburn and Nimkoff a social class is the aggregate of persons having essentially the same social status in a given society.*

- **Max Weber** suggests that social classes are aggregates of individuals who have the same opportunities of acquiring goods, the same exhibited standard of living. He formulated a three component theory of stratification with social, status and party classes (or politics) as conceptually distinct elements.

- ✓ Social class is based on economic relationship to the market (owner, renter, employee, etc.)

- ✓ Status class has to do with non-economic qualities such as honour and prestige

- ✓ Party class refers to factors having to do with affiliations in the political domain

- According to Weber a more **complex division of labour made the class more heterogeneous**. In contrast to simple income--property hierarchies, and to structural class schemes like Weber's or Marx's, there are theories of class based on other distinctions, such as culture or educational attainment.

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- At times, social class can be related to elitism and those in the higher class are usually known as the "social elite".For example, Bourdieu seems to have a notion of high and low classes comparable to that of Marxism, insofar as their conditions are defined by different habitus, which is in turn defined by different objectively classifiable conditions of existence. In fact, one of the principal distinctions Bourdieu makes is *a distinction between bourgeoisie taste and the working class taste.Social class is a segment of society with all the members of all ages and both the sexes who share the same general status*.

STATUS GROUPS

- Max Weber formulated a three-component theory of stratification-**class, status and power-** in which he defines **status class (also known as a status group) as a group of people (part of a society) that can be differentiated on the basis of non-economical qualities like honour, prestige, education and religion. Weber says bureaucracy is the most powerful of all status groups.**

- Since Max Weber, the issue of **status inconsistency has been the object of many studies because the phenomenon has itself been multiplied, particularly in the post-industrial societies and also because of an intervening factor, religion, particularly in emerging nations.**

- Weber rejects the notion that economic phenomena directly determine the nature of human ideals, he distinguishes such conceptualizations independent of class interests and hence the distinction of 'status' groups from 'class' groups. By *status situation Weber refers to that part of a person's life chances, which are decided by the social esteem in which he/she is held, such esteem might be positive or negative. The status situation of an individual refers to the evaluations which others make of an individual of her/his social position. They normally manifest their distinctions upon the manner in which others may interact with them.*

- *The status groups are conscious of their group identity. Along with the social esteem there occurs a specific lifestyle and restrictions and this becomes the characteristics of particular status group.* In Weber's view class distinction and status distinction remained separable in analysis and in fact. But they were also linked and they moved across each other in patterned ways.

- *Social class and status groups are often regarded as objective entities determined by ranking according to economic criteria or other indicators*. In the sociological tradition established by Weber, however, the objective definitions of class and status are distinguished from their subjective manifestations.The approach taken here is to consider that social class may reflect objective behavior, not as attributes judged by outsiders, but by actions taken and relations formed by insiders relative to other insiders.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF GENDER

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Like many questions of interest to sociologists, the nature of maleness and femaleness is not so easily classified. In general, *sociologists use the term **sex** to refer to the anatomical and physiological differences that define male and female bodies. **Gender, by contrast, concerns the psychological social and cultural differences between males and females. Gender is linked to socially constructed notions of masculinity and femininity; it is not necessarily direct product of an individual's biological sex.***

The distinction between sex and gender is fundamental one, since many differences between males and females are not biological in origin. Contrasting approaches have been taken to explain the formation of gender identities and the social roles based on those identities.

- ***Broadly speaking, the term 'gender' refers to cultural ideas that construct images and expectations of both females and males.*** Nature has divided human race between men and women, but their *status and role in society* are determined by out culture. *When we speak of women as 'fair sex' or 'weaker sex' or when invoke the etiquette of 'ladies first', our attention is not confined to the biological fact, have already entered the realm of culture.*

- In social sciences and literary criticism *the term 'gender' is used to indicate the differences in social status of man and woman, particularly to refer to the fact that women are placed in a lower status in relation to their intrinsic worth.* Feminist thus focuses on gender perspective that calls for cultural transformation of society. It implies the right ordering of status of women in relations to men in social and political life. *Culture usually refers to certain distinctive features of different groups. However, some typical attitudes towards gender can be found throughout the civilized world. These attitudes tend to divide male and female personality traits and behavioural tendencies into two opposite patterns. These patterns may be described as masculinity and femininity respectively. Masculinity, for example, typically includes aggressiveness, logical outlook, control of emotional expression, and attitude of dominance, while femininity is associated with peacefulness, intuitiveness, emotional expressiveness, and submissiveness.* (Some variations in these characteristics are possible in different social contexts. **For example,** a wife may be relatively submissive to her husband, but as a mother she may not be so towards her children. Moreover, the degree of submissiveness of a woman may vary from one case to another.)

- In any case, *relative dominance of man and relative submissiveness of women represent almost universal cultural traits, which are not directly based on biological differences. Broadly speaking, these are **the products of the social organization based on patriarchy and its institutions, the division of labour in the family and the competitive and exploitative character of capitalism.** From this perspective, the concepts of masculinity and femininity serve as instruments of social Control that reinforce male dominance.* So *if a woman tends to behave in an authoritarian manner, particularly towards men, her behaviour is termed to be indecent. In short, **the***

expectations attached to differential roles of men and women serve as the foundation of gender inequality in society.

- **J.J. Rousseau** in his essay **A discourse on the Origin of Inequality** had distinguished between natural inequality and conventional inequality. **Natural inequality** describes the inequality of age, health, beauty, physical and intellectual capacities of different people, which were created by nature. These inequalities are largely unalterable. On the other hand, **conventional inequalities** represent disparities of wealth, prestige and power among different individuals. These inequalities are the product of our social arrangements. We can undertake a critical examination of these inequalities from the point of view of justice, and can reduce them by altering our social arrangements. In other words, conventional inequalities are alterable. *While the division of society into two sexes- male and female- represent natural inequality, gender inequalities are the product of convention and culture. These inequalities can be questioned and removed wherever they are found objectionable.*

Gender socialization :

Another route to take in understanding the origins of gender differences is the study of gender socialization, the learning of gender roles with the help of social agencies such as the family and the media. Such an approach makes a distinction between biological sex and social sex.

- **Through contact with various agencies of socialization, both primary and secondary, children gradually internalize the social norms and expectations which are seen to correspond with their sex.** Gender differences are not biologically determined, they are culturally produced. According to this, view, gender inequalities result because *men and women are socialized into different roles.* These positive and negative reinforcements to boys and girls in learning and conforming to expected sex roles leades to gender differentiation. If an individual develops gender practices which do not correspond to his or her biological sex – that is, they are deviant – the explanation is seen to resist inadequate or irregular socialization. According to this functionalist view, socializing agencies contribute to the maintenance of social order by over seeing the smooth gender socialization of new generations.…………This rigid interpretation of sex roles and socialization has been criticized on a number of fronts. Many writers argue that gender socialization is not an inherently smooth process; different 'agencies' such as the family, schools and peer groups may be at odds with one another. Moreover, socialization theories ignore, the social expectations surrounding sex roles. As **Connell has argued :** 'Agencies of socialization' cannot produce mechanical effects in a growing person. What they do is invite the child to participate in social practice on given terms'.

