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MASTER OF ARTS IN SOCIOLOGY

SEMESTER-II

SOC-2.1: MODERN SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

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C.D.O.E

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SOC -2.1: MODERN SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

Brief Contents

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Program Name: Master in Sociology **Program Code: 010316**

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SOC -2.1: MODERN SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

Content

Block-01 Symbolic Interactionism

Unit-01 Symbolic Interactionism

Structure

1.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To provide the meaning and explanation of the theory of symbolic interactionism.
- To let the reader know about the various exponents of the theory.
- To provide the basic premises and approach of the theory.

1.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Symbolic Interactionism is a social theory that focuses on the analysis of the patterns of communication, interpretation and adjustment between individuals. The theory outlines the understandings on how individuals interact with one another and inside the society by attaching meanings to various symbols. Both the verbal and nonverbal responses that a listener then delivers are likewise built up in anticipation of how the original narrator will respond.

1.3 Meaning of Symbolic Interactionism

The theory outlines the understandings on how individuals interact with one another and inside the society by attaching meanings to various symbols. Both the verbal and nonverbal responses that a listener then delivers are likewise built up in anticipation of how the original narrator will respond.

Among the various schools of thought in the discipline of Sociology, Symbolic Interactionism elucidates social behavior in terms of interactions between the people through symbols and it also views that the viable way to understand social structures are through such individual interactions.During the 20th century, thinkers like George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer developed this school of thought. They believed that such social interactions help in the development of one's self and the manner in which people communicate and interact with each other relies on their interpretation of the factors such as actions, language and statuses etc. It could be best defined as a synthesis of intellectual thought and rational method with realistic actions. The ongoing process of Symbolic Interaction islike the game of charades; only it is a full-fledged conversation.

Even though there are quite many editions of Interactionism thought, some deriving from

phenomenological writings by philosophers, the following description offers a basic merger of these thoughts, engaged in points of union.

The term "symbolic interaction" refers, of course, to the peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings. The peculiarity consists in the fact that human beings interpret or "define" each other's actions instead of merely reacting to each other's actions. Their "response" is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions. Thus, human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions. This mediation isequivalent to inserting a process of interpretation between stimulus andresponse in the case of human behavior.

1.4 Historical Background

Conceivably the most significant sociological standpoint from North America has been that of Symbolic Interactionism which traces its roots in the pragmatist philosophers such as Peirce, Dewey, Cooley, and Mead.

This sociological perspective has a stretched academic account, commencing with the German sociologist and economist, Max Weber(1864-1920) and theAmerican philosopher, George H. Mead (1863-1931), both of whom highlighted the subjective meaning of human behavior, the social processand pragmatism. The early proponents of the theory of Symbolic Interactionism were George Herbert Mead and Charles Horton Cooley. G. H. Mead opined that the accurate analysis of any theory lies in the fact that it should be helpful in cracking the other intricate social problems. The impact of Mead's analysis of the Symbolic Interactionism was said to be so commanding that other sociologists considered him as the one "true founder" of Symbolic Interactionism school of thought. In spite of Mead being academically attached to the Philosophy department, many Sociologists treat him as the master-trainer of the theory. Records go on to say that, mead never wreapped up his ideas systematically in a book format but posthumously his students did so. Post his death in the year 1931, his students gathered the class notes and conversations with their mentor and published Mind, Self and Society in his name.

While the theory of Symbolic Interactionism perspective is every so often allied with Mead, it was Herbert Blumer (1900-1987) who carried forward Mead's ideas and developed them into a more methodical sociological approach. The term Symbolic Interactionism was coined by Blumer in 1937. He kept this sociological viewpoint animate through the early

1950s at Chicago, and then in California where he was a professor at the University of Californa in Berkeley. Though Holton and Cohen argue that Blumer tookonly certain ideas from Mead, but it was Blumer who developed specificaspects that formed the basis for later symbolic interaction approaches.

