M.A. - PART I

SOCIOLOGY
PAPER I

THEORATICAL PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIOLOGY

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MA - PART I

SOCIOLOGY – PAPER I

THEORATICAL PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIOLOGY

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7. **Recent Trends in Sociological Theorising :**
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Reading List :

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PREFACE

The M. A. Part 1 course in Sociology was revised in 2003. It is in effect for the IDE students from the term 2004-5. This course has been revised keeping in mind the new guide lines provided by the University Grants Commission. Paper 1 is on the theoretical framework. Those who have read sociology at the B. A. level may be familiar with some of the theories. However the students must keep in mind that the level is much higher at the post-graduate level,

The theories discussed in this paper are modern and related to contemporary life. This paper also covers a major portion of the course for the NET and SET examinations as well as the competition examinations. Some of these theories are complicated and the student may f ind difficulty in understanding them at the first reading. We have tried our best to simplify the theories as best as possible. In many cases, if the student tries to read the originals, s/he may find it difficult. We hope that after reading this book, you find it easier to read and understand the originals.

One last point that needs to be stressed. These study materials cover the entire syliabus and they have been prepared by those who teach these papers. However, they are given to you mainly to simplify matters. They have to be supplemented by reading the originals or at least the readings given at the end of each chapter. As a student of M. A. you should realize that there are no short cuts to success. If You rely only on these study materials you are guaranteed not to do well. These materials are like our lectures in the class room. At the M. A. level, no teacher gives notes for the students. The lectures help the student to learn about the subject. These have to be supplemented by other readings.

We hope that these reading materials will invoke your interest in the subject and prod you to read more.

Dr B V Bhosale
Course Coordinator

1

Nature & Context of Sociological Theory, Meaning of Theory

Objectives

This unit will highlight the definition & meaning of theory. We will also study what are the main elements & functions of a theory. Is a science of society possible? We will try to understand the nature, context & characteristics of a sociological theory & the difference between theories & models.

Concept we shall understand

*   Veriables
*   Statements.
*   Formats.
*   Models.

Introduction

The main aim of sociology is to gain knowledge about the nature of human organization. This knowledge makes it possible to interpret social events & help us understand how & why these events occur. However sociologists disagree on fundamental issues like, the kind of knowledge that is possible, the procedures that should be followed in developing this knowledge & regarding what uses should be made of the knowledge that is generated, A set of procedure called science has developed in the last few hundred years in many disciplines, which is considered as the best way to accumulate knowledge of all phenomena in the universe. All though science pervades every aspects of our lives, there is still disagreement in sociology over what kind of science, can Sociology be? August Comte, that titular founder of sociology in early 80's recognized that the status of a "science of society" was precarious. He posited a law of three stages in order to establish the legitimacy of sociology as a science. The first stage is the religious stage where the events are interpreted with reference to supernatural forces or religious beliefs. The second stage which arises out of religion is the metaphysical stage in which events were interpreted through logic, mathematics and other formal, systems of reasoning. From this stage emerged the third stage called "positivism" by Comte, which according to him was a scientific stage where formal statements are critically examined against carefully collected facts Comte argued that knowledge accumulated about each domain of the universe passed through these three successive stages. Thus in 1830 human organization moved into the "positive" stage and thus Comte called for the use of science to develop knowledge about human affairs.

To gain some perspective in the question of sociology as a science two basic

questions can be asked.

1. Is the search for knowledge to be evaluative or neutral.

2. Is the knowledge developed to pertain to actual empirical events or is it to be about non-empirical realities?

If knowledge is neither empirical nor evaluative then it is a formal system of logic such as mathematics & if it is about empirical events & non evaluative then it is science. Science is based on upon the presumption that knowledge can be value free, that it can explain the actual workings of the empirical world, & that it can be revised on the basis of careful observation of empirical events.

According to Jonathan H turner the vehicle for developing scientific knowledge is theory, Scientific theory provide an inerpretation of events but this interpretation must be rechecked against empirical facts. Yet if the whole enterprise of science is questioned; then sociological theories that tell us now & why events occur will be very diverse. Depending upon what kind of science, Sociology is considered, the theories will vary,

Meaning & definition of Theory
Theory is a mental activity, It is a set of ideas which provide an explanation for something. It is a process of developing ideas that can allow us to explain how & why events occur.

The elements of Theory

The building blocks or the basic elements of theory are as follows

1) Concepts
2) Variables
3) Statements
4) Formats.

Concepts
Theories are built from concepts. Most generally concepts denote phenomena, in doing so, they isolate features of the world that are considered for the moment, important. Familiar sociological concept are group, formal organization, power, stratification, status, socialization etc. Each terms is a concept that embraces aspects of social world that are considered essential for a particular purpose. concepts are constructed from definitions, Definitions allow us to visualize the phonemenon denoted by the concept for example the concept of conflict only has meaning when it is defined. One possible definition might be Conflict is interaction among social units in which one units seeks to prevent the others from realizing is goals. This definitions helps us to visualize the phenomenon.

Thus concepts that are useful in building theory have special characteristics: they strive to communicate a uniform meaning to all those who use them.

Concepts of theory reveal a special characteristic : abstractness. Some concepts pertain to concrete phenomena at specific times & locations other more abstract concepts point to phenomena that are not related to concrete times or locations.

Variables

When used to build theory two general types of concepts can be distinguished

1) those that simply label phenomena &
2) those that refer to phenomena that differ in degree.

For those who believe sociology can be like other sciences prefer concepts that are translated into variables that is into states that vary. We want to know the variable properties - size, degree, intensity, amount, and so forth - of events denoted by a concept for example to note that an aggregate of people is a group does not indicate what type of group it is or how it compares with other group in terms of such criteria as size, differentiation & cohesiveness. And so for some, the concepts of scientific theory should denote the variable features of the world. To understand events requires that we visualize how variation in one phenomenon is related to variation in another.

Theoretical Statements and Formats

To be useful, the concepts of theory must be connected to each other. Such connections among concepts constitute theoretical statements. These statements specify the way in which events denoted by concepts are interrelated and at the same time, they provide an interpretation of how & why events should be connected to each other, when thee theoretical statements are grouped together, they constitute a theoretical format.

What is a Sociological theory?

A sociological theory is a set of idieas which provides an explanation for human society. Critics of Sociology sometimes object to the emphasis which sociologists place on theory & suggest it might be better to "let the facts" speak for themselves. But there are no facts without theory Like all theory sociological theory is selective. No amount of theory can hope to explain everything, account for the infinite amount of data that exists or the endless ways of viewing reality. Theories are therefore selective in terms of there priorities & perspectives & the data they define as significant. As a result they provide a particular & partial view of reality. There are various sociological theories, each presents a distinctive explanation of the social world.

According to some sociologists a theory is an explanation of the relationships between phenomenon which is not as solidly established as a low, but is more than a mere hypothesis. according to others 1) theories should be stated more formally 2) theories should be testable & 3) predictive power should be the primary criterion for assessing theories. However theories differ considerably in terms of characteristics such as scope, verifiability etc.

Parsons defines theoretical systems as a body of logically interdependent generalized concepts of empericil reference. Such a system tends, ideally, to be,--Ome, 'logically closed', to reach such a state of logical integration that every logical implication of any combination of propositions in the system is explicitly stated in some other propositions in the same system.

Thoman Ward synthesizing common ingredients of twenty seven definitions of sociological theory arrived at this definition, according to which a theory is a logical deductive inductive system of concepts definitions and propositions which states a relationship between two or more selected aspects of phenomena from which testable hypothesis can be derived.

The dominant mainstream in social thought, as well as the greater proportion of current literature in contemporary sociological theory, views theory as composed of three major realms:

1 . Main currents in sociological thought expressed in the work of Comte, Durkheim Weber, Pareto, Spencer, Simmel & others

2. General modes of sociological analysis like evolutionary theories, structural functionalism, conflict theory & the system theory which consider society as a whole.

3. A large number of theoretical perspectives, paradigms, empirical generalizations, typologies which deal with the relationships between units within society.

A theory thus explains social phenomena or a class of social phenomena, which is logically constructed & systematically organized that underscores the relationship between two well defined variables. I is more than a hypotheses or speculative reasoning, but it is different from social law that is supported by evidence. A theory is this contrasted with fact, law, practice.

A fat is an empirically verifiable observation whereas a theory is a systematized relationship between facts. A theory is a symbolic construction. It involves creativity. It can not be derived from empirical observations & generalizations by means rigorous induction. It stands for the symbolic dimension of experience. Thus a theory is an abstract conceptual scheme that reaches our beyond itself, it transcendents the observable realm of empirical reality into a higher level of abstraction by means of a symbolic construction.

Characteristics of Sociological Theory

A theory is a set of proposition, which ideally complies with the following conditions.

a) The propositions must be couched in terms of exactly defined concepts.
b) They must be consistent with each other.
c) They must be such that from them the existing generalization could be derived.
d) They must be fruitful i.e. they must show the way for further observations & generalizations increasing the scope of knowledge.

Definitions, hypothesis, concepts & propositions are the main ingredients that constitute a theory. Following are the characteristics of sociological theory.

1) A theory is a systematized symbolic construction. Theory building is a creative achievement & involves a qualitative jump beyond evidence.
2) A theory is couched in terms of well defined concepts & logically inter-connected propositions.
3) It is verifiable i.e. it is consistent with the body of known facts & available evidences.
4) It is always open to revision depending on new evidences i.e. It is provisional in character. It is desirable for a sociological theory to be a final formulation.
5) It is a systematized formulation that seeks to reconcile the need of a humanistic tradition (speculative, creative etc) with the demands of a scientific tradition (productive power, rigorous, induction etc.)

Function of theories

The major functions of sociological theory are as follows:

i) Many empirical investigations leads to theory building. A fruitful theory is a store house of meaningful hypotheses. Thus theory suggests potential problems & produces new investigative studies.

ii) Theory systematizes matter & their relationship into convenient conceptual schema.

iii) It explains observed regularities & Social uniformities. It simplifies laws & summarizes relationships between variables in a conceptual framework. Theory predicts facts. A theoretical system provides a secure ground for prediction based on intuitive knowledge historical analysis & observation of social uniformities.

iv) It established a linkage between specific empirical findings & general sociological orientations, thus enhancing the meaningfulness of research. Theory mediates between specific empirical generalization & broad sociological orientations rooted in the intellectual tradition.

v) They aid in the formulation of a research design, in conducting experiments making measurements & quantifying data. Theory serves as tools of inquiry. This function corresponds to the instrumentalist view of theories.

vi) Theory tries to fill in the gaps in our knowledge with intuitive & extensional generalizations, This is known as the 'heuristic function of theory' In providing meaning, the theory also attests to truth. Just as a law is not only confirmed by the factual data but also helps give the data factual status, so a theory is not only supported by established laws but also plays a part in establishing them.

vii) Theory guides research & narrows down the range of facts to be studied. Theory supplies hypotheses, provides direction to the investigation & helps the researcher look for certain variables & overlook others.

Theories and Models

There is significant difference between theory & model however unfortunately most of current sociological literature uses the term theories & model inter changeably. Theories are speculative, imaginative, symbolic, substantive, They are a product of creative achievement.

A model is a formal theory, a product of logical derivation & abstract formulations, it is concerned with form rather than substance.

Model commonly used in sociology are substantive models & statistical or physical science models.

Substantive Model

It is indeed contradictory that a model, devoid of any argumentation be substantive, yet many sociologists have equated most substantive theories with models. for example Evolutionary theories, Conflict theories, Structural functionalism etc. has been called as models by Inkeles. He uses the term model to refer to a rather general image of the main outline of some major phenomenon including certain leading ideas about nature of the units involved & the pattern of their relations. A theory is a heuristic device for organizing what we know or think about a question or issue at any particular time. A theory thus would be more limited & precise than a model. A theory can ordinarily be proved wrong. In case of the model, it can usually only be judged incomplete, misleading unproductive. Thus according to Inkeles, a model is greater in scope & range than a theory & may indeed encompass a host of theories. Substantive models consists of principles, axioms, postulates, propositions derived from more substantive theories transformed into more abstract mathematical formulations. These models borrow their propositions from substantive theories & Subject them to rigorous logico-deductive formalizations.

Physical science or statistical models

Statistical models start with empirical finding unlike substantive models which start with the propositions of established miniature theories. An observed or observable relationship between variables or a newly ascertained social uniformity is taken to correspond to a pattern in the physical or mathematical sciences. Lundberg, Dodd, & others have insisted that all social phenomena can & must be explained in terms of the laws from physical sciences.

According to them the movements of a man fleeing from a mob can be explained by the same laws in physics which explain the flight of a piece of paper before the wind. The theory of probability & set theory are often used to describe many aspects of the social world. The assumption is that all social phenomenon can be quantified & subjected to precise measurement. Neither the great speculative postulates rooted in the humanistic tradition nor the contemporary theoretical perspectives on the nature of the social institution & process would support this assumption.

The social world & human behavior within it are so complex that any simplistic model can only distort reality. This is not to argue that model building or measurement has no place in Sociology. The point is that the contention that every social phenomenon must be quantified is neither acceptable nor desirable And the contribution of statistical models to the development of discipline in general and to the growth of sociological imagination in particular has been negligible to date.

Let us sum up

We have seen that theory is general is a mental activity & process of developing ideas which helps to explain how & why events occur. We have also discussed the various elements of theory. A sociological theory is a set of ideas providing an explanation about human society. In this unit we have also studied the nature, context, characteristics, & functions of a sociological theory. A model is a formal theory, a product of logical derivation & abstract formulations. It is concerned with form rather than substance. Models commonly used in sociology are substantive models & statistical or physical science models. On other hand theories are speculative imaginative, symbolic, substantive & a product of creative achievement.

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Theory and Research

Objectives

In this unit we will study the types of theories, highlighting the speculative and grounded theories and the Macro and Micro theory. We will also try and understand the conflict between theory building and empiricism. In order to understand the relationship between theory and research we will study the role of theory in social research and the consequences of research for theory and thus examine the reciprocal relationship between theory and research.

Concepts we shall understand

*   Normative and non-normative theory

*   Reduction and non-reduction theory

*   Speculative and Grounded Theory

*   Evaluative and Scientific Theory

*   Grand and Miniature Theory

*   Macro and Micro Theory.

Introduction

Like all theory, sociological theory is selective. No amount of theory can hope to explain everything and account for the endless ways of viewing reality. Thus theories are selective in terms of their priorities and perspective and the data they define as significant, as a result they provide a particular and partial view of reality. These are various sociological theories. Each presents a distinctive explanation of the social world. There is no firm agreement as to the actual number of theories in sociology. Turner has analyzed five general sociological perspectives or orientations.

i)   Functional Theorizing

ii)   Conflict Theorizing

iii) Exchange Theorizing

iv)   Interactionist Theorizing

v)   Structuralist Theorizing

These general perspectives do not constitute paradigms because the various theorists working within these traditions often disagree over the best strategy,

over whether sociology can be a science or over whether or not the micro, macro or some combination of the two should be emphasized.

Types of Theories

Humans identifies two types of general theories 1) The normative and 2) the nonnormative. Normative theories explain how men ought to behave if they are to accomplish certain results and non-normative theories explain how they actually do behave. The normative theories fall into two categories a) one sided & b) many sided. The one sided theory seeks to explain how a particular social actor or a social group ought to behave in order to attain certain goals. The many sided theory is concerned with the interaction between two or more persons who behave normatively towards one another. Theories of applied sociology fall into the first category, the theory of Games illustrates the second type. Homans furter classifies nonnormative theories into a) structural b) functional and c) psychological.

Structural theories try to explain the existence of some' element' of social behaviour. 'Element' is defined by its relation to other elements and the relation of these elements to one another in some configuration, a social structure or social system.

The functional theory says that a society or other social unit will not survive, remain in equilibrium or reach its goal unless a certain element or combination of elements of behaviour occurs in the unit. The psychological theories emphasizes that sortie variable in the behaviour of individual men and not behaviour of societies or groups as such is more or less specific function of some other variable in the behaviour of individual men or of the physical environment. Usually most of the sociological theories do not occur in a pure from but are mixed with the other types.

Bosk off refers to two types of social theory

Non-social, reductionist explanations of social phenomena with reference to physical (environmental) factors and 'proto-sociology' which conceived as an intellectual synthesis of data and genralizations provided by the social disciplines. According to Helmut Wagner sociological theory is classified into the following three categories:

1) Evaluative Social Theories (non-scientific)

The authors of these theories do consider and treat sociology as a positive or interpretative science, example - humanitarian reform theory, ideological social theory, and social philosophical theory.

2) Interpretative Sociology

The authors here t, eat sociology as a social science, example - social phenomenology; theories of cultural understanding, interpretative sociology of actio and interaction, interpretative social psychology.

3) Positive sociological theories -

Whose authors consider or actually treat sociology as a natural science, example structural functionalism, neopositivism, human ecology, bio-psychological theory of culture, social behaviourism fall in this category.

As seen above Homans, Boskoff & Wagner have lumped together extremely divergent theory under the same category though they have used definitionally specific criteria for their classification.

Using three general criteria let us now see the three alternate schemes of classification.

Speculative and Grounded Theories

Comte and Spencer have synthesized the findings of a variety of disciplines to formulate a formidable array of impressive theoretical systems to explain social processes and organization. Speculative theory refers to an abstract impressionistic approach rooted in the philosophical system. Grounded theory is based on the findings of empirical research whereas a speculative theory corresponds to a conceptual ordering. It generates a host of assumptions, as well as theoretical entities and conceptual schema. On the other hand grounded theory produces sociological laws, principles and empirical generalizations. Speculative theories rely on historical methods and usually give rise theoretical laws. Grounded theories give rise to empirical laws and make use of positive methods and mathematical procedures.

Grand Theory and Miniature Theory

A grand theory is a broad conceptual scheme with systems of interrelated propositions that provide a general frame of reference for the study of social process and institutions. Propositions of speculative theory are essentially rooted in philosophical system whereas propositions of grand theory is anchored though hot solidly in empirical world. The difference is a matter of degree not of kind. Grand theories contain many jargons, intuitive generalizations and tendency statements example, Sorokin's theory of Social-Cultural Dynamics and Parson's General System Theory.

Miniature theories are partial theories, rather than inclusive theories. Merton called them "Theories of middle range" These theories evolved intermediate to the minor working hypotheses during day-to-day routines of research. They are more specific and their frame of reference is limited. They generate a manageable number of propositions concerning specific units within society. They include speculations comprising a master conceptual schema from which it is hoped to derive a very large empirically observed uniformities of social behaviour, example, Pareto's Theory of Circulation of the Elites and Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance are examples of theories of middle range.

Macro and Micro Theories

The early masters of social thought like Emile Durkheim were exclusively concerned with grand cosmic issues or total societal patterns. Theories of culture, institutions, Society constitute the tradition of macro sociology of which Durkheim was a major exponent. Macro theories are broader in scope and encompass an extended range of laws. Micro theories have a narrow frame of reference and focus on a limited range of phenomena. Micro sociology is concerned with interactions among atoms of a society, example role theory, small group theories, psychological reductionism etc. The distinction between the two types of theories is based on the size of the unit of analysis rather than the level of analysis. The macro theory delineates the social structure and the micro theory explains social roles and individual behaviour that mediates the structure. Thus the former deals with the society as a whole and the latter deals with the subsystems that make up the whole. Macro theories are also known as molar theories and micro theories are also known as molecular theories, example of macro theory is Parson's General System Theory and Homan's theory is a micro theory. Macro theories are species of Grand Theories and Micro Theories belong to the tribe of miniature theories which can be scientifically tested and are thus more satisfactory and fruitful in scientific inquiry, whereas macro theories can only be verified in a preliminary fashion. But all sociological phenomena cannot be analyzed by molecular theory because of the multiplicity of the variables included and the complexity of their inter-relationships. Hence we choose between types of theories depending on the social phenomena and the range of variables involved.

Conflict between Theory Building and Empiricism

In the case of an ideal relationship between theory and research - theory suggests potential problems for empirical inquiry the empirical findings are then incorporated into theoretical systems and the theory stands revised, rejected or validated according to the findings by research. In sociology however there has always been a rift between the empiricists and the theorists. This dates back to the mid-nineteenth century when grand conceptual schemes on institutions and social organizations Nere drawn by Conte and Spender. These speculative social theories were opposed as they were devoid of empirical reference. In sociology theories have developed independent of any body of continuing research and similarly empirical research has seldom concerned itself with theoretical interests which created this rift between theoretically oriented scholars and empirical minded workers. This rift has been widened due to the mutual distrust between the two groups. The main reason for the persistent conflict between theory and empiricism is that in first place sociology is an outgrowth of social philosophy. Early sociologists were speculative philosophers who never bothered to establish any empirical base. This orientation still persists in sociology. Another reason was that the sociological theories seem to be divided into mutually exclusive and antagonistic schools. They were not in agreement and thus could not guide the researchers. However Hyman is optimistic regarding the conflicting theories which according to him tests ones system with other thus bringing about refinement. Thirdly some empiricists claim that if sociology can claim a status of science it has to develop

precise instruments of measurement with the assumption that anything and everything can and must be quantified in order to possess scientific value. However this assumption is unacceptable to theorists who claim that in realm of human social interaction everything that counts cannot be counted and everything that is counted does not count. Another reason for at least a part of controversy between theorists and researchers is that certain sociological theories like the evolutionary theories are so vague and general that no amount of human ingenuity can test them. Parson's points out at one more feature which empiricists find hard to accept is that particular brands of theory proposed by contemporary sociologists, for many of their features inhibit the potential usefulness of theory for empirical research. Finally theorists have been disenchanted by the marked discontinuities of empirical research and the abundance of facts, discrete empirical generalizations and post facturn inerpretations. Facts are amassed and 'suitable' explanation provided but meaningful relationships between complex variables are seldom established.

C. Wright Mills deplores the a historical bias among empiricsts i.e. their tendency to deal mainly with contemporaneous events for which they are likely to get the kind of data they need. Robert Bierstedt has mentioned the undesirable consequence of 'blinded empiricism' in sociology. According to him it particularly exaggerates the scientific as separate from the practical, importance of community studies, it places an inappropriate emphasis upon what Marshall calls'an aimless assembly of facts'. It also places an undue burden upon the writers of textbooks, it illogically reverses the role of theory and research in sociology.

Role of Theory in Social Research

Robert Merton has analyzed the different ways in which theory influences research. According to him theory helps in the selection of cases, facts and data. It provides general orientations providing -suggestive potential problems and fruitful hypotheses. It points to the variables that are relevant and important. All the facts are not investigated only those which are considered as important by us are investigated. This selection is guided by some prior notions or theories. Homans argues that theory ought to guide research. According to him sociology does not have a good theory. This stand is highly debatable. Theoretical considerations enables the researchers to narrow the range of inquiry by pinpointing potentially significant and relevant variables, thereby saving time, money and other resources. If there are a number of sociological theories to predict all known facts then the scope of empirical research is very much limited. What is the need for elaborate research if existing theories can explain and predict all known phenomena?

Developing sociological concepts are essential ingredients of theory they specify the form and content of the variables. Researchers translate labels into appropriate ideas. In short theories provide interpretative definitions of concepts while empiricism provides operational definitions of concepts. Parson's pattern variables have been effectively utilized in the empirical analysis of the process of modernization.

The data is first collected and then subject to interpretative analysis. In this method explanation are consistent with a particular set of observations, if they cannot be explained, the finding is explained by shifting the blame on to a research tool or sample error or bad concept. Thus post facturn explanations cannot furnish any compelling evidence.

A major function of social theory in empirical research is to summarize observed uniformities of relationship between variables and to synthesize them with reference to existing conceptual schemes.

The formulations and testing of new hypothesis leads to cumulation of both theory and research as well as increases the fruitfulness of research through successive exploration of implication. Theory prods research and empirical findings in turn, elaborate theory. Parson's believes that all controversy about the role of theory in research stems from the sociologist failure to recognize the great potential of the new brand of analytical theory. A body of logically interrelated generalized concepts, the specific fats corresponding to which constitute statments describing empirical phenomena. Thus unlike what Homans said that sociology does not have a sound theory to guide research effectively, the analytical theory, which is highly abstract is capable of guiding research by establishing logical relationships between independent systems.

The Consequences of Research for Theory

Let us now see the consequences of research for theory, The principles of methodology are not peculiar to sociology alone, they transcend any body of substantive theory. Methodology provides answer to the question "how" and substantive theory answers the question of 'What".

According to Robert Merton empirical work invents new procedures and techniques which facilitates the collection of new and previously unavailable facts, which may now stimulate-fresh hypotheses. Unexpected facts or those which are inconsistent with prevailing theory become meaningful and may lead to formulation of new hypotheses and research design.

Research cannot proceed without first defining the concepts with sufficient clarity however vague the concepts may be. The classification of concepts, that is empirical research exerts pressure for clear concepts. The researchers have developed indices of variables such as morale, social cohesion etc. often defined loosely in the conceptual scheme which in turn have led to greater conceptual clarity of key elements in the theoretical system.

Increasingly sociologists have become aware of the futility -of assigning exclusive domains for either theory or research. As Merton saus, during the last decade theorists and empiricists have learned to work together. A sociologist has learned to talk to himself since increasingly the same man has taken up both theory and research.

The reciprocal relationship between Theory & Research

The interplay between theory & research is a matter of striking a balance between quality & quantity. The speculative theory is empty with out

substantiating data & raw empiricism is blind without substantive theories. Empirical work enhances the predictive power, precision, validity & verifiability of sociological theories. By the discovery & successive refinement - of new tools & techniques of methodology, more & more theories are enabled to develop higher order propositions with greater predictive power. According to Hyman in order to establish & strengthen a naturally rewarding association between theory & research a greater emphasis is to be laid on middle range theories than grand theories. Middle range theories are specific & ' concrete Also there has to-be a shift from theory to theorizing. Theory implies something finished, intact. Theorizing implies something in process, an activity in one's mind.

Theoretical considerations enter into empirical inquiry & at several points facilitate the selection of key variables, they guide research & help delimit the scope of inquiry by pinpointing significant facts. Where as empirical inquiry tests, validates or repudiates theories. Research helps theory building. Empirical findings may suggest development of new hypotheses, leading to the formation brand new theories or the modification of existing ones. Empirical research develops & refines sociological concepts. It enhances the clarity of Theoretical constructs & variables through constructions of indices & formalization of research findings. Whereas theory facilitates an effective summation of empirical findings. Thus there exits a reciprocal relationship between theory & research & a need is felt for more interplay between theory & research by the theorists & empiricists.

Let us Sum up

In this units we have studied the different type of theories - normative & non normative theories, speculative & grounded theories, Grand & Miniature theories Macro & Micro theories. We have also discussed how there is a reciprocal relationship between theory & research where in research helps theory building. Empirical findings may suggest development of new hypotheses. Where as a theory facilitates an effective summation of empirical findings.

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3

EMILE DURKHEIM:

Division of Labour in Society

The objective of this unit is to gain an insight into the life and works of a sociologist who is considered to be the founding father of this discipline.

This unit further focuses on one of Durkheim's most important works of all times: The Division of Labour in Society (1893).

The division of Labour in Society according to Durkheim is simply the separation and specialization of work among people. This leads to the development of a certain type of social order or solidarity-social solidarity, which is further explained in the unit.

The two types of social solidarity-Mechanical and organic, their characteristics, certain other concepts like -social facts, etc, the causes of this division of labour and finally the criticism levied against Durkheim are also presented.

CONCEPTS USED:

i)   SOCIAL FACTS: Are those social causes or mechanisms which explain social phenomena.

ii)   SOCIAL SOLIDARITY: Is the type of social order which arises due to the division of labour. It refers to the system of social bonds, social relations, social interchanges and social integration which binds individuals to the society. There are two types of social solidarity Mechanical and organic.

iii)   MECHANICAL SOLIDARITY: Is a solidarity of resemblance, i.e. solidarity based on common roots of identity and similarity.

iv)   ORGANIC SOLIDARITY: Develops out of differences and is a product of the division of labour.

v)   COLLECTIVE CONSCIENCE: Is the sum total of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of society and forming a system in its own right.

vi)   REPRESSIVE LOW: Primitive and severely punishes any breach of collectively held social rules.

RESTITUTIVE LAW: Is co-operative and the main aim is restoration of things to order when a breach of collectively held social rules or a misdeed has been committed,

EMILE DURKHEIM (11858-1917)

INTRODUCTION

Emile Durkheim is conventionally regarded as the founding father' who put Sociology on a professional footing in France in particular and paved the way for this professionalisation to occur across the rest of Europe and in North America. He is now widely regarded as the 'father' of the so called Structural-Functionalist approach in sociology: an approach developed by the North American sociologists Talcott Parons and Robert Merton. Durkheim always perceived his objective as establishing the legitimacy of Sociology: as a science with its own protocols and its own domain.

Ernile Durkheim was born in the eastern French province of Lorraine on April 15, 1858. He was the son of a rabbi and descending from a long time of rabbis, he decided early that he would follow the family tradition and become a rabbi himself. He studied Hebrew, the Old Testament, and the Talmud, while following the regular course of instruction in secular schools. He soon turned away from all religious involvement, though purposely not from interest in religious phenomena, and became a freethinker, or non-believer. At about the time of his graduation he decided that he would dedicate himself to the scientific study of society. Since sociology was not a subject either at the secondary schools or at the university, Durkheim launched a career as a teacher in philosophy.

Emile Durkheim made many contributions to the study of society, suicide, the division of labour, solidarity and religion. Raised in a time of troubles in France, Durkheim spent much of his talent justifying order and commitment to order. Durkheim was a pioneer French sociologist, taught at Bordeaux (1887-1902) and the University of Paris (1902-17). He introduced the system and hypotheticak frame work of accurate social science. Durkheim was author of The Division of Labor (18930, Rules of Sociological Method (1895), Suicide (1897), Elementary forms of Religious Life (1915). Emile Durkheim has often been characterized as ,the founder of professional sociology.

He has a great closeness with the two introductory sociologists, Comte and Saint Simon. Durkheim willingly inherited the ideas of the Division of Labor and the Biological Analogy. Both ideas which had been differently well developed by Comte and Saint-Simon. Durkheim's holism approach said that sociology should focus on and study large social operations and cultures. He used functionalism, an approach of studying social and cultural phenomena as a set of interdependent parts, to find out the roles these institutions and processes play in keeping social order. Because of this importance in large social processes and institutions, Durkheim's sociology can be described as macro-sociological as compared to a micro-sociological, which takes it's starting point at the individual.

Durkheim's main purpose was to give sociology a professional and scientific standing like other traditional social sciences. In order to do this, Durkheim argued that it was essential to clearly state the domain or area of study for sociology. He said that sociology's concern was with the social. This section of the social should be separated from the area of psychological and the individual. If there was to be something called sociology there should be a job just for sociology and sociologists. Durkheim said that the social was an independent physical existence, called a society. Durkheim argued that this society didn't depend on the plans and stimulation of individuals for its lasting existence. Society was'thing like.'So the social or society had a life and logic of its own, If this was the case then sociology had a purpose.

Durkheim also went into the subject of religion. He said that the god concept was a false way [collective representation] of the power that groups used to shape the behavior of members. He thought of religion as a solution to the problem of solidarity, how to hold people together when they have conflicting interests. Durkheim looked to the activities of early religions in rituals. He said rituals were specific tools that implanted illustrations of that society in the members of the society. He suggested that these rituals honored the group and its identity and not the individual's identity. So the basic purpose of these religions and their rituals was to maintain social solidarity within those societies. So, the function of religion in those societies was the worship of 'god 'but of the society.

He said there were other ways to get solidarity than by religion. He mentioned the division of labor, which is defined as the assignment of certain tasks, jobs, or work to be done by certain individuals, groups, and classes of people. Sex, age, education type and level, and the occupation area of one's family are the most traditional bases for distinguishing occupational activities.

Durkheim also explained suicide. He explained suicide in terms of the degree to which a person is joined into social life. At the low end of social unity, there is anomic suicide, in which people destroy themselves because social bonds die and life becomes meaningless to them. Then when people are tightly integrated and there is a threat to the social group, people may sacrifice themselves in order to protect the group. Anomic suicide also proved that suicide increases as society falls apart.

Durkheim married Louise Dreyfus and they had two children, Marie and Andre, but not much is known about his family life. His wife seems to have devoted herself to his work. She followed the traditional Jewish family pattern of taking care of family affairs and helping him in proofreading and secretarial duties. So the he could devote all his activity to his intellectual pursuance. Two years after his son Andre died, Emile died on November 15, 1917 at the young age of fifty-nine.

As mentioned earlier in the introduction, Durkheim's central objective was to give sociology a professional and scientific standing comparable with other well established 'natural' and social sciences. In order to accomplish this Durkheim argued that it was necessary to explicitly state the domain or area of

study for sociology.

SOCIOLOGY IT'S DOMAIN

Durkheim argued that sociology's central concern was with 'the social'. This realm of 'the social' had to be differentiated from the realms of the psychological and the purely individual. This realm of 'the social' should not be explained in terms of the intentions or motivations or individuals because, argued Durkheim, that was the job of psychology and psychologists. So according to Durkheim's argument, if 'here was to be something called sociology, there must a job specific to sociology and sociologists and for that to be the case there must be a different type of explanation for' the social'. According to Durkheim, 'the social' was in fact an autonomous reality, called a 'society'. This 'society' was a phenomenon in its own right. It did not depend upon the intentions and motivations of individuals for its continued existence. 'Society' was, argued Durkheim, a reality Sui generis. Society was a 'thing-like' entity which existed on its own terms. Thus the social' or society had a life and. logic of its own! If this was the case then sociology had a mission! The mission would be to investigate the mechanisms which generated and maintained 'this thing' called society.

The task for sociology, according to Durkheim, was to discover the mechanisms or laws which were said to be the 'origin' or' cause' of societies. Rather than use the word laws Durkheim used the term Social facts.

There are four major characteristics of social facts

1)   they have distinctive social characteristics and determinants which are not amenable to explanation on either the biological or psychological level,

2)   they are external to the individual,

3)   they endure through time outlasting any set or group of individuals, and

4)   they are endowed with coercive powers, due to which they are imposed on individuals, independent of his/her will

There are, according to Durkheim, three general types of such facts:

1 .   Those social facts relevant to the organism of society as a whole. Its population, its technology and its territory/environment. These social facts are those that from the basic conditions of existence of a given society. Indeed these social facts could be said to form the 'environmental context' of a society.

2.,   The social facts underlying the social institutions within a society. The institutions of the state, education and family for example.

3.   The tacts relating to the norms, the values and the moralities of a society. What Durkheim called the 'collective representations' of a society which constituted a society's culture.

Social facts must be: explained in terms of other social facts. Put another way: the cause of any social fact must be shown to be another (antecedent) social

fact. In Sociology we use the term 'irreducible' when we want to claim that a concept or idea is of the most basic or fundamental type. For Durkheim social facts were irreducible. In short this means that social phenomena must be explained in terms of social causes or to use Durkheim's term: social facts.

THE DIVISION OF LABOR IN SOCIETY (11893)

" … Social harmony comes essentially from the division of labor. It is characterized by a cooperation which is automatically produced through the pursuit by each individual of his own interests. It suffices that each individual consecrate himself to a special function in order; by the force of events, to make himself solidary with others."

(Durkheim, 1933, p.200)

One theme that seems to be identical among all of the most important social theorists-Marx, Comte, Spencer, C. Wright Mills, and especially Durkheim-is the division of labour. It is almost always the most important concept in understanding societies and is the foundation upon which most sociological thought is built.

The Division of Labor in Society was Durkheim's first major theoretical work. It developed a way of thinking about society which was at that time (I 880's) completely new.

It has a few key aims :

1)   Durkheim wanted to analyze the nature of the links connecting the individual to society and the social bonds which connect the individuals to each other.
2)   Examine the specific nature of these social bonds and see in what way are they related to the overall function of social cohesion in society.
3)   To see if the system of social links changes as society becomes more advanced and subject to changes in the division of labour.

The division of labour is simply the separation and specialization of work among people. As industry and technology proliferate, and population increases, society must be become more specialized if it is to survive. in modern society, this is especially evident. Labour has never before been as specialized as it is now, and the current trend is toward even further increased specialization.

Durkheim was not merely concerned with what the division of labour was, but how it changed the way people interreacted with one another. He was concerned with the social implications of increased specialization. As specialization increases, Durkheim argued, people are increasingly separated, values and interests become different, norms are varied, and subcultures (both work-related and social-related) are formed. People, because, they are increasingly performing different tasks than one another, come to value different things than one another. Durkheim didn't see the division of labour as the downfall of social order, however. He recognized that, in reality, the division of labour gave rise to a distinct type of social order, or solidarity.

Durkheim's explicit focus in The Division of Labor is on social solidarity. He used the term solidarity in several distinct ways:

1) To refer the system of social bonds which link individuals to society, without which, individuals would be independent and develop separately.
2) To identify a system of social relations linking individuals to each other and to society as a whole, without which, individuals would be separate and unrelated.
3) To refer to the system of social interchanges which go beyond the brief transactions that occur during economic exchange in society. This system of interchanges forms a vast network of social solidarity which extends to the whole range of social relations and acts to link individuals together in some form of social unity.
4) To describe the degree of social integration which according to Durkheim, linked individuals to social groups outside themselves.

"Social life comes from a double source, the likeness of consciences and the division of social labor." (Durkheim, 1933, p.226)

However, before we discuss the two types of solidarity according to Durkheim, a few concepts have to be explained.

A crucial concept in Durkheim's work is the collective conscience which is the sum total of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of society and forming a system in its own right. These beliefs are diffused throughout the society, define social purposes, give meaning to action and generally structure the social lite. This collective conscience is a distinct reality which persists through time and units generations, as it is a product of human similarities. It may be thought of as a system of ideas and beliefs which creates social likenesses among all members of society.

Durkheim has distinguished four interrelated characteristics of the common conscience: volume, intensity, determinateness and content.

1) Volume
This refers to the pervasiveness of social beliefs and the degree to which they extend throughout society as a whole. It also denotes the capacity of the collective beliefs to em-olop the individual and to extend their reach throughout society. So in simplistic terms, the greater the volume of the collective conscience, the greater is the individual's attachment to the prevailing collective beliefs.

2) Intensity
This refers to the degree of leverage collective beliefs exert over individuals. The greater the intensity of the collective conscience, the more leverage is exerted by the collective beliefs and practices. Consequently, the more intense the collective conscience, the greater the social cohesion and the more developed is the social uniformity.

3) Determinateness

This refers to the amount of resistance offered by collective beliefs and how willingly they give way to change, transgression or violation. When collective conscience lacks determinateness, they are less resistant to change in the prevailing social rules, as the more general and vague the rules become, the more they encourage individual discretion. By direct contrast, the more defined the collective beliefs, there is less inclination on part of the individuals to vary in their understanding of common social rules. Therefore, the greater the determinateness of the collective conscience, the more perfect is the consensus.

4) Content

Though Durkheim did not explicitly elaborate on this point, certain points can be inferred from his work. It refers to the dominant characteristic of the society and to its collective disposition. There are two prevailing forms of content: religious content (collective beliefs which primarily stem from religious law and preaching) and secular content (through a process, collective beliefs divest of their religious content and gradually political, economic and scientific functions free themselves from religious functions and take on a more acknowledged character).

Next Durkheim distinguished between two types of laws - repressive and restitutive. According to him, there is a fundamental relation between judicial rules and social solidarity, and this relationship can be examined by the way society punishes its offenders (those who violate collective conscience).