- *Social influences on gender identity flow through many diverse channels;* even parents committed to raising their children in a 'non-sexist' way find existing patterns of gender learning difficult to combat (Statham 1986). Studies of parent – child interactions, for example, have shown distinct differences in the treatment of boys and

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girls even when the parents believe their reactions to both are the same. ***The toys, picture books and television programmes experienced by young children all tend to emphasize differences between male and female attributes***. Male characters generally outnumber females in most children's books, television programmes and films. Male characters tend to play more active, adventurous roles, while females are portrayed as passive, expectant and domestically oriented. Clearly, gender socialization is very powerful. Once a gender is assigned, society expects individuals to act like 'females' or 'males'. It is in the practices of everyday life that these expectations are fulfilled and reproduced.

According to Connell, gender relations are the product of everyday interactions and practices. The actions and behaviour of average people in their personal lives are directly linked to collective social arrangements in society. These arrangements are continuously reproduced over lifetimes and generations.

PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER STRTIFICATION

In almost all societies, gender is a significant form of social stratification. Gender is a critical factor in structuring the types of opportunities and life chances faced by individuals and groups, and strongly influences the roles they play within social institutions from the household to the state. Although the roles of men and women vary from culture to culture, there is no known instance of a society in which females are more powerful than males. Men's roles are generally more highly valued and rewarded than women's roles: in almost every culture, women bear the primary responsibility for child care and domestic work, while men have traditionally borne responsibility for providing the family livelihood. The prevailing division of labour between the sexes has led to men and women assuming unequal positions in terms of power, prestige and wealth.

Despite the advances that women have made in countries around the world, gender differences continue to serve as the basis for social inequalities. Investigating and accounting for gender inequality has become a central concern of sociologists. Many theoretical perspectives have been advanced to explain men's enduring dominance over women- in the realm of economic, politics, the family and else where.

- **Functionalist Approaches**
- The functional approach sees society as a system of interlinked parts which operate smoothly to produces social solidarity. Thus, functionalist and functionalist inspired perspectives on gender seek to show that ***gender differences contribute to social stability and integration***. *While such views once commanded great support, they have been heavily criticized for neglecting social tensions at the expense of consensus and for promulgating a conservative view of the social world.*
- Writers who subscribe to the natural differences school of thought tend to argue that ***the division of labour between men and women is biologically based. Women and men perform those tasks for which they are biologically best suited.*** Thus, the social anthropologist **George Murdock** saw *it as both practical and convenient that women should concentrate on domestic and family responsibilities while men work outside the*

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home. On the basis of a cross- cultural study of more than two hundred societies. Murdock (1949) concluded that the sexual division of labour is present in all cultures. While this is not the result of biological 'programming', it is the most logical basis for the organization of society.

– **Talcott Parsons,** a leading functionalist thinker, concerned himself with the role of the family in industrial societies. *He was particularly interested in the socialization of children, and believed that stable, supportive families are the key to successful socialization. In Parsons's view, the family operates most efficiently with a clear-cut sexual division of labour in which females act in **expressive roles,** providing care and security to children and offering them emotional support. Men, on the other hand, should perform **instrumental roles** namely, being the breadwinner in the family. Because of the stressful nature of men's role, women's expressive and nurturing tendencies should also be used to **stabilize and comfort men**.* This complementary division of labour, springing from a biological distinction between the sexes, would ensure the solidarity of the family.

– Another functionalist perspective on child-rearing was advanced by **John Bowlby** (1953), who argued that the mother is crucial to the primary socialization of children, If the mother is absent, or if a child is separated from the mother at a young age- a state referred to as maternal deprivation – the child runs a high risk of being inadequately socialized. ***This lead to serious social and psychological difficulties later in life, including antisocial and psychopathic tendencies.*** Bowlby argued that a child's well- being and mental health can be best guaranteed through a close, personal and continuous relationship with its mother.

• **Socialist and Marxist feminism**

– **Engels** argued that ***under capitalism, material and economic factors underlay women's subservience to men, because patriarchy (like class oppression) has its roots in private property.*** Engels argued that capitalism intensifies patriarchy men's domination over women- by concentrating wealth and power in the hands of a small number of men.… *Capitalism intensifies patriarchy more than earlier social systems because it creates enormous wealth compared to previous eras which confers power on men as wagearners as well as possessors and inheritors of property………… Second, for the capitalist economy to succeed, it must define people- in particular women- as consumers, persuading them that their needs will only be met through ever- increasing consumption of goods and products……… Last, capitalism relies on women to labour for free in the home, caring and cleaning.* ***To Engels, capitalism exploited men by paying low wages and women by paying no wages.***

• **Socialist feminist** have argued that the reformist goals of liberal feminism are inadequate. They have called for the restructuring of the family, the end of domestic slavery and the introduction of some collective means of carrying out child-rearing, caring and household maintenance. Following Marx, many argued that these ends would be achieved through a socialist revolution, which would produce true equality under a state-centre economy designed to meet the needs of all.

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- **Radical feminism**
- At the heart of radical feminism is *the belief that men are responsible for and benefit from the exploitation of women. The analysis of patriarchy- the systematic domination of females by males- is of central concern to this branch of feminism*. Patriarchy is viewed as a universal phenomenon that has existed across time and cultures. Radical feminists often concentrate on the family as one of the primary sources of women's oppression in society. They argue that men exploit women by relying on the free domestic labour that women provide in the home. As a group, men also deny women access to positions of power and influence in society.
- **S. Firestone** (1971), an early radical feminist writer, argued that men control women's roles in reproduction and child- rearing. Because women are biologically able to give birth, they become dependent materially on men for protection and livelihood of child. This 'biological inequality is socially organized in the nuclear family. Firestone speaks of a 'sex class' to describe women's social position and argues that women can be emancipated only through the abolition of the family and the power relations which characterize it.
- *Other radical feminist points to male violence against women as central to male supremacy. According to such a view, domestic violence, rape and sexual harassment are all part of the systematic oppression of women, rather than isolated cases with their own psychological or criminal roots. Even interactions in daily life- such as non-verbal communication, patterns of listening and interrupting, and women's sense of comfort in public – contribute to gender inequality.*
- Moreover, *popular conceptions of beauty and sexuality are imposed by men on women in order to produce a certain type of feminity. For example, social and cultural norms that emphasize a slim body and a caring, nurturing attitude towards men help to perpetuate women's subordination. The objectification' of women through the media, fashion and advertising turns women into sexual objects whose main role is to please and entertain men. Radical feminists do not believe that women can be liberated from sexual oppression through reforms or gradual change. Because patriarchy is a systemic phenomenon, they argue, gender equality can only be attained by overthrowing the patriarchal order.*
- The use of patriarchy as a concept for explaining gender inequality bas been popular with many feminist theorists. In asserting that 'the personal is political, radical feminists have drawn widespread attention to the many linked dimensions of women's oppression. Their emphasis of women has brought these issues into the heart of mainstream debates about women's subordinations.
- *Many objections can be raised, however, to radical feminist views. The main one, perhaps, is that the concept of patriarchy as it has been used is inadequate as a general explanation for women's oppression. Radical feminists have tended to claim that patriarchy has existed throughout history and across cultures- that it is a universal phenomenon.* Critics argue, however, that such a conception of patriarchy does not leave room for historical or cultural variations. It also ignores the important influence that race, class or ethnicity may have on

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the nature of women's subordination. In other words, it is not possible to see patriarchy as a universally phenomenon; doing so risks biological reductionism – attributing all the complexities of gender inequality to simple distinction between men and women.