'It is a common misconception that John Dewey was the leader of this sociological theory; however, according to The Handbook of Symbolic Interactionism, Mead was undoubtedly the individual who"transformed the inner structure of the theory, moving it to a higher level of theoretical complexity". Two other theorists who have influenced Symbolic Interactionism theory are Yrjö Engeström and David Middleton. Engeström and Middleton explained the usefulness of symbolic interactionism in the communication field in a "variety of work setting including, courts of law, health care, computer software design, scientific laboratory, telephone sales, control, repair, and maintenance of advance manufacturing system. Other scholars credited for their contribution to the theory are Thomas, Park, James, Horton, Cooley, Znaniecki, Baldwin, Redfield, and Wirth.

1.5 Basic Premises and Approach

The term "Symbolic Interactionism" has come into use as a label for a relatively distinctive approach to the study of human life and human conduct. (Blumer, 1939). With Symbolic Interactionism, the existing social reality is visualized as a developed interaction with others. Majority of the symbolic interactionists consider the existence of a physical reality by an individual's social definitions that develop in relation to something "real." People thus do not react to this reality openly, but rather to the social understanding of reality. Humans therefore exist in a physical objective reality and a social reality.

Both individuals and society cannot be separated far from each other for two reasons. One, being that they are both created through social interaction, and two, one cannot be understood in terms without the other. Behavior is not described by forces from the environment such as drives, or instincts, but rather by a reflective, socially understood meaning of both the internal and external incentives that are currently presented.

Herbert Blumer (1969) set out three basic premises of the perspective:

"Humans act toward things on the basis of the meanings they ascribe tothose things."

"The meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the socialinteraction that one has with others and the society."

"These meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used

by the person in dealing with the things he/she encounters."

Interactionists highlight on the subjective aspects of social life and not onthe objective, macro-structural features of social systems. A reason for this focus is that Interactionists found upon their conjectural perception on their image of humans, rather than on their image of society (the way the functionalists do). For the Interactionists, human beings are sensible actors who recurrently ought to regulate their actions to the other actor's actions. The adjustment can only come through when they can be well- interpreted i.e. indicate them symbolically and consider the actions and the performers of such actions as symbolic objects. This procedure of regulation is assisted by one's aptitude to ingeniously review substitute lines of action before one acts. Such a progression is further aided by a person's capability to reflect about and to react to his own actions and even himself as symbolic objects. To any Interactionists theorist, hence, human beings are active, creative participants who construct their social world, not as passive, conforming objects of socialization.

For a theorist of Interactionism, the society comprises of planned and patterned interactions among individuals. Thus, research by interactionists stresses on effortlessly apparent face-to-face interactions rather than on macro-level structural relationships concerning social institutions. In addition, these focuses on interaction and on the connotation of events tothe participants in those events (the definition of the situation) drift the concentration of interactionists away from steady norms and values toward more unstable and repeatedly readjusting social processes.

While for the functionalists socialization generates solidity in the social system, for interactionists, on the other hand, negotiation among members of society creates momentary, socially constructed relations which linger in invariable fluctuation, despite relative stability in the fundamentalframework governing those relations. These stresses on negotiated reality, symbols and the social construction of society lead to an interest in the roles people play.

To sum up, the characteristics of the symbolic interaction point of view are prominence on interactions among people, application of symbols in communication and interaction, interpretation as a fraction of action, self as constructed by others through communication and interaction, and flexible and adaptable social processes. It is primarily concerned with the interaction patterns of day to day life and experiences, rather than the structures associated with large scale and relatively fixed social forces and laws.

1.6 Central ideas behind Symbolic Interactionism

There are five central ideas to Symbolic Interactionism according to Joel M. Charon, author of Symbolic Interactionism An Introduction, An Interpretation, An Integration:

1. "The human being must be understood as a social person. It is the constant search for social interaction that leads us to do what we do. Instead of focusing on the individual and his or her personality, or on how the society or social situation causes human behavior, symbolic interactionism focuses on the activities that take place between actors.