Given below are the main characteristics of the two types of law according to Durkheim.

Repressive law is punitive and severely punishes any breach of collectively held social rules. It involves a passionate reaction because crime is thought of as an offence against the collective conscience. Its main objective is to maintain and reinforce social cohesion by setting examples which act to preserve the collective rules. This is done by severe and swift punishment which brings about total 'public vindication'.

Restitutive law is cooperative, with its major aim being restoration of things to order when a misdeed has been committed. The rules with a restitutive sanction either do not totally derive from the collective conscience, or are only feeble states of it.

One can surmise that, repressive law corresponds to the heart, the center of the collective conscience, and restitutive law corresponds to a special domain of the collective order and therefore, they are peripheral to the collective conscience. Therefore, rules which determine them do not have the superior force which governs the repressive laws.

Now we move on to the types of social solidarity as propounded by Durkheim. Social solidarity can be expressed in society in two very broad and distinct ways, and the terms he used to designate these are 'mechanical' and 'organic' solidarity.

Mechanical Solidarity

Is a solidarity of resemblance, that is, the solidarity of such societies is based on common roots of identity and similarity. People are homogenous, mentally and morally; the 'Y' feel the same emotions, cherish the same values, and hold the same things sacred. These various points of attachment directly link the members of the society equally. Individual autonomy is discouraged and the social whole envelops the individual so completely that there is no distinction between the individual conscience and collective conscience. Collective rules and social practices which are predominantly religious in nature, pervade all aspects of social life. The kinship group is the dominant social institution, and domestic (familial and political) activity forms the basis of social cohesion. The division of labouris rudimentary and divided up so that individuals perform tasks for collective purposes. Offences against the common beliefs are punished by repressive sanctions which act to reaffirm the beliefs and social rules by deliberate punishment. The individual is perceived as an indistinguishable part of the collective whole and as individuality is discouraged, individual differences are subordinated to the solidarity of the group. Social bonds are of obligation, rather than contract.

For our understanding, presented below, are the characteristics of such societies:

i.   has a population which is small, homogenous and isolated,
ii.   division of labour is based on social cooperation, with little or no specialization,
iii.   a system of social institutions in which religion is dominant,
iv.   a system of beliefs which is uniformly diffused throughout the society, creating uniformity in attitudes and actions,
V.   there is a low degree of individual autonomy,
vi.   individuals place in society is determined by kinship,
vii.   a system of penal law based on repressive sanctions which punish individual transgressions swiftly and violently, thereby reaffirming core beliefs and values,
viii. a system of cohesion which produces a high degree of consistency in values and beliefs, and in individual attitudes and action,
ix.   a state in which individualism is at its lowest point of development.
X,   there is a system of social links between individuals based on custom, obligation and sentiment.

In direct contrast to mechanical solidarity is organic solidarity. Organic solidarity develops out of differences rather than likenesses and it is a product of the division of labour. This division of labour occurs in society due to a number of complex facts such as increased population, urbanization, the growth of cities, industrialization, development of means of trans-: portation and communication. Labour is specialized and individuals are linked more to each other than they are to society as a whole. This is because with increasing differentiation of functions in a society come differences between its members. So individuals become more reliant on other to perform separate economic functions which they are not able to carry out themselves, thereby creating dependency on specialized economic

functions that individuals perform for each other. In such a society, the force of social bonds integrates individuals in their economic and occupational functions, and the ties to society become indirect and Operate through the division of labour. Social bonds between individuals are enforced by contracts rather than by the force of prevailing customs or religious beliefs. (as in societies with mechanical solidarity) the individual place in society is determined by occupation rather than by kinship affiliation. The system of laws is based on restitutive sanctions in which judicial rules correct social wrongdoings by restoring things to their original state. Individualism is at its highest point of development, the individual has greater autonomy and becomes the object of legal rights and freedoms. Social bonds are formed on the basis of interdependencies created by increased reliance on each other's occupational functions.

To summarize, the main characteristics of organic solidarity are:

i.   larger population spread over broader geographic areas,
ii.   increased complexity of division of labour leaning to specialized economic functions in which individuals are more reliant on others to perform certain economic functions which they cannot perform themselves,
iii. Social relations are such that individuals are liked to each other by contract rather than by sentiment and obligation,
iv.   individuals obtain their place in society by occupation rather than by kinship affiliation.
v.   there is an increase in individual autonomy based on a system of laws recognizing rights and freedoms of individuals.
vi.   A system of penal law based on restitutive sanctions in which judicial rules redress social wrongs by restoring things to their original state.

Thus, organic solidarity is social order built on 'the interdependence of people in society. Because people are forced to perform distinct, separate, and specialized tasks, they come to rely on others for their very survival. While shoemakers and carpenters may be functioning fine, if farmers stop working, everyone starves. If the carpenters quit, no one has any shelter. If the garbage haulers don't show up, the streets become dumps and diseases spread. Durkheim saw that without one another in a highly specialized society, no one can survive. This interdependence is why the division of labor does not destroy social order.

The two forms of solidarity correspond to two extreme forms of social organization. Primitive/archaic societies are characterized by the predominance of mechanical solidarity, whereas modern industrialized societies, characterized by complex division of labour. are dominated by organic solidarity. Mechanical societies come first in time and social differentiation, according to Durkheim, begins with the disintegration of mechanical solidarity.

Now the next important question to be dealt with is, What are the causes of division of labour? Durkheim rejected a number of causes put forth by numerous luminaries like Spencer, etc. A few of them are elucidated below. For example, the economists explain the division of labour as a rational device contrived by men to increase the output of the society. Durkheim rejects this explanation because 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 differences before social differentiation. Durkheim also rejected explanations like, increasing role of contracts freely concluded among individuals in modern societies because Durkheim argues that modern society is defined first and fore most by the phenomenon of social differentiation, of which contractualism is the result and expression. Similarly, Durkheirn also rejected the search for happiness as an explanation, because nothing proves that individuals in modern societies are happier than individuals in primitive societies.

According to Durkheim, division of labour, a social phenomenon, can only be explained in terms of social factors. There are essentially three social factors according to Durkheim -the volume, the material density and the moral density of the society.

The volume of a society refers to the size of the population. Material density refers to the number of individuals on a given ground surface and moral density refers to the intensity of communication between individuals. The formation of cities and development of communication and transportation networks leads to:condensation of societies, which in turn in increasing intensity of social intercourse and this necessitates a greater division of labour. To put it simply, as societies become denser, population increases in manifold, more people come in contact with each other. This leads to rivalry and competition amongst them for scarce resources. So as the struggle for survival become 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; they are in competition with only a few of these who pursue the same object or vocation. The soldier seeks military glory, the priest moral authority, the politician power, the businessman riches and the scholar scientific renown. The carpender does not struggle with the mason, nor the businessman with the teacher, nor the politician with the engineer. Since they pursue different objects, or perform different services, they can mutually exist in harmony without any discord. The division of labour is thus, the result of the struggle for existence and survival. It becomes the chief source of solidarity and the foundation of moral order.

Abnormal Forms of the Division of Labour

The normal function of the division of labor, as we have seen, is to product a form of social solidarity; but, like all social (as well as biological) facts, the division of labor may present "pathological" forms which produce different and even contrary results. Durkhelm was especially concerned to study these forms. The term pathology is derived from the biological sciences and is primarily used to indicate the occurrence of disease in an organism. Durkheim believed that the'social body', like the human body, can become diseased and he referred to this state as a form of social pathology or, more commonly, 'abnormal forms'. Eventually Durkheirn focused on three types of such pathological forms, not because they exhausted the range of deviant cases, but because they seemed the most general and most serious. They are: (i) the anomic division of labor, (ii) the forced division of labor and (iii) the poor coordination of functions resulting from the division of labour itself.

i)   The anomic division of labour

Is found where individuals, increasingly isolated by their more specialized tasks, lose any sense of being integral parts of some larger whole. This reflects a lack of mutual adjustment among the parts of the social organism. Durkheim cites certain commercial and industrial crises, the conflict between capital and labor, and the "scholastic" specialization of scientific investigation among its examples. Groups previously mediated by links of social cohesion grow rigid and solidarity is jeopardized. Individuals no longer feel that their common work unites them. In circumstances where anomic division of labour is allowed to develop, specialization is usually taken so that, if taken any further, social disintegration would occur. And what is particularly alarming, again, is that this form of social disintegration increased with the growth of the division of labour, and thus appeared to be its natural rather than pathological consequence.

ii)   The forced division of labour

Occurs when the functions of specialization and the social organs representing them become instruments placed at the disposal of certain social classes and their interests. For example, where the lower classes become dissatisfied with the position granted them by custom or law. This is nonetheless a potential source of dissension and civil war because social functions are rearranged in such a way that they become unrelated to natural demands of society and begin to represent divisions based on special interest groups, making the division of functions 'forced' rather than spontaneous. Thus,the division of labor no longer meets the needs of social cohesion and instead serves the interests of certain social groups who manipulate functions in order to satisfy their own interests, and in doing so, disrupt the process of natural cohesion.

iii)   Durkheim's third pathological form of the division of tabour

The poor coordination of functions in society, arose from his observation that the functions of an organism can become more active only on the condition that they also become more continuous, one organ can do more only if the other organs do more, and vice versa. Where this continuity is lacking, the functional activity of the specialized parts decreases, resulting in wasted effort and loss of productive capacity; but, as always, Durkheim was less concerned with the economic than with the moral consequences of such an abnormal condition. Where the functional activity of the parts languishes, Durkheim thus warned, the solidarity of the whole is undermined.

Critical Remarks

The Division of Labor in Society was a seminal contribution to the sociology of law and morality, and remains a sociological classic by any standards. By the same standards, however, it also contains undeniable shortcomings which have limited its appeal to modern sociologists. An industrial utopia does not form simply out of interdependence, for specialization has been seen to set people not only apart, but against each other. Interests often collide and conflict exists. Karl Marx spent a great deal of effort identifying the problems that arise due to the division of labour. Durkheim did not fool himself into believing that the changes .happening around him as a result of industrialization would bring

about total harmony, but he did recognize that though specialization sets us apart, it does, in certain ways, bind us together.

SOME CRITICISMS TO CONSIDER:

1   Durkheim's theory is said to present 'an over socialized conception of individuals'. What do you think that means? Such a theory as Durkheim's, always focuses upon social order. fit seeks to discover the mechanisms which produce the conforming individuals. All others who do not conform are perceived as 'deviants' to social solidarity.

2,   Social change/Conflict: There is a general idea amongst some sociologists that Durkheim and functionalists in general cannot explain social change or conflict.

3.   The idea that a society has a single common culture and set of beliefs is also arguable. It gives to rise to certain questions like, are we all clones of the 'big idea'? Similarly, what happens in a multicultural society?

4.   Durkheim's view of so-called 'primitive' societies is also considered primitive by many He based his thesis on religion and the early societies on his reading of the then contemporary anthropologists.

Two criticisms of Durkheim stand out:
The crudity of his attempt to summarize human history into two categories of mechanical and organic.
Secondly, his assumption that the individuals in early societies were all alike.

SUMMARY

Durkheim carved out a special field for sociology, established a sound empirical methodology and laid the foundation of structural functionalism, the dominant school of sociological theory today. The heart of Durkheim's theory lies in his concept of social facts. When Durkheim's The Division of Labor in Society was written, analysis of the social limitations on personal freedom was relatively underdeveloped, making his study one of the most important contributions to the rise of sociology to academic and scientific respectability. By stressing his argument that social phenomenon must be explained on the social plane, Durkheirn accounted for the emergence of advanced or organic societies on the basis of the growing volume of society. He pointed out that expansion both territorially and demographically, increased the physical density of the population and therefore, added to its social density (i.e., greater communication and interaction). This insight marked a breakthrough for all of sociology.

Briefly the main points of mechanical and organic solidarity are:

Mechanical solidarity - Social cohesion based upon the likeness and similarities among individuals in a society, and largely dependent on common rituals and routines. Common among prehistoric and pre-agricultural societies, and lessens in predominance as modernity increases.

Organic Solidarity-Social cohesion based upon the dependence individuals in more advanced society have on each other. Common among industrial societies as the division of labor increases. Though individuals perform different tasks and often have different values and interests, the order and very survival of society depends on their reliance on each other to .perform their specific task.

Durkheim discussed social solidarity-the bond between all individuals within a society-in considerable depth, especially in his first major work. The Division of Labor in Society, first published in 1893. He first described the social cohesion particular to pre-industrial societies. This mechanical solidarity as he called it, occurred when all members of a society performed the same or nearly the same tasks as all others in a society. It one person were to die and not be replaced, the society would not change, because all other members did exactly the same thing as the member that died. The collective conscience of a mechanical society is identical among all members, and the bond derives not from dependence on other individuals, but from the dependence on the total social system.

Durkheim's primary interest was what happened as societies begin to modernize, when they begin to industrialize the labor becomes increasingly specialized. Durkheim calls the new form of solidarity resulting from modernization organic solidarity. In modern, industrial societies, labor is tremendously divided. Individuals no longer perform the same tasks, have the same interests, nor necessarily share the same perspectives on life. But Durkheim quickly points out that this does not cause a society to fail or disintegrate. Organic solidarity is formed. Like the organs within an animal, individuals perform certain specific functions, but rely on the well being and successful performance of other individuals. If one organ fails, the rest of them fail as well. A body-or in this case a society-cannot function at all if one part crumbles. This reliance upon each other for social (and even physical) survival is the source of organic solidarity, according to Durkheim.

Then Durkheim focused on the 'pathological' or abnormal forms of division of labour, which according to him are of three types; anomic division of labour, forced division of labor and the poor coordination of functions resulting from division of labour.

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Questions

Q. Explain in detail then life and works of Emile Durkheim. Focus on one of his important works.

Q. What are the main tenets of Durkheim Division of Labour in society? (1893)

Q. Critically evaluate Durkheims work: The Division of Labour in Society (1893)
Q. Explain in detail what Durkheim meant by social solidarity.

Quotes from Durkheim

"As the progress of the division of labor demands a very great concentration of the social mass, there is between the different parts of the same issue, of the same organ, or the same system, a more intimate contact which makes happening much more contagious. A movement in one part rapidly communicates itself to others."

(1933, p.224) (Durkheim, Emile. 1933. The Division of Laborin Society Translated by George Simpson. New York: The Free Press).

"if work becomes progressively divided as societies become more voluminous and dense, it is not because external circumstances are more varied, but because struggle for existence is more acute." (Giddens, 1972, P.1 53 [except from The Division of Labor in Society]) Giddens, Anthony. 1972. Emile Durkheim: Selected Writings. London: Cambridge University Press.

"...It is easy to understand that any condensation of the social mass, especially if it is accompanied by an increase in population, necessarily an advance in the division of labor." (1972, p. 154 [excerpt from The Division of Labor in Society])

"But if the division of labor products solidarity, it is not only because it makes each individual an exchangist, as the economists say; it is because it creates among men an entire system of rights and duties- which link them together in a durable way." (1933, p.406)

"in one case as in the other, the structure from the division of labor and its solidarity. Each part of the animal, having become an organ, has its proper sphere of action where it moves independently without imposing itself upon others. But, from another point of view, they depend more on one another than in a colony, since they cannot separate without perishing." (1933, p. 192)

Durkheim on Solidarity

"The social molecules that cohere in this way can act together only in so far as they have no action of their own, as with the molecules of inorganic bodies. That is why we propose to call this form of solidarity 'mechanical.

(Giddens, 1972, p. 139 (except from The Division of Labor in Society])

"in societies where this type of solidarity [mechanical' is highly developed, the individual is not his own master... Solidarity is, literally something which the society possesses."

(1972, p. 139 [except from The Division of Labor in Society])

"There is then, a social structure of determined nature to which mechanical solidarity corresponds. What characterizes it is a system of segments homogeneous and similar to each other. Quite different is the structure of societies where organic solidarity is preponderant. They are constituted, not by a repitition of similar, homogeneous segments, but by a system of different organs each of which has a special role, and which are themselves formed of differentiated parts."

(1933, p. 181)

"In one case as in the other, the structure derives from the division of labor and its solidarity. Each part of the animal, having become an organ, has its proper sphere of action where it moves independently without imposing itself upon others. But, from another point of view, they depend more upon one another than in a colony, since they cannot separate without perishing."

(1933, p. 192)

"...Even where society relies most completely upon the division of labor, it does riot become a jumble of juxtaposed atoms, between which it can establish only external, transient contacts. Rather the members are united by ties which extend deeper and far beyond the short moments during which the exchange is made. Each of the functions that they exercise is, in a fixed way, dependent upon others, and with them forms a solidary system."

(1933,p.226)

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4

EMILE DURKHEIM:
Anomie and Suicide

The previous unit gave an introduction to the life and works of Emile Durkheim with special reference to his important work - The Division of Labour in Society (1893)

This unit goes further and focuses on the concept of Anomie and another important work of Durkheim which has connotations even body, suicide (1897).

The unit focuses on the four different types of suicide as given by Durkheim - Egoistic, Altruistic, Anomic and Fatalistic.

Finally, we look at some of the criticism levied against Durkheim.

CONEPTSUSED

i)   Anomie: is a state where norms (expectation on behavior) are confused, unclear or not present.

ii)   Suicide: According to Durkheim, is applied to all cases of death resulting directly or indirectly from a positive or negative act of the victim himself, which he knows will produce this result.

iii)   Integration: refers to the degree to which collective sentiments are shared.

iv)   Regulation: refers to the degree of external constraints on individuals.

v)   Egoistic suicide: results from too little social integration.

vi)   Altruistic suicide: occurs due to too much social integration.

vil)   Anomic suicide: results from nomlessness or deregulation in society.

viii)   Fatalistic suicide: occurs when regulation is excessive.

EMILE DURKHEIMS (11858-1917)
Anormie

... The state of anomie is impossible whenever interdependent organs are sufficiently in contact and sufficiently extensive. If they are close to each other, they are readily aware, in every situation, of the need which they have of one-another, and consequently they have an active and permanent feeling of mutual dependence."

(1972, p.1 84 [excerpt from The Division of Labor in Society)

Emile Durkheim, introduced the concept of anomie in his book The Division of Labour in Society, published in 1893. He used anomie to describe a condition of deregulation that was occurring in society. This meant that rules on how people ought to behave with each other were breaking down and thus people did not know what to expert from one another.

Anomie, simply defined, is a state where norms (expectations on behaviours are confused, unclear or not present. Durkheim defined the term anomie as a condition where social and/or moral norms are confused, unclear, or simply not present. Durkheim felt that this lack of norms, normlessness or preaccepted limits on behavior in a society-led to deviant behavior.

In 1897, Durkheim used the term again in his study on Suicide, referring to a morally deregulated condition. Durkheim was preoccupied with the effects of social change. He best illustrated his concept of anomie not in a discussion of crime but of suicide.

In The Division of Labour in Society, Durkheim proposed two concepts. First, that societies evolved from a simple, non-specialised form, called mechanical, toward a highly complex, specialized form, called organic. In the former society people behave and think alike and more or less perform the same work tasks and have the same group-oriented goals. When societies become more complex, or organic, work also becomes more complex. In this society, people are no longer tied to one another and social bonds are impersonal.

Anomie thus refers to a breakdown of social norms and it- a condition where norms no longer control the activities of members in society. Individuals cannot find their place in society without clear rules to help guide them. Modern division of labour reduces people to isolated and meaningless tasks and positions. Changing conditions as well as adjustment of life leads to dissatisfaction, conflict, and deviance. He observed that social periods of distruption (economic depression, for instance) brought about greater anomie and higher rates of crime, suicide, and deviance. Individuals cease to

Durkheim felt that sudden change caused a state of anomie. The system breaks down, either during a great prosperity or a great depression, anomie is the same result.

Anomie = Lack of Regulation/Breakdown of Norms

Industrialization in particular, according to Durkheim, tends to dissolve restraints on the passions of humans. Where traditional societies-primarily through religion-successfully taught people to control their desires and goals, modern industrial societies separate people and weaken social bonds as a result of increased complexity and the division of labor. This is especially evident in modern society, where we are further separated and divided by computer technology, the internet, increasing bureaucracy, and specialization in the workplace. Perhaps more than ever before, members of Western society are exposed to the risk of anomie.

Durkheim also discussed nomie's effect on the goals of individuals, as well as

their corresponding happiness. As social restraints are weakened, humans no longer have limits upon their desires and aspirations. Whereas their goals were previously limited by social order and morality, the goals now become infinite in scope. But Durkheim warns that one does not advance when one proceeds toward no goal, or-which is the same thing-when the goal is infinity. To Pursue such a goal, which is by definition unattainable, is to condemn oneself to a state of perpetual unhappiness. This is a form of anomie.

Durkheirn on Anomie

"if the rules of the conjugal morality lose their authority, and the mutual obligations of husband and wife become less respected, the emotions and appetites ruled by this sector of morality will become unrestricted and uncontained, and accentuated by this very release; powerless to fulfill themselves because they have been freed from all limitations, these emotions will produce a disillusionment which manifests itself visibly..,"

(1972, p. 173 [excerpt from Moral Education])

"Man is the more vulnerable to self-destruction the more he is detached from any collectivity, that is to say, the more he lives as an egoist."

(11972, p. 113 [excerpt from Moral Education])

Suicide (1897)

"Collective tendencies have an existence of their own; they are forces as real as cosmic forces, though of another sort, they, likewise, affect the individual from without..."

[excerpt from Suicide]

suicide (11897), Durkheim's third major work, is of great importance because it is his first serious effort to establish an empiricism in sociology, an empiricism that would provide a sociological explanation for a phenomenon traditionally regarded as exclusively psychological and individualistic.

Durkheim decided to study suicide because of a number of reasons. Firstly, because suicide was a growing social problem in Europe by the 1850 and many felt that it was associated to the development of industrial society and its features like individualism, accelerated rate of social fragmentation, weakening of social bonds. Secondly because of its relatively concrete and specific character. Thirdly, there was considerably good data available on suicide. Also most importantly, he believed that if he could show that sociology had a role to play in explaining what is considered a seemingly individualistic act (suicide is one of the most private and personal acts), it would be relatively easy to extend sociology's domain. He felt that if he got the intellectual community convinced the domain of sociology, then sociology would have a reasonable chance of gaining recognition in the academic world.

As a sociologist, Durkheim was not interested in studying why a particular individual committed suicide, this he felt was the domain of psychology. Instead, Durkheim was interested in explaining the differences in suicide rates, that is,

he was interested in understanding why one group had a higher rate of suicide than another. According to Durkheim, biological, psychological and socio-psychological factors remain essentially constant from one group to another or from one period to another. Therefore, if there is a variation in suicide rates from one group to another or from onetime period to another, the difference would be due to variations in sociological factors.

I Durkheim proposed this definition of suicide:'Ihe term suicide is applied to call cases of death resulting directly or indirectly from a positive or negative act of the victim himself, which he knows will produce this result" (1982, p. 110 [except from Suicide]. Durkheim used this definition to separate true suicides from accidental deaths. (Positive act-eg. Shooting oneself. Negative act-eg. Refusing to eat.)

Since Durkheim was committed to empirical research, he not only dismissed other possible causes of differences in suicide rates, but also tested it empirically. In his Suicide, Durkheim presents a series of alternative ideas about the cause of suicide. Like individual psychopathology, race, heredity and climate. Durkheim gave a number of facts to reject each of the reasons mentioned above. To briefly illustrate, he rejected race as a reason because suicide rates varied among groups within the same race, and if race was to be considered as a significant cause of difference for suicide rates, then there should be no variation within the sub groups, as there should be a similar impact on the subgroups also. Another argument was that if race was a significant social fact, then it should have a same effect in different societies. In reality, this is not so, as there are changes in rates of a race in different societies.

In addition to rejecting the factors mentioned above, Durkheim also examined and rejected the imitation theory associated with the early French social psychologist Gabriel Trade (1843-1904). The main tenet of this theory is that people commit suicide (and engaged in a wide range of other actions) because they are imitating the actions of others who have committed suicide. Durkheim rejected this socio-psychological approach on the basis of his argument that, if imitation was important then the nations that border on a country with a high suicide rate would also have high suicide rates. So although Durkheim accepted that imitation may be a minor factor in individual suicide cases, it was however not a significant factor for the overall suicide rates.

Durkheim collected several European nations suicide rate statistics, the statistical data collected by him contained records of suicide deaths that were categorized according to age, religion, sex, occupation and marital status, which proved to be relatively constant among those nations and among smaller demographics within those nations. Thus, a collective tendency towards suicide was discovered. Overall, the records of 26,000 suicides were studied by Durkheim. Marcel Mauss, Durkheim's nephew,.helped in assembling the maps contained in the work and aided in compiling the statistical tables on suicidal deaths relating to age and marital status. Of equal importance to his methodology, Durkheim drew theoretical conclusions on the social causes of suicide. He proposed four types of suicide-egoistic, altruistic, anomic and

fatalistic suicide, based on the degrees of imbalance of two social forces: social integration and moral regulation. Integration refers to the degree to which collective sentiments are shared. Altruistic suicide is associated with a high degree of integration and egois tic suicide with a low degree of integration. Regulation refers to the degree of external constraint on individuals. So fatalistic suicide is associated with high regulation and anomic suicide with low regulation.

Integration	Low ———— Egoistic suicide
	High———— Altruistic suicide
Regulation	Low ———— Anomic suicide
	High———— Fatalistic suicide.

Egoistic suicide

Resulted from too little social integration. Durkheim studied the varying degrees of integration that an individual has with religion, family, political and national communities, and he founa that he stronger the forces throwing the individuals on their own resources, the greater the suicide rate in a society. Those individuals who were not sufficiently bound to social groups (and therefore well defined values, traditions, norms, and goals) were left with little social support or guidance, and therefore tended to commit suicide on an increased basis. To put it simply, those societies which do not have a strong collective conscience and protective enveloping social currents are unable to provide an individual with a sense of belonging. Therefore, as the social currents are weak, individuals easily surmount the collective conscience and do as they wish and pursue their interests in whatever way they wish. Such unrestrained egoism tends to lead to considerable personal dissatisfaction, because all needs cannot be fulfilled, and those that are fulfilled simply lead to the generation of more and more needs and ultimately, to dissatisfaction - and possibly suicide, for some.

As an example, Durkheim referred to religion, Catholicism and Protestantism. According to Durkheim, regardless of race and nationality, Catholics have a lesser rate of suicides than the Protestants even though both faiths prohibit it suicide. This variance Durkheim believed is because of the difference in the inherent characteristics of the two. Catholicism is an idealistic religion which accepts faith ready made-without scrutiny, has a hierarchical system of autonomy, prohibits variation and is able to integrate its members more fully into its fold. Protestantism, on the other hand, fosters spirit of free enquiry, permits great individual freedom, multiplies schism, lacks hierarchic organizations and has fewer common beliefs and practices. This difference in the degree of integration in the two faiths, Protestantism is less strongly integrated church than the Catholic church, is the reason why the rate of suicide in Protestantism is higher as compared to Catholicism.

Another example Durkheim discovered was that of unmarried people, particularly males, who with less to bind and connect them to stable social norms and goals, committed suicide at higher rates than unmarried people. This is because family, like religious group, is a powerful counter agent against suicide. So in other words, contrary to the popular belief that suicide is due to

life's burdens, Durkheim insists that it diminishes as these burdens increase. Small families, for example, are unstable and short lived, they lack intensity in their sentiments and conscience. While on the other hand, large families are more solidly integrated and therefore act as powerful safeguards against suicide.

Suicide thus varies inversely with the degree of integration of the religious, domestic, and political groups of which the individual forms a part, in short, as a society weakens or disintegrates, the individual depends less on the group, depends more upon himself, and recognizes no rules of conduct beyond those based upon private interests. Durkheim called this state of excessive individualism-egoism, and the special type of self-inflicted death it produces egoistic suicide.

Altruistic suicide

But if' excessive individuation leads to suicide, so does insufficient individuation. Thus we come to the second type of suicide discussed by Durkheim, altruistic suicide. While egoistic suicide is more likely to occur when social integration is too weak, altruistic suicide is more likely to occur when the opposite is true, that is, when social integration is too strong. In order words, when there is over-integration of the individual into his social group. An individual's life is so rigorously governed by custom and habit that he takes his own life because of higher commandments, the person kills himself because it is his duty. He is literally to commit suicide. Self-sacrifice is the defining trait, where individuals are so integrated into social groups that they lose sight of their individuality and become willing to sacrifice themselves to the group's interests, even if that sacrifice is their own life. Such a sacrifice, Durkheim argued, is imposed by society for social purposes; and for society to be able to do this, the individual personality must have little value, a state Durkheim called altruism, and whose corresponding mode of self-inflicted death was called obligatoty altruistic suicide.

Like all suicides, the altruist kills himself because he is unhappy, but this unhappiness is distinctive both in its causes and in its effects. While the egoist is unhappy because he sees nothing "real" in the world besides the individual, for example, the altruist is sad because the individual seems so "unreal"; the egoist sees no goal to which he might commit himself, and thus feels useless and without purpose while the altruist commits himself to a goal beyond this world, and henceforth this world is an obstacle and burden to him. The melancholy of the egoist is one of incurable weariness and sad depression, and is expressed in a complete relaxation of all activity the unhappiness of the altruist, by contrast, springs from hope, faith even enthusiasm, and affirms itself in acts of extraordinary energy.

Altruistic suicide thus reflets that crude morality which disregards the individual, while its egoistic counterpart elevates the human personality beyond collective constraints.

There are innumerable examples of this type of suicide, the most common cases being found among members of the military, women throwing themselves at the funeral pyre of their husbands (sati), Danish warriors killing themselves in old age, the Goths jumping to their deaths from high pinnacles to escape the ignominy of natural death, followers and servants of a particular faith or tribe

committing suicide on the death of their chiefs. These are usually the obligatory altruistic suicides.

As mentioned above, altruistic suicides also occurs in cases where committing suicide is considered as not merely an obligation but looked upon as an act of ultimate selfsacrifice and self -renunciation and is considered highly noble and praiseworthy. Some of the examples are Japanese Harakiri, the Kami Kasi pilots of the Japanese Air Force in the second world war, self-immolation by Buddhist monks, self-homicide by army suicide squads and self-destruction in Nirvana under Brahmanic influence (as in the case of the Hindu sages). The individual is so strongly attuned to the demands of his society that he is willing to take his own life when the norms so demand.

To prove this point Durkheim presented his analysis of military suicide. He rejected the popular notion that attributes military suicide to the hardships of military life, the disciplinary rigor and lack of liberty. While with longer service, men might be expected to become accustomed to barrack life, their commitment to the army and aptitude for suicide seem to increase. Also, while military life is much less hard for officers than for private soldiers, the. former accounts for greater Suicide rates than the latter. Finally, volunteers and re-enlisted men who choose military as a career are more inclined to commit suicide than men drafted against their will. This proves that where altruistic suicide is prevalent, man is willing to sacrifice his life for a great cause, principle or value.

The second type, altruistic suicide, was a result of too much integration. It occurred at the opposite end of the integration scale as egoistic suicide. On the second scale, that of moral regulation, lies the other two forms of suicide, the first of which is Anomic suicide, located on the low end.

Anomic Suicide

Egoistic and anomic suicide, as we have seen, are the respective consequences of the individual's insufficient or excessive integration within the society to which he belongs. But quite aside from integrating its members, a society must control and regulate their beliefs and behavior as well; and Durkheim insisted that there is a relation between a society's suicide rate and the way it performs this important regulative function.

Anomic suicide results from normlessness or deregulation in society. Although this kind of suicide occurs during industrial or financial crises, it is not because they cause poverty, because crises of prosperity have the same result, but because they are crises of the collective order. Every disturbance of the social equilibrium, whether on account of sudden prosperity (example, an economic boom) or instant misfortune (example, an economic depression), results in a deregulation and a greater impulse towards voluntary death.

But how can this be the case? How can something generally understood to improve a man's life serve to detach him form it?

No living being, according to Durkheim, can be happy unless its needs are

sufficiently proportioned to its means; for if its needs surpass its capacity to satisfy them, the result can only be friction, pain, lack of productivity, and a general weakening of the impulse to live. For human beings to be happy, therefore, their individual needs and aspirations must be constrained; and since these needs and aspirations are the products of a reflective social consciousness, the purely internal, physiological constraints enjoyed by animals are insufficient to this purpose. This regulatory function must thus be performed by an external, moral agency superior to the individual-in other words, by society. Society determines the respective value of different social services, the relative reward allocated to each, and the consequent degree of comfort appropriate to the average worker in each occupation

Durkheim attributed anomic suicide to unlimited aspirations and the breakdown of regulatory norms. Sudden changes of either kind (as mentioned above-economic boom or depression) renders the collectivity temporarily incapable of exercising its authority over the individual. The societal scale is upset and a new scale cannot be immediately improvised, the collective conscience requires time to reclassify. During this period of transition there is no restraint on aspirations of individuals which runs unbridled. This overweening ambition and the race for unattainable goals heightens anomie, deregulation of the normative order, which according to Durkheim is a chronic state of affairs in the modern socio-economic system.

Anomic suicide was of particular interest to Durkheim, for he divided it into four categories: acute and chronic economic anomie, and acute and chronic domestic anomie. Each involved an imbalance of means and needs, where means were unable to fulfill needs.

Each category of anomic suicide can be described briefly as follows:

Acute economic anomie: Sporadic decreases in the ability of traditional institutions (such as religion, guilds, pre-industrial social systems, etc.) to regulate and fulfill social needs.

Chronic economic anomie: long term diminution of social regulation. Durkheim identified this type with the ongoing industrial revolution, which eroded traditional social regulators and often failed to replace them. Industrial goals of wealth and property were insufficient in providing happiness, as was demonstrated by higher suicide rates among the wealthy than among the poor.

Acute domestic anomie: sudden changes on the micro social level resulted in an inability to adapt and therefore higher suicide rates. Widowhood is a prime example of this type of anomie.

Chronic domestic anomie: referred to the way marriage as an institution regulated the sexual and behavioral means-needs balance among men and women. Marriage provided different regulations for each, however. Bachelors tended to commit suicide at higher rates than married men because of a lack of regulation and established goals and expectations. On the other hand, marriage has traditionally served to over regulate the lives of women by further

restricting their already limited opportunities and goals. Unmarried women, therefore, do not experience chronic domestic anomie nearly as often as do unmarried men.

The final type of suicide is Fatalistic suicide. There is little mentioned about this type of suicide. Durkheim described this briefly in a footnote in Suicide, seeing it as a rare phenomenon in the, real world. While anomic suicide is more likely to occur in situations in which regulation is too weak, fatalistic suicide is more likely to occur when regulation is excessive. Examples include those with over regulated, unrewarding lives such as slaves who takes his own life because of the hopelessness associated with the oppressive regulation of his every action, childless married women, and young husbands. To put it simply, too much regulation, oppression, unleashes currents of melancholy which, in turn, causes a rise in the rate of fatalistic suicide. Durkheim never specified why this is generally unimportant in his study.

CRITICAL REMARKS

Suicide reveals limitations as well as advantages, and thus provides an occasion for considering a number of difficulties namely, argument by elimination, petitio, principal, an inappropriate and distortive language, etc. - which though is seen as typical of Durkheim's work as a whole by many experts, is perhaps most clearly seen here.

The first criticism against Durkheim is his method of argument by elimination'. Briefly, it means that Durkheim's argument consists of the systematic rejection of alternative definitions or explanations of a social fact, in a manner clearly intended to lend credibility to the sole remaining candidate- which is Durkheim's own. Durkheim's use of this technique, of course, does not imply that his candidate does not deserve to be elected; but as a rhetorical device, argument by elimination runs at least two serious risks: first, that the alternative definitions and/or explanations might not be jointly exhaustive (other alternatives may exist): and, more seriously, that the alternative definitions and/or explanations might not be mutually exclusive (the conditions and causes they postulate separately might be conjoined to form perfectly adequate definitions and/or explanations other than Durkheim's'sole remaining' candidates).

The second criticism is levied against Durkheim is Petitioprincipi- the logical fallacy in which the premise of an argument presumes the very conclusion yet to be argued. This is considered to be a feature of Durkheim's work as a whole. There is no clearer instance of this style of argument than Durkheim's classification of the types of suicide, which of course presupposes the validity of the causal explanations eventually proposed for them. The point, again is not that this automatically destroys Durkheim's argument; but it does make it impossible to entertain alternative causes and typologies, and thus to evaluate Durkheim's frequently ambitious claims.

Thirdly, Durkheim's repeated insistence that sociology is a science with its own, irreducible "reality" to study also led him to adopt a language that was both highly metaphorical and systematically misleading. (This is first evident in The Division of Labor, where abundant biological metaphors continuously suggest

that society is "like" an organism in a variety of unspecified and unqualified ways). In his Suicide also the language used made it difficult if not impossible for Durkheim to speak intelligibly about the way in which individual human beings perceive, interpret, and respond to "suicido-genic" social conditions."+

Finally, it might be argued that Durkheim's central explanatory hypothesis-that, when social conditions fail to provide people with the necessary social goals and/or rules at the appropriate levels of intensity their socio-psychological health is impaired, and the most vulnerable among them commit suicide-raises far more questions than it answers. Aren't there different kinds of 'social goals and rules', for example, and aren't some of these dis-harmonious? What is socio-psychological "health"? Isn't it socially determined, and thus relative to the particular society or historical period in question? Why are disintegrative, egoistic appetites always described as individual, psychological, and even organic in origin? Aren't some of our most disruptive drives socially generated? And if they are, aren't they also culturally relative? Why are some individuals rather than others "impaired"? And what is the relationship (if, indeed, there is one) between such impairment and suicide? The fact that these questions and others are continuously begged simply reiterates an earlier point, that Durkheim's macro sociological explanations all presuppose some social -psychological theory, whose precise nature is never made explicit.

To Conclude

Durkheim felt that his empirical study of suicide had discovered the structural forces that caused anomie and egoism, and these forces were natural results of the decline of mechanical solidarity and the slow rise of organic solidarity due to the division of labor and industrialism. Also of importance was Durkheim's discovery that these forces affected all social classes.

This is where the true sociological value of Suicide emerges. Because social forces that affect human behavior are the result of previous human actions, it is the role of sociology to expose and understand these actions as the foundations of societal structure. These structural phenomena are at the root of human society, and through scientific, statistical methods - integrated with informed theory and educated conjecture- the function of these structures can be comprehended. In other words, Suicide is a vital work because it is the first effective combination of sociological theory and empiricism to explain a social phenomenon.

Summary

Emile Durkheim carved out a special field of study for sociology, established a sound empirical methodology and laid the foundation of structural functionalism, the dominant school of sociological theory today. Durkheim offered a more coherent theory than any of the classical sociological theorists. He articulated a clear theoretical orientation and used it in a variety of specific works.

Durkheim's study of suicide is of tremendous importance to sociology. According to Durkheim, suicide is a social phenomenon as well as an individual act. Durkheim used statistics to point to the different trends in suicide rates. These trends indicate that rates of suicide are associated with levels of social integration

and suicide occurs when individuals feel that there is too much or too little integration. These levels of integration are determined by the division of labour in a society and the law.

Durkheim differentiated among four types of suicide - egoistic, altruistic, anomic and fatalistic. Egoistic suicide occurs when there is insufficient integration and by contrast, altruistic suicide occurs when there is excessive or too much integration. Anomic suicide normally occurs when there is insufficient or too little integration and finally, fatalistic suicide because of excessive or too much regulation.