- **Black feminism**

– Many black feminists argue that **ethnic divisions among women are not considered by the main feminist schools of thought** and are oriented to the dilemmas of white, predominantly middle- class women living in industrialized societies.

– Moreover, the very idea that there is a 'unified form of gender oppression that is experienced equally by all women' is problematic. Dissatisfaction with existing forms of feminism has led to the emergence of a strand of thought which concentrates on the particular problems facing black women.

– The writings of American black feminists emphasize *the influence of the powerful legacy of slavery, segregation and the civil rights movement on gender inequalities in the black community. They point out that early black sufferers supported the campaign for women's rights, but realized that the question of race could not be ignored: black women were discriminated against on the basis of their race and gender.* Explanatory frameworks favoured by white feminists for example, the view of the family as a mainstay of patriarchy- may not be applicable in black communities, where the family represents a main point of solidarity against racism. In other words, the oppression of black women may be found in different locations compared with that of white women.

– *Black feminists contend, therefore, that any theory of gender equality which does not take racism into account cannot be expected to explain black women's oppression adequately. Class dimensions are another factor which cannot be neglected in the case of many black women.* Some black feminists have held is its focus on the interplay between race, class and gender concerns. Black women are disadvantaged, they argue, on the basis of their colour, their sex and their class position. When these three factors interact, they reinforce and intensify on another (Brewer).

- **Postmodern feminism**

– *Like black feminism, postmodern feminism challenges the idea that there is a unitary basis of identity and experience shared by all women.* This strand of feminism draws on the cultural phenomenon of postmodernism in the arts, architecture, philosophy and economics. Some of the roots of postmodern feminism are found in the work of Continental theorists like **Derrida, Lacan and de Beauvoir.** *Postmodern feminists reject the claim that there is a grand theory that can explain the position of women in society, or that there is any single, universal essence or category of 'woman' consequently, these feminists reject the accounts given by others to explain gender inequality- such as patriarchy, race or class as 'essentialist'.*

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- *Rather than there existing an essential core to womanhood, there are many individuals and groups, all of whom have very different experiences (heterosexuals, lesbians, black women, working-class women, etc.). The otherness of different groups and individuals is celebrated in all its diverse forms.* Emphasis on the positive side of otherness is a major theme in postmodern feminism, and symbolizes plurality, diversity, difference and openness: there are many truths, roles and constructions of reality. Hence, the recognition of difference (of sexuality, age and race, for example) is central to postmodern feminism.

- As well as the recognition of difference between groups and individuals, postmodern feminists have stressed the importance of 'deconstruction. In particular, they have sought to deconstruct male language and a masculine view of the world. In its place postmodern feminists have attempted to create fluid, open terms and language which more closely reflect women's experiences. For many postmodern feminists, men see the world in terms of pairs or binary distinctions (good versus bad right versus wrong' beautiful versus ugly, for example). Men, they argue, have cast the male as normal and female as a deviation from it. The founder of modern psychiatry Sigmund Freud, for example, saw women as men who lacked a penis and argued that they envied males for possessing one. In this masculine world- view, the female is always cast in the role of the other. Deconstruction involves attacking binary concepts and recasting their opposites in a new and positive manner.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF ETHNICITY AND RACE

RACE : Sociologists define race as a vast collectivity of people more or less bound together by shared and selected history, ancestors, and most importantly physical features. These people are socialized to think of themselves as a distinct group, and others regard them as such.

Most biologists and social scientists have come to agree that race is not a biological fact. The reason is that parents from different racial categories can produce offspring. The offspring, by definition, are mixtures of the two categories and therefore cannot be placed in just one category. But they are socially placed in one category. For example children born of American and African (two racial stock) are put in one category i.e. African-American

- *Racial Groups sharing certain physical features believed to belong to certain broad categories of ancestors, such as Africans, Europeans, Asians, and Native Americans. The social significance of race is also a product of emphasizing or feeling connected to a history shared by a certain broad category of ancestors, who were commonly forced by laws and other social practices to become socially distinct from others.*

- *The social significance of race is also a product of emphasizing or feeling connected to a history shared by a certain broad category of ancestors, who were commonly forced by laws and other social practices to become socially distinct from other broad categories of ancestors.*

- *The racial and ethnic categories to which people belong are a product of three interrelated factors: chance, context, and choice. **Chance** is something not subject to human will, choice, or effort. We do not choose our biological parents, nor can we control the physical characteristics we inherit from them. **Context** is the social setting in which racial and ethnic categories are recognized, created, and challenged. **Choice** is the act of choosing from a range of possible behaviors or appearances. The choices one makes may emphasize or reject the behaviors and appearances that have come to be associated with a racial or ethnic group.*

- ***The premise of racial superiority and Differentiation** lies at the heart of other rationalizations used by one group to dominate another. **Sociologist Larry T. Reynolds (1992) observes that race, as a concept for classifying humans is a product of the 1700s, a time of widespread European exploration, conquest, and colonization that did not begin to subside until the end of World War II.** Racist ideology also supported Japan's annexation and domination of Korea, Taiwan, Karafuto and other Pacific islands prior to World War II. Both Japanese and Europeans used racial schemes to classify people they encountered; **the idea of racial differences became the "cornerstone of self-righteous ideology," justifying their right by virtue of racial superiority to exploit, dominate, and even annihilate conquered peoples and their cultures.***

ETHNICITY:

Sociologists study systems of racial and ethnic classification, which divide people into racial and ethnic categories that are implicitly or explicitly ranked on a scale of social worth. They study the origins of these racial and ethnic categories and their effect on life chances.