   Interaction is the basic unit of study. Individuals are created through interaction; society too is created through social interaction. What we do depends on interaction with others earlier in our lifetimes, and it depends on our interaction right now. Social interaction is central to what we do. If we want to understand cause, focus on social interaction.

2. The human being must be understood as a thinking being. Human action is not only interaction among individuals but also interaction within the individual. It is not our ideas or attitudes or values that are as important as the constant active ongoing process of thinking. We are not simply conditioned, we are not simply beings who are influenced by those around us, we are not simply products of society. We are, to our very core, thinking animals, always conversing with ourselves as we interact with others. If we want to understand cause, focus on human thinking.
3. Humans do not sense their environment directly, instead, humans define the situation they are in. An environment may actually exist, but it is our definition of it that is important. Definition does not simply randomly happen; instead, it results from ongoing social interaction and thinking.
4. The cause of human action is the result of what is occurring in our present situation. Cause unfolds in the present social interaction, present thinking, and present definition. It is not society's encounters with us in our past, that causes action nor is it our own past experience that does. It is, instead, social interaction, thinking, definition of the situation that takes place in the present.

Our past enters into our actions primarily because we think about it and apply it to the definition of the present situation.

5. Human beings are described as active beings in relation to their environment. Words such as conditioning, responding, controlled, imprisoned, and formed are not used to describe the human being in symbolic interaction. In contrast to other social-scientific perspectives humans are not thought of as being passive in relation to their surroundings, but actively involved in what they do."

1.7 Summary

Symbolic interactionism is a social theory that emphases on the analysis of the patterns of communication, interpretation and adjustment between individuals. The theory outlines the understandings on how individuals interact with one another and inside the society by attaching meanings to various symbols

1.8 Self Assessment Questions

1. Discuss the meaning and understanding of symbolic interactionism.

2. Describe the central idea behind symbolic interactionism.

1.9 Key Words

Social Interaction- social interactions help in the development of one's self and the manner in which people communicate and interact with each other relies on their interpretation of the factors such as actions.

1.10 Study Guide

1. Turner, J.H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories
2. Giddens, Anthony, 1984, The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory
3. Blumer, 'Society as Symbolic Interaction' in Human Behaviour and Social Process
4. Schutz, Alfred, The phenomenology of the Social world
5. Berger Peter L and Thomas Luckman, 1966, The Social construction of Reality
6. Garfinkel, Harold, 1967, Studies in Ethnomethodology
7. Giddens, Anthony, 1979, Central problems in Social Theory
8. Abraham, M.F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introduction

Unit-02 Erving Goffman

Structure

2.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To understand Goffman's idea.
- To know what is asylum.
- To know what is stigma.

2.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Their consultation inspired Goffman to leave the University of Manitoba and register at the University of Toronto, where he studied under C. W. M. Hart and Ray Birdwhistell graduating in 1945 with a B.A. in sociology and anthropology. Subsequently, he moved to the University of Chicago, where he received an M.A. (1949) and Ph.D. (1953) in sociology. For his doctoral dissertation, from December 1949 to May 1951 he lived and collected ethnographic data on the island of Unst in the Shetland Islands. Goffmanwas utterly influenced by Herbert Blumer, Émile Durkheim, Sigmund Freud, Everett Hughes, Alfred Radcliffe-Brown, Talcott Parsons, Alfred Schütz, Georg Simmel and W. Lloyd Warner. However, according to Tom Burns, Hughes was the most significant of his teachers.

2.3 Erving Goffman

Born on 11th June, 1922 to Max Goffman and Anne Goffman, née Averbach in Mannville, Alberta, Canada, Goffman belonged to a family of Ukrainian Jews who had emigrated to Canada at the turn of the century. While his elder sister was an actress, his father operated a successful tailoring business.From 1937 Goffman joined St. John's Technical High School in Winnipeg and in 1939 he enrolled at the University of Manitoba, majoring in chemistry.His studies were interjected when he decided to shift to Ottawa to work in the film industry for the National Film Board of Canada, established by John Grierson. It was only afterwards that he developed an interest in the discipline of Sociology as during this time, he happened to meet with the renowned North American sociologist, Dennis Wrong.