There are a number of criticisms leveled against Durkheim, a few being, his method of argument by elimination, petitio principal, use of an inappropriate and distortive language, and others.

Questions

Q.1 Briefly present the life and works of Durkheim. Focus on his important work suicide (1897)

Q.2 Critically evaluate Durkheim work: suicide (1897).

0.3 Explain in detail with example the different types of suicide according to Durkheim.

Q.4 What are the causes of suicide according to Durkheim? Do you think it has validity in present times?

Q.5 Define Anomie and present in detail Durkheims important work suicide (1897).

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5

KARL MARX:
Historical Materialism

Introduction: Why Must We Study Marx

Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it 1 - thus wrote a young Karl Marx in 1845. This statement can be construed as the point of departure from where Marx builds up his entire ideas.

Progress or change was an important notion of the Enlightenment period, beginning in the seventeenth century, which laid emphasis on rationality and the imperfectability of the human being. The French Revolution of 1789, the culmination of the Enlightenment, prepared the ground for sociology by separating philosophy from social thought.

A quintessential Enlightenment thinker, Marx approached social theory as a science and formulated its problem as undoubtedly that of practice aimed at social change. What is true is what can be proved by practice. In other words, whichever theory is useful in changing the world is true, because it is the basic human impulse to change his external world in accordance with, his will. For Marx, to know is to change. And the human activity of changing one's own circurnstances can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionary practice, according to Marx.

He says, "The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question or theory but is a practical question. Man must prove the truth, i.e., the reality and power, ... of his thinking, in practice."2

Marx's entire work was directed at the realization of this aim: To change the world with a view to liberating the whole mankind from the chains of material structures that man himself has brought into existence, and to establish the truth of this world3 by eliminating his self-alienation or self-estrangement. The result will be, as his collaborator Frederick Engels put it, "humanity's great leap from necessity to freedom." Only then will each and evey human being be able to realise his true potential or "human essence." Critical social theory is nothing but a weapon to achieve these aims.

Ever since Marx came out with his revolutionary ideas, the history of the world has never been the same. The unity of theory and practice is to central to Marx's philosophy that many a forcible overthrow of existing order, such as the Russian, Chinese and Cuban Revolutions, have taken place in his name. These events, and a lot many people's liberation movements, were inspired by the ideas of some of the finest minds in twentieth century, such as Lenin, Trotsky, Gramsci and Lukacs who consistently developed a theory of practice based on

Marx..There is Seldom a thinker - Max Weber to Foucault-who has not touched upon Marx, whether to endorse or to deny him, since his times. The ideals Marx cherished are still fuelling a number of social movements and renewed academic interest despite the farcry by his opponents about the demise of Marxism following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990s. Contemporary sociologists such as Frederick Jameson, Jurgen Habermas, Ernesto Laclay and Chantal Mouffe have tried to redefine Marx in the changed socio-politico-economical context of today.

It is, therefore, all the more imperative to study Marx in his totality in order to understand the elements that shape our thinking and being. Towards this aim, we need to take stock of the intellectual climate in which Marx lived, the figures who informed his thought, and the overall milieu to which he was responding.

1 . K Marx (1924), Eleven Theses On Feuerbach, Moscow: IML

2.   Ibid.

3.   K Marx, Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. "It is the task of history, therefore, once the other-world of truth [the ideology of the existing state of affairs] has vanished, to establish the [real] truth of this world.

Influences on Marx

Marx's thought is said to have three sources-German classical philosophy, French socialist ideas and British political economy. Though Marx drew heavily from these sources, besides at times the findings of American anthropologist Lewis Morgan and the data collected by British officers on colonial countries like India, his thought marks a radical break with the hitherto European philosophical tradition.

In order to understand Marx in correct perspective, it is necessary to, examine the influences on his intellectual make-up and his philosophical orientation. Marx began his intellectual career as a Young Hegelian while he was majoring in philosophy in the University of Berlin. Young Hegelians were a group of radical youth who more or less adhered to the teaching of the German philosopher Hegel.

Soon, Marx, in his own words, found Hegel "standing the world on its head," or viewing the reality just upside down. Marx was also by this time influenced by his contemporary philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach who rejected Hegel. Marx considered himself to be contributing to critical science, which aims at he emancipation of the entire human kind, as opposed to bourgeois science, which serves the interests of the ruling class for exploiting the masses. In this effort, Marx encountered, debated with and repudiated all leading thinkers of his time.

He wrote polemics against Joseph Proudhon's variety of socialism, Malthuss'theory of over-population as the cause of misery, and Feuerbach's mechanical materialism, let alone Hegel's Philosophy of Right. He also called into question the dominant intellectual fashions of

nineteenth-century Europe such as positivism, empiricism, Kantianism, anarchism etc. In short, denunciation and emancipatory promise are the keynote of Marx's teachings. According to Frederick Engels, Marx's ideas entail a comprehensive world view.4 It is an alternative way to look at the world with a view to changing it.

Major Contributions

Nevertheless, our concern here is limited only to Marx's contribution to sociology. The theories usually attributed to Marx were in fact develop by him in close collaboration with Engels, though some scholars prefer to make a clear demarcation between the writings of Marx from Engels. By far the most outstanding discoveries of Marx are historical materialism and surplus value theory. Just as Darwin's discovery of organic evolution brought about a revolution in natural science, says Engels, Marx conception of historical materialism changed the course of social sciences.

Dialectical materialism, which is derived from Marx's methodology of inquiry, encompasses the entire range of human knowledge-from anthropology to history, from fine art to politics, from biology to cosmology. in fact, Marx himself wrote extensively, from the Jewish question to the future of British rule in India, from the revolutionary fervor in Shelley's poetry to the penchant for commodities in our daily life.

Critique of Ideology and Its Meaning

One of the most important contributions of Marx is his critique of ideology. Marx showed that ideas and ideologies can be traced to the material basis of human life. This single most idea has made him-along with Nietzsche and Freud-a pioneer of what Paul Reoccur termed the "hermeneutics of suspicion": the tendency to read all ideas and statements in terms of the interests (economic, political, sexual) they reveal, or conceal. 5 Though some thinkers have alleged a "redicalisation of property" - the tendency to derive all other social ~

4   F Engles, Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, Collected works of Marx and Engels,   Moscow: Progress Publishers

5   Paul Ricoeur (1970), Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation, New Haven: Yale University Press phenomena from the relations of property-in Marx, he directs his criticism at least at three distinctive institutions which he believed prevented the   true   realization   of human essence. He called for the abolition of private property, family, and religion in the Communist Manifesto. What prevents the abolition of these is partly the ideology, and its most common form is religion.

The role of religion is of paramount importance in Marx's analysis of ideology. While most students have heard Marx's phrase, "Religion is the opium of the people," many fail to understand his sociological remark on the function of religion in society. The misunderstanding arises from people's ignorance of what Marx means by the word "opium," and the context in which Marx used it. He wrote:

"Religious suffering is at the same time the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh [yearning] of the oppressed creatures, the sentiment [or heart] of a heartless world, and the soul [spirit] of soulless [spiritless] conditions. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of ' the men, is a demand for their real happiness. The call to abandon their illusion about their condition [the existing state of affairs] is a call [demand] to abandon a condition which requires illusions. The criticism of religion is, therefore, the embryonic criticism of this vale of tears of which religion is the halo. Criticism has plucked [or torn out] the imaginary flowers from the chain, not in order that [a] man shall bear [wear] the chain without caprice or consolation but so that he shall cast off [break) the chain and pluck the living flower. The criticism of religion disillusions man [humankind] so that he will think, act and fashion [shape] his reality as a man who has lost his illusions and regained his reason-, so that he will revolve about himself as his own true sun. Religion is only the illusory sun about which man revolves so long as he does not revolve about himself. It is the task of history, therefore, once the other world of truth [the ideology of the existing state of affairs] has vanished, to establish the [real) truth of this world. The immediate task of philosophy, which is at the service of history, is to unmask human self-alienation [self -estrangement] in its secular form now that it has been unmasked in its sacred form. Thus the criticism of heaven is transformed into the criticism of earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of law, and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics."6

Let us examine the meaning of the words opium. The "opium" for the capitalists and ~he bourgeoisie is their ability to consume, freely, what their money can buy. The rich can do anything they feel like to alleviate their suffering and boredom because they have unlimited access to the products and services being produced. But the working-class can no longer wait for their reward in heaven, as it taught to them by priests, and that they need a permanent release from their suffering. They need heaven on earth, now. God and the promise' of heaven, for the proletariat, is the projection of the proletariat's wants, needs, and desires for products and services that are controlled and hoarded by the capitalists. On the other hand, God, for the rich, is an acronym for the control and sole consumption of gold, oil, and drugs.

His Methodology

Marx's method is simple: a concrete analysis of concrete situation. He does not acknowledge the validity of anything abstract in separation from its concrete material conditions. There is no absolute, final, pre-given truth; instead, the test of truth is practice and practice alone. And practice, as said earlier, is nothing but practical-revolutionary activity aimed at changing the world. Further, nothing is finite, stationary or stable; everything is changing, under constant flux. It is futile to pursue the thing in itself whereas

6.   K Marx, Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right.

It is fruitful to grasp the process in motion. And it is impossible to grasp the meaning of a process except as dialectical relation. Dialectics is the highest form of reason. It is a law of development of nature as well as history.

The origin of dialectics dates back to ancient Greek philosophy where Aristate finetuned this method for intellectual argument. It was used as a method to get at underlying truths, which could not be obtained using the techniques of observation and sense perception. Since the question of all philosophy is the relation between thinking and being, or consciousness and existence, or mind and matter, the school of philosophy that asserts the primacy of mind is called idealism. The school of philosophy that stresses the primacy of matter is called materialism. Philosophical idealism was propounded by Socrates and Aristotle and reached its pinnacle in German philosopher Hegel.

Idealism holds that the fundamental task of philosophy and social thought is to understand human existence by an examination of abstract categories such as being, reason, history and spirit. In Hegel's idealism, the ultimate reality is the spirit or the Idea or the Mind that finds its expression in the material world. The human history is an unfolding or the realization of the idea.The external world is an alienation of the Mind.

In other words, mind or consciousness has precedence over matter or existence in idealism. What is unique to Hegelian idealism is that the Idea develops itself in a specific logic called dialectics.

Hegel's refined dialectics involves three stages.

Thesis the first stage, is a given state of things, or anything that has existence. The thesis is also called affirmation because the existing thing has the capacity to affirm itself, actively rather than passively. In its being, the thesis affirms itself and this affirmation is a principle of its being. As it affirms itself, the thesis expresses its inherent potential for development and propagation.

Antithesis is the opposite of thesis. Dialectical process moves to this second stage when thesis necessarily produces its opposite termed antithesis. The antithesis is also called negation as it acts to limit or resist the capacity of thesis to develop its being. Thus the principle of negation is the opposite of affirmation. While all theses have their antithesis, negation itself, in a way, paves the way foe further development and "therefore is an act in the sequence of development." According to Engels, the negation "does not mean simply no, or declaring that something does not exist, or destroying it in any way one likes.7

Synthesis, the third stage, is the "negation of the negation." It is simply the resolution of contradictions and thus the arrival of a new state of being. It is the result of the sharpening of the contradiction between thesis and antithesis. But the new state of being, synthesis, is not absolutely new, because it contains the old in anew form. In other words, the synthesis preserves whatever was good in the thesis.

The synthesis, in turn, becomes the new thesis because it now produces its own antithesis. This gives birth to a new synthesis. This process goes on till a final stage is reached where all contradictions are resolved and universal harmony is attained. For Hegel, dialectics is the rationale of existence, development and change. "What is rational is real; and what is real is rational," said Hegel in his Preface to the Philosophy of Right. Thus, for Hegel, Prussian State during Bismarck represented the highest stage of historical development.

Marx's intellectual career begins with his criticism of Hegel and the imprints of Hegelian thought are visible throughout his works. Having begun as a Young Hegelian, Marx soon charged Hegel with inverting the actual relations, for Marx had by then come under the

7.   F Engels, Anti-Duhrong, p.181.

Spell of philosophical materialism. He would now say the actually existing world is the reality while consciousness, which for Hegel is the reality, is but a product of matter. In an early joint work with Engels, Marx wrote about the Hegelian system:

"The whole destructive work results in the most conservative philosophy because it thinks it has overcome the objective world by transforming it into a 'thing of thought'. [Hegel thus) stands the world on its head and can dissolve in the head all the limitations which naturally remain in existence."8

Thus, Marx and discarded what had become redundant in Hegel's dialectics retained what was progressive in it. Says Engels, "For dialectical philosophy nothing in final, absolute, sacred. It reveals the transitory character of everything and in everything: nothing can endure before. it except the uninterrupted process of becoming and passing away, of endless ascendancy from the lower to the higher."

Let us examine the laws of dialectics in detail. The three laws of dialectics are:

the law of transformation of quantity into quality, the law of the unity and conflict of opposite, and the law of the negation of negation.

Transformation of Quantity into Quality:

Quality is an aspect of something by which it is what it is, and not something else. Quality reflects that which is stable amidst change. Quantity is an aspect of something which may change [become more or less] without the thing thereby becoming something else. Quantity reflects that which is constantly changing in the world [the more thing change, the more they remain the same]. The quality of an object pertains to the whole, not one or another part of an object, since without that quality it would not be what it is, whereas an object can lose a "part" and still be what it is, minus the part. Quantity on the other hand is aspect of a thing by which it can [mentally or really] be broken up into its parts [or degrees] and be re assembled again. Thus, if something changes in such a way that has become something of a different kind, this is a "qualitative change", whereas a change in something by which it still the same thing, though more or less, bigger or smaller, is a "quantitative change". In Hegel's Logic, quantity

and quality belong to Being. Quantitative changes beyond certain limits become converted into qualitative. A slow accumulation of changes at a certain moment explodes of the old shell and brings about a catastrophe, revolution. A kilogram of sugar subjected to the action of water or kerosene cases to be a kilogram of sugar. To determine at the right moment the critical point where quantity changes into quality is one of the most important and difficult tasks in all the spheres of knowledge including sociology.

Unity and conflict of opposites

means that while there is contradiction between the thesis and anti-thesis, there is also a harmony between them. This law stresses the interpenetration of opposites as can be seen in nature. There is unity between two opposites, because one cannot exist without the other, and there is contradiction because the two entities are opposed to each other.

Negation of negation

denotes the completion of a cycle of development. If negation itself means limit or boundary, then negation of negation is the principle that reconstitutes these limits by bringing an end to, or surpassing, the limits or boundaries. In this sense, the primary reference here, is to the capacity of the negation to reconstitute itself and to fundamentally alter its own nature. 8. K Marx and F Engels (1956), The Holy Family, Moscow: Progress Publishers, p.72.

Engels' explanation of the laws of dialectics, especially in Nature, is elaborated in Anti-Dubbing. Leon Trotsky's The ABC of Materialist Dialectics also makes a fair appreciation of Marx's methodology. "Dialectic is a science of the forms of our thinking insofar as it is not limited to the daily problems of life but attempts to arrive at an understanding of more complicated and drawn-out processes. The dialectic and formal logic hear a relationship similar to that between higher and lower mathetmatics."9

The fundamental flaw of vulgar thought is that it focuses on motionless imprints of a reality, which in fact consists of eternal motion. Dialectical thinking is related to vulgar thinking in the same way that a motion picture is related to a still photograph. The motion picture does not outlaw the still photograph but combines a series of them according to the laws of motion. Dialectics does not deny the syllogism [formal logic], but teaches us to combine syllogisms in such a way as to bring our understanding closer to the eternally changing reality.

Hegel in his Logic established a series of laws: change of quantity into quality, development through contradictions, conflict of content and form, interruption of continuity, change of possibility into inevitability, etc., which are as important for theoretical thought as is the simple syllogism for more elementary tasks. Marx's dialectic is materialist, since its roots are neither in heaven nor in the depths of our "free will," but in objective reality, in nature. Consciousness grew out of the unconscious, psychology out of physiology, the organic world out of the inorganic, the solar system out of the nebulae. In all these cases, quantitative changes were finally transformed into qualitative change.

Darwinism, which explained the evolution of species through quantitative transformations passing into qualitative, was the highest triumph of the dialectic in the field of organic matter. Marx, who unlike Darwin was a conscious dialectician, discovered the rule for the scientific classification of human societies. The development of productive forces and the relations of ownership together constitute the anatomy of society.

However, the dialectic is not a magic master key for all questions. It does not replace concrete scientific analysis. But it directs this analysis along the correct road, securing it against sterile wanderings in the desert of subjectivism and scholasticism.

Dialectic is the logic of evolution, but in Marx it does not mean peaceful "progress". Evolution takes place through the struggle of antagonistic forces, A dialectician is someone who has learned to apply the general laws of evolution to thinking itself. Dialectic training of the mind demands approaching all problems as processes and not as motionless categories.

Further, criticism is not a means to destroy the object that is being judged. Marx used the world criticism in a dialectic way. For him, criticism means the resolving, negating, merging, conserving, and elevating the object being judged in order to make it better. Marx's criticism of heaven, religion, and theology, for instance, is to put an end to human suffering by human hands instead of divine hands. Changing the economic system from production for profit to production for need will create new social arrangements where the empowerment, the many-sided flowering of each individual, is possible.

Historical Materialism

The materialism conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the means to support human life, and the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure, In every society that has appeared in history, the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders is dependent upon what is produced, how it is produced, and how the products are exchanged.10

9   Leon Trotsky (1939), The ABC of Materialist Dialectics, From A Petit-bourgeois Opposition in the Socialist Workers Patty.

10   F Engels, Socialism; Scientific and Utopian, Moscow: Progress publishers

The final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought from this point of view, and not in men's brains, not in men's better insight into eternal truth and justice.

This theory follows the premise that human beings must eat, drink, have shelter and clothing before he is able to pursue politics, science, art or religion. "The first act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself," 11 says Marx. Another premise of historical materialism is that human beings are distinguished from animals in that they produce their

necessities whereas animals at best collect their food. During the course of the social production of their requirements, men enter into definite relations among them, which, in turn, are determined by who controls the means of production.

The means of production refers to anything in the external world that may be employed in order to meet human being's necessities and to satisfy his will. In every stage of history, human beings have certain productive forces such as land, raw material, instruments, technological knowledge etc., which are used to produce their means of subsistence. One cannot produce the things that is necessary for his survival on one's own without employing the part of nature called the means of production. In primitive societies, like tribal communities, the means of production is commonly owned and, therefore, there exists no classes. All members of the society contributed the maximum capacity of their labour, and this was sufficient for the bare existence of all. Slowly, because of technological advancement, the society was able to produce surplus which enabled a section of the society to survive without working. They became the owners of the means of production whereas others, who were deprived of the means of production, had to work in order to survive. It is the control over means of production that leads to the division of society into classes of owners and non-owners. Means of production should not be confused with forces of production, which refers to the capacities in things and persons to be put to use for purpose of production.

Relations of production forms the basis of a society since this is what concretely binds one class to another. This relation is defined in terms of who has control over the means of production to the exclusion of others. The non-owners are compeled to enter into relations of production in order to satisfy their needs and, as a result, they are subordinated to the class which owns the means of production. The owners of the means of production always receive more from the production process than the direct producers. Marx mentions relations of property as a legal expression of the actually existing relations of production, but the two are not synonymous.

Mode of production is the distinct way in which human necessities are produced and exchanged within a definite historical period. It is the specific arrangement of the forces of production and the relations of production in a given time and a given society. Marx identified four modes of production: ancient, Asiatic, feudal and capitalist. However, modes of production are not limited to these. Marxist scholars, during the debate over the Mode of production in India, formulated a peculiar."colonial mode of production", which they said characterises India. This is because India falls into the category of neither classical feudalism nor Western captalism.

The most succinct summary of Marx's materialist conception of history is found in the following passage:

11   K Marx and F Engels (1977), The German Ideology, New York: International Publishers, pp. 7-16.

"in the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will. These relations of production correspond to a definite stage of the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, which is the real foundation on top of which arises a legal and political superstructure to which correspond definite form of social consciousness. It is not the consciousness of men, therefore, that determines their existence, but instead their social existence determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or-what is but a legal expression of the same thing-with the property relations within which they had been at work before. From forces of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters. Then occurs a period of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed.1 2

This is the context of Marx's famous quote that "revolutions are the locomotives of history," to which his most celebrated disciple Lenin added: Revolutions are the festivals of the people.They are inevitable outcome of class struggle.

Class struggle is a crucial concept in historical materialism. In every stage of history, says Marx, various classes of human beings exist in society. A class is defined in terms of its relation to the means of production: Those who have power over the means of production and those who are deprived of free access to the means of production. The latter class is thus forced to sell the only property they have at their disposal, i.e., their own physical labour power, to the class who owns the means of production in order to earn a living. Class is a historical social action in which the principle of production expresses itself. "The history of hitherto society is the history of class struggle," says the Communist Manifesto.

Let us examine the mallerialist conception of history in detail. Engels defines historical matelialism as follows: The ultimately determining factor in history is the production and reproduction of immediate [rea] life. 13

This itself is of a two-fold character. First, the production of man's means of existence like food, clothing and shelter and the tools requisite therefore. Secondly, the production of human beings themselves or the propagation of the species. The social institutions of a definite historical period and a definite country are conditioned by both kinds of production: by the stage of development of labour, on the one hand, and of the family, on the other. However, these two structures - relations and production and reproduction - are inter-related and from the base of a society. All other aspects of a society - political, religious, juridical, aesthetic and philosophical ideas - belong to the superstructure, which is always built on the base.

The less the development of labour, and therefore, the wealth of society, the more the social order gets dominated by ties of kinship [family]. However, within this structure of society based on ties of kinship [family), the productivity of labour develops more and more. With it comes private property and exchange, differences in wealth, the possibility of utilizing the labour power of others and

thereby class conflicts. The new social elements strive for generations to adapt the old social structure to the new conditions, but, finally, the incompatibility of the two leads to a complete revolution. The old society, built on the basis of ties of kinship, breaks up due to the collision of the newly-developed social

12 K Marx (1977), A Contribution of the Critique of political Economy, Moscow: Progress Publishers.

13 F Engels (1970), Letter to J. Bloch, Collected Works of Marx and Engels, Vol I 11, Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Classes, and in its place a new society appears, in the form of a state. But the new society is not based on kinship but on territorial boundaries, where the family system is entirely dominated by property system. Now, class conflicts and class struggles freely develop and the history of human society begins.! 4 Let us briefly sketch the historical evolution.

Feudalism or medieval period was characterized by individual production on a small scale. Agriculture was the main livelihood of people. The means of production, mainly land, was adapted for individual use. The relation between lord and serf, which formed the basis of feudal society, was defined by customary obligations and rights. The main features of feudalism were: (i) the lord had the customary right to compel unpaid labour from the serf, (ii) serfs were legitimately subordinated to the lords citing social distinctions, (iii) economic exactions like taxes, dues, and fees were levied upon the serf by the lord. Production was carried, out for immediate consumption, either of 'the producer himself or of his landlord. Only where an

excess of production occurs over this consumption level, the excess products were offered for' sale or exchanged. The production of commodities was, therefore, only in its infancy. Feudal mode of production existed in Europe between ninth century and seventeenth century.

Capitalism or industrial revolution saw the transformation of industry, at first by means of simple co-operative and manufacture. The concentration of the means of production into great factories resulted in their transformation from individual to social means of production. The capitalists appeared and as owners of the means of production, they turned products into commodities. Production becomes a social act. The capitalist production started in the fifteenth century. The specific features of capitalism are:

(i)   The forcible separation of the producer from the means of production. The worker is condemned to wage-labour of life. The Conflict between the proletariat and the bourgeois starts.

(ii)   Laws governing commodity production become more effective. Cut-throat competition increases. Dialectic contradiction between the social organization of individual factory and social anarchy in production as a whole.

(iii) On the one hand, the technological improvement of machinery leads to displacement of labourers. On the other hand, there is an unlimited increase in production. Both are caused by competition among individual manufacturers. Then arrives the unprecedented development of the forces of production, more supply than demand, over-production, flooding of

markets with goods, frequent economic crisis, etc. there is an excess of means of production and products here, and an excess of labourers without employment and without means of existence there. Thus the capitalists become unable to further manage their own productive forces.

(iv) The capitalists are forced to recognize, at least partially, the social character-of the productive forces. The big institutions of production and communication" are taken over, first by joint-stock companies, later on by trusts, then by the state. All its social functions are now performed by salaried employees.

Proletarian revolution is considered the solution of all these contradictions. The proletariat seizes the state power and converts all means of production into public property. Pre-planned socialized production on the basis need becomes possible.

The development of production makes the existence of different classes of society unnecessary, and the classes stops to exist. When the anarchy in production vanishes, the political authority of the state also dies out. Man, at last the master of his own social

14   F Engels, Preface to The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, Moscow. Progress Publishers.

Organization, becomes at the same time the lord over Nature, his own master-free. The historic mission of the proletariat is to accomplish this act of the universal emancipation of mankind. And the task of historical. materialism, Marx believed, is to provide the proletariat with a full knowledge of the conditions and the meaning of this mission.

Rejection of Economic Determinism

From the beginning, there have been academics who tended to view the materialist conception of history as a theory of historical development which explains human existence in terms of just a series of economic stages. Nothing can be far from true.

Engels has clarified this confusion in the following passage:

"If somebody twists this [historical materialism] into saying that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless,:abstract, senseless phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure-political forms of the class struggle and its results, to with constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc,, juridical forms, and even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas-also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form."15

Engels further says that Marx's Eighteenth Brumaire deals almost exclusively with the particular part played by political struggles and events. In Capital, the section on the working day emphasizes legislation, which is surely a political act. Another instance in point is Chapter XXIV of Capital concerning the history of the bourgeoisie.

Engels asks, "Why do we fight for the political dictatorship of the proletariat if political power is economically impotent?"

In Marx's own times, commenting on the French "Marxists" who tried to view his ideas as economic determinism, he used to say: "All I know is that I am not a Marxist."

3.1 Marx: What He Means Today

Marx's system of through is deeply rooted in the Newtonian paradigm. The Newtonian worldview, which holds that space and time are absolute and the laws of motion of matter can be studied objectively, is implied in Marx's general understanding of social phenomena. Says Engels in Dialectics of Nature, "Motion is the model of existence of matter. Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, or motion without matter, nor can there be." Therefore, it was natural that Marx set out to discover the laws of motion of "social matter' or the laws of human existence. This is what impelled Foucault to comment that Marxism cannot breath outside the nineteenth-century epistemological arrangements.

However, as the Enlightenment paradigm, of which the Newtonian framework is the foundation, faced a challenge following the advent of post-modernism, new forms of thinking have emerged to recover Marx. One of such efforts is post-Marxism that aims to do away with such Enlightenment limitations in Marx as reductionism, essentialism, foundationalism etc. Nevertheless, in its effort to overcome the historical limitations in Marx to explain today's social phenomena, post-Marxism abandons the most fundamental characteristic in Marx: the unity of theory and practice. One the other hand, Lenin, Gramsci and Althusser have stressed on the role of consciousness in Marx and advocated conscious human intervention in history. This strain of thinking in Marx was further

15 F Engels (1970), Letter to J. Block, Collected Works of Marx and Engels, Vol 111, Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Developed by Mao Tse-tung when he applied the principles of historical materialism to the concrete conditions of China. Maoism has lent inspiration to people's liberation movements in various parts of the world today.

Over 160 years since Marx broke a new path of thinking, his ideas still arouse interest among academics. "There will be no future... without Marx, ... without the memory and the inheritance of Marx: in any case a certain Marx, or his genius, of at least one of his spirits," says Jacques Derrida, the most noted thinker of ourtimes, in Speters of Marx. 16 Indeed, Karl Marx is by far the most influential thinker in history as Derrida goes on to say: "We all live in a world, some would say a culture, that still bears, at an incalculable depth, the mark of this (Marx's) inheritance, whether in a directly visible fashion or not."

Further Readings

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Ian Fraser and Tony Burns, eds., (2000) The Hegel-Marx Connection. New York: Palgrave.

16   Derrida, Jacques (1994), Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International. Routledge.

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MARX'S Theory of State

Marx has not written a comprehensive work on the theory of political state. Therefore, his line of argument has to be constructed from the references he made in various works. Marx's political thought bears the marks of French political philosophy, one of his three source besides German philosophy and British political economy. After moving to Dresden in 1842, he closely watched the revolutions in France and England. He started reading Enlightenment thinkers like Rousseau, Tocqueville and Machiavelli, and subsequently developed an interest in democracy and state functions. Rousseau's assumption of the inherent goodness of the human being, and his notion of Justice are implicit throughout the works of Marx. He also shared Rousseau's assumption that man originally lived in a "state of nature," which Marx later called "primitive communism," where there existed no state, Marx is a direct descendent of Rousseaul in political thought in as much as that of Hegel and Ricardo in philosophy and political economy, respectively. The essence of Enlightenment thinking is in the grain of Marx's political sociology.

One of his earliest systematic discussions on the state is found in Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right in 1843 where Marx undertook a critical revision of Hegel's political philosophy. Later, in "On the Jewish Question," he looked at the relationship between civil society and the development of the modern state. The Communist Manifesto, written along with Engels, also contains Marx's most general statement on the nature of the state: "the modern state is but a committee to manage the general affairs of the bourgeoisie."

Marx made a historical study of the state in 1851 in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte which showed how, in his own words, a "grotesque mediocrity" like Louis Bonaparte! seized state power utilising the class struggle in France. The Civil War in France, written in 1871, analysed the development of the French political state. However, it was not until May 1875 that Marx set out to explain the type of state he put forward - dictatorship of the proletariat - in Critique of the Gotha Programme, which was posthumously published in 1891.

Marx had made critical notes on Lewis Morgan's findings on ancient society in order to write a comprehensive book on primitive societies. After Marx's death, Engels fulfilled his friend's wish by writing The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State in 1891, making use of Marx's notes. This book provides a more or less complete expositions of Marx's theory of state. Since Marx was particularly concerned over the role of social theory as a tool to bring about social revolution, it is necessary to study the type of state he anticipated to emerge out of the existing states. This question is addressed in Critique of the

Gotha Programme. Marx was engaged with this question after the failure of Paris Commune in 1871, where the working-class seized state power and tried to put the state machinery in the service of its interests,

Methodology of Marx's Political Sociology

Before dealing with Marx's theory of state, it is important to look at the method he employed to discover the nature and functions of the state. Marx starts from an analysis of the concrete conditions of a given state, for instance France, in a definite historical limit, in this case the nineteenth century. This does away with all abstract categories and speculative thinking. In this manner, he studies the origin, again found in material conditions, and development of a particular state rather than any state in general.

In his earlier works, which carries deep imprints of Hegel, Marx had made generalizations and abstract conceptions of the state. Critique of Hegel's philosophy of Right, German Ideology, and Communist Manifesto are the examples of such method of investigation. In his nature works, he adopted a more concrete analysis and used historical materialism rigorously as a guide to study the state. All his works from Eighteenth Brumaire to Critique of the Gotha Programme belong to this kind and are rich in empirical data. A detailed and concrete elaboration of the state was given by Marx when he studied each separate revolutionary situation, when he analysed the lessons of 'the experience of each individual revolution.

State As Product of Class Antagonism

Just as in all his investigations into social phenomena, Marx proceeds his study of the state from class analysis. He established that the state is an instrument for oppression of one class by another. State is the product of the irreconcilability of class antagonism.

There are some fundamental postulates that constitute Marx's theory of state. First, the state has a definite origin in history. This means that there were societies without being organized a state. The modern state came into existence at a definite time, and only under certain historical conditions caused by the development of the forces of production and the relations of production. In other words, only after the society was divided into classes. Therefore, the state is a historical and social product.

Secondly, the state has a material origin and is not independent of the relations of production. The state is not autonomous as previous political wisdom holds.

Thirdly, the appearance of the state in society is historically dependent upon the development of what Marx called "civil society."

All these postulates can be best understood only in the background of Marx's intellectual moorings in Hegelian philosophy. In German Ideology, Marx and Engels for the first time in 1846 systematically exposed the materialist principles of state formation by a forceful repudiation of Hegel. Marx rejected Hegel's idea that the state is a manifestation of man's ethical will, i.e., man's values of right and wrong, in history. He thought that the central abstraction in Hegel's

work made it appear as if political institutions were "determined by a third party, rather than being self-determined."2

For Hegel, the state was a philosophical abstraction that was eternally given. But Marx disproved Hegel's presumption that the state was eternal and existed for all time, by showing that it emerged at a certain stage in history. (Therefore, it also follows that man can do without the state in future.) Further, Hegel believed that the state did not have a social and historical character since it is the manifestation of human ethical will in the political structure. of society. But Marx established the material basis of the state by linking it with the relations and the process of production.

The distinguishing features of the political state are as follows:

1 . Robert A Nisbet, The Sociological Tradition.

2. K Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, p. 22.

(i) Territory :

In comparison to the old gentile [tribal or clan] society, the state divides its people according to territory. Such a division seems "natural" to us, but it took a long struggle against the old form of tribal or gentile society.

(ii) Public power:

The second distinguishing feature is the establishment of a public power, which is different from the population organizing itself as an armed force. This special pubic power is necessary, because a self-acting armed organization of the entire population has become impossible since the division into classes. This public power exists in every state. Engels further elaborates the concept of the "power" which is termed the state. The power arose from society, but places above it and alienates itself more and more from it.

(iii) A standing army, police, bureaucracy:

This special body of men is the third feature of the state. The public power consists not only of special bodies of armed people but also of material adjuncts, prisons and institutions of coercion of all kinds, which were unknown to the tribal society. The special body of armed men is required because the public power, an attribute of every state, does not allow the armed population, with its "self-acting armed organization." A standing army and police are the chief instruments of state power. It could not be otherwise for the present situation because a "self-acting armed organization of the population" is not a reality yet. The need for special bodies of armed men, placed above society and alienating themselves from it (police and a standing army), is not due to the growing complexity of social life or the differentiation of functions, as Herbert Spencer says. Such a statement obscures the basic fact of the division of society into irreconcilably antagonistic classes. Because the society is split into irreconcilably antagonistic classes, the "self-acting" arming of the population will lead to an armed struggle between them. A state arises, a special power is created, special bodies of armed men, and every revolution, by destroying the state apparatus, clearly demonstrates how the ruling class strives to restore

the special bodies of armed men which serve it, and how the oppressed class strives to create a new organization of this kind, capable to serving not the exploiters but the exploited. Engels raises the same questions which every revolution raises in practice, the question of the relationship between "special" bodies of armed men and the "self-acting armed organization of the population."

Engels gives a precise definition of the state in The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State:

"The state is, therefore, by no means a power forced on society form without: just as little as it 'the reality of the ethical idea,' 'the image and reality of reason,' as Hegel maintains. Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, might not consume themselves and society in sterile struggle, a power, seemingly standing above society became necessary for the purpose of moderating the conflict, of keeping it within bounds of 'order'; and this power, arisen out of society, but placing itself it, and increasingly alienating itself more and more from it, is the state."

Irreconcilability of class antagonism

The above lines provide a clear idea of Marx's views on the historical role and the meaning, of the state. The state is the product and the manifestation of the irreconcilability [inability to resolve] of class antagonisms. The state arises when, and because, class antagonisms objectively cannot be reconciled [resolved]. And, dialectically, the existence of the state proves that the class antagonisms are irreconcilable.

There is a lot of misunderstanding over this fundamental point. Some academics, while admitting that the state only exists where there are class antagonisms, believe that the state is an organ for the reconciliation of classes. According to Marx, the state could neither arise nor maintain itself if it were possible to reconcile classes. He showed that the state is an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another; it is the creation of "order", which legalises and perpetuates this oppression by moderating the conflict between classes. Therefore, it is wrong to conclude that order means the reconciliation of classes, and not the oppression of one class by another; to moderate the conflict means reconciling classes and not depriving the oppressed classes of definite means and methods of struggle to overthrow the oppressors. The state is an organ of the rule of a definite class, which cannot be reconciled with its antithesis (the class opposite to it).

From this analysis, Marx drew a self-evident conclusion. If the state is the product of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms, if it is a power standing above society and "increasingly alienating itself from it," then the liberation of the oppressed class is impossible without a violent revolution, and the destruction of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class. 3

Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Democracy

Dictatorship of the proletariat is the type of state Marx conceived. No concept of Marx has been more misunderstood than this. In fact, Marx's dictatorship of the proletariat is a higher stage of democracy.

Marx favors a democratic republic as the best form of state for the proletariat under capitalism. But he reminds us that wage-slavery is the fate of the people even in the most democratic bourgeois republic. Universal suffrage is an instrument of bourgeois rule. Every state is a "special force for the suppression" of the exploited class. Therefore, no state is "free" or a "people's state." Marx repeatedly expressed this view in 1870s.

Marx said, on the eve of the 1848 revolution, said about the state In The Poverty of Philosophy:

"litical power properly so-called, since political power is precisely the official expression of class antagonism in bourgeois society."

Let's compare this general idea, of the state disappearing after the abolition of classes, with the exposition in the Communist Manifesto, written a few months later:

3.   V. 1. Lenin, State and Revolution, Moscow: Progress Publishers.

"...the first step in the revolution by the working-class, is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the baffle of democracy. The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest ... all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state, i.e., of proletariat organized as the, ruling class, and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible."

Here we come across Marx's most remarkable idea on the subject of the state, namely, "dictatorship of the proletariat." Marx began to call it after the Paris Commune. The essence of Marx's definition of the state is: "the state, i.e., the proletariat organized as the ruling class."

The proletariat needs the state. But what is more important is, according to Marx, the proletariat needs only a state which is withering away, i.e., a state so constituted that it begins to wither away immediately, and cannot but wither away.

The state is a special organisation of force; it is an organization of violence for the suppression of some class. What class must the proletariat suppress? Naturally, only the exploiting class, i.e., the bourgeoisie. The toilers need a state only to suppress the resistance of the exploiters, and only the proletariat is in a position to direct this suppression, carry it out, for the proletariat is the only class that is consistently revolutionary, the only class that can unite all the toilers and the exploited in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, in completely displacing it. (foot noot)

The exploiting classes need political rule in order to maintain exploitation, i.e., in the selfish interests of an in significant minority against the vast majority of

the people. The exploited classes need political rule in order completely to abolish all exploitation, i.e., in the interests of the vast majority of the people, and against the insignificant minority consisting of the modern slave-owners-the landlords and the capitalists.

Marx conceives socialist transformation as the overthrow of the rule of the exploiting class, and not as the peaceful submission of the minority to the majority. Marx fought all his life against this distortion of his idea.

The overthrow of bourgeois rule can be accomplished only by the proletariat, as the particular class whose economic conditions of existence prepare it for this task. Only the proletariat-by virtue of the economic role it plays in large-scale production-is capable of being the leader of all the toiling and exploited masses.

The overthrow of the bourgeoisie can be achieved only by the proletariat becoming transformed into the ruling class, capable of crushing the inevitable and desperate resistance of the bourgeoisie.

Withering Away of State

Marx's phrase, withering away of the state, is well-known, and many believe it is an impractical idea. So, let us quote the argument from where it appears in utmost clarity.