Ethnicity is derived from the ancient Greek work **ethnos**, which refers to **'a range of situations where there is a "sense of collectivity of humans that live and act together"** (Ostergard). The notion is often translated today as '**people' or 'nation'** (Jenkins). *Ethnicity relates to ascriptive identities like caste, language, religion, region etc. Inequality in terms of sharing power between two ethnic groups' results into conflict.*

Its use in contemporary sociology and in popular conception is relatively recent. The term was popularized in common American usage with the publication of Yankee city series of Warner published in 1941.**Warner** used the term ethnicity as a *'trait' that separates the individuals from some classes and identities him with others'.*

- *The ethnicity is socially mobilized and territorially confined. It has **numerically sufficient population** and is a pool of symbols depicting distinctiveness.*

- *It has a **reference group in relation** to which /whom a sense of relative deprivation is aggregated among members of ethnic group..*

- *Ethnicity causes ethnic movements after being left out of the developmental process or even being a victim of uneven development.*

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- *Ethnicity is manifested in society not merely due to grass root discontent **but sometime it is also a creation of vested political interest.***

- ***Ethnic groups** that use ethnicity to make demands in the political arena of society for alteration in their status, in their economic well being etc. **are engaged very often in a form of interest group politics.** The focus of interests of an ethnic group is to get some benefits for itself.*

- ***The group often uses ethnic criterion like religion, language or caste to mobilize itself and to give identity to itself which separates it from other group or groups.***

- ***The delineation of boundary of an ethnic group is an important aspect of ethnicity.** The nature of identity shifts along with changing circumstances and calls for change in boundary or a change in identification.*

- ***An ethnic community does not strictly have a racial connotation. A community can be distinct from others in many ways: Their racial stock or origin being one of them.** A community may distinguish itself from others by way of a particular or distinctive culture, language, religion or a combination of these. These features lead ethnic communities to conflict with other communities with whom they come in contact.*

The term ethnicity has been defined in broader sense to signify self-consciousness of a group of people united or closely related by shared experience such as language, religious belief, common heritage etc. While race usually denotes the attributes of a group, **ethnic identity signifies creative response of a group who consider themselves marginalized in society.** The identity of a group is defined vis a vis another community and how this identity becomes psychologically and socially important for a member or members of a community.

*Ethnicity refers to people who share, believe they share, or are believed by others to share a national origin; a common ancestry; a place of birth; distinctive concrete social traits (such as religious practices, style of dress, body adornments, or language); or socially important physical characteristics (such as skin color, hair texture, or body structure). Unlike race, which emphasizes physical features and geographic origin, ethnicity can be based on an almost infinite number of traits. **Unlike race, which emphasizes physical features and geographic origin, ethnicity can be based on an almost infinite number of traits.***

Social Stratification and Ethnic Inequality (Ethnicity)

Notions of **'ethnicity' and 'ethnic group'** travel together. If ethnicity emerged as a key sociological and political concept only in the early 70s it was in operation in sociological reality much before that and was commonly addressed in **solidarities and differences that marked social and cultural groups.**

The concept of class rooted in Marxian dictum of hierarchies also encompasses within its scope notions of 'class consciousnesses' – an idea that talks about building in-group solidarity. *Ethnicity as a social construct has also evolved on perceptions of 'bonding' and 'collectivity'. Class theorists use 'exploitation' by the 'others' as an instrument for strengthening 'class solidarity' in a similar vein those subscribing to constructs of 'ethnic consciousness' use 'exploitation' by the 'others' as an instrument for strengthening "ethnic solidarity".* **Irrespective of these common features many in sociological and social sciences has argued that ethnicity is not class.** However, at the same time none of them would deny the crucial relationship that ethnicity has with class.

- **Daniel Bell (1975) argues that,** "*The "reduction of class sentiment" is one of the factors one associates with the rise of "ethnic identification". He further suggests that ethnicity has become more salient because it can combine interest with an effective theme. Ethnicity provides a tangible set of common identifications – in language, food, music, names – when other social roles become more abstract and impersonal*".

- In support of Ethnic Inequality and Conflict, **Glazer and Moynihan** argues- *"As against class-based forms of social identification and conflict-which of course continue to exist – we have been surprised by the persistence of ethnic based forms of social identification and conflict".*

- **Richard Jenkins** argues that, *since the early decades of this century, the linked concepts of ethnicity and ethnic group have been taken in many directions, academically. **The Concept of ethnicity has passed into everyday discourse, and become central to the political group differentiation and advantage, in the culturally diverse social democracies of Europe and North America.** With the notions of 'race' gaining public and scientific disrepute since 1945, ethnicity has stepped in the reorganization of the post-cold war world. The obscenity of '**ethnic cleansing**' stands shoulder to shoulder with earlier euphemism such as '**racial hygiene**' and '**the final solution**'.*

- **Jenkins also refers to advantages that accrue because of ethnic affiliations.** *Sometimes these advantages are granted to groups because they are perceived to be marginal to the other groups in the societies (Reservation to Backward Communities). It is important to understand here that 'being part of an ethnic group' provides a sense of belonging and an assertion of 'identity'. This sense of belonging and identity also accompany certain advantages and disadvantages.*

Max Weber: Construction of Ethnicity

Max Weber regards an ethnic group to be "a group whose members **share a belief that they have a common ancestor**" or to put it differently *'they are of common descent'*.

- *He qualifies his statement by suggesting that* **"ethnic membership facilitates group formation of any kind, particularly in the political sphere**. *It is primarily the political community, no matter how artificially organized; it inspires the belief in common ethnicity".* *It is apparent from Weber's statement that biology had little role to play in cultivating 'sense of belonging'.*

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- **Weber also perceived** *Ethnic group as status group. A status group may be **rooted in perceptions of shared religion, language of culture**. Members of the group on the basis of shared community tend to form 'monopolistic social closure' – that is they refuse to let others enter their exclusive domain.*

- *Every member of the group knows what is expected of him in "situations of collective participation". They also function together to protect each other's honour and dignity. It is on these perceptions that 'suicide squads' operate in political struggles.*

   Weber Concludes *that since the possibilities for "collective action" rooted in ethnicity are 'indefinite' the ethnic group, and its close relative "nation", cannot easily be precisely defined for sociological purposes'.* This profound statement by Weber enables us to understand how political acts of subversion under one regime are celebrated as heroic and patriotic by those who are seeking political sovereignty; and are condemned as acts of treason by those governing the national states. (You must be reading articles in Newspapers about ongoing struggle between Israel and Palestine and various other so called insurgent groups and the nation states.) **Ethnicity forms complex equations and "simple cultural or ethnological explanations" are not enough to unfold its mysteries.** Ethnicity as a theoretical tool for understanding "complex questions of social interaction and political formations" holds equal interest not only for sociologists but also for anthropologists and political scientists.

Socio-biological or Primordialist Approach to :

- *Socio-biological interpretations of ethnicity assume that there are tangible explanations for ethnicity. The Primordialist approach recognizes "biology as the fundamental for establishing ethnic identity". The biological roots are determined by genetic and geographical factors. These linkages result in the formation of close knit kin- groups. Kinship loyalties demand that 'near relatives are favored by those in situations of command and controlling resources'.* In contemporary terminology such favours are rebuked for being nepotistic. Nepotism is defined as the '**tendency to favour kin over non-kin'**. This principle of kin-selection based on conception of socio-biology is not acceptable in societies that claim to be democratic and follow principles of meritocracy.