Their consultation inspired Goffman to leave the University of Manitoba and register at the University of Toronto, where he studied under C. W. M. Hart and Ray Birdwhistell graduating in 1945 with a B.A. in sociology and anthropology. Subsequently, he moved to the University of Chicago, where he received an M.A. (1949) and Ph.D. (1953) in

sociology. For his doctoral dissertation, from December 1949 to May 1951 he lived and collected ethnographic data on the island of Unst in the Shetland Islands. Goffmanwas utterly influenced by Herbert Blumer, Émile Durkheim, Sigmund Freud, Everett Hughes, Alfred Radcliffe-Brown, Talcott Parsons, Alfred Schütz, Georg Simmel and W. Lloyd Warner. However, according to Tom Burns, Hughes was the most significant of his teachers. Gary Alan Fine and Philip Manning state that Goffman never engaged in serious dialogue with other theorists. His work has, however, influenced and been engaged by numerous contemporary sociologists, including Anthony Giddens, Jürgen Habermas and Pierre Bourdieu. Though Goffman is often allied with the symbolic interaction school of sociological thought, he himself did not see himself as an archetypal of it, and so Fine and Manning conclude that he "does not easily fit within a specific school of sociological thought". His ideas are also "difficult to reduce to a number of key themes"; his work can be roughly labelled as developing a comparative, qualitative sociology that aimed to produce generalizations about human behavior.

2.4 The presentation of self in Everyday Life

Published in 1959, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, provides a thorough account and analysis of process and meaning in mundane and dayto day interaction. Ervin Goffman writes from a Symbolic Interactionists perspective, stressing on a qualitative analysis of the constituent segments ofthe interactive process. Through a micro-sociological analysis and spotlight on unusual subject matter, Goffman discovers the details of individual identity, group relations, the impact of environment, and the movement and interactive meaning of information. His viewpoint provides new insight into the nature of social interaction and the psychology of the individual. By employing a "dramaturgical approach" in his study, Goff man concerned himself with the mode of presentation employed by the actor and its meaning in the wider social context. Interaction is viewed as a "performance," shaped by environment and audience, constructed to provide others with "impressions" that are consonant with the desired goals of the actor.

The performance survives in spite of the mental state of the individual, as persona is often attributed to the individual despite 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 extensivetreatment. In this way, the individual builds up identity or persona as a function of interaction with others, through a swap of information that allows for more precise

meanings of identity and behavior.

Eventually, the process of establishing social identity becomes intimately related to the concept of the "front," which is described as that part of the individual's performance which frequently functions in a universal and set fashion to describe the situation for those who watch the performance. The front acts as the vehicle of standardization, allowing for others to comprehend the individual on the basis of predictable character qualities that have normative connotations. As a "collective representation," the front establishes proper "setting," "appearance," and "manner" for the social role presumed by the actor, joining interactive behavior with the personal front.

The actor, in order to portray a convincing front, is enforced to not only fill the duties of the social role but also to communicate the activities and characteristics of the role to other people in a steady 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 provided throughout a diversity of communicative sources, all of which must be controlled to efficiently persuade the audience of the suitability of behavior and consonance with the role assumed. As a result, believability is constructed in terms of verbal implication, which is used by the actor to set up intent, and non-verbal signification, which is used by the audience to confirm the sincerity of statements made by the individual.

Attempts are made to present an "idealized" version of the front, more constant with the norms, mores, and laws of society than the behavior of the actor when not in front of the audience. Information dealing with abnormal/deviant behavior and belief is hidden 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 structure to which the role belongs.

Goffman investigates nature of group dynamics through a dialogue of "teams" and the connection between performance and audience. He uses the concept of the team to exemplify the work of a group of individuals who "co- operate" in performance, endeavoring to attain goals sanctioned by the group. Co-operation may manifest itself as harmony 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," encouraging 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 supposes a front that is apparent to improve the group's performance.