"The proletariat seizes the state power and transforms the means of production into state property. In doing this, it puts an end to itself as proletariat, it puts an end to all class differences and class antagonisms; its puts an end to 'the state as state.' The former society, moving in class antagonisms, had the need of the state, that is, an organization of the exploiting class at each period for the maintenance of its external conditions of production. This is mainly for the forcible holding down of the exploited class in the conditions of oppression (slavery, serfdom or wage labor) determined by the existing mode of production. The state was the official representative of society as a whole...but it was this only in so far as it was the state of that class which itself, it its epoch, represented society as a whole. In ancient times, the state of slave-owning citizens; in the Middle Ages, of the feudal nobility, in our times, of the bourgeoisie, When ultimately it becomes really representative of society as a whole, it renders itself superfluous. As soon as there is no longer any class of society to be held in subjection; as soon as, along with class domination and the struggle for individual existence based on the anarchy of production hitherto, the collisions and excesses arising from these have also been abolished, there is nothing more to be repressed which would make a special repressive force, a state, necessary. The first act in which the state really comes forward as the representative of society as a whole-the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society is at the same time its last independent act as a state. The interference of the state power in social relations becomes superfluous in one sphere after another, and then ceases of itself. The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the processes of production. The state is not'abolished', it withers

away 14

The interpretation that the state will wither away automatically and slowly is against the laws of dialectics, which establishes the sudden leap or revolutionary change in history. (See Chapter on historical materialism.)

In the first place Engels says that, in seizing state power, the proletariat thereby "abolishes the state as state." These words are based on the experience of the Paris Commune. Engels speaks of the proletariat revolution "abolishing" the bourgeois state, while the state "withering away" refers to the remnants of the proletarian state after the socialist revolution. The bourgeois state does not "wither away,' but is "abolished" by the proletariat in the course of the revolution. What withers away after this revolution is the proletarian state or semi-state.

The state is a "special repressive force" for the suppression of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, (of the exploited masses by a few rich). This must be replaced by a "special repressive force" for the suppression of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat. This is called the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is precisely what is meant by "abolition of the state as state." This is the "act" of taking possession of the means of production in the name of society. And such a replacement of one (bourgeois) "special force" by another (proletarian) "special force" cannot take place in the form of "withering away."

"Withering away" and "ceasing of itself" of the state refers to the period after "the state has taken possession of the means of production in the name of the whole of society." State withers away after the socialist revolution.

4   F Engels (1947), Anti-Duhring, Moscow, pp. 416-17.

The political form of the state after the socialist revolution is the most complete democracy. But democracy is also a state and, consequently, democracy will also disappear when the state disappears. Revolution alone can "abolish" the bourgeois state.

The argument about the withering away of the state is closely related to the significance of violent (forcible) revolution. Here is Engels'argument:

" , ..Force plays another role in history, a revolutionary role. In the words of Marx, it is the midwife of the old society which is pregnant with a new one, it is the instrument by the aid of which the social movement forces its way through the shatters the dead political forms... Unfortunately, because all use of force demoralizes the persons who uses it. And this is spite of the immense moral and spiritual impetus which has resulted from every victorious revolutionl"

This doctrine of forcible revolution seems inconsistent with the "withering away" of the state, But Marx's view of the inevitability of a violent revolution refers to the bourgeois state, which cannot be replaced by the proletarian state (the dictatorship of the proletariat) through the process of 'withering away." It requires a forcible revolution. The concluding passages of The Poverty of Philosophy and the Communist Manifesto openly proclaims the inevitability of a forcible revolution. Marx elaborated this idea thirty years later in Critique of the Gotha programme. The necessity of teaching the masses this idea of forcible revolution lies at the root of Marx's thinking.

Origin and Development of Modern State

Relation between civil society, France,

Developments in Theory of State After Marx

Marx's ideas from an open system..

Lenin and Trotsky,

Antonio Gramsci,

Nicos Poulantzas,

Mao put forward a new type of state suitable for what is called the Third World countries, and the underdeveloped countries. Mao's New Democracy is thus a new version of Marx's oictatorship of the proletariat.

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MAX WEBER:CLASS

INTRODUCTION

I "Max Weber is'the' sociologist for me," writes Raymond Aron in his main currents of sociological thought*. In the current scenario of sociology, especially in the methodological debate in the social sciences, the importance and relevance of Max Weber is undoubted and increasing.

Max Weber is one of the classical thinkers in sociology. His relevance can be seen in his influence on two contemporary stands in sociological theory, conflict school and Schutz's Phenomenological sociology. It is very difficult to arrive at consensus about the importance and meaning of Weber's work. He was perceived in many ways. He can be looked at as a bourgeoisie sociologist whose views on domination were part of the background of fascism, also as one of the greatest minds of the 20th century, or as a philosopher of modernity, whose views on rationalization prepared the way towards the current dispute between modernists and postmodernists. These disputes over the meaning of Weber's work are ironic, since Weber regarded the interpretation of meanings, which actors attach to social action as an essential aspect of sociology as a science.

With the publication of Weber's essay on Protestantism and capitalism, and with their translation by Parsons into English in 1930, Weber entered the world of social sciences as a "bourgeois answer to Marx." It was held wrongly that Weber had argued against Marx that --the origins of capitalism lay in spiritual values and not material causes. In fact, Weber recognized the existence of forms of capitalism in the catholic cultures of Italy and Spain. He saw that the causes of capitalism were complex and variable: they included modern technology, rational administration, a money economy, market demand, a disciplined labour, force, and the free political environment. Weber was, however, more concerned with how the 'spirit' of capitalism had combined with this worldly ascetic ethics of Lutheran and Calvinistic Protestantism to give western capitalism a peculiar and unique characteristic namely it's rational emphasis on calculation and predictability.

Max Weber was the primary influence on analytical theorists of conflict tradition. Weber believed in the vital importance of objective social science. He developed a typology of 'Class, Status and Party', as an important influence on people's lives; as opposed to Marxian emphasis on property class alone. Furthermore, Weber considered the conflict these generate, are permanent features of human society and he saw modern society tending not towards a communist utopia but towards a bureaucratic society inimical to human freedom. However, that does not mean that either he or the analytical conflict theorist he influenced are indifferent to political action.

Although he stressed on the power struggle in the society, his primary focus was on the subjective meanings that human actors attach to their actions in their mutual orientations within specific socio-historical contexts. Behavior devoid of such meaning, Weber argued falls outside the purview of sociology.

It would be interesting to see Anthony Giddens's perspective.

"Weber was a political thinker, economic historian and theorist of jurisprudence. He was not only a sociologist; he only came to sociology pretty reluctantly and started using the term quite late in his career.

Weber was a riven and driven personality. All through his life, he struggle to reconcile contemplation and action, passion and reason, intellectual life and politics. Moreover, you find these schisms emerging in his intellectual life as well. The tension passion and reason is perhaps the prime theme of Weber's life, reflected in a series of personal troubles and depressions. He was a more complex person than Durkheim or Marx,"I'

Debate with Marx

In a discussion with Oswald Spengler in February 1920, Weber said that the moral stature and honesty of a present day scholar might be measured by his attitude towards Nietzsche and Marx. Weber was, no doubt influenced most by these two thinkers. The world in which we live intellectually has been shaped by Marx and Nietzsche.*.

Weber was influenced by Nietsche's uncompromising view of human relations as relations of power. B. S. Turner says that in very general terms, it may be possible to read Weber as 'sociologizing' of Nietzsche's idea of will to power.* Furthermore, it may be said that Weber's views on state power and the problems of political leadership in the revaluation of values reflects the influence of Nietzsche.

There are various ways to look at Weber's relationship with Marx. As Solomon puts it, "Max Weber . became a sociologist in a long and intense dialogue with the 'ghost of Marx".' Before looking into this 'issue, one must take into account that only a small part of Marx's own writings were available to Weber, and therefore many of his ideas about Marx's teaching were derived from the secondary sources. These were the works of what are often disparagingly called 'vulgar Marxism', interpreting Marx's theory as economic determinism. Much of Weber's own work is of course informed by a skillful application of Marx's historical method.

Weber was influenced by Marx, especially in his economic writings. Whether he exclusively criticized Marx or whether he applied Marx's historical methods is still very much in question, but it is clear that Weber fundamentally disagreed with Marx on number of key theoretical issues. 2

Few important points of Weber's disagreement with Marx are the analysis of capitalism, views on historical causation and views on domination and also the nature and purpose of sociological theory.

Weber rejected Marx's assertion that the central task of social theory was to change society. Marx believed that all philosophy and social theory had only observed rather than changed society and history. Marx, therefore, believed that theory must be linked to social and political action. He called it 'praxis.'Weber disagreed with this view. He thought that the ultimate task of social theory was to search for historical truths and to gather historical facts about society. In this way, Weber was an empiricist in his epistemological orientations.

Weber also disagreed with Marx on the way he used theoretical concepts in his writings. He believed that Marx used concepts as critical instruments whose purpose was to point up the social inequalities. Weber however believed that concepts in social sciences should be neutral and not based on value judgments Weber was insistent on value-free sociology.

In addition to differing on views mentioned above, Weber and Marx differed on their understanding of history and historical causes. Marx believed that history could be understood in terms of underlying laws of economic development shaped the material condition of society. Weber, in contrast, wanted to show that social phenomena could in fact, be studied outside the realm of economic forces and he took the view that there were other determinants of social life derived from the political, religious and legal spheres of society. Weber believed that these social spheres were fundamental to the understanding of historical and social development.

Although Weber does not squarely oppose 'historical materialism', as altogether wrong, he merely take exception to his claim of establishing a single and universal causal sequence. Weber, however, felt that Marx as an economist had made a mistake that raising a segmental perspective to paramount importance and reducing the multiplicity of causal factors to a single factor theorem.

The assumption by Weber of the interconnected nature of "social spheres'is one of the most important theoretical insights in his work. There are, according to Weber, four major social sphere, which make up society: the political, legal, economic and religious. Weber believed that no one sphere was dominant in society, since they tend to overlap in relation to each other.

Marxian concept of superstructure incorporates these spheres-political, law and religion-as expressions of underlying forces and only these were analytically important. Weber did not see economic forces as sole determinants of history and society, and wanted to show that other causal factors were important in social development.

Weber also disagreed with Marx's claim that all social functions could, also disagreed with Marx's claim that all social functions could, in the last instance, be reduced to economic laws and thus he fundamentally criticized Marx's materialist view of history.

Weber's important works

The intellectual situation in Germany during Weber's lifetime was singularly unfavorable for development of academic sociology. Historiography was largely dominated by the traditions of Hegel. The historical school discouraged systematic theory by opposing to it a massive treasure of historical details, legal fact and institutional description.

Within this context of conflicting classes, parties and intellectual currents, Max Weber worked out his intellectual orientations. He aimed at the comprehensiveness of a common ground, and he did so inspite of the intellectual departmentalization of sharply opposed worldviews.

Apart from his most controversial thesis 'protestant ethics and the spirit of capitalism', Weber's contribution to social sciences In general and sociology in particular, is immense and varied. We can classify his sociology in a following pattern:

Firstly, his contribution to methodology of social sciences and his concept of' Verstehen': which means interpretative understanding, with reference to this, his types of social action is also very important. His philosophy of history and social causation, theory of knowledge; i.e. his world-view.

Secondly, his thesis on the relationship between religious values and economic behavior of people, namely the protestant ethics and the development of capitalism. His works on the sociology of religion.

Thirdly, his political sociology, his analysis of capitalism, his theory of class status and party. His conflict-view of society and the power structure, the types of authority and his theory of Bureaucracy.

We can al so separate his works in two parts - i.e. substantive, i.e. historical and sociological studies, and his philosophical essays on methodology in social sciences.

We will briefly look at his methodological orientations and the concept of 'Verstehen'. We will specifically deal with his political sociology and analysis of capitalism in detail in the same chapter.

Weber's methodological orientations -'Verstehen' and value-neutrality

There were two discrete traditions in social theory, relating to the problem of methodology and to the identification of the subject matter; with which sociology is held to be connected.

One is positivist. The French positivism propounded by Comte and developed by Durkheim, stressed on to make holistic conception of social reality. It was the dominance of natural sciences and their methodology, which influenced this particular stance in the social sciences in its beginnings. Positivism did shape sociology in the initial stages and stressed on objectivity and empiricism. Positivism, refers to the tendency in 'thought which rigorously restricts all

explanations of phenomena purely to phenomena themselves preferring explanations strictly on the model of exact scientific procedure and rejecting all tendencies, assumptions and ideas which exceed the limits of scientific technique.**

The second tradition in social theory is developed in Germany. It opposed positivism. It is mainly developed by Max Weber. Weber's methodological essays deal with two overlapping themes; that of subjectivity versus objectivity and irrationality versus rationality in the explication of human conduct.

According to Weber, what distinguishes the natural and the social sciences is not an inherent difference in methods of investigation, but rather the differing interests and aims of the scientist. What particular problem attracts a scholar, and what level of explanation is sought, depends, Weber argues, on the values and the interests of the investigator. The choice of the problem is always "value relevant."

Weber said that we could understand (verstehen) human action by penetrating to the subjective meanings that actors attach to their own behavior and to the behavior of others. Hence, Weber defines sociology as "that science which aims at the interpretative understanding (verstehen) of social behavior in order to gain an explanation of its causes, its course, and its Ofects."

Weber also dealt with the problem of value neutrality and value relevance in the social sciences. He believed that value relevance must be distinguished from value neutrality, since they refer to the two different orders of ideas. In the first place, ethical neutrality implies that once the social scientist has chosen his problem in terms of its relevance to his values, he. must hold values-his own or those of others-in abeyance while he follows the guidelines, his data reveal. He cannot impose his values on the data and he is compelled to pursue his line of inquiry whether or not the results 'urn out to be inimical to what he holds true.

Value neutrality refers no less importantly to another order of considerations: the disjunction between the world of facts and the world of values, the impossibility of deriving it ought statements" from "is statements". An empirical science, Weber contended, can never advice anyone what he should do, though it may help him to clarify for himself what he can or wants to do.

Weber's political sociology: His theory of "Class, Status and Party"
For Marx, class was above all an analytical concept, one that he used to explain the course of historical development in the past as well as in his historical aspirations for the future. In his works, on the other hand, as in the Eighteenth Brumaire, he employed it as a descriptive term to label divisions in French society as he saw them actually existing at the time.

Contrary to Marx, for Weber, a class is not by it's nature an actual group, it is only a category, a collection of individuals who occupy comparable economic

positions, and who need not have any awareness of each other, or recognition of the fact that they are in a same position. Here Weber emphasizes the existence and importance of 'life-chances'.

Marx's argued that class membership is determined by one's position in the process of economic production, and Weber did not have other opinion. But, for Weber, it is one's relationship to the market that is decisive in fixing class position: whether one buys or sells labour, as well as in terms of the labour, one seeks to sell or buy. Thus, a skilled worker comes with skills to sell, whilst the unskilled worker has only the raw capacity to work on offer. However, those who have skills to sell have different skills to dispose of, and this may put them at odds with one another. For eg: a railway-engine driver and a truck-engine driver have different skills to sell and are in conflict with one another in so far as engine drivers find that the transfer of goods from rail to road is taking their work away from them.

Thus, it can be held that not even the members of the same occupation are in the same relationship to the market, for even though such capacities as they have to sell are broadly alike, there are still likely to be significant differences between them.

"Power', in Weber's definition," is a person's capacity to get what he or she wants, even in the face of resistance by others" ** social stratification is precisely about the unequal distribution of people's capacities to obtain things, and to prevail over others, and is, thus essentially a phenomena of the distribution of power.

In his essay 'Class, Status and party' in Economy and Society, Weber, not only extends his concepts in systematic fashion but also supplies the ink between class and status group, which explains their interrelationship. What classes have in common with status groups, and for that matter with political parties, is that they are all 'phenomena of the distribution of power'within the society.

However, though political power is clearly dependent on each of the three phenomena; the phenomena themselves are not independent of one another. The distribution of property, the distribution of honour and the distribution of political activity are dependent, each in its own way, on the other two. As Weber himself writes, "With some oversimplification, one might say that 'classes' are stratified according to their relation to the production and acquisition of goods as represented by special 'styles of life."'

The formation of class and social order

Though Marx and Weber, more or less agree, for many sociological purposes, that class is a matter of ownership and non-ownership of property, they disagree about the import of class as a basis for collective action. According to Marx, classifications are designed to capture divisions, which are inherent in reality itself, and a class is therefore something, which actually exists independently of the theorist's conception of it. For Weber, there are many differences between

individuals, but there is no dividing line built into reality, which allocates them to different classes, and any proposed division between them is at the theorist's convenience.

Marx argued that the differences in economic interests arising from shared positions in the system of production would lead people to reorganize their common interest and to unify in pursuit of it. Weberian approach eliminate this claim.

A social class might become a group in that people in comparable positions might become aware of each other, see one another as having interests in common and set about organizing more effectively to advance those interests. This could happen, but it was by no means destined to do so, and overall, it is an unlikely development, according to Weber. It would require special social and cultural conditions to encourage the recognition of similar situations, of shared interests and need for action. As per Weber saw It, they act commonly but quite without awareness of each other.

The definition of class for Weber has two important inherent characteristics: it is multiple and it is both 'subjective' and 'objective'. From this he deduces that there may be more than one type of class. A property class is determined by the differentiation of the property it owns. An 'acquisition' class is determined primarily by the opportunity its members have to exploit their services in the market. In addition, a social class is composed of multiple class statuses, between which an observer can detect regular and consistent movements of individuals or generations.

Weber insists that a clear-cut distinction should be made between 'class in itself' and 'class for itself': class, in his terminology, always refers to the market interests, which exists independently of whether men are aware of them. Class, is thus an objective characteristic, influencing the life chances of man. However, only under certain conditions do those sharing a common class situation become conscious of and act upon their mutual economic interests. In making this emphasis, Weber undoubtedly intends to separate his positions from that of many Marxists, involving what he calls a 'pseudo-scientific operation' where by the link between class and class-consciousness is treated as direct and immediate. Such a consideration evidently also underlies the emphasis which Weber places upon' status groups' as contrasted to classes.

Weber uses the term class in a very individualistic way. Weber defines a class as "any group of persons occupying the same class status".

Economic inequalities are not the only kinds of inequalities in society. There are inequalities in the value that people put upon each other, the esteem or honour in which they hold one another. People look upon each other as superiors, equals and subordinates, and their orientation to each other in these terms significantly affects the ways they behave, Indeed, people will often accepts associates only those with whom they regard, as at least their equals, rejecting those whom they think stand below them in the social order. Thus,

social groups arise based upon the equality of regard in which their members hold one another. These Weber calls Status group.

Status groups are ones, which are defined subjectively rather than objectively. The subjective definitions of status group means that it consists in tile reciprocal recognition of each other by the members of the group; an awareness of each other and acting towards one another based on that awareness of common position and interest.

A social class, in Weber's terms, has only the potential, often a faint potential, to make up a real social group but status group is, by definition, a real group.

Status groups, Weber held, form within the sphere of consumption rather than that of production and distribution, and it is 'lifestyle' rather than 'life chances' which is the criterion of the membership.

As Weber points out, it is not enough to have equivalent wealth to be regarded as someone's equal; it is what one does with the wealth that is decisive. Thus the newly rich are often looked down upon by those who comes from a backgrounds of long standing wealth and prestige because they lack social connections, manners and polish and because they consume their wealth in 'ostentatious' and 'tasteless' ways.

The basis for status differences is not an economic one, and people of comparable economic power can stand in different status positions. However, of course, status inequalities cannot be entirely independent of economic ones. However, though there is a relationship between wealth and status stratification just as there is in that of class; the relationship in these two cases is quite different, and in important respects antithetical. Stratification in terms of class is based upon relationship to the market; where as the development of strong status differentiation turns upon restricting the operations of the market. Status groups struggle to keep the things, which are the marks of their status from the market, even to the extent of inhibiting the workings of the market itself.

The most developed example of the status system is Indian Caste system, which is divided into rigidly ranked, sharply distinguished and mutually closed groups in which a persons worth is decided entirely by heredity. Occupations are allotted on the basis of caste membership and marriage prospects are restricted within the caste group. In the caste case, it is the position in the status system, which dictates one's occupational position being the basic determinant.

Through the notion of 'status group', then, Weber opened up the possibility that social stratification can be organized around many different criterion of evaluation. Economic situation is certainly one basis upon which people rank each other, but ethnic origins, gender and religious affiliations are others, which have been important. Though, class membership can be the foundational basis for classifying people in society, Weber did not consider it to be the primary one, as Marx did.

PARTY

Party is the third element in Weber's account of stratification. A clear, conscious awareness of common interest and a calculation of effective means towards realizing that interest is characteristic of the party.

By 'the party', Weber does not only mean those organizations which are called parties and which are the constituents of an electoral system, but any kind of organization which is set up specially to complete for power, and which organizes itself primary in pursuit of this.

The status group is concerned about its position, its power over other groups, and it acts to sustain and develop that power positions. However, it is not, like the party, specifically formed in order to struggle for power.

The basis for party membership is, then, acceptance of its purpose, recognition of common interest with other members. The members of the party can, but need not, be drawn from the same social group. A party can base itself upon a particular social stratum, can align itself with a particular social class or ethnic group in which case, it is likely to recruit mainly, if not exclusively, from that group. But parties need to identify themselves in that way and can also recruit a socially heterogeneous following, one, which crosses class and status lines.

A key function of the modern political party, according to Weber, is the mitigation of the class structure, which takes place as the party system absorbs elements of the class struggle within the party itself. This occurs, explains Weber, as the stratification of political parties tends to conform to the representation of social classes.

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8

MAX WEBER: 'Power' and 'Authority'

In this chapter, we will deal with Weber's methodology of 'ideal types' and his types of authority, his view of allocation of power in society and his theory of Bureaucracy. We will also try to understand his types of social action.

Weber's analysis of capitalism and its interpretation in terms of growth of rationalization are very important, here. Weber, in the modern western society, saw that behavior had come to be dominated increasingly by goal oriented rationality, whereas in earlier periods it tended to be motivated by tradition, affection or value-oriented rationality.

Karl Mannheim puts the matter well when he writes, "Max Weber's whole work is in the last analysis directed toward the question 'which social factors have brought about the rationalization of western civilization?" (Mannheim, Karl- Man and society in the age of reconstruction ... page 52.)

The theme of rationalization in Weber's work

One of the most important themes in Weber's work is the concept of rationalization. The term occurs repeatedly in his writings, and many of his theoretical investigations are devoted to the understanding of the process of rationalization by looking at why modern societies took the form they did. This stress by Weber on the process of rationalization placed him in opposition with Marx.

Whereas Marx was concerned to understand the monopoly of economic power in society, Weber drew attention to alternative monopolies. First, he was concerned with how the means of military violence were socially organized and distributed. Secondly, he looked at the institutionalism of spiritual powers in his sociology of religion. It was for this reason that Weber defined the state as an institution, which enjoys the monopoly of legitimate force, and the church as an institution, which seeks a monopoly of religious power.

"By arguing and Weber wanted to understand the institution of social closure i.e. how monopolies over scarce resources of wealth, spiritually and violence were constructed; we can get a better understanding of Weber's analysis of western history as the development of rationalization." Says Bryan Turner in the introduction to 'From Max Weber', while analyzing the theme of rationalization in Weber's work. ***

Analysis of capitalism in the writings of Marx and Weber

For Marx, capitalism destroyed the stagnation of traditional society and undermined what he referred to as the 'idiocy' of village and peasant life. It pushed humanity along the roads of modernization but at an enormous cost in terms of individual and collective sufferings, here he is referring to alienation and dehumanization.

Whereas, for Weber, capitalism destroyed the securities of belief and disrupted the 'natural'rhythm of pre-modem means of production and consumption in the traditional household. Rationaliaztion destroyed the authority of magical powers, but it also brought up into being the machine like regulation of bureaucracy, which ultimately challenges all system of belief. The paradoxical outcome of rationalization of the world in which systems of meaning could no longer find an authority. Rational norms of authority are in competition with Charismatic and traditional powers.

In Weber's work, military and religious, political and judicial institutional systems are functionally related to the economic order in variety of ways, the political judgments and evaluations involved differ entirely from those of Marx.

For Marx, the modern economy was basically irrational; this irrationality of capitalism results from the contradiction between the rational, technological advances of the productive forces. The system is characterized by 'anarchy of production.'

For Weber, on the other hand, modern capitalism is not irrational; indeed its institutions appear to him as the very embodiment of rationality. Bureaucracy, as apart of modern system promotes rational efficiency continuity of operation, speed, precision and calculation of results; and all this goes on within institutions that are rationally managed. The whole structure is dynamic, and by its anonymity compels modern man to become a specialized expert.

Although, Weber recognizes capitalism as a system of competitive enterprise, but for him it is most distinctive characteristic is its promotion of 'rationalization', not only in economic life but in other social spheres also. Rationalization means essentially the subordination, standardization, and increased predictability of economic and social relationships. In the social arena rationalization equals bureaucracy: a bureaucratic organization is one that is carefully and consciously ordered, having clear levels of authority and decision-making. Rationalization and bureaucracy cannot be transuded by any kind of economic or political revolution. In Weber's eyes, a socialist society would mean more bureaucracy and more equal power, not less.

We can also consider Weber's types of social action as a concluding remark on his stress on rationalization. However, before looking at these types of social action, we will first look at the methodological foundations of this typology i.e. 'ideal types.'

Ideal Types:

Weber's ideal type construction is premised on Rickert's theory of concept formation. Initially, the ideal type was first put forward by Weber in 'Objectivity

in social science and social policy,' which he published in 1905. Weber defines the ideal type as a conceptual pattern which brings together certain relationships and events of historical life into a complex which is conceived of as an internally consistent system.

An ideal type is an analytical construct that serves the investigators a measuring rod to ascertain similarities as well as deviations in concrete cases. It provides the basic method for comparative study. An ideal type is not meant to refer to moral ideals. There can be an ideal type of a brothel. Nor did Weber mean to refer to statistical averages.

The ideal type involves an accentuation of typical courses of conduct. Many of Weber's ideal types refer to collectivities rather than to the social actions of individuals, but social relationships within collectivities are always built upon the probability that component actors will engage in expected social actions An ideal type never corresponds to concrete reality but always moves at least one step away from it. It is constructed out of certain elements of reality and forms a logically precise and coherent whole, which can never be found as such in that reality.   I

As Julien Freund puts it," being unreal, the ideal type has the merit of offering us a conceptual device with which we can measure real development and clarify amity the most important elements of empirical reality."

Their levels of abstraction distinguish Weber's three kinds of ideal types. First are the ideal types rooted in historical particularities, such as the "western city", "The protestant ethic", or "modern capitalism", which refer to phenomena that appear only in historical periods and in particular cultural areas. A second kind involves abstract elements of social reality such concepts as "bureaucracy"- that may be found in variety of historical and cultural context. Finally, there is a third kind of ideal type, which Aron calls," rationalizing reconstructions of a particular kind of behavior". According to Weber, all propositions in economic theory, falls into this category.

The goal of the ideal type is to make explicit both the general and individual characteristics of empirical reality. Their task is to "frame out" the empirical characteristics of reality while at the same time retaining the focus on historical individuals. Weber knew that empirical reality could not be described in any complete factual sense, but he did believe it could framed out' by means of criterion of selection. At the outer limit of the frame, are generalizing concepts such as capitalism, feudalism or city economy. At the inner limits of the frame, there can be a reference to subjective meaning.

TYPES OF SOCIAL ACTION

Weber made distinctions regarding the degree of rationality and meaningfulness inherent in different types of social action.

Four major types of social action are distinguished in Weber's sociology.

1. Zweckrational action, or rational action in relation to a goal:

It is the action of an engineer who is building a bridge, the speculator at the stock exchange, who is trying to make money In all these cases, Zweckrational action is distinguished by the fact that the actor conceives his goal clearly and combines means with a view to attaining it.

However, Weber does not explicitly states that action in which the actor chooses unsuitable, means because of his inaccuracy of information is non-rational. Weber defines rationality in terms of knowledge of the actor rather than that of the observer.

2. Wertrational action or rational action in relation to a value:

It is characterized by striving for a substantive goal, which in itself may not be rational. It is an action of a brave captain who goes down with his ship. The action is rational, not because it seeks to attain a definite and external goal, but because to abandon the sinking ship, would regarded as dishonourable; thus the actor is acting rationally in accepting all the risks, not to obtain an extrinsic result, but to remain faithful to his own idea of honour.

3. Affective or emotional action:

"Action is effectual, if it satisfies a need for revenge, sensual gratification, devotion, contemplative bliss, or the working off of emotional tensions", wrote Weber. In this type of action, the actor is directly motivated by an emotional response dictated by the state of mind of the actor. It is not oriented toward to a specific goal or values, but is an expression of the emotional state of the actor in a given circumstances.

it lacks rational orientations. According to Weber," Purely effectual behavior is on the border line of what is considered meaningful"action and is irrational.

4. Traditional action:

In this type of action, "the actor reacts automatically to habitual stimuli which guide behavior in the course which has been repeatedly followed.'' Action of this type is patterned by an orientation to a fixed body of traditional beliefs, which act as moral imperatives upon the actor's judgment.

To act in this way, according to Weber, the actor need not imagine a goal, or be conscious of specific commitments to values. According to Weber, a great bulk of every day action approaches this type, as far as both ends and means are fixed by custom. Traditional action lacks evaluative criteria, is not rationally oriented to ends, and means.

WEBER'S POLITICAL WRITINGS AND THE THEORY OF LEGITIMATE DOMINATION

Weber was concerned explicitly with two issues of social and historical development; first, he wanted to trade the pattern of development leading to the decline of empires and the rise of modern state; and second, he wanted to look at the changes taking place in the manifestations of political authority as the modern state developed. He believed that, as the state changes in its political

organizations, power is altered as the state becomes dependent on bureaucratic administration. Weber's political writings explore the interrelation between three distinct spheres in society: the political, the legal and the religious spheres. At the center of Weber's political work is his theory of legitimate domination.

Weber began by making a distinction between power and domination. Power is the ability of an individual to carry out his will in a given situation, despite resistance. Domination, by contrast, refers to the right of a ruler within an 'established order' to issue commands to others and expect them to obey.

Weber's primary aim was to focus on various systems of domination rather than on power itself and so his approach focused primarily on the structure of domination. In looking at the historical types of authority, Weber focused on two central elements, which are key to any system of domination. First, is the concern for legitimacy, and the perception that authority is legitimate among those who are subject to it. Second, is the development of an administrative staff .

Every system of domination is based on some corresponding belief of people in the legitimacy of the ruler to issue commands and to rule over the individuals. While the administrative staff serves as a link between the leader and the people, Weber thought that the means of administration alter the nature of power.

In his theory of authority, Weber put forward three types of legitimate domination:

1.   Traditional Authority.

2.   Rational-Legal Authority and,

3.   Charismatic Authority

Each of these types gives rise to a corresponding form of legitimacy, type of obedience, administrative apparatus and mode of existing power. While existing societies and forms of domination incorporate elements of charisma, tradition and legal rationality, Weber examined each of the structures of domination as 'pure types.'

Traditional Authority

Authority is traditional when its legitimacy is based on tradition and custom, on the ,sanity of age-old rules and power.'Tradition, was historically the most wide spread and long lasting of these, which is given a leading example b the kingly ruler who holds the position through inheritance and is entitled to obedience entirely because the right has traditionally been in the hands of his family. The king's power to command derives not from any personal characteristics, but entirely due to the fact that he is some one with the right kind of hereditary connection to his predecessors. Monarchies and feudal estates are historical examples of traditional systems of domination.

The forms of domination are ways of administrating social affairs, and each form is associated with the characteristic administrative arrangement: 'Traditional authority' is typically operated through the royal court, with the king's

personal following, performing the administrative functions because they are connected to and trusted by the king and carrying out their functions at his behest.

Legal-Rational Authority:

Weber calls this type of authority, rational or legal authority to emphasize the fact that leader ship is selected with a procedure, which is legally sanctioned. This is the kind of authority, which we have, in modern societies, where the democratic electoral process is the means of choosing between rival leaders, and where entitlement to occupation of the positions of leader is due to the fact that he or she has been chosen for the leadership in a legally sanctioned way.

In the system, compliance is owned to those issuing commands on the basis of the principles of law rather than the personal authority of the leader, and individuals owe their obedience to an impersonal legal order.

This type of leadership is associated with an administrative arrangement, which is staffed by professionals, who have no personal relationship to the political leader, but who hold their jobs on the basis of their qualifications. They too, have been selected for their positions by explicit procedures, most notably those of examinations, and their movement up the hierarchy of positions is based upon their supposed success in administrative work.

A key characteristic of legal domination is that officials in power are themselves subject to laws and must orient that r action to an impersonal order of legal rules in their disposition of commands.

Charismatic Authority

It is contrasted with traditional domination, for the power of charismatic resides entirely in their personal qualities. Charismatic are those, in the original meaning of the term, are gifted with' holy grace' or in Weber's usage, those who present themselves people with special gifts frequently super natural, which entitle them to the obedience of others.

Charismatic, accordingly, claim to have been sent by God or national destiny, and demand that others should follow them unquestioningly to realize what they ordain. Charismatic are an exceptional people in the sense that their personalities are such that they can impress themselves upon others, powerfully enough to lead them to abandon their normal lives to follow their cause. Such figures are common in religious life, but are also to be found in the worlds of politics and warfare.

Charismatic leaders are the ones, for Weber, have powerful potential in initiating important social changes, for they are typically descriptive and innovative. Charismatic can appear under either traditional or legal-rational domination, and characteristically confront and challenge the existing order.

However, whilst the charismatic leader can have a powerful impact, this can be short lasting. It certainly cannot span generations in the way that a dynasty of traditional rulers can. it is short lived for two reasons:

1 .   Charismatic are constantly required to prove their powers and,
2.   The charismatic powers are personal and mortal.

The charismatic position demands the continuing proof of his or her special powers. The prophetic leader can only convincingly claim special status so long as the prophecies are fulfilled.

Even if the events continue to 'prove' the charismatic leader's power, that leader will, eventually, die, so creating a problem of succession. Since the charismatic powers are personal, they cannot be transferred to some one. If the group, the charismatic has founded is to continue, a successor must nonetheless be found. However, a selection of such a successor cannot be assured to find another person equally dominating, powerful personality; and so the charisma of the deceased leader will be displaced onto the leadership position, rather than the person who occupies it.

For example, the pope is a special person, not by a virtue of his own awesome personal powers, but because he occupies a position, so to speak, the 'successor to Christ'. This transition from personal to positional power, Weber termed, as "routinisation of charisma", making the end of a period of charismatic leadership, because routine is anathema to true charisma. Charisma is a disturbing and transitional force, lasting no longer than a single life time and either fading away or absorbed, at the movement of succession, into either one of the other two more stable types of domination, traditional or rational legal.

Another important point is the administrative organization of charismatic domination varies considerably in comparison with traditional and legal forms of domination. Primarily, the administrative staff has no appointed officials or a hierarchy of off ices, and its members are not technically trained.

The leader 'selects' followers who commit themselves to 'serve' the leader because of their belief in leader's powers. In such a circumstances, decision-making occurs in the form of intervention by the leader.

WEBER'S STUDY OF BURIEUCRACY

Formally, Weber's study of bureaucracy is part of a much larger study of the theory of domination, which appeared in part one of 'Economy and Society'. Weber began by tracing the development of the modern means of administration. He believed that a bureaucratic type of organization began in societies whose political organization tended towards an'officialdom'.

Bureaucratic coordination of activities, he argued, is the distinctive mark of modern era. Bureaucracies are organized according to rational principles. Offices are ranked in a hierarchical order and their operations are characterized by impersonal rules. Appointments are made according to specialized qualifications rather than ascriptive criteria. The bureaucratic coordination of

the actions of large numbers of people has become a dominant structural feature of modern forms of organization. Only through this organizational device has large scale planning, both for the modern state and for the modern economy, become possible.

Bureaucratic organization is, to Weber, the privileged instrumentality that has shaped the modern polity, the modern economy, and the modern technology. Bureaucratic types of organization are technically superior to all other forms of administration, much as machine production is superior to handicraft methods.

Yet, Weber also noted the dysfunction of bureaucracy. Its major advantage, the calculability of results, also makes it unwieldy and even stultifying in dealing with individual cases. Thus, modern rationalized and bureaucratized systems of law have become incapable of dealing with individual particularities, to which earlier types of justice were well suited.

Factors leading to bureaucratization

Weber believed that several historical factors led to the development of the bureaucratic means of administration under legal domination. He divided it into two distinct categories of change:

1) changes occurring in the society due to the process of industrialization; and

2) Changes occurring in the system of rationality and decision-making.

Rapid industrialization helped creating advance technology in calculation; and at the same time, it created a greater need for the use of rational accounting methods in industrial and commercial enterprise, leading to rationalization of the conduct of everyday life and industrial production.

Eventually this gave rise to the sphere of the office. With the rise of the technical means of administration and the appearance of the official, argues Weber, the workday was subject to norms of efficiency and technical control could be exerted outside the home.

Characteristics of Bureaucracy

Weber outlined a number of key characteristics related to bureaucratic administration. Among these are the following characteristics:

1. A bureaucratic administration presupposes a chain of command that is hierarchically organized. This organization follows a clearly defined structure of off ices and positions, with duly assigned responsibilities.

2. The rights and the duties of officials are explicitly prescribed and prescribed in a written regulations, Because of this, the staff members owe their allegiance to the system of impersonal legal rules.

3. in a bureaucracy, a system of impersonal rules governs the rites and duties of positional incumbents.

4. Officials receive contractually fixed salaries and do not own their positions or the means of production.

5. A bureaucracy presupposes a system of impersonal guidelines for dealing with and defining work responsibilities.

6. A bureaucracy is predicted on a clearly defined division of labour based upon functional specialization of tasks and well-defined hierarchy of authority.

7. Within the bureaucracy, a norm of impersonality governs interpersonal relationship.

8. Officials treat people in terms of 'cases' rather than as individuals, and remain impersonal in their contact with public.

9. Written documents and orientation to files is a precondition to legitimate decision making.

10. in a bureaucratic administration, the discharge of responsibilities is based on calculable rules which are carried out 'without regard for persons'.

One of the most important characteristics of bureaucracy is the concept of the office. By 'office', Weber meant a sphere of legal authority that is granted to an area of work, which is under the administrative jurisdiction of an official and his or her directives.

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9

HABERMAS' Sociological Theory

Objective

The Objective of this study material is to introduce Jurgen Habermas, one of the most celebrated living sociologists, to the students and familiarize them to the concepts of modern sociology. Harberams is one of the most influential contemporary sociologists. He is especially noted for his critique of postmodernism which is an intellectual current that questions the hitherto assumptions of Western thought, also known as Enlightenment, such as the universal validity of Reason, Justice and Truth. Habermas is considered the last line of defence for Reason in European thought. At the same time, he departs from Positivism, the culmination of Enlightenment thought. Habermas thus tries to give us understanding and insight into the processes of human action, interaction, and organization.

Influences on Habermas

Habermas was born in 1929 in Germany. He was under the sway of philosopher Martin Heidegger until 1953. He was then inspired by George Lukacs' History and Class Consciousness and Adomo and Horkheimer's Dialectic of Enlightenment He joined the Institute for Social Science Research, better known a,,; the Frankfurt Institute, in 1956. He brought out his first major work, Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, in 1962. In the early 1970s, Habermas began arguing for a reorientation of critical theory towards a renewed collaboration between philosophy and social sciences. His magnum opus, The Theory of Communicative Action, was published in 1981.