- Some of the followers of this school (Socio-biological or Primordialist school) are *convinced about genetic linkages itself are responsible for accentuating ethnic ties*. Another group within the same school thinks that *biological and kinship ties evolve and are furthered by cultural influences. The explanations offered by various scholars suggest that this schools of thought is primarily rooted in evolutionary construction of human societies*. **Shaw and Wong** (1989) argue that **'recognition of group affiliation is genetically encoded, being a product of early human evolution, when the ability to recognize the member of one's family group was necessary for survival.**

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Primordialist Concludes that "kinship bonds and cultural attachments" would always reign supreme and govern social and political actions.

Instrumentalist Approach:

- **Fredrik Barth and Paul Brass** is commonly associated with popularizing instrumentalist position in social science literature. Also sometimes referred to as **Situationalist perspective. It** *emphasizes plasticity in maintaining ethnic group boundaries*.

- *It argues that* **people can change membership and move from one ethnic group to another**. *The change can take place either "because of circumstances or because of manipulation by Political elites".* He regarded **ethnicity:** *'As a product of political myths created and manipulated by cultural elites in their pursuit or advantages and power*.

- *"The cultural forms, values and practices"* *of ethnic groups become resources for elites in competition for political power and economic advantage.* **They become symbols and referents for the identification of members of group, which are called up in order to ease the creation of political identity'.**

- **Fredrik Barth** was always convinced that the focus for the investigation of ethnicity should be '**the ethnic boundary that defines the group'.** Adapting the **definition that ethnicity is social organization of cultural differences'**, Barth regarded **'ascription'** critical to the process of establishing group boundaries.

- **Sociologists and social anthropologists have argued that this model of ethnicity is essentially borrowed from the works of Max Weber**. Barth facilitated its understanding by differentiating it from notions of race and culture. According to **Vermeulen and Grovers,** 'Barth presented ethnicity or ethnic identity as an aspect of social organization not of culture'.

- **Wallman** furthered Barth's understanding and argues that: "*Ethnicity is the process by which 'their' difference is used to enhance the sense of 'us' for purposes of oganisation or identification. Ethnicity can only happen at the boundary of 'us', in contact or confrontation or by contrast with 'them'. And as the sense of 'us' changes, so the boundary between 'us' and 'them' shifts. Not only does the boundary shift, but the criteria which mark it change".*

Post-Modernist Model of Ethnicity:

- *The constructivist model of ethnicity is located in the interpretive paradigm based on postmodernism.* In this interpretation **emphasis has** *shifted to 'negotiation of multiple subjects over group boundaries and identity'.*

- **Sokolovski and Tishkov** stress that: In this atmosphere of renewed sensitivity to the dialectics of the objective and subjective in the process of ethnic identity formation and maintenance, even the negotiable ethnic character of ethnic boundaries stressed by Barth was not proper. It was argued that terms like **'group' boundary'** still can not fix identity, and Barth's concern with maintenance tends to defy it still more.

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- The mercurial nature of ethnicity was accounted for when it was defined 'as a set of sociocultural diacritics [physical appearance, name language, history religion, and nationality] which define a shared identity for members and nonmember.

Jenkins' Model of ethnicity:

Jenkins has offered **'a basic social anthropological model of ethnicity which is equally relevant for sociological understanding.** The model is summarized as follows :

– **Ethnicity is about cultural differentiation**- although, to retreated the main theme of Social Identity, identity is always a dialectic between **similarity and difference;**

– **Ethnicity is centrally concerned with culture-** shared meaning – but it is **also rooted in, and to a considerable extent the outcome of, social interaction;**

– *Ethnicity no more fixed or unchanging than the culture of which it is a component or the situations in which it is produced and reproduced;*

– *Ethnicity as a social identity is collective and individual, externalized in social interaction and internalized in personal identification.*

- According to Jenkins*, "It is essential for us to remember that ethnicity or culture is not something that people have or they belong but it is a complex repertories which people experience, use, learn and 'do' in their daily lives, within which they construct ongoing sense or themselves and an understanding of their fellow".*

Race and Ethnicity

*Relationship between race and ethnicity is complex. Genesis of the term race are traced to Latin words 'generation', 'ratio', nation' and 'radix' to Spanish and Castilian 'razza', Italian 'razza' and old French 'haraz with such diverse meanings as **generation, root, nobility of blood, patch of threadbare or defective cloth, taint or contamination, or horse breeding"** (Sollors). The term race has been in popular use much before ethnicity was adapted in popular and academic vocabulary.*

- **Race came into scientific academic parlance as a classificatory feature. Physical Anthropologists** used physical features to classify what some may describe as 'human types'. However man's lust to conquer his fellow being and subordinate them resulted in tremendous abuse of these so called classificatory studies that were promoted to facilitate scientific research. *Magnus Hirschfield in 1938 described racial abuse as 'racism.*

- **The genocide that was unleashed in World War II in the name of protection of purity of races made academicians and politicians equally shy of using it in public domain**. The concept of **"ethnic group" introduced in the mid fifty's was an acknowledged attempt to provide a neutral system of classifying**

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human groups on the basis of 'cultural differences' rather than distinguishing them on the basis of 'racial characteristic'.

- **It was argued that the terminology of ethnic group would provide a value neutral construct and avoid prejudiced and stereotypical categorization of people in hierarchical and discriminatory categories.** Many scholars believed in the usefulness of this distinction but others think there was hardly any merit in this distinction as "race" is only one of the markers through which "ethnic" differences are validated and ethnic boundary markers established. Those authors supporting the expediency of making this distinction would argue that while "ethnic" social relations are not necessarily hierarchical and conflictual, race relations would certainly appear to be.

- *One may reason that even when race is often constructed and conceived in terms of physical or phonotypical difference, prejudices and stereotypes accompanying this perception are socially articulated and perceived*. In this sense, many would argue that 'race' is an allotrope of 'ethnicity.

- **Jenkins** prefers to argue the other way suggesting that **"ethnicity" and "race" are different kinds of concept;** they do not actually constitute a true pair. The most that can be said is that, at certain times and in certain places, culturally specific conception of 'race' or more correctly 'racial' differentiation have featured, sometimes very powerfully in the repertoire of ethnic boundary maintaining devices.