The requirement of each individual to uphold his or her front in order to promote the team performance lessens the likelihood of rebel. While the amalgamating elements of the team are often shallower and less absolute than the necessities of performance, the individual actor feels a strong stressto conform to the desired front in the presence of an audience, as deviance annihilates the reliability 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, an obvious division is made between team and audience.

Goffman explains the division between team performance and audience in terms of "region," describing the role of setting in the differentiation of actions taken by individuals. Expanding the dramaturgical analysis, he segregates region into "front," "back,"and "outside" the stage, dependentupon the relationship of the audience to the performance. While the "official stance" of the team is noticeable in their front stage presentation, in the backstage, "the impression fostered by the presentation is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course," demonstrating a more "truthful" type of performance.In the backstage, the conflict and difference intrinsic to familiarity is more completely discovered, often growing into a secondary type of presentation, contingent upon the lack of the responsibilities of the team presentation. To be outside the stage engages the inability to gain access to the performance of the team, described as an "audiencesegregation" in which precise performances are given to specific audiences, permitting the team to contrive the proper front for the demands of each audience. This allows the team, individual actor, and audience to protect proper relationships in interaction and the establishments to which theinteractions fit in.

2.5 Asylums

Another book written by 1961 by Erving Goffman is the Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates. Asylums were a chief text in the development of deinstitutionalization. The book is one of the first sociological assessments of the social condition of mental patients, the hospital. Based on his participant observation field work, the book portrays Goffman's theory of the "total institution" and the process by which it takes efforts to maintain predictable and regular behavior on the part of both "guard" and "captor," suggesting that many of the features of such institutions dole out the ritual function of guaranteeing that both classes ofpeople know their function and social role, in

other words of "institutionalizing" them.

The main highlight of the book is not the world of the staff but the world of the patient. Goffman confesses that he arrived at the hospital with no great respect for the agencies involved with psychiatric practice nor for the discipline of psychiatry. He hoped that Asylums would reveal the gap between what psychiatrists actually do and what they said about what they do.

The book has been segmented into four essays: Characteristics of Total Institutions (1957), The Moral Career of the Mental Patient (1959), The Underlife of a Public Institution: A Study of Ways of Making Out in a Mental Hospital, The Medical Model and Mental Hospitalization: Some Notes on the Vicissitudes of the Tinkering Trades.

The first essay, On the Characteristics of Total Institutions, is a broad assessment of social life in these settings, sketching on two examples which typify involuntary membership — prisons and mental hospitals. There the schemes detailed in the following essays are stated and their place in the broader whole suggested. The second essay, The Moral Career of the Mental Patient, views the initial effects of institutionalization on the social relationships which the person possessed before he became an inmate. The third essay, The Underlife of a Public Institution, is regarded with the addition which the inmate is expected to manifest to his dwelling and, in detail, with the way in which inmates can commence some distance between themselves and these expectations. The final essay, The Medical Model and Mental Hospitalization, moves attention back to the professional staffs to view, in relation to psychiatric hospitals, the role of the medical perspective in presenting to the inmate the facts of his situation.

In Asylums, Goffman is mostly occupied with the details of having been hospitalized to a psychiatric hospital and the nature and effects of the process he defines as ‘institutionalization’. He explains how the institutionalization process socializes people into the role of a good patient, someone ‘dull, harmless and inconspicuous’, which in turn strengthens notions of chronicity in severe mental illness. A fundamental course of Goffman's asylums is mortification of self. A patient's notions of self are subjected to a dramatic change for the worse due to the devastating atmosphere in all total institutions, in spite of of how therapeutic or non- therapeutic a hospital is.