His works often refer to the ideas of various thinkers with an eye towards critiquing and yet utilizing them or, rather, synthesizing them into a critical theory. Habermas treats such thinkers as Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Mead, Lukacs, Horkheimer, Adomo, and Parsons and "virtual dialogue partners." Turher says that Habermas, in his conceptualization of communicative action, blends elements of George Herbert Mcad's behaviourist/interactionist approach and Alfred Schutz's phenomenological/interactionist ideas with ethnomethodology and linguistic analysis.

Critical Theory and Frankfurt School

The theme of human emancipation in Karl Marx was carried over to subsequent thought under a number of guises, the most important of them being critical theory. Critical theory holds that the aim of social sciences is to liberate human being from social restraints. Critical theory was primarily developed by the

thinkers of the Frankfurt School. Frankfurt School was an institution set up in Germany in early twentieth century. During the lifetime of the first generation of critical theorists, the world did not seem to be rife with emancipatory. Max Weber's analysis of the increasing bureaucratic control over every sphere of life seemed to be a more apt prognosis of the future than Marx's communism. Thus the first critical theorists grappled with the question. How to reconcile Marx's emancipatory project with Weber's characterization of modern society? According to Habermas, it was George Lukacs who blended Marx and Weber by unveiling the on vergence of Marx's ideas about commoditication of social relations through money with Weber's thesis on rationalization of more and more spheres of modern life.

Major Contributions

Habermas has contributed many concepts to sociology: public phase, legitimation crisis, communicative rationality etc. In Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, Habermas traces the genesis and dissolution of the public sphere. The public sphere originated in the eighteenth century when various fora for public debate - clubs, cafes, journals, newspapers - proliferated. These fare helped erode feudalism which is legitimated by religion and custom rather than consensus reached through public debate. The public sphere was strengthened by the development of market economy. This sphere is a realm of social life where people can bring up matters of general interest; where they can discuss and debate these issues without recourse to custom, dogma, and force; and where they can resolve differences of opinion by rational argument.

In his earlier works, The Logic of the Social Sciences and Knowledge and Human Interest, Habermas analyses the systems of knowledge in order to lay down a framework for critical theory. He say that science is but one type of knowledge aimed at meeting only one set of human interests. Habermas outlines three basic types of knowledge that encompass the full range of human reason. First, empirical-analytical knowledge that pertains to understanding the laws of the material world. Secondly, hermeneutic-historical knowledge that is devoted to understanding of meanings, epsecially through the interpretations of historical texts. Thirdly, critical knowledge that reveals the conditions of constraint and domination. These three types of knowledge correspond to three basic types of human interests, respectively. First, a technical interest in the reproduction of human existence by controlling the environment. Secondly, a pratical interest in understanding the meaning of situations. Thirdly, and emancipatory interest to achieve freedom for growth and improvement. These three types of human interest create the three types of knowledge, respectively. The interest in material production has created science or empirical-analytical knowledge. The interest in understanding meanings has resulted in hermencutic-historical knowledge. And the interest in liberation has led to the development of critical theory.

Theory of Communicative Action

Habermas thinks that emancipation of the human being from oppression can be achieved through "communicative action," which is roughly a modified concept of public sphere.

Habermas first tries to reconceptualise action and rationality while shifting

emphasis from subjectivity and consciousness of the individual to the process of symbolic interaction. There are four types of action: teleological, normative, dramaturgical and communicative. Firstly, teleological action entails calculating various means, and selecting the most appropriate means to acheive explicit goals, Habermas also calls this action "instrumental". Teleological action is hitherto considered rational action. But Habermas asks since teleological means -ends rationality is what oppresses the people today, how can critical theory propose rationality? Because such a rational theory will also be yet another oppressive application of rationality. Habermas, therefore, answers that there are several types of action and true rationality does not lie in teleological action, but is communicative action.

Secondly, normative action is behaviour oriented to common values of a group. It is directed towards fulfilling the normative expectations of a collective group of individuals. Thirdly, dramaturgical action is ego-entric action whereby actors mutually manipulate their behaviour before one another, presenting their own intentions. It is also social since manipulation is doen in the context of organized activity.

Thirdly, communicative action is interaction among agents who use speech and nonverbal symbols as a way of understanding their mutual situation and their respective plans of action. This helps them agree on how to coordinate their behaviour.

The four types of action presupposes different kinds, of "worlds". Each action oriented to different aspects of the universe that can be divided into (1) "Objective or external world" of manipulable objects, (2) "Social world" of norms, values, and other socially recognized expectations, arid (3) "Subjective world" of experiences. Teleological action is concerned primarily with the objective world, normative action with the social, and dramaturgical action with the subjective and external. It is only with communicative action that actors "refer simultaneously to things in the objective, social, and subjective worlds in order to negotiate common definitions of the situation."

Habermas summarises his basic premise in Volume 1 of The Theory of Communicative Actior7:

"if we assume that the human species maintains itself through the socially coordinated activities of its members and that this coordination is established through communication - and in certain sphers of life, through communication aimed at reaching agreement - then the reproduction of the species also requires satisfy in the conditions of a rationality inherent in communicative action."

Communicative action is more rational than the other three types of actions because it involves all three worlds and proceeds in terms of speecs acts that assert three types of validity claims. These speech acts assert that, first, the statements are true in reference to the external and subjective world, secondly, they are correct with, respect to the existing normative context or social world, and, thirdly, they reflect the subjective world of intention and experiences of the actor. Communicative action - in which these three types of validity claims are

made, accepted, or challenged by others - is more rational than other types of action. If a validity claim is not accepted, then it is debated and discussed in order to reach an understanding without using force.

While making validity claims through speech acts, actors use existing definitions of situations or create new ones. In other words, when people communicatively interact, they not only use but also produce common definitions of the situation. These definitions are part of the life world of a society. These definitions become part of the stocks of knowledge in their life worlds, and they become the standards by which validity claims are made, accepted, and challenged. In communicative action, the lifeworld serves as a point of reference for the adjudication of validity claims which encompass all the three worlds - objective, social, and subjective. In Habermas, the lifeworld functions as a "court of appeals" for communicative action. As the common definitions are produced and reproduced through communicative action, they are the basis for the rational and non-oppresive integration of a society.

Criticism

Habermas' classification of teleological, normative, dramaturgical, and communicative action enriches our understanding of human behaviour. But his distinction between the teleological and the normative does not add beyond Talcott Parsons' analysis in The Structure of Social Action, which in turn does not go much beyond Max Weber's analysis. Though Habermas incorporates Goff man's ideas into his action theory, he does not develop Goff man's ideas on dramaturgical action. The only uniqueness of Habermas' contribution is the conceptualization of communicative action.

The conceptualization of reaching an inter-subjective understanding through speech acts and common assumption of the lifeworld is an example of a creative synthesis of linguistics, ethnomethodology, phenomenology, and symbolic interactionism.

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10

ANTONIO DRAMATIC
Hegemony & Role of Masses

Objectives

This chapter aims to gain an insight into the life and theory of Antonio Gramsci, a leading Italian Marxist. It also focuses on his contributions with reference to Karl Marx's theory.

Concept

Gramsci's understanding of the role of intellectuals in society - traditional and organic, as well as the concept of hegemony, are of prime importance in this chapter.

Some basic concepts of Marxism are given below in order to bring about a better understanding of Gramsci's philolsophy.

Economic Determinism

According to Karl Marx, the form of property is the most important feature of any society. Human being's relation with respect to the property is what determines their positions in society. Relations of production determine and form the base of society. The superstructure in the form of ideas, religion, politics, culture are all built upon the base i.e. the relations of production.

Class Struggle

In a capitalist society the capitalists or the bourgeoise own the means of production. The economic power of the bourgeoise is also converted to power in the political stream and this dictates the life of the rest of society. The proletariat are the working class who own nothing but their own labour. There is a struggle between these two classes as the proletariat are exploited by the bourgeoise for profit.

Introduction

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) was a leading Italian Marxist. He was an intellectual, a journalist and a major theorist. He spent the last 11 years of his life in Mussolini's prisons. It was in this period that he completed 32 notebooks containing almost 3,000 pages called "Prison Notebooks". These notebooks were smuggled out from his prison and published in Italian after the war. However it was published in English only in the 1970s. The main idea of the Prison Notebooks was to develop a new Marxist theory to be applied to the conditions of advanced capitalism.

Gramsci was born in Ales, Sardinia which was a very backward part of newly unified Italy, His mother belonged to a well to do Sardinian family. However his father was a minor civil servant from the mainland and considered an outsider. His father was also imprisoned for malpractices in administration. Gramsci grew up in poverty and was quite lonely as a child. At the age of 3 he had an unfortunate accident because of which he grew up with a hunch back.

Gramsci was well read, intelligent and a good student in school. He heft University after four years, without completing his graduation. In 1913 he joined the Italian Socialist Party and became a full time journalist on its news paper Avanti. In 1917, inspired by the Russian Revolution he began to get involved in political organization and was instrumental in the emergent Factory Councils Movement, the background of which is given below.

After the war there was a crisis in the economy of Italy. The soldiers were rendered jobless and the unemployment ranks swelled. Thus the situation with inflation, debt and unemployment was rather chaotic and frustrating. The working class was very unhappy as their standard of living was very poor. This was in contrast to the capitalists whose earnings kept increasing. At that point the trade unions were considered as the most efficient body to deal with the capitalists. It was with this background that the Factory Councils movement started.

The trade union members used to elect their own "internal commissions" to handle small scale matters of arbitration and discipline. Gramsci was keen on converting these internal commissions into Factory Councils. He believed that the first step towards replacing capitalist power by the proletariat was to ensure that everyone in the company elected their representatives. Secondly he also believed that the Council should be based on division of labour inside the factory. The main task of the Council was to change the attitude of the mass of workers from that of dependence to leadership. The Council was for the proletariat while the trade union operated within the framework of a bourgeoise society.

However the failure of the Turin Councils movement led Gramsci to modify his views.

Hegemony

Gramsci accepted the analysis of -capitalism put forth by Marx, that the struggle between the ruling class and the subordinate working class was the driving force that moved society forward. But he disagreed with the traditional Marxist view of how the ruling class ruled. It was here that Gramsci made a major contribution to modern thought in his concept of the role played by ideology.

To put it simply, hegemony may be understood as "common sense", a cultural universe, where the dominant ideology is practiced and spread. It emerged out of social and class struggles and serves to shape and influence peoples minds. It is a set of ideas by means of which dominant groups strive to secure the consent of subordinate groups to their leadership. The capitalists succeeded

in persuading the other classes of society to accept its own moral, political and cultural values as their own. A plain consent was given by the majority of a population towards the direction suggested by those in power. However, this consent was not always peaceful, and could combine physical force on coercion with intellectual, moral and cultural inducement.

According to Gramsci hegemony thus referred to the Permeation throughout society, of an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs and morality that had the effect of supporting the status quo in power relations. These values and attitudes became internalized so well that it was almost as if they were the natural way for things to be: as it the socialization process had internalized these thoughts amongst all the people.

Mary's basic division of society into a base represented by the economic structure and a superstructure represented by the institutions and beliefs prevalent in society was accepted by most Marxists. Extending this Gramsci divided the superstructure into those institutions that were openly coercive and those that were not. The coercive ones, which were basically the public institutions such as the government, police, armed forces and the legal system, he regarded as the state or political society. The non-coercive ones were the others such as the churches, the schools, trade unions, political parties, cultural associations, clubs, the family etc. which he regarded as civil society. So for Gramsci, society was made up of tile relations of production (capital vs labour); the state or political society (coercive institutions) and civil society (all other non-coercive institutions).

Since the hegemony of the ruling capitalist class resulted from an ideological bond between the rulers and the ruled, a strategy needed to be employed in order to change tile scheme of things. Those who were keen on breaking that ideological nexus had to build up a 'counter hegemony' to that of the ruling class. The mass of the people would have to concentrate on the ideological struggle in order to question the rights of the capitalists to rule, in the economic and political realm.

However, is not easy to overcome popular consensus. Ideological hegemony meant that the majority of the population accepted what was happening in society as the only way of running society. There may have been dissatisfaction about certain ways of working and people looked for improvements: but the basic beliefs and value system operating in society were seen as either neutral or of general applicability in relation to the class structure of society.

Gamsci felt that the intellectuals of the ruling class were very powerful and hence subsume the intellectuals of the other social groups. Thus hegemony implid a condition/ concept wherein the ruling class obtained the consent of the subordinate groups for their own domination. The thought processes of the ruling class got inculcated in the entire society and became their "common sense." In most cases, they didn't have to resort to any force in getting their way of thinking accepted as the right way.

Till the cultural hegemony of the bourgeoise continued, it was not possible for the proletariat to have a revolution and bring about a change in their status. The proletariat thus wouldn't be able to understand their problems and difficulties. The bourgeoise hegemony was so strong that the proletariat actually believed and accepted the interests of the bourgeoise as their own. The whole of society thereby represented the interests of the bourgeoise. Thus Gramsci was the first Marxist theorist to show how the capitalists maintained their control through consent rather than force and hence a proletariat revolution was not possible till such a situation existed.

In order to succeed against the bourgeoise, the working class would have to put forth a counter hegemony. They would have to rise above their narrow sectarian interests and fight for he interests of society as a whole. This would be possible only if the intellectuals of the working class worked together actively. In this struggle Gramsci considered the role of the Party important as it would offer a counter culture with the aim of gaining a rise in the civil society before political power was wrested.

Hegemony was not a strategy for "he bourgeoise exclusively, In fact the working class could develop its own hegemony as a strategy to control the State. Nevertheless, Gramsci stated that the only way to perform this labour class control is by taking into account the interests of other groups and social forces and finding ways of combining them with its own interests.

If the working class was to achieve hegemony, it would have to build up a network of alliances with social minorities. These new coalition would have to respect the autonomy of the movement, so that each group can make its own special contribution toward a new socialist society.

Gramsci stated that hegemony was readjusted and renegotiated constantly and couldn't be taken for granted. Periodically there may develop an organic crisis An which the governing group begins to fall apart. This would then provide the subordinate class the opportunity to begin a movement demanding a change in the existing order and achieving hegemony. But if the opportunity was not taken, then the balance of forces would shift back to the dominant class. This would help it to reestablish its hegemony on the basis of a new pattern of alliances.

The way of challenging the dominant hegemony is political activity.

However Gramsci distinguished between two different kind of political streategies to overthrow the predominant hegemony and thereby form a socialist society:

The way of challenging the dominant hegemony was political activity. Gramsci proposed a distinction between two different kind of political strategies to overthrow the predominant hegemony and thereby form a socialist society. He borrowed the following terns from studies of military science:

a) War of manoeuvre or movement:

This is a strategy in which the missiles or weapons could open up sudden gaps in defences and troops could be switched from one point to another quickly to storm through and capture fortresses. The objective of the war of manoeuvre thus was winning quickly through frontal attack. It is especially recommended for societies with a centralized and dominant state power that have failed in developing a strong hegemony within the civil society (i.e. Bolshevik revolution, 1917).

b) War of position:

This refers to a situation in which the enemies are well balanced and have to settle down to a long period of trench warfare. War of position thus involves long struggle primarily, across institutions of civil society. Here the socialist forces gain control through cultural and ideological struggle, instead of only political and economic contest. This kind of procedure is especially suggested for the liberal-democratic societies of Western capitalism with weaker states but stronger hegemonies (i.e.: Italy).

Gramsci considered the war of position to become more important as capitalism developed. As far as the war of movement is considered, it should be launched only after considerable thinking and evaluation. This is because it was too expensive for the working class to launch it.

The creation of working class intellectuals actively participating in practical life, helping to create a counter hegemony that would undermine existing social relations was Gramsci's contribution to the development of a philosophy that would link theory with practice.

Role of the Intellectuals

Gramsci focused on the role of the superstructure unlike Marx. The delineation of the role that the intellectuals play in society states this fact quite clearly. Gramsci said that all human beings are born intellectuals. But every person has a different role and function in society. Each person contributes to society according to his role and function. Therefore though everyone has the quality of being an intellectual, it is not their function or role to play that part in society. According to Gramsci, the role of the intellectual was crucial in the context of creating a counter hegemony. He felt that if a change had to be made from capitalism to socialism, then the involvement of the masses would be imperative. Socialism would not be possible by a handful of elite representing the working class. It had to be the work of the majority of the population conscious of what they were doing. For Gramsci, mass consciousness was therefore essential and the role of the intellectual was vital.

Historically, different intellectuals have created the ideologies that have moulded societies; each class creates one or more groups of intellectuals. Thus Gramsci suggested that if the working class wanted to succeed in becoming hegemonic, it would have to create its own intellectuals to develop a new ideology. He made a distinction between traditional and organic intellectuals. Traditional intellectuals referred to people like artists, writers, philosophers. This

category believed that they were independent of social classes. They were linked to the historically declining classes. Yet they pretended to have an ideology, so that the fact that they were outdated or absolete could be hidden. Although they liked to think of themselves as independent of ruling groups, this was usually a myth and an illusion. Being conservative and assisting the ruling group in society, were their characteristics.

Gramsci also delineated the role of the organic intellectual. Organic intellectuals represented and worked for the collective consciousness and aspirations of their class in every sphere-political, social and economical. The strength of the organic intellectual was displayed by the organization which he belonged to and the -connection and degree of closeness of that organization to the class it belonged to. This was the group that grew organically with the dominant social group, the ruling class. For Gramsci it was important to see them for what they were. They were produced by the educational system to perform a function for the dominant social group in society. He stated that it was through this group that the ruling class maintained its hegemony over the rest of society.

According to Gramsci it was important for the working class to develop its own organic intellectuals. Only then could it be successful in its endeavours. Along with producing its own organic intellectuals, it also had to conquer the traditional intellectuals.

The important role of the organic intellectual was to realize the dreams, potential and aspirations of the working classes, which were already inherent in them. Thus the role was a dialectic one: the organic intellectuals would draw material from the working class while imparting to it the historical consciousness. Gramsci considered the Party to be the organization of the intellectuals and it was most linked to its class. It was through the party that the collective will of the of the people took shape and found an expression.

Gramsci felt that it was more difficult for the proletariat to develop its organic intellectuals. than the bourgeoise. And occasionally even said that the working class would have to seize power from the state for the production of intellectuals.

I Gramsci wanted to work towards the creation of organic intellectuals from within the working class and also to get more traditional intellectuals to contribute towards the cause of the working class revolution. He worked towards this through a journal called L 'Ordine Nuovo (New Order), subtitled "a weekly review of Socialist culture". This journal came out at the same time as the huge spontaneous outbreak of industrial and political militancy that swept Turin in 1919. It mirrored events throughout the industrial world that shook the very foundation of capitalist society.

Gramsci did not focus much on the economic substructure. Rather he focused on the means by which the proletariat could gain an understanding of the socio economic relations in a capitalist society, so as to overthrow it through political means. He analysed the base through the superstructure and is one of the Marxist thinkers who constantly used the dialectical approach.

An analysis of Gramsci's theory

Gramsci's theory has been a major contribution to sociology. Several Sociologists have pointed out the merits of his theory. The emergence of a critical sociology of culture and the politicisation of culture has been a result of his thought process. He resolved two central weaknesses of Marx's original approach. One was the assumption that social development always originates from the economic structure; the second was a high degree of reliance on the possibility of a spontaneous outburst of revolutionary consciousness among the working class. Gramsci thus focused on he routine structures of everyday 'common sense', which work to sustain class domination. He also displayed a lack of dogmatism, unlike some other, Marxist authors.

However, certain flaws in his theory have also been pointed out. According to some Sociologists, Gramsci's ideas are reductionist on account of his Marxist background. This line of thinking is also found in the theories of the Frankfurt School and Althusser's work. Being a class-based analysis it tends to simplify the relation between the people and their own culture.

It has also been pointed out that Gramsci's proposed the concept of hegemony is uniform, static and abstract structure. His ideas about the role of intellectuals in society are rather elitist, and all the theory is too political and partisan to be credible. Gramsci's theory also lacks empiricism. It leaves no room for studies of audiences, surveys or something related directly with the people and their behaviour.

However one must bear in mind that only such productive thought processes c an invite such an intense analysis.

Structuralist Marxism and Althusser:

Equally opposed to Hegelian - Marxism, but much more influential, was the structuralist Marxism that arose in France in mid-1960s. It sought to harmonise Marxist thought with the apparently organized and passive nature of advanced industrial society in which both the working class and the bourgeois ego had lost their self-confident sense of mission. Levistrauss used the concept of 'structure' to illuminate primitive societies, whereas Lacan and Foucault did the same in psychology and epistemology. For these thinkers, what was vital for our understanding of human society was not the conscious activities of the human subject, but the unconscious structure which these activities presupposed. Given the immense influence of structuralism in the 1960's, it is not surprising that a structuralist reading of Marx should emerge. The major figure here is Louis Althusser, a French philosopher who began elaborating his ideas around 1960. Althusser rejected both the humanist Marxism of the young Lukacs, Sartre and Gramsci with its emphasis on men as the subject of history, and the simplistic economism that he considered inherent in traditional dialectical materialism.

Althusser started with the question of how to interpret Marx. In his view, Marx's work

was not a coherent whole. It did contain a scientific conception of history. But to understand the theoretical gaps in his work, it was essential to rigorously define the concepts and understand their interrelations.

Althusser's basic question was: "What is Marxist philosophy? Has it any theoretical right to existence? And if it does exist in principle, how can its specificity be defined?" To answer this question, 'capital' was the basic text and Althusser aimed to uncover and display the philosophy inherent in it.

Rejecting the humanism of Marx's early works Althusser saw what he termed an, epistemological break' between the young Marx and the mature Marx. According to Althusser, marx's early and late writings contained two distinct problematics. A problematic was 'the objective internal reference system of its particular themes, the system of questions commanding the answers given'. (Althusser, 1970. p.67) Marx's early, Hegelian writings, by concentrating on the concepts of alienation and species-being, displayed an ideological problematic of the subject - only his later writings contained a problematic that allowed the foundation of a science.

Althusser, in a distinctly neo-kantian vein saw the task of philosophy as the creation of concepts which were a precondition for knowledge. He insisted on the strict separation of the object of thought from the real object. Knowledge working on its object was a specific from a practice, theoretical practice. This theoretical practice consisted of three elements which Althusser called generalities I 11 and Ill. Generalities I were the raw materials of a given discipline - its ideas and concepts; partly scientific, partly ideological. These were worked over by the means of theoretical production. Generalities I I - the framework of concepts of a science, which constituted its problematic. The production of this working over was generalities III - the concrete- in-thought which provided knowledge of the real-concrete. Marxist philosophy-dialectical materialism was the theory of this theoretical practice.

The result of this epistemology when applied to society was the science of historical materialism. Parallelly to his strict separation of the object of thought from the real object, Althusser rejected Hegel's conception of totality in which the elements of the 'whole were merely phenomenal expressions of an inner essence, e.g. the essence of Rome expressed in Roman Law, Roman Politics etc. in contrast to this simple approach what Marx did, according to Althusser, was to develop the concept of society as a totality, "whose unity is constituted by a certain specific type of complexity, which introduces instances, that, following Engels, we can systematically, reduce to three: the economy, politics and ideology. Each of these was a structure united in a structure of structures -causality was itself structural. As Althusser put it, "the structure is immanent in its effects, a cause immanent in its effects in the Spinozist sense of the term, that the whole existence of the structure consists of its effects, in short that the structure, which is merely a specific combination of its peculiar elements, is nothing outside its effects."

Each level had its own peculiar time, its own rhythm of development. This complex and uneven relationship of the instances or levels to each other at a specific time was called by Althusser a 'conjuncture.' Every conjuncture was said to be 'overdetermined' in that each of the levels contributed to determining the structure as well as being determined by it: determination was always complex. Thus Althusser rejected the idea that there was only one simple contradiction between forces and relations of production, between base and superstr ucture.

Althusser drew a distinction between instances which were dominant and those which were determinant. Under feudalism, for example, the political was the dominant instance but the fact that the political was dominant was itself determined by the economy. Given that there was always a dominant element, Althusser called the structure 'a structure in dominance.' But the determining role of the economy on this structure in dominance could never be isolated from the structure as a whole.

From the notion of structural causality followed the conception of history as 'a process without a subject.' History was not the unilinear and homogeneous process of man's mastery over nature. "To be dialectic- materialist, Marxist philosophy must break with the idealist category of the 'subject' as origin. Essence and cause, responsible in its internality for all the determinations of the external 'object', of which it is said to be the 'subject." (Althusser, 1976, p. 96)

In Hegel, this subject was the Absolute. According to Althusser, all Marx did in his early writings was to substitute the idea of human essence for the Absolute as the subject of history. It was only in 1845-46 that Marx came to see that human nature was 'no abstraction inherent in each single individual' but only' the ensemble of the social relations.'

Criticism of Althusser's Theories.

Althusser's account of Marx, in particular its concept of the problematic and its insistence on the relative autonomy of the sciences, was a good antidote both to all types of reductionism and to extreme forms of Hegalian Marxism. Nevertheless, Althusser's theories met with criticism on three counts. Firstly, Althusser claimed that dialectical materialism was a science but offered no criterion of scientificity of' how we know its knowledge to be true knowledge. Any recourse to areal object' was ruled out by his rejection of empiricism.

Secondly, Althusser declared ideology to be the realm of illusion, but still insisted that ideology was not restricted to class society but would also exist under communism. For, thirdly, dialectical materialism, as Marxist science, was cut off from the influence of the conditions of social production, existed outside the social formation, and ultimately appeared as the preserve of an intellectual elite disconnected from the revolutionary activity of the working class. This failure to offer a satisfactory account of the relation of theory to practice was the weakest part of Althusser's Marxism.

Critics have pointed out that, although Althusser's theories seem to stand above the class struggle, his counter-position of ideology and science in fact servers to justify the existence of the party and bureaucracy for scientific knowledge is necessarily open only to the few, while even under communism the masses will have to make do with ideology.

Althusser' work was highly theoretical. The attempts of his followers to apply his ideas have concentrated on two main fields: contemporary politics and the study of history. Althusser distinguished between Repressive State Apparatuses and Ideological State Apparatuses such as Trade Unions, Churches, Schools, and analyzed the role o of the latter as important sites of class struggle.

The contemporary capitalist state is a class state in that the social formation which is functions, to maintain is one dominated at the various levels, by the capitalist class-irrespective of what positions of political power, may be held by representatives of this class. The result is an amalgamation of Marxism and structural-functionalism in which the chief difficulty remains the explanation of change in the structure.

Conclusion

Gramsci provided a new dimension by focusing on the superstructure unlike Marx. He tried to put into action the actual procedure through which the proletariat could establish their rule by overthrowing the bourgeoise.

Due to political involvements and continuous poverty Gramsci was unable to continued his University education. Thereafter he became an influential journalist, a prominent political activist and parliamentarian, leader of the Italian Communist part and finally a prisoner in Mussolini's gaols (11926-37).

His exalted reputation among Marxist socialist thinkers definitely owes a lot to his writings in the prison, now called the Prison Notebooks. The ideas discussed in the Notebooks are intellectuals, fordism, hegemony, fascism, political parties and Italian history and education.

These then are ideas which made him a pivotal figure in the Marxist social science circle in the 1970s.

Summary

Gramsci was an intelligent student and an intellectual. Despite poverty and a difficult childhood, he showed great promise by being involved in various debates concerning the masses and Marxist social science.

The concept of hegemony refers to situation wherein the ideas, values and attitudes of the capitalists infiltrate into the whole of society. The working class also accepts the thinking of the capitalists as their own, without realizing the true pictures. In order to change this unfortunate scheme of the things the workers would have to break and do away with the capitalist hegemony and provide a counter hegemony. The role of the intellectuals was vital in order to bring about this change.

Though Gramsci has been criticized for his theory, one cannot but accept the merits of the same.

Additional Readings

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Questions

1   Discuss Gramsci's views on Hegemony.

2.   How does Gramsci perceive the role of the intellectuals?

3.   How according to Gramsci, can a proletariat hegemony, be brought about?

4.   Examine Gramsci's theory with reference to Karl Marx.

5.   How does Althusser interpret Marx's work?

6.   Discuss Althusser's structuralist Marxism.

7.   Give a critique of Althusser's Theories.

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9

G. H. MEAD:
Symbolic Interactionism

The objective of this unit is to gain an insight into the works of one of the most prominent and foremost symbolic interactionist of all times: G. H. Mead.

This unit starts with a brief introduction of symbolic interaction by way of comparison with structural functionalism.

Then we look at the contributions of G. H. Mead who is considered to be he founder of this approach.

The unit explains the main tenets of Mead's symbolic interactionism by explaining the major influences on Mead, what he considers to be the characteristics of humans and finally by focusing on his major work - Mind, Self and Society (1934), whereby it is explained how individual identity is socially created i.e. it arises from social interaction (between the individual and other people) and social experience.

CONCEPTS USED:

(i)   STRUCTURAL FUNCTIONALISM: It perceives roles as locating individuals in social positions, and providing them with articulated sets of expectations specifying the rights and duties of occupants.

(ii)   SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM: Focuses on process instead of structure, specifically on the process of meaningful human communication (which includes the roles of symbols and language).

(iii)   MIND: According to Mead, mind is social and is a result of social interaction.

(iv)   SELF: According to Mead, self is a process which is active and creative takes on the roles of others and responds. The self is comprised of "I" and "Me".

(v)   M Is the internal sense of who you are. Its spontaneous, impulsive, unorganized, inner, creative and subjective.

(vi)   "Me": Is the organized attitude towards others. It is more social and determined. It is the self-concept or how we perceive others to be seeing us.

(vii) GENERALIZED OTHER: Is the organized community or social group which gives to the individual his unity of self. The attitude of the generalized

other is the attitude of the whole community.

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM:

In this unit we shall examine the work of G. H. Mead and the work of Erving Goffman will be covered in the next unit, but before going ahead let us look at the special contribution of Symbolic Interactionism to the understanding of self hood.

The answer is given by way of comparison with the fundamental tenets of structuralism-functionalism:

STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONALISM:

It perceives roles as locating individuals in social positions, and providing them with articulated sets of expectations specifying the rights and duties of occupants. This perspective is oriental towards order and stability, and preservation of the status quo. It views social systems as tending towards equilibrium, integration and harmony of parts, and regards deviance as residual, usually to be explained in terms of aberrations of individual experience. Correspondingly, structural role theory has focused on conforming behaviour, consensus and continuity. It fails to account for conflict, change and disharmonies. It denies any impact of the individual characteristics in the social process. Humans are seen as automatons, quietly acquiescent in reflecting the social norms they have been programmed through socialization to duplicate.

The individual motivation is viewed as social and as the product of two basic processes:

(i)   The first is an intrenalisation of social norms (about expectations derived from the positions they occupy) through socialization.

(ii)   The second process is conformity to those normative expectations (which tend to become moral imperatives) motivated by need for approval and acceptance by others.

The direction of influence is unilaterally from society to the person. Role theory neglects the impact role enactment can have on social structure, hence it offers no Systematic explanation for (non-traumatic) modification of role expectations. Social actors are coneptualised as pragmatic performers without having any input on norms, roles or society in general. They simply act out scripts written by the culture.

Structural role theory also fails to consider the importance of the interaction process itself in modifying the more structured aspect of the social environment. It fails' to recognize that persons can have considerable latitude in constructing role portrayals. Constructed role portrayels are seen as sources of personal satisfaction, and role bargaining is deemed basic to processes by which new roles emerge and social change occurs. It neglects the interpretive procedures

individuals use to construct consensus or shared agreement during interaction.

SYMBOLIC INTERATIONISM:

In contrast, symbolic interactionism focuses on process instead of structure, specifically on the process of meaningful human communication. From its inception it has stressed the significance of person's perceptions and definitions of the situation in structuring social behaviour, as well as constructing shared meanings in the process of interaction (Mead).

It has been defined as a theoretical approach based on the philosophy of pragmatism, which focuses on the role of symbols and language in human interaction.

The image of society held by symbolic interactionism is a web of communication. Social life is visualised as a dynamic process. Society and person take on their meanings as these emerge in and through social interaction. Implicit in this image is a conception of human beings as "minded" and not "mindless", as active and creative rather than passively responsive. This is an image that insists on a degree of indeterminacy in human behaviour, in the sense that the course and the outcome of social interaction cannot be totally predicted from the knowledge of the structural parameters.

The interactionist view of human nature is premised upon W. 1. Thomas's dictum that situations that people define as real are real in their consequences.

Ali varieties of symbolic interactionism share a substantive view that human beings construct their realities in a process of interaction with other human beings. They take as basic premises that:

1.   Humans act towards things on the basis of the meaning those things have for them,

2.   These meanings emerge from social interaction.

3.   These meanings are modified and handled through an interpretive process that is used by each person in dealing with the things they encounter.

Symbolic Interactionism is an attempt to ground a social psychological theory on assumptions about human distinctive characteristics.

These assumptions are;

(1) People live in a symbolic environment as well as a physical environment. A symbol is defined as a stimulus that has a learned meanings, values and expectations. Practically all the symbols a person learns are learned trough communication with others,

hence most symbols can be though of as common or shared meanings, within a given culture, Not all symbols are words: they can be gestures and objects.

(2) Through symbols, a person can evoke within oneself the same meaning and value that they invoke in another. Following Mead it can be said that communication involves role taking "taking the role of the other" (empathy). It means that the communicator imagines how the recipient of their communication understands that communication. The other can be a specific other, or a generalized other. The learned symbols which require role-taking for their communication Mead called significant symbols, as distinguished from natural signs which instinctively invoke the same body response. The meaning of social objects, or symbols is not intrinsic but emergent: it flows from the nature of the interaction that people engage with it. That meaning is derived from an interpersonal process implies that reality is socially defined: it is negotiable.

(3) Communication with cultural symbols does not imply cultural determinism. First, while values indicate requirements or pressures for a certain kind of behaviours-cultural meanings indicate possibilities for behaviours. Additionally, most cultural expectations are for ranges of behaviour rather than for specific behaviour, and some are for variation rather than conformity.

Second, the communicator may influence the addressee, but can control (predict) neither 'the meaning attached to it by the addressee, nor the response.

(4) The symbols - and the meanings and values to which they refer - do not occur only in isolated bits, but often in clusters. These clusters are usually referred to as roles or structures. Roles are clusters that guide and direct an individual's behaviour in a given social setting. Structure refers to a cluster of related meanings and values that govern a given social setting. They may be small and temporary like an ad-hoc committee, or large and enduring like state or society.

The individual defines oneself as well as other objects, actions and characteristics. The definition of oneself as a specific role-player in a given relationship is what Mead calls a "me": the self as object. We have a defined "me" corresponding to each of our roles, It has been observed by scholars that we have as many "selves" as there are groups of people about whose opinion we care.

The perception of oneself as a whole (integrating all the various "me's") is what Mead calls the "I":' the self as subject.

GEORGE HERBERT MED (11863-1931)

George Herbert Mead (11863-1931) is a major figure in the history of American philosophy, one of the founders of Pragmatism along with Pierce, James, Tufts, and Dewey. Mead was trained in social psychology and philosophy at Harvard University and later in Germany. He spent most of his academic career in the

philosophy department at the University of Chicago. He published numerous papers during his lifetime and, following his death, several of his students produced four books in his name from Mead's unpublished (and even unfinished) notes and manuscripts, from students' notes, and from stenographic records of some of his courses at the University of Chicago.

Through his teaching, Writing, and posthumous publications, Mead has exercised a significant influence in 20th century social theory, among both philosophers and social scientists. During his more-than-40 -year career, Mead thought deeply, wrote almost constantly, and published numerous articles and book reviewed in philosophy and psychology. However, he never ' published a book. After his death, several of his students edited four volumes from stenographic records of his social psychology course at +the University of Chicago, from Mead's lecture notes, and from Mead's numerous unpublished papers. The four books are The Philosophy of the present (1932), edited by Arthur E. Murphy; Mind, Self, and Society (1934), edited by Charles W. Morris; Movements of Thought in the Nineteenth Century (1936), edited by Merritt H. Moore, and The Philosophy of the Act (1938), Mead's Carus Lectures of 1930, edited by Charles W. Morris.

His major work is Mind, Self and Society, a series of his essays put together after Mead's death and originally published in 1934, a work in which he emphasizes how the social world develops various mental states in an individual. This theory of the emergence of mind and self out of the social process of significant communication has become the foundation of the symbolic interactionist school of sociology and social psychology.

In addition to his well-known and widely appreciated social philosophy, Mead's thought includes significant contributions to the philosophy of nature, he philosophy of science, philosophical anthropology, the philosophy of history, and "process philosophy." Both John Dewey and Alf red North Whitehead considered Mead a thinker of the highest order. John Dewey said of George Herbert Mead that he had "the most original mind in philosophy in the America of the last generation." (Coser, 1997; 343-347) * Though this may have been a slight exaggeration, there seems to be consensus among students of philosophy that Mead ranks in the forefront of the exponents of pragmatism in America,

In North America, Mead participated in the development of a pragmatic approach to the study of society-at approximately the same time period as when Weber, Durkheim, and Simmel were developing their theoretical perspectives in Europe.

Holton notes that "Mead was able to avoid both the one-sided individualism of economic liberalism, which assumed that self-interest created its own spontaneous order, and the one-sided collectivism of Durkheim, in which the individual became submerged" (Turner, p.48).* As a result, he "integrated together individualist and collective or supra-individual accounts of social order'(Turnerm, p. 48). *

Mead is often considered the founder of the symbolic interaction approach; he

argued that social interaction creates mind and self, and it is through symbolic forms of communication that the self and community are constructed. From Mead's approach, Herbert Blumer and others developed the symbolic interaction perspective. According to which, sociology is seen as the study of human interaction, the use of symbols and communication in these social interactions, social action resulting from humans considering the meaning things have for them, and humans as being flexible in adjusting to different situations and contexts. Mead established a form of analysis and a theoretical perspective that led to the symbolic interactionist school of sociology. Later sociologists in this tradition are Blumer, Erving Goffman, Arlie Hochschild, and Norman Denzin.

Mead was born into a Congregationalist religious family (a form of Calvinism) and supported progressive causes and social reform, for example he was a supporter of women's rights.

INFLUENCES ON MEAD

Mead's analysis incorporates ideas and approaches from several directions - ideas that were current during the time Mead was writing. Even though he developed these ideas at the same time as Weber and Durkheim, he combined these in quite a different and unique manner.

(I)   Protestant, social reform, and democratic tradition.

Mead incorporated ideas from the social reform tradition of United States Protestantism. He was the son of a clergyman and grew up in the protestant milieu. Many of the progressive people from this tradition considered it important that they undertake social reforms to help improve society, especially the situation of poor and disadvantaged. Mead was also a social reformer, as mentioned above, in that he favoured women getting the right to vote and supported women in obtaining access to higher education and careers. It is the opinion of many scholars that Mead's scientific method has some parallels to democracy.

(ii) German idealism.

From his studied in Germany, Mead adopted the idea of social action (Weber) and realizing a self in opposition to others (Hegel). That is, the individual's self does not have a predetermined or set form, but is developed as the individual encounters others and difference. While there are elements of opposition and contradiction in this, humans develop selves in these struggles. Similarly, society develops through such oppositions.

(iii) Darwin and evolution.