- **Banton** has argued that *primary difference between race and ethnic group is that membership in an ethnic group is voluntary whereas membership in a "racial group" is not' and this would empty that an "ethnic group" is all about inclusion whereas race is all about exclusion.* We are once again returning to the basic categories of '**us' versus 'them'** critical to our understanding of ethnicity as well as race. But as perceived by Jenkins "**ethnicity" is about group identification whereas "race" is about social categorization.**

It is important for the students to note here that sociological conceptions of race takes specific note of **'visible and physical features' as suggested by Gordon or as described by Berghe than that of 'innate and immutable distinctions' from those described as ' cultural'**. The most discerning contribution made by these scholars is that distinctions whether 'racial' or 'ethnic' are a matter of both 'physical' and verbal perception. **Qualifying this insight Berghe reasons:** *In practice, the distinction between a 'racial and ethnic group' is sometimes slurred by several facts. Cultural traits are often regarded as genetic and inherited (e.g. body odor, which is a function of diet, cosmetics, and other cultural items); physical appearance can be culturally changed (by scarification, surgery, and cosmetic); and the sensory perception of physical differences is affected by cultural perception of race (e.g. a rich Negro may be seen as lighter than an equally dark poor Negro, as suggested by the Brazilian proverb; 'Money bleaches'). This rhetoric of making distinctions on the basis of 'cultural content' or 'descent' overlooks the fact that matters relating to descent accentuate cultural crux on which cultural differences are constructed and*

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boundaries defined. **Sollors** sums up this admirably saying *'it is a matter of a 'tendency', not of absolute distinction*

SOME IMPORTANT INSIGHTS OBJECTIFIED

- **What are the basic patterns of race and ethnic group relations?**

The basic patterns of race and ethnic relations are amalgamation (blending two or more groups into a society that reflects the cultural and biological traits of the group), assimilation, pluralism, structured inequality, population relocation and extermination.

- **How do conflict theorists define inter group conflict and what are the five major factors that might contribute to it?**

When conflict exists between two groups the group that gains the most power, wealth and prestige becomes the majority regardless of its size. The five major factors that contribute to such conflict are visible differences between groups, competition for resources, racist ideology, potential for exploitation and the minority -group response to the majority definition of the situation.

- **What are some of the possible sources of prejudice and discrimination?**

Prejudice may be formed through both individual and group influences including socialization, rationalizing through stereotypes, the scapegoating process, reinforcement of a self-fulfilling prophecy ramification of an authoritarian personality and degree of contact with minority groups.

- **Ethnicity and Plurality in India**

India has a cultural, economic and social heterogeneity. The complex ethnic plurality is visible with ethnic groups varying in size, culture and consciousness and no clear demarcation is present between different groups. The system is highly segmented and heterogeneous. However emergence of ethnicity all around primarily on cultural grounds has put the boundary of nation state under severe stress. Usually the quest for larger identity is emphasized as it also serves some political purposes.

But at the same time, this emphasis on a large identity like nation ignores the reality of plural identities and their possible interplay and thus reverts back to the nation where religion, language etc become static categories of ethnic attributes.

SOCIAL MOBILITY

Individuals are recognized in society through the statuses they occupy and the roles they enact. The society as well as individuals is dynamic. Men are normally engaged in endless endeavor to enhance their statuses in society, move from lower position to higher position, secure superior job from an inferior one. For various reasons people of the higher status and position may be forced to come down to a lower status and position. Thus people in society continue to move up and down the status scale. This movement is called social mobility. The

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study of social mobility is an important aspect of social stratification.Infact it is an inseparable aspect of social stratification system because the nature, form, range and degree of social mobility depends on the very nature of stratification system. Stratification system refers to the process of placing individuals in different layers or strata.

- *According to Wallace and Wallace social mobility is the movement of a person or persons from one social status to another.W.P Scott has defined sociology as the movement of an individual or group from one*

- *In Other words, Social mobility is movement across the social structure. Concept of social mobility is classically defined by Pitrim A. Sorokin. According to Sorokin, the shift of position may be undertaken by an individual or social object or value. That is to say, anything that has been created or modified by human activity can experience social mobility. Social mobility is the reorganization of gradation in a society. The gradation is normally done in terms of power, prestige and privileges. That is to say, a hierarchical structure operates in such societies.*

OPEN AND CLOSED SYSTEMS

- **THE CLOSED SYSTEM emphasizes the associative character of the hierarchy. It justifies the inequality in the distribution of means of production status symbols and power positions and discourages any attempt to change them. Any attempt to bring about changes in such a system or to promote mobility is permanently suppressed. In closed system individuals are assigned their place in the social structure on the basis of ascriptive criteria like age, birth, sex. Considerations of functional suitability or ideological notions of equality of opportunity are irrelevant in deciding the positions of individuals to different statuses.**

- **In the OPEN SYSTEM the norms prescribed and encourage mobility. There are independent principles of ranking like status, class and power. In an open system individuals are assigned to different positions in the social structure on the basis of their merit or achievement. Open systems mobility is generally characterized with occupational diversity, a flexible hierarchy, differentiated social structure and rapidity of change. In such systems the hold of ascription based corporate groups like caste, kinship or extended family etc declines. The dominant values in such a system emphasize on equality and freedom of the individual and on change and innovation** For example caste system in India provides little scope for social mobility. By comparison, social class, system of stratification, in industrial societies provides immense scope for social mobility.

In Broader perspective there are four forms of social stratification having specific patterns of social mobility.

- **SLAVERY SYSTEM :** Mobility was possible only in two ways – **through manumission and through rebellion**. In manumission was a practice where by a slave was unconditionally released from the stating of

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slavery. *Becoming rebellion a slave could and his sufferings by placing to country side or becoming pending. So there was unique pattern of social mobility in slavery system*.

- **ESTATE SYSTEM:** Mobility was possible **through the act of grace the monarch.** He could bestow a person in rank of mobility. Other avenue of mobility was occupational guild. Sometimes emperor adds new loyal supporters by bestowing position of high rank, this results in social mobility. Marriage also was an imp avenue of social mobility in estate system especially for women.

- **CASTE SYSTEM : is an example of closed stratification system where an individual's position is largely ascribed. Often it is fixed at birth and there is little he can do to change his status**. There is little scope of social mobility. Though avenues are available for social mobility:
  – *Flexibility in the political system.*
  – *Availability of land cultivation.*
  – *Sanskritisation.*
  – *Hypergamy.*

  Normatively caste system has following characteristics :
  – *Proscribes mobility;*
  – *Membership of caste: Ascriptive, based on birth;*
  – *Legitimized by Karma theory (because of bad Karma in previous birth-low birth);*
  – *Strict endogamy.*

- **CLASS SYSTEM : is an example of open system of stratification**. It offers numerous opportunities for mobility. Persons are placed class hierarchy primarily on the basis of their achievement. So achievement is the most imp avenue of social mobility in class system.

  In Class based societies :
  – Membership depends on achievement.
  – Norms envisage mobility.
  – Equality of opportunity.
  – Open model of mobility.

Some barriers and restrictions to mobility is still there in Class system alsoe.g. in America, no Negro has become the President of America, though egalitarianism is emphasized. Most of the high ranking positions in corporate sector are held by men. The rate of social mobility may have an important effect on class formation.

For example, **Anthony Giddens suggests** that if the rate of social mobility is low, class solidarity and cohesion will be high. Most individuals will remain in their class of origin and this will 'provide for the reproduction of **common life experiences over generations'**.