Charles Darwin (11809-1882), author of The Origin of Species, 1859. In his work he developed the theory of natural selection as the means by which plants and animals evolve, organisms adapt and evolve. The idea of adaptation had an important influence on Mead - he considered humans to have an adaptive ability in social matters. That is, humans can consciously reflects on social matters and choose appropriate courses of action. In different contexts and situations, humans can adjust to each other - for Darwin this was more biological and natural, for Mead it was more social and conscious.

(iv)   Wundt and symbols.

In Germany, Mead encountered the ideas of William Wundt, who discussed signs and symbolic communication. Mead adopted this approach and argued that gestures, signs, and language are important to human communication, it carries meaning and precedes action. An example he uses is of a theatre, where someone calls out 'Fire'. By doing this vocal gesture the other people in the auditorium react to the danger and leave.

This is communication and is something that separates humankind from animals. In contrast to non-human animals, humans have the ability to understand and interpret these symbols, so they become significant symbols. Animals gesture, they move, but there is no preceding thought because there is no consciousness, no mind that envisages the action taking place before it does. Let us take the example of dogs attacking other dogs, they do not attribute meaning and do not interpret actions of others. Rather, they respond in a more or less automatic manner to stimuli.

People communicate by a series of these gestures, and that process of communication is termed symbolic interaction. "The conversation of gestures is not significant below the human level because it is not conscious, that is, not self conscious"

While these symbols have common understandings associated with them, each individual interprets and uses these is a somewhat different manner. For example, "shaking a first" is a significant symbol, another human observing this may react. in more or less automatic manner, but may just as well ignore this symbol, attempt to defuse the situation, or attempt to find other responses than engaging in a physical fight. It is this flexibility and the delayed and considered response that makes humans different from other animals.

(v) Pragmatism.

In the late nineteenth century, William James, John Dewey, and other United States writers developed a philosophical approach that is termed pragmatism. Rather than being concerned with rationality and truth in an abstract manner, this perspective considered practical and experiential aspects of how we acquire and construct knowledge. For the pragmatists, there is no eternal or unchanging truth, rather truth is determined by practical results. Since the social world is always changing and since humans encounter different people, situations, and problems, the pragmatic approach is to consider how humans deal with these in a practical manner. In this approach, people are problem-solves and develop an ability to deal with these situations and problems, and this is what constitutes human knowledge.

The pragmatists also consider ethics within this same perspective. Rather than eternal truths or fixes ideas of right and wrong, pragmatists argue that ethical knowledge is constructed in each society. Standards of morality and ethical behaviour differ among societies and change as the situation in each society changes. This is reminiscent of Durkheim, although Mead builds more on the pragmatic approach than Durkheim.

Mead called his approach social behaviourism - that is, humans deal with and react to stimuli (behaviourism) but also reflect on these before acting and do all this in a social context.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HUMANS

Mead looked on the "self as an acting organism, not a passive receptacle that simply receives and responds to stimuli." This is similar to Durkheim, according to whom people are not merely media that can be put into action by apprpriate stimuli, but that they are thoughtful and reflective creatures whose identities and actions as a result of their interactions with others.

For Mead, what distinguishes humans from non-human animals is that humans have the ability o delay their reactions to a stimulus. Intelligence is the ability to mutually adjust actions. Non-human animals also have intelligence because they often can act together or adjust what they do to the actions of other animals. Humans differ from non-human animals in that they have a much greater ability to do this. While humans may do this through involuntary gestures, Mead thought it more important that it is only humans that can adjust actions by using significant or meaningful symbols. As a result of this greater intelligence, humans can communicate, plan, and work out responses, rather than merely reaction in an instinctive or stimulus-response manner.

Mead also looked on humans as being able to understand and take on the attitude of others, incorporating this into one's own attitudes and actions. He expressed this as the ability of the social actor to be acting with reference to himself, so that his actions would include himself as an object. Further, Mead's approach was that human beings are only human when a reflective mind takes the self as an object. Note that this contrasts with Marx who argued that human essence was in creative work and labour, for Mead it was humans ability to take the self as object.

According to Mead, human actions have three characteristics:

(a) Humans are able to organize their minds concerning the array of possible responses open to them;

(b) Humans can consider the likely implications of different actions, and test possible outcomes mentally in their own minds; and

(c) Since there are a range of stimuli that impinge upon an individual, a human need not react to the immediate stimulus, but may react to one of the lesser stimuli. This means that humans are able to make choices that are better adapted to the situation and "intelligence is largely a matter of selectivity" (Ritzer, p. 339).

For Mead, rather than action being defined by:

Stimulus   Response

Action is more appropriately identified with the following sequence of events:

Meaning

Stimulus   interpret and Define   Response.

That is, the stimulus- response pattern is not what characterizes social interaction, but rather what happens between stimulus and response. Here humans go through a process of interpreting and defining the stimulus before providing a response. Associated with this is meaning, which is, the wedding of different attitudes and the use of significant symbols that have the same import for all concerned. That is, when individuals share symbolic interpretations, the act becomes meaningful to them. Therefore, for Mead, symbols are imported in allowing human interaction to occur, and it is the shared understanding of the significance of symbols that and what they denote that makes for social interaction.

MIND, SELF, AND SOCIETY (1934):

Mead's best known work is Mind, Self and Society (1934), It was a work of social psychology and thus he is most recalled as a social psychologist. This was published after his death but constructed from his many lectures and papers. Each of the three aspects are connected to and established in interaction with the other two.

(1) MIND:

While the mind must involve the human brain and its associated physiological operations, Mead also considered mind as involving the processes of responding to stimuli and contemplating action, with these being almost more important than the physiological processes of the brain, the structure of knowledge, or the contents of individual knowledge. The mind is social, r them than being purely a characteristic of the brain or the individual. That is, the mind develops as a result of social interaction, the mind is part of social processes, and since the latter precede the mind, society is prior to the mind and self for Mead.

For Mead, the mind arises through communication ... and not communication through mind.

Ritzer notes that the mind "has the ability to respond to the overall community and put forth an organized response." That is, the individual takes on the attitude of others and it is the interplay of significant symbols and producing an organized, cooperative response involving others that constitutes the mind. This is not just a particular response, but one that can have meaning for the community as a whole, with symbols playing a major role. Further, the mind "involves thought processes oriented toward problem solving." This shows the influence of the pragmatic approach.

(11) SELF:

The self is the central social feature in the symbolic interaction approach. For Mead 'it is the self that makes the distinctively human society possible.' (Mead 1934) instead of being passive and being influenced by values or structures,

Mead considers the self as a process that is active and creative-taking on the role of others, addressing the self by considering these roles, and then responding. This is a reflexive process, whereby an individual can take himself or herself to be both subject and object. This means that the individual is an object to . himself, and so it follows that, an individual is not a self in the reflexive sense unless he is an object to himself.

Your internal sense of who you are is "I", its spontaneous, impulsive, unorganized, inner, creative and subjective. "Me", which is organized attitude towards others, connects to the wider society. This is more social and determined and is the organized self that is learned irinteraction with others and which guides the behaviour of the socialized person. The self is comprised of the Tand the'Me'.

The 'Me' is often referred to as the self-concept or rather how we perceive others to be seeing us. The I is the subject which thinks and acts, while the 'Me'is a consequence of the individuals awareness of itself as an object existing for others. 'I Is a combination of biological drives and social experiences, and 'McComas into existence almost entirely through communication via language. For example,'I" wants to leave a boring lecture, while 'Me' realizes that this is inappropriate and the lecturer marks my paper. Your 'Me' put simply is how you think others see you. Are you white, male or female, young or old, well-dressed.

As explained above, Mead distinguished the "I" from the "me". When an individual is involved in a situation and acts, this action occurs in an environment. Physical things or stimulate exist in the environment, prior to action, and people encounter these. By considering these things and acting in response to them, following self-reflection and interpretation, these things become objects. I a * i doing this, individuals are active and creative. Those things of which the individual is conscious are those that the individual takes note of and' indicates to the self.

This has two consequences:

(I) By being conscious of certain things, the individual makes these things into objects, and these are more than stimuli. The individual constructs his objects on the basis of his ongoing activity. These objects then become meaningful for the individual and this is what is meant by interpretation or acting on the basis of symbols.

(II) This also means that acts are constructed or built up instead of being a mere release. The act is considered, in the context of the surroundings including the possible responses of others, and the overall consequences that are anticipated by the actor. Action is thus conscious and is not just a reaction to a stimulus.

Self -interaction is how the individual takes things into account and organizes himself or herself for action. As the social environment changes, or as Individuals encounter new or altered experiences, they experiment and interact with

themselves in order to find an appropriate response.

This involves taking on

(i)   The role of the other,

(ii)   Considering how others will respond,

(iii)   Having a conversation with oneself, and

(iv)   Forming a means of response which takes all these considerations into account.

This may sometimes be quick and not entirely conscious, as in fairly routine situations such as buying food at the cafeteria. At other times, it may involve a long period of conscious role playing, for example in preparing for a job interview: In either case though, some self -interaction does take place, in *that each action is unique and is a result of the individual using the information from previous experiences and what the individual understands about the environment an situation, in order to act appropriately in the future.

Humans, are distinctive in having the ability to be able to have a conversation with themselves, to imagine themselves in the position of other people, to consider what the other person imagines, and contemplates what the reaction of the other person is likely to be. This is evident in communication with the other person, where the individual carries on a conversation with himself or herself (although this is covert and in the mind, and is not stated for others to hear) at the same time as the conversation with the other person is carried on.

Development of the Sell

Among Mead's most notable achievements is his account of the genesis of consciousness and of the self through the gradually developing ability in childhood to take the role of the other and to visualize his own performance from the point of view of others. In this view, human communication becomes possible only when "the symbol [arouses] in one's self what it arouses in the other individual." (Coser, 335-338)*

Mead spends considerable time discussing the development of the child, because this is how the self is created.

(i)   The first stage of development of the self involves imitative acts on the part oil the child. This is the pre-play stage, around age two, where the child does not have the ability to take on the role of others and use significant symbols, but merely imitates the actions of others. Their behavior in many ways is similar to that of puppies playing with each other.

(ii)   A play stage follows, where the child can act out the parts of others through play but cannot yet relate to the role of others. That is, the child repeats what others say, and takes on several roles, one at a time. "A child plays at being a mother, at being a teacher, at being a policeman; that is, it is taking different roles." The growing child who playfully assumes these

roles thereby cultivates in himself the ability to put himself in the place of others who are significant to him. As he matures, he will not)

only be able to take these roles by acting them out; but he will conceive of them by assuming them in his imagination. A crucial landmark in the child's social development is made when, in showing a picture to someone facing him, he will turn the picture away from himself rather than, as he did up to then, hold it toward himself in the belief that his partner can see only what he himself sees.

In child play at the level of simple role-taking there is a gradual transformation from simple conversations of gestures- a child's running away when chased-to the mature ability to use significant symbols in interaction with many others. Although he has learned to put himself, in imagination, in the position of his partner, the child still does not relate in his mind the roles that several others play with one another outside himself.

Thus, for instance, he can understand the relation of mother or father with himself, but he cannot understand that his own mother is not his father's mother also.

(iii) This breakthrough in his conceptualization comes with his ability to play complex organized games in what is known as the game stage. When he will have in his mind all the roles of other players and make assessments about their potential responses to one another. The child is able to act with others and anticipate the actions of others. The child can take on the role of all the others involved in the game or situation. In doing this, the child learns the organized attitudes of the whole community, and is able to act in common with others.

Such games must be distinguished from simple games such as hide-and-seek, which involve only two types of role partners, or playing jacks, in which the actors do not modify each other's play and hence do not have to anticipate the response of the other partner. In hide-and seek, "everyone, with the exception of the one who is hiding, is a person who is hunting. A child does not require more than the person who is hunted and the one who is hunting." (Closer) * But in a game in which a number of individuals playing different roles are involved, in baseball for example, the child taking one role must be ready to take the role of everyone else. This differs not only from the two-role game, but also from what Mead calls "Play," from those so-called games that do not involve mutual role-taking, such as jacks.

The fundamental difference between the complex game and the play is that in the former the child must have the attitude of all the others involved in that game. The attitudes of the other players that the participant assumes organize into a sort of unit, and it is that organization which controls the response of the individual. Each one of his own acts is deterined by his assumption of the acts of the others who are playing the game, What he does is controlled by his being everyone else on that team, all least in so far as those attitudes affect his

own particular response. We get then an "other"which is an organization of the attitudes of those involved in the same process.

Mead separates game from play by stating that a game requires the knowledge of how others also playing the game are going to behave. The other differences between play and games resides in the number of participants and in the existence or absence of riles. Play undertaken by one child has no rules. Games have rules but differ as to the number of players. Two person games require only simple role-taking, multiple person game require taking the role of the "generalized other", that is, each player's having an idea of the behavior of every other player toward each other and toward himself. With the help of the rules that govern the game, the child develops the ability to take the place of all the other players and to determine their responses. These rules are the set of responses which a particular attitude calls out.

Simple and then more complex situations and games are one way the child develops a self, and these situations illustrate the nature of more general social processes- interacting with family and friends and taking part in social relationship. Other than games, the development of the individual's ability to communicate using language and other symbols also play an important role in this. In the use of different forms of language,_ the child learns what others think and how others might respond. Games and learning a language are both social - they could not occur in the isolated individual.

(iv) The final stage in socialization is the internalization of the generalized other, whereby people can put themselves in the position of the other person, imagine how others will react, and from that contemplate various courses of action. Once this abitity is developed, the individual has a self which is individual, yet could not have developed apart from the community. That is, one has to be a member of a community to be a self and the community exercises control over the conduct of its individual members.

Mead argues that it is shortly after childhood that the individual internalize roles, especially the collective role of the group, which he called the "generalized other."

The generalized other is the rest of society with which the individual personality must contend. The generalized other stands in for the paradox of a social theory conceived out of a theory of personality development.

"The organized community or social group which gives to the individual his unity of self may be called "the generalized other."

"The attitude of the generalized other is the attitude of the whole community." (Mead, 1934:154)*

The essence of the self, according to Mead, is its reflexivity. The individual self is individual only because of its relation to others. Through the individual's ability to take in his imagination the attitudes of others, his self becomes an object of his own reflection. The self as both subject and object is the essence of being social. The peculiar individuality of each self is a result of the peculiar

combination, never the same for two people, of the attitude of others that form the generalized other. Hence, although individuality is rooted in sociality, each person makes an individual contribution to the social process.

(iii) SOCIETY

The third major part of Mead's approach is society. The ongoing symbols and social processes that exist are logically and historically prior to the development of the mind and self. Institutions that give the common responses of society and the regular habits of the community are the context within which the mind and self are created. Socialization and education are the means by which individuals internalize these common habits.

Mead does not see these as coercive or oppressive, and feels that individual creativity can exist within this. Social institutions can be viewed as constraining on individuals but these same institutions can also be viewed as enabling people to become creative individuals. Mead did not develop a macro view of society and social institutions as a whole, but his approach might be combined with some of the more structural approaches to provide a more integrated view of the macro and micro approaches. Note that the classical sociologists have a similar conception of society to that of Mead, but they do not have a theory of the self, and they do not emphasize interaction.

(iv) SYMBOLIC MEANING

For Mead, significant symbols are those which will call out in another that which it calls out in the thinker. Symbols of this sort are universal (rather than particular) and are involved in the process of thinking - "an internalized or implicit conversation of the individual with himself" (Mead in Ritzerm p. 338)* using gestures or symbols. Language is a set of vocal gestures which are significant symbols carrying social meaning. Thinking is implicit conversation, or covert behaviour-that is, it "is not a mentalistic definition of thinking; it is decidedly behaviorstic" (Balzer, p. 338).

While Weber considered meaning to be essential to defining what is social, he did not provide a very clear idea of how he defined meaning or what aspects of meaning were important. In contrast, Mead makes meaning an essential part of definition and development of self. According to Mead, meaning, i.e., the object of thought" arises in experience through the individual stimulating himself to take the attitude of the other in his reactions toward the object. That is, meaning develops through experiences, as different individuals develop a common understanding of social situations and symbols. When symbolic interpretation is shared, people see things in the same light, and acts are meaningful to actors. As a result of this common understanding, the gesture or symbol arouses the same attitude in the individuals, and this is sufficient to trigger a reaction.

A symbol is defined by Mead as the stimulus whose response is given in advance. This could be a set of words, a gesture, a look, or a more fixed, material symbol such as a flag, crest, or money. When actors in a situation have developed a common understanding of symbols, it is significant for them

and has meaning, in that they understand how the symbol will be interpreted by others and what the response is likely to be. This understanding is developed from previous experiences where the likely responses of others to the symbols has been observed or understood. As a result, the symbols have meaning for the individuals, and these allow individuals to interact with each other.

CRITICISM

A major criticism of Mead and the symbolic interactionists such as Erving Goffman (who will be covered in the next unit) is that they lack a theory of causation and social structure. By focusing on interactions between individuals, they tend to ignore how the actions of individuals are subjected to social control, e.g., norms and values of the society which limit individual behaviour. Symbolic interactionists also lack a theory of social change.

CONCLUSION

Mead's work abounds in suggestive leads for the sociology of knowledge. He prepared the ground for consideration of the concrete sociological links between social and thought processes, to the extent that he stressed, along with his pragmatist co-thinkers, the organic process by which every act of thought is linked to human conduct and to interactive relationships, thus rejecting the radical distinction between thinking and acting that had informed most classical philosophy. When Mead advanced the idea that consciousness is an inner discourse carried on by public means - that is, a private experience made possible by the use of significant social symbols and hence organized from the standpoint of the "generalized other" - lie paved the way for detailed investigations linking styles of thought to social structures. Mead provided valuable indications for future inquiries linking individual modes of discourse to the "universe of, discourse" of total epochs or of special strata or groupings within a particular society, In so far as he stressed that thought is in its very nature bound to the social situation in which it arises, he set the stage for efforts to ascertain the relations between, a thinker and his audience.

As in the sociology of knowledge, Mead also provided rich leads for future disciplined inquiry in other spheres of sociological inquiry though only through hypotheses and illustrations. His notion of role-taking, that is, of taking the attitudes of others toward oneself, is not to be confused with what modern sociologists call role performance, or living up to the expectations entailed by a specific position. However, it is hardly a subject of dispute that modern role theory from Linton and Parsons to New comb and Merton has been enriched by freely borrowing from Mead. Although reference-group theory has gone beyond Mead in considering not only those groups to which a person belongs but also groups to which he aspires or which he takes as a point of reference while not aspiring to be a member, it owes a good deal to Mead's insistence that individuals always be considered under the angle of their relations to groups of significant others.

More generally, Mead's work has led to the final demise, at least within sociology, of what Simmel once called the "fallacy of separateness," which considers

actors without reference to the interactions in which they are variously engaged. For Mead, no monads without windows ever exist in the social world; there is never an I without a Thou. An ego is inconceivable without an alter, and the self is best visualized as a vivid nodal point in a field of socialinteraction. This perspective on human action has by now become an essential characteristic of all thinking that wishes to be called sociological. Although Mead was by no means alone in having prepared it, he surely was one of its major sources.

Mead must be credited alongside C. H. Cooley and other pragmatists with having been instrumental in stressing the need for always considering situations from the point of view of the actor. For him, just as for Weber, when the sociologist refers to meaning, it is to the subjective meaning actors impute to their actions. While Cooley's theories veered perilously close to a subjectivist and solipsistic view of society, Mead remained steadfast in his social objectivism. The world of organized social relationships was to him as solidly given in intersubjective evidence as the physical world. He did not attempt to reconstruct the world through introspection in the manner of Cooley. He took as fundamental data that an "objective life of society" exists, which the scientist studies. To Mead society is not a mental phenomenon but belongs to an "objective phase of experience". (*Coser, 1977:339-341.)

SUMMARY

Mead was a member of the Chicago school of pragmatism and as such was concerned with the application of the scientific method to psychological, sociological and philosophical issues. His interests were very broad, ranging from philosophy, sociology, psychology, evolution., literature, history and more. People who had influence in his theories included Darwin, Einstein, Hegel Leibniz, and Wundt, and he shared many of his views and ideas with his contemporary thinkers such as Dewey and Cooley. Chicago in the 1930s was probably the most advanced center for sociology in the world, and these vast, diverse influences affected Mead's theories of personality development and society.

George Herbert Mead is the founder of the approach to the study of society called symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interactionism is a social approach. This micro approach argues that "society" and "social institutions" are made up of the countless interactions between individuals. Therefore sociologists should focus on social action rather than on social structure. Symbolic interactionism together with phenomenology and ethnomethdology make up the Interpretivist or Anti-Positivist school of thought.

Mead laid the foundation for social psychology. His work places emphasis on the analysis of experience in the social. Mead highlighted the importance of language, symbols and communication in human group life. According to Mead, social order is fluid and open, and individuals have the capacity to create new roles and meanings. Communication is effected through 'significant gestures', and then self-conscious acts distinguish human behaviour from non-human behaviour. Humans interpret meaning of other peoples' actions.

Mead sees human communication as being a process involving the exchange of symbols. The most important of these is language. If both the speaker and the listener understand the language being spoken, this would allow them to arrive at a common definition of the situation. Language also serves as a "cement" of social order. (Other examples of symbols which are exchanged during communication include gestures and "body language").

Mead's most famous work is Mind, self and Society [1934] was a work of social psychology and thus he is most recalled as a social psychologist. This book was compiled from his lecture notes by his admirers. Mead argued that individual identity is socially created, i.e. it arises from social interaction (between the individual and other people) and social experience. Our self-image is socially derived and is based on what others think of us. We human beings are able to view ourselves as how others view us (the self as object) and we can adjust our behaviour accordingly. Charles Horton Cooley calls this ability to imagine how we look to others "the looking glass self" (looking glass means a mirror). Mead calls this "taking the role of the other", i.e., imagine the situation from the other person's point of view.

Mead's endeavor is to show that mind and the self are without residue social emergents; and that language, in the form of vocal gesture provides the mechanism for their emergence, The concept of gesture as the main mode of human interaction predates Mead. Mead developed the work of earlier sociologists such as Wundt in the belief that gesture, and in particular vocal gesture language) is a significant symbol, that is it carries meaning and precedes action. An example he uses is of a theatre, where someone calls out 'Fire'. By doing this vocal gesture the other people in the auditorium react to the danger and leave. This is communication and is something that separates humankind from animals. Animals gesture, they move, but there is no preceding thought because there is no consciousness, no mind that envisages the action taking place before it does. People communicate by a series of these gestures, and that process of communication is termed symbolic interaction.

Mead raises more points of inteest: Each individual experiences himself indirectly through the particular standpoints of other individual members of a social group or from generalized standpoints of society toward that particular social group, thus, "Thinking becomes prepatory to social action" (*Mead, 1934: 141). The process of thinking, Mead argues, is simply an inner conversation that goes on in the form of gestures, and in its completion explicates the expression of what somebody thinks to a particular audience. On this point Mead and Cooley agree. A response to these gestures is what gives them meaning, and meaning is universal because it is understood by al. Mead argues that nothing can be absolutely particular, and that anything that is said and that has meaning has universal meaning. When a person talks he is addressing himself as well as the other, or else what he says doesn't make sense.

The self involves both the I and the me, with social actions resulting from the dialogue or conversation between the two. "I" is the impulsive and spontaneous, unorganized, creative, and imaginative response of the individual, whereas

the "me" is the organized self that is learned in interaction with others and which guides the behaviour of the socialized person. The "I" allows for spontaneity, innovation, and individuality, and the "me" is that part of the self which involves the attitude of others.

A theory of personality development begins where personalities begin in childhood. In the pre-play stage, the child does not have the ability to take on the role of others and use significant symbols, but merely imitates the actions of others. Their behavior in many ways in similar to that of puppies playing with each other.

Play is the next form of social interaction with the self and the other, and Mead argues that the child creates an alternative self, or a different part of the self with which to play. The child plays with itself by creating two roles, the example given is of one part playing customer to the other part playing shopkeeper. To take another example, children often pretend to be "Mummy" or "Daddy". In Malaysia, children often play games like "Masak-Masak.'All these imaginative, role - playing games lead to the development of a sense of self. Mead defines the "mind" as the ability to think, weigh and consider alternative ways to act

By acting in this way the child enables itself to continue in conversation by answering to each part from the standpoint of the other. "Such is the simplest form of being another to one's self' (* Mead 1934: '150). A continuation of this develops into symbolic interaction of adults as we predict unconsciously what the other (in ourselves and in our partners for conversation) may say or do next, hence enabling society to have norms and expectations of behavior. It is when these norms are drastically broken that people are seen as strange or mad. There is a fine balance between insanity and genrus....

The child however is not a fully developed personality, but rather a combination of different parts that come out in different situations that constitute the overall whole. This also carries on into adulthood, but the adult is aware of this and thus constitutes a whole. Mead gives as an example for this a job interview where one feels one didn't come across as one would have liked, or didn't show the part of the self best suited for that particular job. Another point is that people have different roles and relationships with different people according to the situation that they are in, and the subconscious role taking. Often we do not like the roles we are forced to take with people and either have to alter them forcibly or seek different relationships.

Mead separates game from play by stating that a game requires the knowledge of how others also playing the game are going to behave.

Mead also talked about the "generalized other", i.e., cultural norms and values which we use to evaluate ourselves. For example, in a country like America where being rich is being a "successful person", this would mean that people who are poor may consider themselves (and be considered by others) as"failures".

The generalized other is the rest of society with which the individual personality must contend. The generalized other stands in for the paradox of a social theory

conceived out of a theory of personality development. It is the linking element between Mead's theory of personality development and his social theories.

"The organized community or social group which gives to the individual his unity of self may be called "the generalized other." The attitude of the generalized other is the attitude of the whole community" (Mead, 1934:154)

A major criticism of Mead and the symbolic interactionists such as Erving Goffman (who will be covered in the next unit) is that they lack a theory of causation and social structure. By focusing on interactions between individuals, they tend to ignore how the actions of individuals are subjected to social control, e.g., norms and values of the society which limit individual behaviour. Symbolic interactionists also lack a theory of social change.

To conclude, at the center of G. H. Mead's theory of the origins and process of consciousness was the process he called "taking the role of the other' by which humans are able to imaginatively enter the mind of the other. Mead's theory has developed a substantial following within sociological social psychology, the school of thought known as 'symbolic interaction'. However, because of the unrelenting abstractness of the theory, it has been difficult for Mead's followers to develop an explicit theory and method that could be applied to actual episodes. Like most social theories, it has continued to be discussed at such an abstract level that it has never been clear how well it describes human conduct.

Questions

Q.1 What are the main tenets and merits of the symbolic interactionist Approach? Compare with the structural functionalist Approach.

Q.2 What is the symbolic Interactionist Approach of G. H. Mead? Focus on his important work.

Q.3 Do you agree that the symbolic Interactionist Approach of Mead has validity today? If yes, illustrate with examples.

0.4 Explain in detail the works and life of G. H. Mead.

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12

ERVING GOFFMAN:
Self & Society

The objective of this unit is to understand and acknowledge the important contributions of one of the important sociologists of our times - Dr. Erving Goff man.

Goffman's theories provided an ironic insight into routine social actions. This is explained in the unit by focusing on three of his important works - the Presentation of self in Everyday Life (1959), Asylum: Essays on the social situation of mental patients and other patients (1961) and stigma: Notes on the Management of spoiled Identity (1963).

TERMS USED:
(i) DRAMATURGY:
Coined by Goffman, this is the process of impression management. Goffman used the theatre as a metaphor to explain how one 'stage manages'the impression one tries to convey to those around us.

(ii) NORMAILIASATION:
Process of classification which covers the ways in which are tends to classify others and be classified by them and how this classification is used as our basis of interaction.

ERVING GOFFMNA (1922-1982)
Dr. Erving Goffmna was a 20th Century sociologist. He was born in Manville, Alberta, Canad on June 11, 1922. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Toronto in his native Canada in 1945. His master's and doctorate were granted by the University of Chicago in 1949 and 1953, respectively, where he studied both sociology and social anthropology. While working on his doctorate, he spent a year on one of the smaller of the Shetland islands gathering material for his dissertation and his book The Presentation of Seff in Everyday Life, 1959; which is available in at least ten different languages and has been almost continuously in print.

In 1958, Dr. Goffman joined the faculty of the University of California at Berkeley and was promoted to full professor in 1962. He joined the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania in 1968 where he became the Benjamin Franklin Professor of Anthropology and Sociology. In 1977 he was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship. Just prior to his death, Goffman served as president of the American Sociological Association in 1981-1982.

In the 70's, he served on the Committee for the Study of Incarceration based on his work Asylums: Essays in the Social Situations of Mental Patients and other Inmates and prior to that he also served as a "visiting scientist" to the National Institute of Mental Health in Bethesda MD, where he began his researches that led to this book. Asylums is a penetrating analysis of the significance of social structure in producing conforming behavior, especially in environment that Goffman labeled "total institutions", such as mental asylums, prisons and military establishments.

Erving Goff man's primary methodology was ethnographic study, observation and participation rather than statistical data gathering, and his theories provided an ironic insight into routine social actions. For example, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life uses the theatrical stage as a metaphor to explain how we "stage manage" the images we try to convey to those around us. For this impression management, Goff man coined the term 'dramaturgy."

The book cover to his Relations in Public describes him as "perhaps the most precise and perceptive 'people watcher' writing today." Relations in Public is a continuation of the researches presented in three of his prior books, Encounters, Behaviour in Public Places, and interaction Ritual. Goffman's works form a singularly compact body of writing. All his published work was devoted to topics and themes which were closely connected, and the methodology, angles of approach, and, of course, style of writing remained characteristically his own throughout. Interaction Ritual in particular is an interesting account of daily social interaction viewed with a new perspective accounting for the logic of our behavior in such ordinary circumstances as entering a crowded elevator or bus.

Although sometimes controversial in his conclusions in Gender Advertisements, an examination of the arrangement and use of male and female images in modern advertising, Goffman contributes to our understanding of the way images are used to convey social information and how those images have been incorporated into our social expectations. As Goff man wrote, gender advertisements are "both shadow and substance: they show not only what we wish or pretend to be, but what we are". Gender Advertisements and Stigma both examine the ways we tend to classify others and be classified by them and how we tend to interact based upon those classification. Goffman used the word "normalization" for this proes of classification.

Frame Analysis is often described as Goffman's longest and most ambitious book. it is about how we shape and compartmentalise our experience of life and of the world of objects and events around us, and about how the experiencing and acting self, too, can be compartmentatlised into a series of part-selves, each of potential factor in the production of experience for ourselves and for others Again, the metaphor of theatre and stage management is used to explain how this compartmentalization is accomplished and why it is necessary.

His last book, Forms of Talk, was nominated for a National Book Critics Circle award and was reviewed in both the New York Review of Books and the London Review of Books. It continues his original metaphor of 'theatre by examining the social rituals and conventions observed in conversation in the light of performances.

Goffman died in Philadelphia Pennsylvania on November 19,1982.

A list of his eleven books is presented below.

The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, 1959;

Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates, 1961; Encounters: Two Studies in the Sociology of Interaction, 1961;

Behaviour in Public Places: Notes on the Social Organiazation of Gatherings, 1963; Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity, 1963;

Interaction Rituals: Essays on Face-to-Face Behaviour, 1967; Strategic Interaction, 1969;

Relations in Public: Microstudies of the Public Order, 1971;

Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience, 1974; Gender Advertisements, 1979;

Forms of Talk, 1981.

THE PRESENTATION OFSELF IN EVERYDAY LIFE: (11959)

Mead is the founder of symbolic interactionism. (Refer to union Mead) Another major theorist of symbolic interaction is Erving Goffman. One of Goffman's most famous and interesting books is called The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.

The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, published in 1959, provides a detailed description and analysis of process and meaning in mundane interaction. Goffman, as a product of the Chicago School, writes from a symbolic interactionist perspective, emphasizing a qualitative analysis of the component parts of the interactive process. Through a microsociological analysis and focus on unconventional subject matter, Goff man explores the details of individual identity, group relations, the impact of environment, and the movement and interactive meaning of information. His perspective, though limited in scope, provides new insight into the nature of social interaction and the psychology of the individual. Before moving further it would be important to note the following.

(i)   Goffman's early work is focused on the individual self, in a world that at once creates and oppresses it.

(ii) Goff man's work is intensely moral in character, marked by a passionate defense of the self against society.

(iii) Goff man's work has no systematic relationship to abstract academic theory and provides no encouragement to attempts to advance such theory.

These points will be further explained in the course of the unit.

In The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life Goff man seeks to show the reader how everyone sets out to present themselves to the world around them, always trying to maintain the role they have selected for themselves, since those whom they meet not only try to decide what role it is you are playing, but also whether or not you are competent to play that role. More significantly, impression management is a function of social setting.

Goffman portrays everyday interactions as strategic encounters in which one is attempting to sell a particular self-image and accordingly, a particular definition of the situation. He refers to these activities as face-work. Beginning by taking the perspective of one of the interactants, and he interprets the impact of that person's performances on the others and on the situation itself. He considers being in wrong face, out of face, and losing face through lack of tact, as well as savoir-faire (diplomacy or social skill), the ways a person can attempt to save face in order to maintain self-respect, and various ways in which the person may harm the face of others through faux pas such as gaffes or insults. These conditions occur because of the existence of self presentational rules. These rules, in turn, are determined by how situations are defined. For instance, there is greater latitude in social situations than in taskoriented situations, Situations (small groups, a company, a church, national units, intercivilizational situation) also dictate available roles and how much self-importance people can sustain.

In this book we can see Erving Goffman as the ethnographer of the self. He proves us with an introduction to the sustenance of the self in only normally problematic situations in the social establishments that are part of everyday life, interaction with people who are reasonably well equipped and well inclined to collaborate in sustaining mutually agreeable definitions of self. Individuals work 'their performance so as to provide others with the materials by which they infer that a creditable self confronts them. The self is seer as the product of the various means by which it is produced and maintained.

Goffrnan employs a "dramaturgical approach" in his study, concerning himself with the mode of presentation employed by the actor and its meaning in the broader social context. Interaction is viewed as a "performance", shaped by environment and audient, constructed to provide others with "impressions" that are consonant with the desired goals of the actor. The performance exists regardless of the mental state of the individual, as personal is often imputed to the individual in spite of his or her lack of faith in - or even ignorance of - the performance.

Goffman uses the example of the doctor who is forced to give a placebo to a patient, fully aware of its impotence, as a result of the desire of the patient for more extensive treatment. In this way, the individual develops identity or persona as a function of interaction with others, through an exchange of information that allows for more specific definitions of identity and behvior.

Goffman uses the analogy of the stage and acting to describe how people behave in everyday life, In acting for the stage, there is front stage behaviour and backstage behaviour.

Front stage behaviour is when the actor/performer appears in front of an audience and performs certain roles and acts in a certain way. Backstage behaviour is when the actor or performer is behind the curtain or in the dressing room and he or she can be her real sell'. Similarly, in everyday life, we sometimes engage in front stage behaviour, e.g. especially when we are in formal situations such as Job interviews or when we need to project a certain image to others such as during a first date. When we are alone or with our relatives and close friends, we can relax and engage in backstage behaviour.

As Props are used in stage performances Similarly, people use "props"in everyday behaviour to project a certain image or to impress others. Examples of such props would be expensive cars, designer clothes and so on. Goffman said that therefore, people engage in "dramaturgy" and "impression mangement."

Let us understand this further.

Goffman describes the division between team performance arid audience in terms of region", describing the role of setting in the differentiation of actions 'Laken by individuals, Extending the dramaturgical analysis, he divides region into "front", "back" and "outside" the stage, contingent upon the relationship of the audience to the performance, While the "official stance" of the team is visible in their front stage presentation, in the backstage, "the impression fostered by !he presentation is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course," indicating a more "truthful" type of performance. In the backstage, the conflict and difference inherent to familiarity is more fully explored, often evolving into a secondary type of presentation, contingent upon the absence of the responsibilities of the team presentation. To be outside the stage involves the inability to gain access to the performance of the team, described as an "audience segregation" in which specific performances are given to specific audiences, allowing the team to contrive the proper front for the demands of each audience. This allows the team, individual actor, and audience to preserve proper relationships in interaction and the establishments to which the interactions belong.

The process of establishing social identity, then, becomes closely allied to the concept of the "front", which is described as "that part of the individual's performance which are regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance". (*Goffman, 1959, 22) The front acts as a vehicle of standardization, allowing- for others to understand the individual on the basis of projected character traits that have normative meanings. As a "collective representation," the front establishes proper "setting", "appearance" and "manner" for the social role assumed by the actor, uniting interactive behavior with the personal front. The actor, in order to present a compelling front, is forced to both fill the duties of the social role and communicate the activities and characteristics of the role to other people in a consistent manner,

This process, known as "dramatic realization", is predicated upon the activities of "impression management", the control (or lack of control) and communication

of information through the performance. In constructing a front, information about the actor is given off through a variety of communicative sources all of which must be controlled to effectively convince the audience of the appropriateness of behavior and consonance with the role assumed. Believability, as a result, is constructed in terms of verbal signification, which is used by the actor to establish intent, and non-verbal signification, which is used by the audient to verify the honesty of statements made by the individual. Attempts are made to present an "idealized" ver-, sion of the front, more consistent with the norms, mores, and laws of society than the behavior of the actor when not before an audience. information dealing with aberrant behavior and belief is concealed from the audience in a process of "mystification," making prominent those characteristics that are socially sanctioned, legitimating both the social role of the individual and the framework to which the role belongs.

Goff man explores the nature of group dynamics through a discussion of "teams" and the relationship between performance and audience. He uses the concept of the team to illustrate the work of a group of individuals who "co-operate" in performance, attempting to achieve goals sanctioned by the group. Co-operation may manifest itself as unanimity in demeanor and behavior or in the assumption of differing roles for each individual, determined by the desired intent in performance. Goffman refers to the "shill", a member of the team who "provides a visible model for the audience of the kind of response the performers are seeking", promoting psychological excitement for the realization of a (generally monetary) goal, as an example of a "discrepant role" in the team. In each circumstance, the individual assumes a front that is perceived to enhance the group's performance.

The necessity of each individual to maintain his or her front in order to promote the team performance reduces the possibility of dissent. While the unifying elements of the team are often shallower and less complete than the requirements of performance, the individual actor feels a strong pressure to conform to the desired front in the presence of an audience, as deviance destroys the credibility of the entire performance. As a result, disagreement is carried out in the absence of an audience, where ideological and performance changes may be made without the threat of damage to the goals of the team, as well as the character of the individual. In this way, a clear division is made between team and audience.

Let us try to analyze two situations that reinforce the desired interpretation of self that one wishes to convey. The first performance takes place in the university environment on the first day of school. The second scene takes place at the formal wedding reception among family and friends. Both interactions describe the Goffmanian concepts and schemas that the author uses throughout his sociological discourse.

The first situation is portrayed in the university setting. Among a hundred first year students some will undoubtedly know each other beforehand, but on the whole everyone will be on their own and looking to make friends. Sasha is walking proudly to his first class trying to impress everyone. But if he was to

make a mistake in his self -presentation now, he could take several weeks to recover his credibility. The process of establishing social identity, then, becomes closely allied to the concept of the front, which is described as that part of the individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance. The front acts as a vehicle of standardization, allowing for others to comprehend the individual on the basis of projected character traits that have normative meanings. As a collective representation, the front establishes proper setting, appearance, and manner for the social role assumed by the actor, uniting interactive behavior with the personal front. A teacher will often act differently when talking to someone in his lecture, than he will with his friends in the restaurant later that night - the former providing a sense of intimacy, the latter a more public occasion. Goff man discusses the need for belief in the part you are playing, both in terms of the audience, and in terms of the performance himself. For the performance to appear credible the performer himself should believe the performance is genuine (which is a source of existential engagement with and within the world); the alternative is have no belief in the performance, to be what Goffman terms a cynic someone who is deliberately seeking to mislead his audience. If the teacher honestly believes tie is an easy going guy who doesn't worry about work, he may appear sufficiently credible to overcome any of the apparently contradictory evidence of the impression given off. When there is little or no occasion for "dramatizing" the performance the teacher will always appear unconcerned when the subject of work comes up, to show that work isn't a priority in his life. This process, known as dramatic realization is predicted upon the activities of impression management, the control (or lack of control) and communication of information through the performance to emphasize this he may leave files on the floor or leave books half open to show that work is something he does when he has time in between partying or talking to friend, and if someone comes round he will show mock concern about going our rather than working, before quickly agreeing to go out, even if he knows he has work to do for the next day, all in order to dramatize the front he Js performing, and therefore make the front more credible.

Secondly, the family setting is described as a mother-daughter relationship as "team" members during a wedding reception. Both mother and daughter co-operate together to avoid any unpleasant surprises. They engage in a discussion with guests but only in a general talk. The "dark secrets" of the bride have to be well kept from the guests and other family members. Here Goffman explores nature of group dynamics through a discussion of teams and the relationship between performance and audience. He uses the concept of the team of illustrate the work of a group of individual who co-operate in performance, attempting to achieve goals sanctioned by the group. Co-operation may manifest itself as unanimity in demeanor and behavior or in the assumption of differing roles for each individual, determined by the desired intent in performance. The mother engages in a group talk while the daughter is beside her. The mother comments on her daughter's looks and the audience responds in the positive way. Therefore, the mother performs as a shill, a member of the team who provides a visible model for the audience of the kind of response the performers

are seeking, promoting excitement for the realization of a goal, as an example of a discrepant role in the team. In each circumstance, the individual assumes a front that is perceived to enhance the group's performance- motherdaughter performance. Goff man describes the division between team performance and audience in terms of region, describing the role of setting in the differentiation of actions taken by individuals.

In The Presentation of Self in Every day Life he provides us with an introduction to the nourishment of the self in only normally problematic situations - in the social establishments that are part of everyday lite, interaction with people who are reasonably well equipped and well inclined to collaborate in sustaining mutually agreeable definitions of self. Individuals work their performance so as to provide others with the materials by which they inter that a creditable self confronts them. The self is seen as the product of the various means by which it is produced and maintained.

Goffman writes, the self is in part a ceremonial thing, a sacred object, which must be treated with proper ritual care. Social interaction in modern society (and only in modern society) requires us to act as if we have a self, but it is a myth; the self is the (real) ideology of the modern everyday.

What gives Goffman's work a value that displays intercivilizational significance is its intense individual humanity and its existential concerns with the semantics of meaning in relation to the grammer of self.

An interesting notion derived from Goff man that there are numerous selves. The self can be simply defined as: the code that makes sense out of almost all the individual's activities and provides a basis for organizing them, but this code can differ from situation to situation. The fact that people have different roles to play and different selves to present, and the fact that the audience has different expectations and thus creates different selves, can lead to problems (tension between different selves), a dynamic shift between roles, or a multiple presentation of selves (as well as coping mechanisms to deal with these discrepancies). Under normal circumstances or existential equilibrium where the forces of alienation and realization are to certain extent balanced and one is able to hamess or cope with external sources of anxieties as well as internal personal demons), however, it turns out that people are quite capable of handling these multiple, fluctuating, situational selves.

The multiplicity of selves is also clear from a consideration of role-distance. Role distance refers to the degree to which people separate themselves from the role they play (while they're playing it). People play roles in a double fashion: they enact the role and distance themselves from it. Role-distance is a function of social status: people in low status roles are more defensive in their role-distance (ashamed of their role).

For Goffman it seems, there is no real self, only a multiplicity of selves, as long as the existential kernel of the self is ontologically tied to the reproducible moments of social roles that are devoid of authentic actualization. These selves

are not pre-determined fractures but emerge in the course of action that unfolds itself at the stage of modernity.

In The Presentation of Self, there is the importance of spontaneity which emerges as an aspect of the performance, as the actor seeks to create a front that does not appear to contrived. Spontaneity allows for the realization of the "true" self an idealized type of interaction that allows 'the individual to realize a desired. Goffman's model, reaffirms the existing social environment through the notion of "truth". Each individual is bound to the contemporary social organization, while attempting to realize a sense of freedom in expressing truth.

Goffman's language is very cool, with sufficient irony on occasion to seem more amused than sympathetic. There is a sense of detachment, not engagement. The very use of the vocabulary of the stage gives the impression of insincerity and contrivance on the part of the participants. So it is no wonder that this work is often characterized as cynical by naive commentators. Few are likely to see it as a celebration of the self; more likely is the view that it is at least neutrally a dissection, or more actively an expose of social manners: But such reactions are superficial and unjust because in this book Goff man analyzes the ordinary, everyday people in everyday life, circumstances in which personal ruin is more literary than real, in which the price to be paid for failure is not much greater than embarrassment, circumstances in which efforts to sustain creditable selves are largely successful.

In contrast, there are circumstances in which the self is profoundly threatened, in which it is attacked and discredited and its actual survival put to doubt. It is in those circumstances that Goffman shifts his stance and creates an eloquent and passionate assertion of the dignity and value of the self and a defense of its right to resist the social world even when, from the observer's point of view, it resists what may be 'for its own good.

In Goffman's summary words, there are the back regions with its tools for shaping the body, and a front region with its fixed props. "There will be a team of persons whose activity on stage in conjunction with available props will constitute the scene from which the performed character's self will emerge, and another team, the audience, whose interpretive activity will be necessary for this enterprise. The self is a product of all of those arrangements, and in all of its parts bears the marks of this genesis."

Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates: (11961)

As it has been mentioned earlier, in this controversial, work through his four essays, Goffman provides a penetrating analysis of the significance of social structure in producing conforming behavior, especially in environments that Goff man labeled "total institutions", such as mental asylums, prisons and military establishments.

Goffman saw these total institution as a "forcing house for changing persons, as a natural experiment on what can be done to the self" Goff man, 1961, p. 12). In everyday life in a civil environment - that is, in the home world-one work

at sustaining one's identity with one's cohabitants of social establishments because, by and large, they collaborate in the enterprise and honor one's effort to do so. But in the total institution the inmate is separated from ordinary collaborators and interacts with a staff that requires different terms of collaboration. Inmates are subjected to a series of abasements, degradations, humiliations, and profanations of their selves and a withdrawal of all the physical and social supports that once sustained them.

This process is carried out in the name of God, or Country; or in the name of Justice or Cure, all exalted names and exalted goals. Decent people cannot contest the goal of transforming the slack, casually sinful civilian into a dedicated servant of God or Country or the people, nor can they disapprove of the reformation of the criminal and the cure of the insane so that they can be returned to everyday life as "useful' citizens.

Goffman does not disapprove of this. What he documents, however, is the self's resistance to its stripping. The self struggles against its transformation, it perversely insists on preserving some portion of its familiar substance. He points out that inmates practice secondary adjustments that do not directly challenge the staff of the total institution but that, by seeking forbidden satisfaction, assert that they are still their own persons, still with some control over their environment, control apart from God, Country, Party, or whatever.

In characterizing the self's struggle, Goffman employs a number of phrases - " expressed distance", "holding off from fully embracing all the self- i implications of its affiliation, allowing some ... disaffection to be seen, even while fulfilling ... major obligations" and perhaps most precisely, "a defaulting not from prescribed activity, but from prescribed being." (Goff man, 1961, p. 188)

Goffman argues that it against something that the self can emerge. He is of the belief that without something to belong to one has no stable self and yet total commitment and attachment to any social unit implies a kind of selflessness. So it follows that one's sense of being a person can come from being drawn into a wider social unit; our sense of selfhood can arise through the little ways in which we resists the pull. Goffman said "Our status is packed by the solid buildings of the world, while our sense, of personal identity often resides in the cracks" (*p.320)

And so it is that whenever worlds are laid on, underlives develop. Those underlives are to be found everywhere in ordinary life, but they are most apparent when existence is an act of survival as in total institutions. In such institutions, the self does not triumph because its survival is hidden, in the cracks, but it does survive, and in surviving constitutes however modestly a "movement of liberty". (* 305.

Goff man documents, even celebrates that modest movement of liberty, that tenacity of the self to be what it is and resist prescribed being. He also takes its side and grants deep respect to its need to express distance. He becomes its defender as well as its observer. His compassion for mental patients and his rage at psychiatry stems from defense of the self.

While all total institutions attack the self in the course of attempting to reconstruct it, Goffman feels that only the psychiatric institution leaves no possibility for expressed distance. In this he feels it is even more destructive of the self than a concentration camp, for it converts efforts to resist the pull, efforts to be against something, into cooperative acts. The mental patient is robbed of the common expressions through which people hold off the embrace of organizations; insolence, silence, sotto voce remarks. Often the meaning of those act is transformed from the defiance which the inmate wishes to display, albeit cautiously, into mere symptoms of sickness, confirmation of inmate status.

Goffman's stance is not cool or cynical. It is merely one of morally absolute outrage.

Like the opponent of capital punishment or torture, he does not defend the inmate's sins and argue. Instead he argues the absolute inhumanity of the treatment. He argues that no matter how crazy or murderous a human being has been, to strip the self from the person without allowing some expressed distance is as inhuman as it is to flay the skin from the body, or to hang, shoot, electrocute, or gas the body. Such means of punishment or treatment cannot be justified by the goal of retribution or even salvation.

Less dramatic than stripping but equally stained normally is the process leading to institutionalization. In the moral career of the mental patient Goffman documents with both bitterness and compassion the "betrayal funnel" through which prepatients are drawn, their retrospective discovery that while they were cooperating with others so as to spare them pain, discomfort, or embarrassment, those others were stripping them of their civilian rights, and satisfactions. And discovering that those with whom they had intimate personal relations could no longer be assumed to be trustworthy, that they have betrayed them.

But now we are armed with a vision of how he self can be deeply discredited even if not entirely destroyed.

STIGMA: NOTES ON THE MANAGEMENT OF SPOILED IDENTITY. (11963)
Between the 50s and the early 80s, Erving Goffman worked to describe the structure of face-to-face interaction and to account for how that structure was involved in the interactive tasks of everyday life. He developed a series of concepts, which are useful in describing and understanding interaction, and also showed how the physical nature of interaction settings is involved in people's interactions.

In Stigma Goffman leads US from the total institution back to everyday life. Goffman focuses primarily on the information the stigmatized convey about themselves in mixed contacts with normals, on their attempt to project or protect the self they believe they have, and on how "we normals" respond to their discredited features and encourage their adoption of a good adjustment.

Take for example the dwarf, the disfigured, the blind man, the homosexual, the exmental patient and the member of a racial or religious minority. They all share on decisive characteristic: they are all socially 'ab normal and therefore in danger of being considered less then human.

In his book, Goff man studies various situations (case studies, autobiographies) where normal and abnormal meet and the ways in which a stigmatized person

can shore up his precarious social and personal identity. Goff man argues that stigma is intimately associated with stereotype, and both these are related to the unconscious expectations and norms which act as unseen arbiters in all social encounters.

This often leads to the adoption of a good adjustment line. Goffman believes that, "the good adjustment line ... means that the unfairness and pain of having to carry a stigma will never be presented to normals; it means that normals will not have to admit to themselves how limited their tactfulness and tolerance is; and it means that normals can remain relatively uncontaminated by intimate contact with the stigmatized, remain relatively unthreatened in their own identity beliefs. It is just from these meanings, in fact, that the specifications of a good adjustment derive." (* p. 121)

CRITICISM

While post-structural critique was developing in France, there was a sociologist who developed his own line of analysis about the ways in which images, stagings, performance, impressions, frauds, cons, and 'betrayals' were involved in the production of everyday life. Erving Goff man, in a wide ranging series of books laid out the techniques and tactics by which the people he observed used the acounterments from the world of theatre in order to construct the dramaturgical impressions they wanted 'to give off and to have other persons take.

When Goff man's works first came out, the reviews were decidedly unfriendly. There were three major lines of criticism, which were leveled at the work in the reviews and in books about sociology itself.

(i) There were criticisms from the more established sociologists who complained that the world Goffman described was fartoo cynical, far too conniving, and far much a function of personal will and intent. People do not 'stage' their social life world, rather they live it in innocence and naivete according to those who liked structural analysis which reduce people to the mere embodiment of the social forms into which they had been born and socialized.

(ii) Then too, there was the criticism that Goffman had depoliticized social interaction by ignoring the structures of power, status and class inequality, which greatly affected the ability of people to stage-manage the sociology of it all.

In 1970, Gouldner wrote at length, in 'The Coming Crisis of American Sociology' that Goffman had trivialized the sociological project by his concentration on tactics while ignoring the reasons why people were reduced to such inauthentic presentations.

Lastly, there was the position of some critics, who argued that Goff man along with a couple of other sociologists like Garfinkel and even Gouldner constituted, together, a rich underlife in American sociology which should be sustained and carefully considered. The nub of their arguments could be reformulated as this that Goffman was talking about a social process coming to birth while Durkheim, Mead, Cooley were talking about the kinds of social forms in the past or found only in the safe and responsive world of the middle class academic.

These sociologists. in the historiography of social theory, are now considered as pre cursors and collateral embodiments of what came to be called the postmodern sensibility.

There could be a grain of truth in each of the above-mentioned critiques but the fact of the matter is that it reflects the lack of awareness (or what is commonly called within reflexive social theory as Eurocentism) about Goffman's (both potential and dynamic) significance in an intercivilizational dialogue. The significance could not be detected or unthought as long as Goff man was read in terms of mode mist-construction istsociology.

Conclusion

Along with G. H. Mead who is the founder of symbolic interactionism, another major theorist of this tradition is Erving Goffman. One of Goffman's most famous and interesting books is The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.

Goffman is considered to be the premier analyst of the self, of the way it sustains itself in the everyday world and of the way it forces itself by setting itself apart from and against the world Goffman has focused on the sustenance and assertion of the individual's self in interaction with the others who both create and threaten it.

In his works Goff man displays a deep moral sensibility, compassion for those whose selves are attacked, whose identities are spoiled, whom the social world through its ordinary members and its official agents, seeks to shape to its convenience. In all this Goffman is as much moralist as anlyst, and a celebrant and defender of the self against society rather than, as might be expected of a sociologist who cites Durkheim, a celebrant of society and social forces.

Goff man's work lives and will live not as a contribution to the development of systematic sociological theory but rather as a contribution to human consciousness. Though his work creates and plays with sociological concepts rather than character, plot, mood, or consciousness,-it is as concrete and revelatory as fiction. What gives Goffman's work a value that will endure far longer than most sociology is its intense individual humanity and its style.

It is often felt that the semantic of Goffmanian discourse is seemingly cold or disengaging, with sufficiency irony on occasion to seem more amused than sympathetic. There is a sense of detachment, not engagement. The very use of the vocabulary of the stage gives the impression of insincerity and contrivance on the part of the participants. So it is no wonder that Goffmanian sociology is often characterized as cynical by nalve commentators. Few are likely to see it as a celebration of the existential sociology, more likely is the view that it is at least neutrally a dissection, or more actively an expose of social manners. But such reactions are sociologically superficial and intellectually absurd because Goffmanian discourse is aimed to analyze the ordinary, everyday people in everyday life, circumstances in which personal ruin is more literary than real, in which the price to be paid for failure is not much greater than embarrassment, circumstances in which efforts to sustain creditable selves are largely successful. In contrast, there are circumstances in which the self is profoundly threatened,

in which it is attacked and discredited and its actual survival put to doubt. It is in those circumstances that Goffman shifts his stance and creates an eloquent and passionate assertion of the dignity and value of the self in existential sense and a defense of its right to resist the social world - that threatens the authenticity of the self - even when, from the observer's point of view, it resists what may be for its own good.

Goffman tried to assert himself as a sociologist against the seductive resistance of the convention of the world. He employed with imagination and passion any resources that seem useful to illuminate aspects of human life that most of use overlook and to show us more of humanity there than we could otherwise see.

Summary
Between the 50s and the early 80s, Erving Goff man worked to describe the structure of face-to-face interaction and to account for how that structure was involved in the interactive tasks of everyday life. He developed a series of concepts which are useful in describing and understanding interaction, and also showed how the physical nature of interaction settings is involved in people's interactions. Much of Goff man's interest is in his analysis of the depth and richness of everyday interaction.

One of the things people need to do in their interactions with others is present themselves as an acceptable person: one who is entitled to certain kinds of consideration, who has certain kinds of expertise, who is morally relatively unblemished, and so on.

In his most famous book The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, Goffman uses the analogy of the stage and acting to describe how people behave in everyday life. Goff man investigated social interaction as though it were a drama, a theatrical performance. He main-tained that people use statuses and roles to crate impressions. They work with the available tools on their cultural palette. People use a process called the presentation of self to creates, pecific impressions in the minds of others-the 'others' could be a stranger, mere acquaintances, or close and important members of an individuals life cycle. Performance occur both front stage - in public - and back stage - in privacy or with primary group.

Extending the dramaturgical analysis, Goffman divides region into front, back, and outside the stage, contingent upon the relationship of the audience to the performance. While the official stance of the team is visible in their front stage presentation, in the backstage, the impression fostered by the presentation is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course, indicating a more truthful type of performance.

In acting for the stage, there is front stage behaviour and backstage behaviour. Front stage behaviour is when the actor/ performer appears in front of an audience and performs certain roles and acts in a certain way. Backstage behaviour is when the actor or performer is behind the curtain or in the dressing room and he or she can be her real self. Similarly, in everyday life, we sometimes engage in front stage behaviour, e.g., specially when we are in formal situations

such as job interviews or when we need to project a certain image to others such as during a first date. When we are alone or with our relatives and close friends, we can relax and engage in backstage behaviour.

As mentioned, the performance takes place in the front stage, where different props are used, making possible a specific type of interaction and creating a specific picture of the self. The front stage is generally fixed and defines the situation, It consists of the setting, i.e. the physical scene, and the personal front, i.e. the items of expressive equipment that the audience ex Dects of the performer. The personal front is divided into appearance, i.e. the items that reveal the actor's social status, and manner, i.e. the role, which the performer expects to play. Public and private lives are sustained by the ritual performances of the everyday. In this interaction process the self is created and manipulated. The self moves between front stage and back stage. On the front stage of publicity, the self uses more props and works harder on the right presentation of self than in the back stage of privacy. In the back stage the front stage performances are prepared, and this space is therefore in a way more authentic, more private and less social. Nevertheless, according to Goffman, even in these most intimate moments and spaces of social life, some rituality remains.

In the back stage, the preparations for the front stage performance are made, the garbage of performances is there taken care of, actors prepare and rehearse their roles, and they can meet there before and after the performance. Note that any physical space can vary between front stage and back stage. For instance, when the mother takes her daughter to the back of a room, where no one can see them, she reminds of the roles that they should play. This can be analyzed as the backstage, the conflict and difference inherent to familiarity is more fully explored, often evolving into a secondary type of presentation, contingent upon the absence of the responsibilities of the team presentation. The performance is more "cynical" in the front region, perhaps. To be outside the stage involves the inability to gain access to the performance of the team, described as an audience segregation in which specific performances are given to specific audiences, allowing the team to contrive the proper front for the demands of each audience. This allows the mother-daughter team and audience to preserve proper relationships in interaction and the establishments to which the interactions belong.

People present their selves in a particular way, and in interaction, these definitions of the self are upheld and reinforced, e.g. people are polite to protect their own as well as others' definitions of selves. The presentation of self in the front stage, created in the back stage, can be manipulative. People present a line, a face, and this face, while it is often unrealistic and unreal should be always consistent.

Most of Goffman's attention goes to the different techniques and processes that are involved with the constitution of the self in interaction. Props are used in stage performances. Similarly, people use "props" in everyday behaviour to project a certain image or to impress others. People use props to present one's self, the control of the audience, and impression management. Examples of

such props would be expensive cars, designer clothes and so on. Goff man said that therefore, people engage in "dramaturgy" and "impression management".

The techniques of impression management include: the concealment of the secret pleasures of previous performances, the concealment of errors, concealment of the process of the performance (only showing the end-product), concealment of dirty-work, and mystification, i.e. performers create a social distance so that the audience cannot question the actor and grasp the semantics of the actions. These techniques can be seen as means of selfcontrol, that is, dramaturgical discipline to handle or avoid embarrassment, which may have existential repercussions. Note that the audience is also involved in efforts to cover up this fakeness of the performance. Usually, all performers have an interest in maintaining the totality coherence and smoothness of the performance.

Goff man sees embarrassment as an important indicator of where people fail to present an acceptable self, and an important motivator. A person wishes to present himself effectively to minimize the embarrassment of a failing presentation, but other participants are also motivated to help the performance by their wish to avoid the embarrassment they feel at its failure. So, most of the time, we interact in a cosy conspiracy in which it appears as if everyone knows what they are talking about, can remember the names of those who they're talking to, and has an appearance and presence which is pleasant and unexceptionable. In this sense, our 'selves' are presented for the purpose of interacting. with others, and are developed and maintained with the cooperation of others through the interaction.

In face-to-face encounters, much information about the self is communicated in ways incidental to the'main business' of the encounter, and some is communicated involuntarily: Goffman distinguishes between information 'given', that is, intended and managed in some way, and that 'given off' which 'leaks through' without nay intention. He also points out a difference between the 'main'or'attended track of the interaction and other 'unattended tracks' which are at that moment less salient. For example; if a colleague calls round, one may discuss a work problem and prepare a cup of coffee simultaneously, both of these going on cooperatively and interactively with the other person, but it is generally clear that the 'point' of the interaction is the discussion, not the coffee making.

It is often felt that the semantic of Goffmanian discourse is seemingly cold or disengaging, with sufficient irony on occasion to seem more amuse than sympathetic. There is a -sense of detachment, not engagement. The very use of the vocabulary of the stage gives the impression of insincerity and contrivance on the part of the participants. So it is no wonder that Goffmanian sociology is often characterized as cynical by native commentators. Few are likely to see it as a celebration of the existential sociology, more likely is the view that it is at least neutrally a dissection, or more actively an expose of social manners. But

such reactions are sociologically superficial and intellectually absurd because Goffmanian discourse is aimed to analyze the ordinary, everyday people in everyday life, circumstances in which personal ruin is more literary than real, in which the price to be paid for failure is not much greater than embarrassment, circumstances in which efforts to sustain creditable selves are largely successful. In contrast, there are circumstances in which the self is profoundly threatened, in which it is attacked and discredited and its actual survival put to doubt. It is in those circumstances that Goffman shifts his stance and creates an eloquent and passionate assertion of the dignity and value of the self in existential sense and a defense of its right to resist the social world-that threatens the authenticity of the self -even when, from the observer's point of view, it resists what may be for its own good.

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Questions:

Q. Explain in detail the works and life of Dr. Erving Goff man.

Q. Explain in detail the Dramaturgical Approach of Erving Goffman. Illustrate with ex-amples.

Q. Present in detail any one of the important works of Goffman. Explain the validity in present times.

Q. What are your viewed on Goff mans work on Asylums. Do you agree with his analysis?

Q. Critically evaluate the works of Goffman.

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13

ALFRED SCHUTZ:
Phenomenology

Objectives

To explore phenomenology with particular reference to 'the philosophy of Alfred Schutz. This would enable a deeper understanding of the dimensions of phenomenology and ethnomethodology.

Concepts

a) Assumption of Intersubjectivity

This refers to the knowledge, beliefs and understanding of people required to participate and interact in life, known as the Objective View. In this the thought process "We are of one mind" exists. When we are born in this world, there are already others who are existing. There is interaction and continuous, contact and thereby a connection of the two minds. This is then a bilate ral/positive feedback relationship, because if we all are of the same thinking mind, then the natural changing and evolution of thoughts would consistently build upon one another.

b) Reality

Paramount Reality:

This refers to the manner in which people perceive and see their reality in the world of everyday life.

Finite Reality: This has a beginning, middle and end. One is able to fathom and understand when one is entering "it", in "it", and e emerging from "it"

C) Assumption of Reciprocity of Perspectives

This means that if "I" exchange my position with someone, then his/her "here" will become mine. This will mean that "I" will look upon them in the same manner that he/she does and with the same distance from things. The same things which are within his/ her reach would also be within "my" reach and vice versa. This is an extension of Mead's "taking the attitude of the other." Therefore, this too would be considered a reciprocal relationship. Each time one changes places with one's fellowman one ascertains the same perspective. This changes each time one "looks through the eyes" of another.

d) Typifications

Whenever one is successful at designation, the mere assignment reinforces the designation of the person. This is a sufficient condition. The reference builds and reinforces the prospective which in turn creates another incident of reference to build on and so on.

Durkheim states that categories are expressed and sustained through the collective representation results in collective realities. Typifications are categories in which individuals are labeled. In this aspect the relationship is bilateral.

Introduction

Human beings have the capacity to feel and reason. They want to explore the various things and situations. They want to understand and interpret the world in which they live. Phenomenology seeks to unravel these facets of a human being. Unlike traditional approaches in sociological theory and methodology which focus on the historical and functional character of social behaviour, phenomenology is an interpreative approach to social life which emphasizes the need to understand social action from the point of view of the social actor.

It seeks to recognize 1) the meanings people attempt to find in their world: things events and persons 2) the perspectives from which people see themselves and others 3) the motives that underlie their behaviour

Phenomenology is a branch of philosophy which owes it origin to Edmund Husserl. The aim of phenomenology, as propounded by Husserl, is to study human phenomena. It aims to explore human phenomena without considering questions of their causes, their objective reality, or even their appearance. The objective is to study how human phenomena are experienced in consciousness, in cognitive and perceptual acts, as well as how they may be valued or appreciated aesthetically.

Husserl

The founder of phenomenology, the German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), introduced the term in his book "Ideas: A General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology" (191; trans. 1931). As formulated by Husserl after 1910, phenomenology is the study of the structures of consciousness that enable consciousness to refer to objects outside itself. This study essentially focuses on the content of the mind exclusively. Husserl called this type of reflection the phenomenological reduction.

Since the mind can focus on nonexistent as well as real objects, Husserl noted that phenomenological reflection does not presuppose that anything exists. It is actually a "bracketing of existence," which implies, setting aside the question of the real existence of the contemplated object.

While studying the content of his mind, he took cognizance of acts such as remembering, desiring, and perceiving and the abstract content of these acts, which Husserl called meanings. Due to these meanings an act could be directed toward an object under a certain situation. This he called intentionality and considered it to be the essence of consciousness.

Husserl's philosophy was an important philosophical programme which focused on putting froth the absolute ground of human knowledge. He was in pursuit of a search for essences. He believed that a real and objective world exists. But because it is known only through subjective human consciousness, it is a socially constructed reality when it is interpreted.

Alfred Schutz (1899-1959)

Alfred Schutz, more than any other phenomenologist, attempted to relate the thought of Edmund Husserl to the social world and the social sciences. His work has been influential on new movements in sociological thought such as ethnomethodology and conversation analysis.

Alfred Schutz was born in Vienna in 1899 and died in New York in 1959. He arrived in the United States after fleeing the Nazis in Austria. Shortly after that he took a position in New School for Social Research in New York from which he was able to influence the development of phenomenological and later ethnomethodological sociology in the United States.

It was outstanding that he pursued a career in banking at the same time as pursuing his interests in phenomenological philosophy and the creation of a phenomenological basis for the social sciences. Gifted and talented in banking, Schutz took a daytime position in a New York city bank to support himself and taught social philosophy classes in the evening at the New School for Social Research in 1943. Nine years later he became professor of Sociology and philosophy and continued to teach at New School until his death in 1959.

Although Schutz was never a student of Husserl, he along with a colleague, Felix Kaufman, studied Husserl's work intensively in seeking a basis fora' sociology of understanding' derived from the work of Max Weber. This work and its continuation resulted in his first book, Der Sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt (literally, 'The meaningful construction of the social world', but published in English as 'The phenomenology of the social world'). This work brought him to the attention of Husserl, with whom he corresponded and whom he visited until Husserl's death in 1938. In fact, he was offered the position of assustant to Husserl at Freiburg University in the early 1930s, which he declined.

Phenomenology has a long history with its focus on consciousness. But the effort to develop a sociological perspective of phenomenology can be credited to Alfred Schutz's work "The Phenomenology of the Social World" in Germany in 1932. However it was translated into English only in 1967. This accounts for its recent impact on American sociological theory.

Schutz and Max Weber'

Schutz praised Max Weber's viewed on value-freedom in social science and the autonomy of science vis-a-vis other activities (e.g. politics). He also commended Webre's methodological individualism and ideal-type methodology. However, Schutz pointed out that selecting an experience out of one's own forms of experiences also forms an aspect of interpretation. To an actor, the meaning of an action is also based on the project which is guiding the sequences of sub acts, leading to its realization. According to Schutz Weber fails to explore 'why' and through what processes actors come to share common meanings.

Schutz thus developed his own theory of meaning and action, beginning with Husseri's study of the consciousness of internal time.

Schutz's Phenomenology

Husserl's phenomenology was aimed inward toward understanding the transcendental ego. Schutz turned it outward toward a concern for intersubjectivity. He saw the way people grasped consciousness of others while living within their own stream of consciousness. He used intersubjectivity in a large., sense to mean a concern with the social world, especially the social nature of knowledge.

Schutz studied the social world called the life world or the world of everyday life. This is an intersubjective world in which people create social reality and at the same time are constrained by the social and cultural structures which have already been created by their predecessors. Most of the parts of the life world are shared. However there do exist some private aspects in the life world.

Within the life world, Schutz discussed intimate face to face relationships (" we relations") and distant impersonal relationships. According to him face to face relations are of great importance in the life world, but it is easier for the sociologist to study more impersonal relations scientifically.

He focused on the meaning individuals assign to situations in everyday life and adapted Husserl's philosophy to sociology as well as incorporated Weber's concept of verstehen of subjective understanding into his system. He attempted to clarify Weber's concept of 'action' and his method of 'ideal type' construction. Keeping with the phenomenological spirits of Schutz's sociology, it can be said that all symbolic universes and all legitimations are human products; their existence has reality or validity in the lives of concrete individuals, and has no empirical status apart frorn these lives.

'Life world', intersubjectivity' and 'natural attitude' are the three pillars of Schutz's theory of phenomenological sociology. Natural attitude is understood as the way ordinary individuals participate in the world, taking its existence for granted, assuming its objectivity, and undertaking action projects as if they were predetermined. Language, culture and common sense are experienced in the natural attitude as objective features of ail external world that are learned by actors in the course of their lives.

'Uniqueness and typification' are two terms of relevance in Schutz's analysis.

He noted that all repetitive social situations constitute a process called typification. This refers to categorizing of situations and persons into types based on socially shared definitions and meanings. In face to face situations typification is necessarily adapted by unique situations. Thus the more personal the relationship the more unique its character is bound to be and the more impersonal the relationship the more typified. The meaning that the individual gives to situations in everyday life is of prime importance. Schutz studied the individuals's own definitions of the situation. He believed that the meaning an individual assigned to the interaction situation maybe shared by the person with whom he is interacting. This is called 'reciprocity of perspectives'. He gave the example of musicians in an orchestra. Since they shared the meanings of the situation with the conductor, the musicians could exchange positions with the conductor and experience the situation the way the conductor does.

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

Actors assume that knowledge is objective and all people reason in a like manner. Each actor assumes that every other actor knows what he or she knows of this world: All believe that they share common sense. However, each person's biography is unique, and each develops a relatively distinct stock of typifications and recipes. Therefore, interpretations may be different. Everyday social interaction is replete with ways in which actors create feelings that common sense is shared, that mutual understanding is occurring, and that everything is all right. Phenomenology emphasizes that humans live within an intersubjective world, yet they at best approximate shared realities. While a paramount reality is commonly experienced in this manner, particular realities or finite provinces of meaning are also constructed and experiences by diverse cultural, social, or occupational groupings.

According to Schutz all human consciousness is practical. People act in order to implement goals based on their typifications and recipes, their stock of knowledge at hand. Consciousness is composed of thinking, perceiving, feeling, remembering, imagining, and anticipating, directed toward the world. The objects of consciousness are the sources of all social realities that are, in turn, the materials of common sense.

Thus, typifications derived from common sense are internalized. They become

the tools that individual consciousness uses to constitute a lifeworld, the unified arena of human awareness and action.

The concept of typification is derived by Schutz from both Weber and Husserl. He first encountered the idea in Weber's concept of 'ideal types' and then in Husserl's Insight that typification is a key process in the way we make sense of the world.

Phenomenology and Ethnomethodology

Ethnomethodology and phenomenology have certain basic characteristics. Ethnomethodologists do trace their roots to phenomenology.

Traditional sociologists and the laymen perceive objects, events and persons of the domain of everyday life are as common sense reality. But phenomenological and ethnomethodological sociologists do not believe in constructing or assuming such a real world. They do agree that for analytical purposes, what "really" is there, is irrelevant. However what is of central importance is what is thought to be there by a social group. Both "susupend" or "bracket" the belief that such objects are independent of the mode of enquiry used to make the objects observable. Therefore ehtnomethodologists and the phenomenological sociologists concentrate upon the "real "world as it is thought, believed and perceived to be by a social group.

However there are discernible differences between the two approaches. While phenomenology analyses and interprets recognizable structures of immediate consciousness, ethnomethodology focuses on human activity which constructs a sense of objective reality about the social world for the people.

Conclusion

Doubts have been expressed about the possibility of a phenomenological sociology. However there is a growing body of sociologists who are building upon the work of German expatriate Alfred Schutz. He is more or less considered the founder of phenomenological sociology or atleast responsible for the introduction and development of the sub discipline on American soil.

Phenomenology is probably the most significant philosophical movement of the twentieth century, as far as the social sciences are concerned. Phenomenological ideas underlie virtually all of those schools of thought that hold that it is necessary to understand the meaning attributed by persons to the activities in which they engage, in order to understand their behaviour.

Thus Schutz and his phenomenological orientation are concerned with the dialectical relationship between the way people construct reality and the obdurate social and cultural reality that they inherit from those who preceded them in the social world.

Summary

Phenomenology was initially developed by Edmund Husserl, a German mathematicism who felt that the objectivity of science did not allow for an adequate perceptionand understanding of the world. He presented various

philosophical conceptualizations and techniques in order to find the sources or essences of reality in the human consciousness. It was only when Alfred Schutz found some deficiency in Max Weber's theory of action that phenomenology entered the sphere of sociology. Schutz gathered and simplified from Husserl's rather dense writings a sociologically relevant approach. He set about describing how subjective meanings give rise to an objective social world. Schutz discussed the concepts of lifeworld, intersubjectivity and natural attitude. He studied the meanings people assign to situation in every day life.

Phenomenology thereby seeks to understand how people construct meaning, the key concept being intersubjectivity. It suggests that our experience of the world, upon which our thoughts about the world are based, is intersubjective. This is because we experience the world with and through others. Whatever meaning we create has its roots in human actions and activity which include social and cultural objects.

Thus though Husserl's approach started earlier, it much later that phenomenology became a major theoretical and methodological school of thought due to the work of prominent phenomenological sociologist Alfred Schutz. who is credited with bringing this stream to the American soil.

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Questions

1)   Discuss the life and contribution of Alf red Schutz with reference to Phenomenology.

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14

HAROLD GARFINKEL:

Ethnomethodology

Objectives:

The main objectives of this chapter are to give the reader an insight into Ethnomethodology and to give them a better understanding of Harold Garfinkel and the social world.

Concepts

Some of the concepts used by Garfinkel are documentary method, indexicality, accounting and reflexive. These are explained subsequently with examples.

Introduction

Human beings do not live by their sensory organs alone. They want to and need to understand the social world and the various structures in it. There are various encounter and processes that take place in life and while interacting with people. The interactions have a meaning in social life, which humans try to unravel. It is in this context that theories of Phenomenally and Ethomethodology have emerged.

The term ethomethodology comes from Greece meaning the methodology of the ordinary people. Harold Garfinkel is recognized as the founder of ethnomethodology. Born in 1917, Garfinkel completed his Ph. D from Harvard. He taught briefly at Ohio State and University of Chicago. Since 1954 he taught at University of California, Los Angeles. "Studies in Ethomethodolgy" published in 1967 consists of number of articiles written by Garfinkel.

Although there are differences in them ethnomethodology is often aligned with phenomenology. One of the major reason for this is that Garfinkel was a student of Alfred SchutzThough ethnomethodologists owe their indebtedness to phenomenology and sociology of knowledge, they do maintain their distinct identity.

Ethnomethodology means the study of methods and procedures employed by society. According to ethonmethodologiests society has to be understood in the manner that people give meaning to the social world and the members construct it. Ethnomethodology refers to the commonsense methods used by people to construct reality. Ethomethodologists give a lot of importance to conversations and their study. They are interested in how peop*_ make sense of the structures in society and not in the structures as phenomena by themselves.

Ethomethodologists focus on the microscopic aspects of human behaviour. They believe that in order to understand larger social structures, it is important to focus on smaller groups and face to face situations. They are interested in the interpretations people use to make sense of the social structures and settings. They state that human beings create rules to persuade each other that there is a real world. They are interested in ways people create a sense of reality by "making sense" of events according to the already existing order for society. They thus study common sense methods used by society / people in constructing reality. They want to understand the world from the point of view of the actor or interactional participants.

Harold Garfinkel put forth that, the meaning of what we call society is really about the way people actually relate to each other.'Thus Garfinkel found it essential to analyse methods used by people in everday life to describe and make sense of their own activites. Like Durkheim Garfinkel also examines social facts. For Durkheim social facts are coercive of individuals and actor are constrained by the social structures and instituutions, Contrasting this, ethomethodology treats social facts as the accoplishment of members, as a product of members methodolgoical activities.

Todays ethomethodology has gained a lot of acceptance. Yet there is some way to go before it gains complete acceptance

Ethnomethodology and Social order

One of the tasks of Sociology has been to explain the concept of social order. Social order is assumed to have an objective social reality. Functionalists relate social order to the functional requisites of a social system. Social action is seen as systematic because it is governed by the norms and values which guide and direct behaviour. Marxists believe social order to be uncertain, but neverthless believe in its existence. They believe it results from the constraints imposed on people due to their posistions in the relations of production. Symbolic Interactionists believe that social order arises from the interpretative methods used by people .in the interaction process. Thus the different schools of sociology have different view points about social order. However the common thread running in them is the belief in the existence of social order.

By contrast ethnomethodologists suspend or abandon the belief that a social order exists. They say that social order exists only so far as members of society perceive it to exist. People assign meanings and interpret situations so as to make sense of them. Meaning is not inherent in situations. Hence ethnomethodologists put forth the idea that social order is a "convenient fiction." People make sense of situations, of things, the way they want to. Thus the social world is made knowable, understandable and accountable to its members.