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Lipset emphasize that rate of social mobility displays basic similarity across industrial societies. According of them, among industrial societies, no association is apparent between mobility rates and rate of economic growth. Social mobility becomes relatively high once their industrialization reaches a certain level.

TYPES OF MOBILITY

Horizontal And Vertical Social Mobility

- A distinction is made between horizontal and vertical social mobility. The former refers to change of occupational position or role of an individual or a group without involving any change in its position in the social hierarchy, the latter refers essentially to changes in the position of an individual or a group along the social hierarchy. When a rural laborer comes to the city and becomes an industrial worker or a manager takes a position in another company there are no significant changes in their position in the hierarchy. Those are the examples of horizontal mobility. Horizontal mobility is a change in position without the change in statue. It indicates a change in position within the range of the same status.

- It is a movement from one status to its equalivalent. But if an industrial worker becomes a businessman or lawyer he has radically changed his position in the stratification system. This is an example of vertical mobility. Vertical mobility refers to a movement of an individual or people or groups from one status to another. It involves change within the lifetime of an individual to a higher or lower status than the person had to begin with.

Forms Of Vertical Social Mobility

- The vertical mobility can take place in two ways - individuals and groups may improve their position in the hierarchy by moving upwards or their position might worsen and they may fall down the hierarchy. When individuals get into seats of political position; acquire money and exert influence over others because of their new status they are said to have achieved individual mobility. Like individuals even groups also attain high social mobility. When a dalit from a village becomes an important official it is a case of upward mobility. On the other hand an aristocrat or a member of an upper class may be dispossessed of his wealth and he is forced to enter a manual occupation. This is an example of downward mobility.

Inter-Generational Social Mobility

- Time factor is an important element in social mobility. On the basis of the time factor involved in social mobility there is another type of inter-generational mobility. It is a change in status from that which a child began within the parents, household to that of the child upon reaching adulthood. It refers to a change in the

status of family members from one generation to the next. For example a farmer's son becoming an officer. It is important because the amount of this mobility in a society tells us to what extent inequalities are passed on from one generation to the next. If there is very little inter-generational mobility .inequality is clearly deeply built into the society for people' life chances are being determined at the moment of birth. When there is a mobility people are clearly able to achieve new statuses through their own efforts, regardless of the circumstances of their birth.

Intra-Generational Mobility

- Mobility taking place in personal terms within the lifespan of the same person is called intra-generational mobility. It refers to the advancement in one's social level during the course of one's lifetime. It may also be understood as a change in social status which occurs within a person's adult career. For example a person working as a supervisor in a factory becoming its assistant manager after getting promotion.

Structural mobility:

- Structural mobility is a kind of vertical mobility. Structural mobility refers to mobility which is brought about by changes in stratification hierarchy itself. It is a vertical movement of a specific group, class or occupation relative to others in the stratification system. It is a type of forced mobility for it takes place because of the structural changes and not because of individual attempts. For example historical circumstances or labor market changes may lead to the rise of decline of an occupational group within the social hierarchy. An influx of immigrants may also alter class alignments -especially if the new arrivals are disproportionately highly skilled or unskilled.

Apart from this there have been other ways through which sociologists have frequently difference the social mobility.

- Firstly, **its' absolute- vs- relative social mobility**. Absolute Social Mobility is the actual change in position that occurs whereas relative social mobility is judged in comparison to others.
- Secondly, **objective and subjective social mobility**. Objective social mobility is actual change in terms of objective criteria whereas subjective social mobility is individual's own or other's perception about social mobility.
- **Structural vs. Circulation Mobility**: Structural social mobility is the mobility of people who are already part of occupational structure. By virtue of change in technology, skills, education, policy such people become socially mobile. On the other hand, there are people who are outside the social structural when such people enter into occupation it is referred to as circulation mobility.

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- **Sponsored Vs. Contested** – R.H. Turner, Sponsored social mobility is one which a person acquires due to some policy decision, e.g. policy of reservation is known as sponsored social mobility. On the other hand, contested mobility is one based on open competition.

Mobility in India-through time:

During Rig Vedic period: There was no restriction on mobility. Ranking was on the basis of merit e.g. those good at learning (Brahma) were called as Brahmins. On the basis of Military called as Rajanya.

*During Mughal's rule, it was not fully closed; e.g. rise of Rajputs-actually Sakas and Huns tribes from Central Asia came to acquire political power and acquired title of Rajputs. Kayasthas took to service of Mughal emperors, became court scribes. Marathas political mobilization of Kunbis; later on acquired Kshatriya lifestyle. Artisans moved to urban areas and acquired w*ealth and became Vaishyas.

SOURCES AND CAUSES OF MOBILITY

There are certain primary factors that affect mobility in all societies, and secondary factors that are specific to particular societies at particular times. These factors include:

- The mobility of parents and children.
- The faulty distribution of individual in social position.
- The change of the environment.
- Birth rate of higher group is lower than that of lower groups.
- Loss of lives in the war, necessitating a high, degree of mobility.
- Rapid industrialization.
- Migration

Social mobility is a product of social change and also it initiates social change Social Mobility in different societies:

- Till Horticulture, there existed ranked societies, and not stratified. In agriculture, due to surplus production-inequality started crystallizing. People felt relative deprivation which led to social movement.
- **Irrigated agriculture**: Disparity increase; centralization of power increases and allocation of position is on ascriptive basis.
- **Industrial society**: Skills start becoming specialized. Formal education develops; economy becomes de-linked to domestic unit. The amount of movement from one stratum to another-is significantly higher in industrial as compared to pre-industrial societies. Industrial societies are therefore described as 'open', as having a relatively low degree of 'closure'.

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- In particular, it is argued that status in pre-industrial societies is largely ascribed whereas in industrial societies, it is increasingly achieved. Advanced industrial society. So, mobility is a product of social change.

Other Factors Responsible For Mobility :

- **Personal talent :** Gifted individuals acquire mobility in their respective society. Simple societies-military skills are valued. So, those high in this, gain mobility. Trend continues in Industrial society. By sheer individual talent, mobility at individual level can be achieved. But such cases are exceptions rather than the rule. For mobility to take place on a sizable scale, structural change should be there in society.

- **Industrialization and Urbanization :** one of determinants of social mobility. There is expansion and diversification of occupation in Pre-industrial society. Diversity of occupational opportunities leads to economic growth. Economic growth is significant factor in increasing mobility. Sustained eco growth results in expansion of tertiary sector. It is not eco growth per se which makes significant impact; it should be accompanied with rapid expansion of education. India: Jobless growth in 1990s. Growth was in areas with specialized skills. So capital intensive growth did not make significant improvement in quality of life of population.

- **Politicization/Democratization :** Gives access to political power opportunity to gain power. It can be used for further eco power and prestige. Social changes in these directions contribute to mobility. Mobility can be seen as an index of modernization=-eco develop and politicization.