Reflexive : Indexicality

Garfinkel says that members use the documentary method to make sense and account

for the social world inorder to give it a sense of order. The documentary method consists of selecting certain aspects of the infinite number of features contained in any situation or context, of defining them in a particular way and seeing them as evidence of an underlying pattern. The process is then reversed and particular instances of the underlying pattern are then used as evidence for the existence of the pattern. According to Garfinkel social life is essentially reflexive and members are constantly referring activities and situations to presumed underlying patterns and confirming the existence of those patterns by reference to particular instances of their expression. In this manner members make sense of the social world and produce accounts of it. Accounts are the ways in which actors explain situations. It is the process used to make sense of the real world. This is one of the reasons why ethomethodologists focus a lot on analyzing conversations. Eg, when a student explains to the professor why the couldn't give an exam, she is offering an account. The student it trying to make sense of an event to provide explanation to the professor. Ethnomethodologiests use a process "ethomethodological indifference" where they do not judge the nature of accounts but study how the accounts are used in practical action. They are concerned with the accounts and the methods needed by the speaker and listener to understand, accept and reject the accounts.

I Garfinkel demonstrates his concept of documentary method and its reflexive nature through the following: example. An experiment was conducted in a University in a Psychiatry Department. Students were asked to take part in it as it was supposed to be a new form of psychotherapy. Students were told to give a brief description of their problem and ask the Counselor for advise by asking a series of questions, answers to which would be in the form of "Yes" or "No". The student and Counselor couldn't see each other as they sat in adjoining rooms and communicated through the intercom. Unknown to the student the person was not really a Counselor. The answers to be given were predetermined, equally divided between yes and no, in accordance with a table of random numbers.

In one case a student was worried about his relationship with his girlfiend, since he was Jewish and she a Gentile. He was apprehensive about his parents' reaction and about his marriage and children in the future. It was found that thought the responses given by the Counselor sometimes contradicted each other and were given randomly, the student found them helpful. In questions where the answers didn't match it he assumed that it was because to Counselor didn't have the full background. Other student also gave a similar assessment of the Counseling session.

Garfinkel found that although there was no real consistency in the answers given to the questions asked, the students nevertheless managed to make sense of them, findIng some underlying pattern in the advice they were being given. Most found the advice reasnable and helpful. This was so even when some of the advice was contradictory since they were being randomly. Thus is one case a student asked: "So you think I should drop out of school than?'' and received a yes' response. Surprised by this he asked., "You really think I should out of school?" only to be given a 'no' answer. Rather than dismissing the

advice as, nonsense, the student struggled to find its meaning, looking bark for a pattern in the Counselor's responses. The student never thought of doubting the sincerity or genuineness of the Counselor.

What the students were doing throughout these counseling sessions, Garfinkel argues, was constructing a social reality to make sense of an often senseless interaction. By using the documentary method they were able to bring order to what was in fact a chaotic situation

Thus Garfinkel made the following observations: Students made sense of the answers given to them, though in some cases they didn't match. They also gave a sense of order to the situation where no order existed. Therefore Garfinkel says that the students used the docuemntary method. They found an underlying pattern from the beginning of the Counseling advice. Each answer was then interpreted in terms of the pattern and each answer was seen as evidence for the existence of the pattern. Thus Garfinkel concluded that the students' method was reflexive.

The above example can also be used to explain the concept of indexicality as used by Garfinkel and other ethnomethodologists. Indexicality means that a situation can be understood and interpreted depending on the content in which it is indexed. Meaning the context or the circumstances surrounding the situation is of utmost importance in making sense of the situation. Using the above example, because the students were at the University Psychiatry Department, they believed that the Counselor was genuine and thereby made sense of the answers given by him. But if the same answer would have been given by a fellow student in the canteen or at a coffee table, he would be laughed at the people would think that the had lost his senses or was under the influence of alcohol. Thus members make sense of what is happeneing depending upon the context of the situation. They make sense in particular settings.

Thereby Garfinkel suggests that we are all constantly making use of the documentary method in our daily lives to create a "taken-for-granted" world which we feel we "know" and can be "at home" in. We perceive our social world through a series of patterns we have built up for making sense of and coping with the variety of sitations that we encounter everyday. Sometimes we know (or think we know) something so we that we do not notice when it change. For example a wife may become angry when her husband does not notice her new hairstyle or new dress. The pattern of her appearance and behaviour, which the husband carries in his mind has become so fixed, that it is incapable of accommodating new facts. The taken-for-g ranted world we all inhabit is to some extent necessary in order to avoid confusion which would be experienced if we saw everything as if were the first time.

A technique among ethnomethodologists is to disrupt temporarily the world which people take for granted and see how they react. The point of this is to expose background assumptions that have been accepted as reality for a long time. In one of his experiements Garfinkel asked students to behave as visitors in their own homes, and record the bemused reactions of their parents as they struggled to comprehend disruption of their informal relationship built up over many years with their children.

4.3 Ethnomethodologists and mainstream Sociology

Ethnomethodologists suggest that mainstream sociologists have treated human beings as a "cultural dope" who act out things as per the directives of society. Ethnomethodologists on the contrary, treat human beings as thinking creatures, who actually measure every situation according to the context and then give it meaning. Thus humans are not shaped by the social world but construct their own social world.

The "conventional" sociologists treat the social world with an objective reality of its own. Therefore they treat aspects like suicide and crime as having an independent existence and attempt to give an explanation for the same. But ethnomethodologists argue that the social world basically consists of interpretations and accounts given by the members to make sense of the world. Therefore socialogists should be studying the accounting procedures which the members use.

Critique

The ethnomethodologists themselves have been criticized by mainstream sociologists as "folk sociologists." According to them the kind of members whom the ethnomethodologists are talking about, lack and motives and goals in life. Ethnomethodologists also ignore the impact that nature of power and power differentials can have on members motives. Also many ethnomethodologists ignore the objects and events which are not interpreted by people.

Conclusion

Ethnomethodology is far more accepted today than it was a decade or two earlier though it is felt that they are losing sight of their phenomenological roots. Mainstream sociologists do feel that ethnomethociology focuses on trivial matters and ignores the more important issues of society. However ethnomethodologists believe that focusing on every day life is a most relevant field of study. It could be said that the human capacity to produce order out of chaos is the only worthwhile capacity in the eyes of the ethnomethodologist. For them other human capacities, such as moral judgement, would be seen as subjective only and therefore perhaps containing no real truth.

However ethnomethodology is a very good method for seeing how individuals make sense of the social world for themselves, in effect creating their own reality from precious little real information provided.

Summary

Ethnomethodology studies the commonsense methods used by main in understanding the social world. It owes its roots to phenomenology. The founding father is Harold Garfinkel.

The ethnomethodologists do not really believe in social order. They feel that there is actually chaos in society and the feeling of order is given by members. Members interpret social structures and give meaning to it. Thus the social world is reflexive. Also members comprehend a situation depending on the context that it is indexed in.

According to ethnomethodologists, mainstream sociologists need to study the accounting procedures that members use to make sense of the world.

Though criticized for focusing on trivial matters and ignoring the larger issues, ethnomethodologists raise interesting questions.

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Questions

1) What is Ethnomethodology? How has Harold Garfinkel contributed towards its development?

2) Explain the concepts of reflexivity and indexicality as used in ethnomethodology.

3) Explain the concept of social order as underslood by Ethnomethodologists vis a vis other schools of thought in sociology.

4) How do ethnomethodologists distinguish themselves from mainstream sociologists? Give a critique of ethnomethodology.

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15

Structuration Theory

Introduction:

Structuration theory is primarily a contribution of Anthony Giddens. Anthony Giddens is a well known British sociologist; currently a director of London school of Economics (L.S.E), London. Born in 1938, he is considered to be one of the most important contemporary social theorists. He has written numerous sociological books namely, "Capitalism and modem sociological theory"(1 971), "The Class structure of advanced societies" (1981), and " The constitution of society" (1984). Giddens is also a cofounder of a publishing house, called Polity press and an adviser to the British Labour Party.

Giddens started by reviewing the classical sociological theoretical traditions. In "Modernity and self-identity"11 991), he analyzed the concepts and ideas of Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Simmel, Parsons, Goffman and other sociologists. Giddens tried to show the interconnection between the seemingly distinct, and at times opposite theoretical views. He has pointed out the one-sidedness of the theoretical views: especially in terms of their action\structure orientations. His approach is to integrate the various theories in order to get a coherent picture of the society.

Gidden's work has a special significance in the context of the new ways of thinking that emerged in theory, especially linguistic analysis and the modernity-post-modernity debate. Giddens contributed immensely to the discourse of modernity as well. He is highly influenced by Modern thinkers like, R. D. Laing, Lugwig Wittgenstein among others.

He gave a new perspective to the sociology of time as well. Often ignored in sociological theories, these concepts of time and space are central components of social life. These are considered to be the reference points of any analysis. Here Giddens notes that every actor has a finite existence and at every moment it is contextually situated in time and space. Giddens reviews the historical changes that took place in the concepts of time and space, or at least the ways in which they were perceived and its relation with human beings in the contemporary era.

But the most notable contribution by Giddens is the theory of structuration. This theory has shown the dualism in the philosophical and sociological epistemology. Gidden's theory of structuration primarily deals with the nature of the social process. It means studying the ways in which social systems are produced and reproduced in social interaction. Giddens defines structuration as "the structuring of social relations across time and space, in virtue of the duality of structure". . . .1

It is very important in order to understand structuration theory, to take a review of Gidden's critique of classical and modern sociologies He identified two basic stands in sociological thinking, namely system I structure oriented theoretical stands and action \ agency oriented theoretical stands.

Gidden's account of sociological theories and his analysis of dualism:

The theory of structuration evolved in a critical dialogue with the four main tendencies within theoretical sociology - action theory, functionalism, structuralism, and Marxism. Giddens finds both the action oriented theories and system oriented theories inadequate to explain the social process. Giddens sees action theory as having remained in a subjectivist position, which means inability to explain the social structures and the conditions for action. Similarly, structuralism and functionalism do not adequately account for agency, the fact that individuals possess a will and contribute to changing these structures. The functionalist and structuralist positions therefore result in a determinism which overlooks the fact that social structures are not only constraining but enabling.

This critical dialogue with these sociological theories lead to the theory of structuration, which is Gidden's attempt to resolve the tension between agency and structure, and between an individual and the society. Gidden's treatment to these various stands in sociological philosophical discourse can be illustrated in a following diagram:

The philosophical level

Dualism	Objectivism	Subjectivism
Philosophical Orientation	Positivism	Hermeneutics

The Sociological level

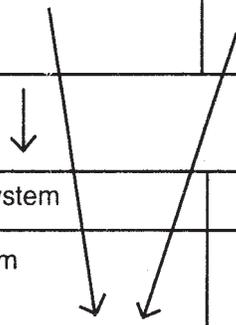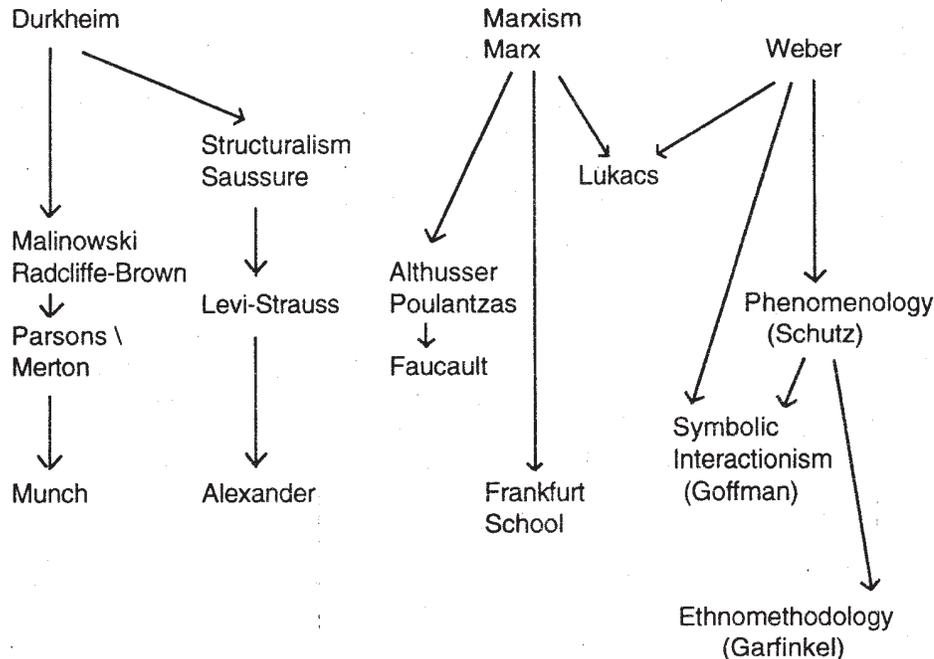| Dualism	Structure\System	Actor \ Action
Sociological Orientation	Functionalism	Action theory

Durkheim   Marxism
                             Marx   Weber

Durkheim

Structuralism
Saussure

Malinowski
Radcliffe-Brown

Parsons \
Merton

Levi-Strauss

Munch

Alexander

Marxism
Marx

Weber

Lukacs

Althusser
Poulantzas

Faucault

Phenomenology
(Schutz)

Symbolic
Interactionism
(Goffman)

Frankfurt
School

Ethnomethodology
(Garfinkel)

[This diagram has been taken from - Kaspersen Lar Bo - Introduction to Anthony Giddens 2000 - page 27]

Thus, according to Giddens, within philosophy there exists a dualism between an objectivist (positivism) and subjectivist (hermeneutics) views or stands. As these philosophies have been the basis of the sociological theorizing, there exists a corresponding dualism between the structural perspective (functionalism \ structuralism) and the actor perspective of action theory (Weberian sociology, Symbolic Interactionism) Giddens emphasizes that this dualism between agency and structure or between object and, subject is the cause of one sidedness of sociological theories.

Giddens, while discussing the relation between philosophy and social theory/ sociology, he points out that social theory has become more philosophical and more preoccupied with epistemological questions. Conversely, philosophy has also become more sociologically oriented. Giddens appreciates this development, but reminds the sociologists that "it's not primarily .... a philosophical endeavour".

Structuration Theory: An answer to the dualism

Giddens asserts that social science must abandon the eternal and endless epistemological discussion as to how reality should be known. Instead, it should focus on the ontological questions of how to conceptualize reality. This means for Giddens, conceptualization of human actions and reproduction and transformation of social life. Hence, for the prerequisites of a new social theory which can go beyond this problem of dualism is a change from epistemology to

ontology; and a development and redefinition of concepts. One can see Giddens being influenced by psychologist R. D. Laing, in his emphasis on ontological understanding,

Structuration theory utilizes a deconstruction and redefinition of basic concepts of agents, action, power, structure, and system from action theory, functionalism, and structuralism so as to create the foundation for new social ontology. Giddens develops and redefines the concepts so that the traditional actor\structure dualism is instead conceived as a duality, which means that the structure no longer determines individual's action. Similarly, the social structure is not simply the sum of individual's actions. Society is viewed as a structuration process, whereby human actions simultaneously structure and are structured by society. For Giddens, human agency and social structure are not two separate concepts; rather they are two different aspects of the social process.

For example when a little boy goes to school, he through his actions help to produce and reproduce the school as an independent system; and at the same time he is deriving his actions from the norms and the rules set by the school system. The school as a structure is therefore, not something which exists external to him, as functionalism would say. This condition is called by Giddens as a duality of structure or social practice.

(a)   Social Practice
The basic unit of analysis of social sciences, according to the theory of structuration, is neither an individual action nor the all expansive social structures, but social practice ordered across space and time. There are two main processes involved in the social practice

Social practice constitutes the social life i.e. it constitutes humans as actors and realizes structures.

Thus it's a mediating concept between agency and structure, between individual and society.

This social practice is a continuous process - it has to be understood in terms of the interrelations between certain conceps like, agency, actor, time, space, etc; which Giddens redefined in his structuration theory. This is elaborated in his work'The constitution of society'. He maintains in that book that as the social practice constitutes us as actors and at the same time realizes structures; actors and structures thus, become two modes of considering the same relations: social practice.

Giddens does not see structuration theory as a decidedly coherenttheory. Rather, he considers it to be an approach containing several different concepts which operate as a tool to explain social situations. Giddens theory is not only a sociological; it's in fact more a social, theory, 'plural' enough to applied in all social sciences. Giddens, in almost all his works

reflects his consciousness about the tendency of previous sociological theories, which claim to be coherent and universal -to become a narrative. He tries to avoid, the claim of universality and takes more flexible stance.

The concept of social practice is a decisive concept of the theory of structuration. It makes us understand the production and reproduction of social life through the application of the terms like agent, agency, structure\system, time, space, etc. this social practice in the form of 'duality of structure' transcends the traditional dualism between action and structure, between individual and society.

Agent

Structure   Duality of   =   Social practice
                Structure
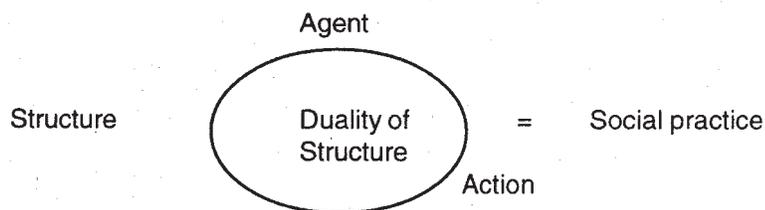
                          Action

The theory of structuration: from actor - structure to social practice.

Concept of an agent:

An important task in front of Giddens is to interweave both the action and system perspectives, so that no one will obtain priority over the other. The system perspectives have always under emphasized the role of an agent, treating he\she as if he\she just bears the system and does not have an independent will. According to Giddens, all the individual elements (agent, action, structure, etc.) in the process, possess the same dual property: they unite an element of both agency and structure. Giddens highlights the importance of the knowledge ability and consciousness of the agent. Giddens pointed out three types of consciousness - that can be found among the agents:

i)   The first of these is called practical consciousness

This is concerned about the day-to-day activities conducted by an individual, which\she generally takes for granted. Giddens explains that generally people have knowledge of the daily actions that they carry out but this knowledge is formulated explicitly. It is a tacit knowledge. These actions of people are routinized and they take place at a level of practical consciousness.

This practical consciousness comprises most of the activities conducted by people and it's one of the most central through most overlooked levels of consciousness.

ii)   The second is discursive consciousness. -

This discursive capacity of an actor is indicative of his will-power. This consciousness explains the 'reason'of an actor about his act. The reasons as actor may give to justify his act are generally subjective reasons - i.e.

explanations from his own point of view. This type of consciousness can overlap with practical consciousness, but the discursive consciousness refers to the understanding which the agent achieves by reflecting upon his actions. This reflection may occur with the help of others or as an independent act.

iii)   The third type indicates the absence of consciousness -

Here Giddens explains an unconscious level which involves actions caused by unconscious motives. The unconscious includes knowledge that is suppressed or expressed in a distorted form. This type of consciousness, which is an absence of itself, is strictly analyzed differently than the other two types of consciousness.

Giddens considers the practical consciousness to be the most critical for the understanding of social life; as it deals more with the implicit or tacit knowledge which is largely under emphasized in sociological analysis.

C)   Agency

Giddens used the concept of agency more like praxis than the way it has been used in the classical sociological sense. "The notion of agency connects directly with the concept praxis, and when speaking of regularized types of acts I shall talk of human practices, as an ongoing series of 'practical activities", said Giddens   2

Agency has a flow without a start or an end. It's a structuration process. Giddens emphasized that a meaningful act is meaningful only when the actor reflects upon it. When the actor reflects discursively, it appears in his consciousness, and here starts the meaningful understanding of an agency. The other action theories like phenomenology and ethnomethodoloy emphasized highly upon the intentionality of the actor. Giddens makes a step further and starts viewing intentionality itself as a process.

Agency involves three important processes; embedded in agent's body and cognitive activity - reflexive monitoring of action, rationalization of action and motivation of action these processes represent some aspects of agent's subjectivity.

The reflexive monitoring of action and rationalization of action are closely connected. Both these processes occur as actor's practical consciousness. In the first instance, an actor underakes a reflexive monitoring of his flow of activities. It refers to an international nature of human behavior. The agent continually reviews his own behavior in the context of social situation. Giddens shows that it's highly complex an act and a highly essential one for a man to perform in a society.

Rationalization of action tales place as a process whereby the agent reflects his tacit or assumed\taken for granted understanding of reality for his own activities.

Unlike reflexive monitoring, which reflects more an intentional part of the action process; rationalization of action is primarily concerned with the ability o evaluate the relationship between the action and its reason. One constantly applies these two subjective processes which give the concept of agent and agency a reproductive character.*Peing repetitive in nature, these actions are extended in time and space and therefore contribute to the daily creation of society.

Motivation of action is certainly different than the other two processes. The first two actions are directly related to the chain of routine events; where as the last process, ie. motivation of action is basically a potential for action. Giddens has also dealt with the unconscious motives which indirectly cause actions. Here he is extensively relying on psychology, especially on Freud, Erik Erikson and Laing.

It is important to see how these processes come together and reproduce a certain system. As we have already seen, Giddens views actions as intentional and at the same time his treatment of concepts of 'intentionality' and 'rationalization of action' imply that the agent is not conscious - of all the consequences of his actions. Giddens also have emphasizes that recursive practices have unintentional consequences; which precisely introduces a reproductive character to action. Thus, our actions have unintended consequences, which further constitutes the basis for future actions. From this position Giddens deals with structure levels.

Another interesting point in terms of agency is its connection with power. As Giddens have written, agency does not refer to - "the intentions people have in doing things, but to their capability of doing those things in 'the first place" .....3. To act is to exert power. In the case where the agent is no longer able to act "otherwise', he will cease being an agent.

d)   Structure\systern and structuration:

To start with, Giddens distinguishes between structure and system. For Giddens, a social system consists of relations between actors or collectivities reproduced across time and space. Social systems are thus - social practice - which is reproduced. Structures, in contrast, are characterized by the absence of acting subjects. Giddens explains structures as an abstract entity. He discards the idea of existence of structure as an external condition. He points out "....that social system, as reproduced social practices, do not have "structures" but rather exhibit "structural properties".... "....4

Structures do not exists as such; rather, it is being continually recreated qua the agent, who draws on the same structure (or, structural properties) whenever action occurs. Giddens view structures as both - enabling and constraining. Giddens observes that the structural properties carry rules and resources which the agent utilizes in the production and reproduction of social life, and thereby also the structure. Giddens states that these rules should be understood as the techniques which, deeply rooted in our tacit practical consciousness, are used in the action.

Thus the agent, agency and structure are linked together. Giddens does not accept the view that structure is external to the agent; he views it as a means to

and a result of joint's social practice - which is precisely, i's what - duality of structure. This concept of quality of structure lies that the core of the theory of structuration and succeeds in transcendig the dualism between action theory and functionalism\structuralism. As Giddens himself -write, "structure is both the medium and outcome of the practices which constitutes social systems".

Till now we have seen the concepts of agency, agent and structure and their interrelations - which constitute the social practice. Now it is also necessary to look at the time-space dimension of this social practice, which is an integral part of Giddens theory.

These concepts of time and space have hardly been discussed in the classical or even in the modern sociology, until Giddens deals with them while formulating his structuration theory. Giddens has drawn upon here, Martin Heidegger - the existentialist philosopher. Heidegger was interested in the temporal character of human existence. He was also studying the relations between ontology and time, which coincided with Giddens interest as well.

The Time-Space dimension in the theory of Structuration

Giddens agreed,with Heidegger that human life is temporal, and fie further showed that social practice not only occur in time; it involves three forms of temporality. One is the reversible nature of time, that is repetitive nature of day-to-day activities; the duty of daily life. This duree of daily life at every point of time intersects with the duree of the life-span of the individual, which, in contrast, i's an irreversible time. These two forms of duree or temporality are related with the loncue-duree -which is a reproduction of institutions and institutional time. This is a reversible time.

Thus there are three major types of time mentioned by Giddens

i) Time in terms of our Clay-to-day life - which is repetitive in nature and therefore reversible.

ii) Time in terms of an individual - which is finite and therefore irreversible in character.

iii) Time in terms of institutions or the practices organized to carry out the day-to-day life. It is a reversible time.

The interrelations between these three types of time sustain the social practices.

Giddens have emphasized that social systems are both temporally and spatially binding and time-space constitutive. That is those actions which constitute and being constituted by the social system, produce the space in which social practice takes place. At the same time, the social system also binds the actions to a specific spatial-temporal context

If we consider the Mumbai University as a social system, this systems time-space binding on the social practice which takes place within the system. Students and teachers come to the university each day, carry out their respective roles. As social practices of all the agents (students, teachers and administrative

staffs) are connected to Mumbai University, this university becomes a "locale", which means all their actions and practices take'place in the same space. Similarly, the university also structures a process which is defined in terms of time.

Thus, the time-space categories are crucial to Gidden's understanding of being and the constitution of social life. In order to conceptualize society the time-space dimension is very important. These categories of time and space are very building blocks of Gidden's social ontology. Gidden's theory of structuration was a step further to the solution of the problem of duality in the very relation between subject and object.

Conclusion/Summery

Giddens's attempt was to solve the problem of agency\structure or individual\ society. He stressed on ontological rather than the epistemological concerns of social theory; therefore the closeness with philosophy is problematic as it link sociology with epistemology. As epistemology avoids both subjectivism and objectivism, Giddens attempted to push epistemological questions in the background and allow ontology to take the charge. He maintained that social theory must be justified on its own terms.

Giddens elaborated the process of interaction between the agency and the structure. He names it a social process. It is a basic domain of social sciences and it's ordered through time and space. Gidden's points out that the concepts of agent, structure, time and space together constitutes the social practice, when defined in terms of each other. Giddens reformulated the concepts of agent, agency and structure to dissolve the problem of dualism in social theory. All these redefined concepts constitute the social practice which is a decisive concept in structuration theory. This social practice, in the form of the duality of structure, transcends the traditional dualism between action and structure, between subjectivism and objectivism.

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Modernism and Post Modernism

Introduction

One of the key debates in contemporary social sciences and indeed the humanities, centers around the term 'post-modernism'. Critics are not agreed upon the substantive content of this term-does it depict an epoch of era, as in 'post-modernity' or does it rather, represent a system of ideas, as impost-modernism' and is there a demonstrable relationship between the two. This section will attempt to sketch a preliminary picture of this as yet inconclusive, debate.

The Rise and Fall of Reason

In the early period of 'modernity'a high confidence in reason coincided with the astonishing power of industrial capitalism. It permeated the works of early social thinkers, from Hobbes and Rousseau to Saint-Simon, Comte and Spencer. In psychology, in art, in economics and in politics, thinkers advanced perspectives that had a decidedly rationalist form.

This dream of reason foundered in the twentieth century, which had been inaugurated with such hopes for its triumphs. Reason came to ruin in society and in social thought. It was not only the capitalist economies based on applied reason and purportedly rational exchanged that failed, producing conflict and instability on a massive scale. The ethical rationality of Western culture gave way to a ferocious and debilitating upsurge of racism and xenophobia. Within secular culture itself there opened a terrifying chasm of alienation and ennui.

The then existing idea of reason overlooked, denied and 'inferiorised' the unconscious sources of action, of thought and of social order itself. As a result, for many in the twentieth century, reason came to be experienced as absent, as alienated from itself. Reason produced not liberation but objectification and domination.

This in turn produced three reactions. The first is to declare the experiment of modernity a failure. The universalism of reason was a pretension, never a real possibility. By creating a fraudulent sense of expansion and scope, in fact, universalism actually was responsible for the vast scale of the disaster that reason created. Relativism and localism are the only-standards that can inform a good society. Modernity lead to the Holocaust, postmodemity to tolerance. Objectivity leads to objectification. Antifoundationalism therefore, was to be the order of the day.

The second response did not reject reason as such, but it is reduced to a method rather than a cultural pattern or a substantive goal. This deracinating social scientific method allows us to e that reason and universal morality do not exit as such, they are merely reflections of social structures in particular forms, equality's a reflection d bureaucratic leveling and the need for efficient forms of social control; democracy is a product of newly empowered classes in struggle; tolerance is produced by globalisation and mobility, individuality by competitive markets and the overlapping networks of social life.

A third response to the crisis of reason is to incorporate relativism and social construction without giving up universalizing intent. Reason versus relativism, this approach would contend. is a false and dangerous dichotomy.

The Modern

'Modernity' emerged in the fifth century when newly Christianised Romans wished to distinguish their religiosity from two forms of barbarians, the heathens of antiquity and the unregenerate Jews. In medievaltirnes, modernity was reinvented as a term implying cultivation and learning, which allowed contemporary intellectuals to identify backward, with the classical learning of the Greek and Roman heathens themselves. With the Enlightenment, modernity became identified with rationality, science and forward progress, a semantically arbitrary relationship that seems to have held steady to this day. The rejection of modernity as a development category in the -mid twentieth century is to be understood as distinct from the retention of Modernity as a linguistic signifier of the greatest import. It is also important to keep in mind the idea that modernity can have no respect for its own past.

I Although the term 'modern' as we have seen has-an ancient history, what Habermas calls the 'project'of modernity came into focus in the eighteenth century. That project amounted to an extraordinary intellectual effort on the part of Enlightenment thinkers 'to develop objective science, universal morality and law and autonomous are according to their inner logic.' Enlightenment thought embraced the idea of progress, and actively sought that break with history and tradition, which modernity espouses. The doctrines of equality, liberty, faith in human intelligence and universal reason were understood as the cornerstone of the project. Writers like Condorcet (French 'Intellectual of the eighteenth century) Habermas notes, were possessed 'of the extravagant expectation that the arts and sciences would promote not only the control of natural forces but also understanding of the world and of the self, moral progress, the justice of institutions and even the happiness of human beings.'

Modernity and its Critics

According to Jean Baudrillard, one of the foremost advocates of post-odernity 'modernity' involved 'individualistic and rationalist thought, 'the centralized and democratic, bourgeois State, 'urban concentration', and' the gigantic development of the means of communication and information', a 'way of life articulated on change and innovation', 'anxiety, instability continued mobilization, shifting subjectivity, tension, and crisis', the 'integrated hierarchy of personal relations'

etc. Above all, however, Baudrillard emphasizes that 'modernity meant the prodigious expansion of science and technique, the rational and systematic development of the means of production, their management and organisation'. These latter developments mark'modernity as the era of productivity an intensification of human labour and of human domination over !abour, both reduced to "he status of productive forces and the schemas of efficacy and maximal output.

The twentieth century - with its death camps and death squads, its militarism and two world wars, its threat of nuclear annihilation and its experience of Hiroshima and Nagasakihas certainly shattered this optimism. Worse still, the suspicion lurks that the Enlightenment project was doomed to turn against itself and transform the quest for human emancipation into a system for universal oppression in the name of human liberation. This was the thesis advanced by Horkheimer and Adomo in their' The Dialectic of Enlightenment.'

It is however important to point out that Enlightenment thought, from its inception, internalized a whole host of difficult problems and possessed quite a few troublesome contradictions. Further, even before Baudrillard and Lyotard had begun to put together a critique of modernity from a post-modern standpoint, it had been criticized by a number of thinkers. Weber's 'sober warning that, the rationality of the Enlightenment leads not to the concrete realization of universal freedom but to the creation of and iron cage' of bureaucratic rationality from which there is no escape, was one such critique.

The Process of Moernisation

'Modernisation', is the term which depicts 'modernism' as a development category. The modernization model was characterized by the following ideal-typical traits:

1 . Societies were conceived as coherently organized systems whose subsystems were closely interdependent.

2. Historical development was parsed into two types of social systems, the traditional and the modern, statuses which were held to determine the character of their societal subsystems in determinate ways.

3. The modern was defined with reference to the social organization and culture of specifically Western societies, which were typified as individualistic, democratic, capitalist, secular, and stable, and as dividing work from home in gender -specific ways.

4. As a historical process, modernization was said to involve non-revolutionary, incremental change.

5. The historical evolution to modernity - modernization - was viewed as likely to succeed, thus assuring that traditional societies would be provided with the resources for what Parsons called a general process of adaptive 'upgrading', including economic take-off to industrialization, democratization via law and secularization and science via education.

However by the end of the 60s modernization theory was an increasingly embattled zone.

Despite the existence of capitalist markets, poverty persisted at home. New religious movements emerged in Western countries and in the developing world, with sacralisation and ideology gaining ground over secularization, science and technocracy. These developments strained the central assumptions of modernization theory, although they did not necessarily refute it. The decisive fact in modernization theory's defeat was the destruction of its ideological, discursive and mythological core brought about by the emergence of the new social movements.

The contemporary modern period was represented as bureaucratic and repressive rather than democratic and individualistic. Instead of a free market or contractual system, modern societies became 'capitalist' no longer rational, interdependent, modern, and liberating but backward, greedy, anarchic and impoverishing. Modernity was equated with the mechanism of the machine.

The Post Modern

Most critics engaged in the 'post-modernity' debate contend that 'there has been a sea-change in cultural as well as in political - economic practices since around 1972'. This sea-change is bound up primarily with the emergence of new dominant ways in which we experience space and time. Postmodernism represents some kind of reaction to, or departure from, 'modernism'. It eventually spilled over into a vigorous denunciation of abstract reason and a deep aversion to any project that sought universal human emancipation through mobilization of the powers of technology, science and reason.

One of the startling facts about postmodernism is its total acceptance of the ephemerality, fragmentation, discontinuity and the chaotic. It does not try to transcend it, counteract it or even to define the'eternal and immutable' elements that might lie within it. Postmodernism swims, even wallows, in the fragmentary and the chaotic currents of change as if that is all there is.

Incredulity Towards Meta Narratives

Writers like Michel Foucault and Jean Francios Lyotard explicitly attack the notion that there might be a meta-language, meta - narrative or meta-theory through which all things can be connected or represented. Universal and eternal truths, if they exist at all, cannot be specified. Condemning meta-narratives (broad interpretative schemas like those deployed by Freud and Marx) as 'totalising', they insist on the plurality of 'power-discourse' formations (Foucault), or of 'language games' (Lyotard). Lyotard in fact defines the postmodern simply as 'incredulity towards metanarratives.'It thus rejects the'meta- narratives' of Science, Reason, Marxism or whatever, which claims to guarantee Truth, any aesthetic narrative which offers standards of beauty, any moral narrative which offers standards of the Good. Instead of such a meta-narrative holding everything together, we are left with a complex network of different language-games, between which we move and our grasp of the rules of these games and our ability to move from one to the other keeps everything together. Postmodernism

rejects the notion of causal and historical explanations and concentrates on appearances and representations.

Knowledge and Post Modernism

Both Lyotard and Foucault claim that knowledge is the principal force of production in contemporary societies. Referring to the information revolution, the 'computerisation I of-knowledge, Lyotard suggests that the meta-narrative is undermined, or even destroyed, by the packaging of knowledge. Knowledge can be seen no longer as a value, but as something which has a use; and knowledge which cannot be so packed will disappear. Additionally, most postmodernist thinkers are fascinated by the new possibilities for information and knowledge production, analysis and transfer. However they insist that since coherent representation and action are either repressive or illusionary (and therefore doomed to be self-dissolving and selfdefeating), we should not even try to engage in some global project. Eschewing the idea of progress, postmodernism abandons all sense of historical continuity and memory, while simultaneously developing an incredible ability to plunder history and absorb whatever it finds there as some aspect of the present.

Post Modernism and its Critics

Fredric Jameson suggests that postmodernism is nothing more than the cultural logic of late capitalism. He argues that we have moved into a new era since the early 1960s in which the production of culture' has become integrated into commodity production generally'. This understanding is echoed in Iain Chambers view that, 'Postmodernism, whatever form its intellectualizing might take, has been fundamentally anticipated in the metropolitan cultures of the last twenty years: among the electronic signifies of the cinema, television and video, in recording studios and record players, in fashion and youth style, in all those sounds, images and diverse histories that are daily mixed, recycled and 'scratched' together on that giant screen which is the contemporary city. He thus draws our attention to the urban-based cultural ferments that began in the early 1960s and continue to this day, which is at the root of the postmodern turn. The struggles that were once exclusively waged in the arena of production have, as a consequence, now spilled outwards to make of cultural production an arena of fierce social conflict.

For Anthony Giddens increasing areas of social life are no longer justified by tradition but have to be justified on rational grounds. This rational questioning increasingly turns in on itself, there is a constant process of undermining the grounds for certain knowledge. Further modernity is understood in terms of the standardization of time and space and the 'disembedding' of our relationships from the specific features of time and space and our various attempts to 'reembed' them. Giddens thus sees postmodernism as a product of modernism itself-modernism, as it were, taken to its extreme, its latest stage. He argues that a 'true' postmodemism would involve a break from these processes. As a result, he rejects much of what involve a break from these processes. As a result, he rejects much of what postmodernism has to say, particularly its emphasis on relativism.

Scott Lash's'The Sociology of Postmodernism'(1 990) conceptualizes postmodernism s involving a reverse of the modernist development of differentiation and, the increasing autonomy of the different areas of social life, a process generated by two'motors'. The first is the evelooment of a new social class - the post-industrial middle-class, the cultural - capital based Fraction of the bourgeoisie. The second is the development of a new type of avant-grade that actually promotes orthodoxy. Lash, unlike Giddens, seems to regard these processes as representing a real social change rather than the continuation of modernism's drive to a new level.

In 'The condition of Postmodernity' (1989) David Harvey, using a Marxist approach understands postmodernity as a real change at one level of the social formation, generated by developments, at a deeper level, of the same system. He locates both economic and cultural changes as a response to the classic capitalist crisis - an overproduction - or, as he calls it, over accumulation crisis - which, in Marxist theory, is seen as the result of the contradiction between forces and relations of production.

This response is seen in terms of a change in the structure of capital - finance capital, more flexible than industrial capital, taking over a controlling function, and a move from what has become known as 'Fordism' to'post-Fordisrn'. This involves a number of aspects, but the crux is a changing organisation of the labour force, away from the routinised, highly organized and controlled model based on the innovations of Henry Ford. The new form of organization involves more small-scale production, a flexibility of skills and location in the workforce where workers carry out multiple tasks; and, at the level of the state, deregulation and some degree of privatization. Post-Fordism is understood, not as a total change but as a process which might vary in extent and dominance. He calls the whole process a change to 'flexible accumulation', and it is bound up with the rapid development of new technology. This in turn leads to an intense phase of time-space compression. Flexible accumulation involves small-batch production, rapid turnover 'Lime, the speeding up of the labour process, the rapid change of styles in mass fashion markets, the movement from consumer goods to consumer services which are 'spent' immediately and so on. Further modern communication systems have broken down spatial barriers. This has resulted in 'the production of fragmentation, insecurity and ephemeral, uneven development within a highly unified global space economy of capita! flows.'

Conclusion

'Post-modernism' thus is an attempt to come to terms with the condition that the contemporary West sees itself in. For most societies in the third world, however, modernity can still be understood as an 'incomplete project.'This characteristaion has been provided by the German critical theorist Jurgen Habermas who in fact stresses the conservative and irrational aspects of postmodernisim. In conclusion, one could acknowledge postmodernism as a useful corrective, a cautionary tale while not jettisoning modernity completely. That to my mind would be a prototypical case of throwing the baby out with the bath-water. Reason and rationalism have not yet exhausted its capacity to serve as useful guides to social living and indeed social theory.

Questions

1   What do you understand by the term 'modernity'? Why is it inextricably associated with 'reason'?

2.   Elaborate the main claims of the post modernists even as you draw up a critique of them, using, in the main, the ideas of Jameson and Harvey

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