City and village: Continuity And Change In Social Mobility

- *More striking than new opportunities for group mobility within the traditional status hierarchy has been the appearance in recent decades of new status hierarchies-new arenas for status competition. They have emerged from the impact of urbanization and westernization but are not independent of the traditional social organization in which they are based.*

- *Urbanism is nothing new in India but rapid urbanization is new. The emergency of industrial employment, of easy communication over long distances, of increasingly efficient distribution of goods and services and of more effective centralized administration has made urban living a more accessible alternative to more people in India than ever before.*

- *Urban life affords a measure of independence from the ties and constraints of membership in rural based social groups by granting a degree of individual anonymity and mobility quite unattainable in rural communities.Caste, religion, ritual, tradition and the social controls implicit therein are not as rigid or pervasive in the city. People are increasingly able to seek status and other rewards on an individual or small family basis largely independent of caste or the other larger social entities of which they are also a part. They*

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do this primarily by going to the city although the values of the city also extend into the country-side and have loosened the hold of tradition even there.

- *To a great extent urban Indians can achieve status as a result of behaviors and attributes rather than simply as a result of birth. According to Harold Gould industrialization brought about the transfer of specialized occupations of all kinds from the context of the kin groups to factories organized on bureaucratic principles. This meant that occupational role and role occupant would be in principle separated and that the preponderant criteria for determining occupations would be performance qualities and that economic rewards and social mobility would constitute the principle standards for evaluating the worth or the status of any given role.*

- *Traditional status -caste status does not disappear in the city. It remains important in the most private contexts; the family and neighborhood. Some neighborhoods essentially reproduce the village setting in personnel as well as social structure; others do not.*

- *A very large proportion of city dwellers are in close touch with their native villages. Tradition and ascription are important in the city in those relationships upon which the day to day functioning and future composition of the family depends of which the epitome is marriage. In the city primary relationships occupy a diminishing proportion of most people's time, attention and energies. Much of the individual's interaction takes place on the basis of particular or even fragmented roles. He can often behave in a way consistent with the requirements of the situation without reference to his group membership. He is even able to pass if that is his desire by learning the superficial symbols of the status such as that of white collar worker, student, middle class householder or professional. In these statuses skill in handling the language, in pursuing the occupation or success in acquiring money or an appropriate life style may be socially recognized and rewarded irrespective of caste and family.*

- *Contemporary urban life has available more means to mobility and suggests to those who seek it a greater likelihood of success that the highly structured closely controlled traditional village setting. Mobility occurs in all settings. Some low status groups have been victims of technological displacement with the result that their economic, political and social statuses have declined. They drift either into the status of rural landless laborers or into unskilled urban employment, both of which are overpopulated and underpaid. The result is underemployment, unemployment, poverty and lack of opportunity for improvement. For examples: water carriers comprise a caste whose members have been displaced in many parts of Northern India with the advent of handpumps.In some instances new occupations have been created and with them opportunities for enhancement of economic and social status thus allowing certain mobility.*

Consequences of Mobility :

- **High mobility adds to social cohesion because there were no class wars in America as social structure was open**. Europe had a rigid social structure and the class inequality was far more pronounced.

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- *Frank Parkin has seen the relatively high rate of upward mobility as a 'political safety-valve'*. It provides opportunities for many able and ambitious members of the working class to improve their situation. As a result, the frustration which might result, if opportunities for upward mobility were absent, is prevented from developing.

- **Greater innovation, creativity and productivity**. Thus, people who are upwardly mobile are more efficient. It hastens eco growth.

- **Anomie of infinite aspiration, illegitimate means are used to climb up the ladder by people with achievement motivation.**

- **Weakens kinship ties**. Suicide rate increases.

Case Studies for quality improvement of answers

- *Fox and Miller* studied 12 industrial nations. He found that moving from Blue collars jobs to – white collar jobs, is the basis of assessing mobility. Those countries which registered a sustained high growth in economy, accompanied with increase in school enrolment, increase in urbanization and also political stability, experienced highest rate of mobility. But it was only confined to those sections which had high achievement motivation.

- A study by **Willmott and Yong** conducted in 1970, in the London areas, included a sample of 174 managing directors. It revealed that 83% were the sons of professionals and managers. A survey by Stanworth and Giddens designed to investigate the social origins of company chairman revealed a high degree of elite self-recruitment.

- A study by *Halse and Crewe* shows that in 1967, only 17% of the higher administrative grades in the civil service were filled with individuals from manual working-class backgrounds.

- *The Oxford study*, while showing a relatively high rate of mobility into class 1, does not indicate the degree of elite self-recruitment. Firstly, there is considerable change in the occupational structure. For each succeeding generation, there are more white-collar and fewer blue-collar jobs available. This helps to account for, the finding of the oxford study, that upward mobility considerably exceeds downward mobility. Secondly, manual and non-manual fertility rates differ. In particular, working-class fathers have generally had more children than middle-class fathers. Recruitment from lower strata was essential to fill those positions. Thirdly, many sociologists have argued that occupational status in industrial society is increasingly achieved on the basis of merit. Jobs are allocated in terms of talent and ability rather than through family and friendship connections. Education is seen to play a key part in this process.

- Educational opportunities are increasingly available to all young people, no matter what their social background; the result is a more open society and a higher rate of social mobility. The nature and extent of

social mobility, in Western industrial societies, pose a number of questions concerning class formation and class conflict. Marx believed that a high rate of social mobility would tend to weaken class solidarity.

- *Peter Saunders-Longitudinal study*: same sample studied over a long period of time. National child survey data was used. He collected 17,414 children sample; born in 1958 and monitored their progress through records till 1991. Among these, 6795 were in full time employment and he located them. He used Goldthorpe model. He found that 52% was Inter-generational mobility; so majority is moving up, society is meritocratic. He concedes that men with service class fathers were 2.6 times more likely to be in service class than those in working class; so beginning did matter. But moving towards a more meritocratic society, merit and class position are getting linked more. It was challenged by *Savage and Egerton*. National Child development survey sample was used. 40% of intermediate class children were themselves in service class. 25% of children with parents in working class were themselves in working class. It shows that class matters and questions the ability criterion. Among high ability children, school performance is the result of family background and upbringing matters.

- Among meritorious those who scored high, 75.5% of high ability students from service class joined service class (Both parents+high ability). High ability students from working class-only 45% joined service class (class inequality). The6refore, class background matters. Society is not wholly meritocratic.

- *Ralf Dahrendorf* believes that the situation has arrived in modern western societies, where, there are considerable opportunities for individual advancement. There is therefore less need for people to join together as members of a social class, in order to improve their situation. In Dahrendorf's words, 'Instead of advancing their claims as members of homogeneous groups, people are more likely to compete with each other as individuals for a place in the sun'. 'Although mobility diminishes the coherence of groups as well as the intensity of class conflict, it does not eliminate either'.