While people come from a social context in which they have some sense of a personal identity and engage in various roles, these aspects of their lives are methodically stripped from them as their sense of themselves are mortified, pathogolized and negated, leading to what Goffman defines as ‘disculturation’. Rather than curing or reducing the illness, this

process leads to demoralization, skill deterioration and role dispossession and leaves people less competent of managing life in the outward world. In addition to disculturation from their identity and previous roles, acculturating inmates to life in a total institution does little, if anything, in preparing them for the contingencies they will bump into once again after discharge and prepares them only for remaining within the setting.

Goffman finishes from his investigation that taking a mentally ill person out of his or her life context, hospitalizing him or her to a psychiatric hospital and then returning the person to the same life context is similar to taking a drowning man out of a lake, teaching him how to ride a bicycle and putting him back into the lake. In the inpatient phase, patients come to realize that society has deserted them. Goffman states that inmates in total institutions have a strong sentiment that time spent there is time taken from one's life or time wasted. Human needs are handled in an unfriendly and bureaucratic mode. The social detachment between the staff and inmates is huge, and each group tends to be distant toward the other.

The book concludes that adjusting the inmates to their role has at least as much significance as "curing" them. In the essay "Notes on the Tinkering Trades," Goffman concluded that the "medicalization" of mental illness and the various treatment modalities are offshoots of the 19th century and the Industrial Revolution and that the so-called "medical model" for treating patients was a variation on the way trades- and craftsmen of the late 19th century repaired clocks and other mechanical objects: in the confines of a shop or store, contents and routine of which lingers as a secrecy to the customer.

2.6 Stigma

Goffman's theory of social stigma describes a stigma as an attribute, behavior, or reputation which is socially dishonoring in a particular way: it causes an individual to be mentally classified by others in an undesirable, rejected stereotype rather than in an accepted, normal one. He defined stigma as a special kind of gap between virtual social identity and actual social identity.

He furthered that the society establishes the ways of classifying people and the complement of attributes felt to be normal and accepted for members of each of these categories. When a stranger comes into our presence, then, first appearances are likely to enable us to anticipate his category and attributes, his "social identity". We bend on these anticipations that we have, converting them into normative expectations, into virtuously presented demands. It is that we are probable to understand that all along we had been creating certain

suppositions as to what the individual before us ought to be. Such presumed demands and the character that one ascribes to the individual is known as virtual social identity. On the other hand, the category and attributes he could in fact be proved to own is known as his actual social identity. While a stranger is present before us, evidence can arise of his possessing an attribute that makes him different from others in the category of persons available for him to be, and of a less desirable kind-- in the extreme, a person who is quite thoroughly bad, or dangerous, or weak.

He is thus reduced in our minds from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one. Such an attribute is a stigma, especially when its discrediting effect is very extensive [...] It constitutes a special discrepancy between virtual and actual social identity. Note that there are other types of [such] discrepancy [...] for example the kind that causes us to reclassify an individual from one socially anticipated category to a different but equally well-anticipated one, and the kind that causes us to alter our estimation of the individual upward. (Goffman 1963:3).

Goffman categorizes the individual's relation to a stigma into three categories:

1. the stigmatized are those who bear the stigma;
2. the normals are those who do not bear the stigma; and
3. the wise are those among the normals who are accepted by the stigmatized as "wise" to their condition (borrowing the term from thehomosexual community).

2.7 Summary

Goffman discusses roles dramaturgically, using an analogy to the theater, with human social behavior seen as more or lesswell scripted and with humans as role-taking actors.

2.8 Self Assessment Questions

1. **What is asylum?**
2. **What is stigma?**

2.9 Key Words

Asylum- is a total social institution.

Stigma- is certain form of social restriction.

2.10 Study Guide

1. Turner, J.H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories.
2. Giddens, Anthony, 1984, The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory ofStructuration
3. Blumer, 'Society as Symbolic Interaction' in Human Behaviour and Social Process.
4. Schutz, Alfred, The phenomenology of the Social world.
5. Berger Peter L and Thomas Luckman, 1966, The Social construction of Reality.
6. Garfinkel, Harold, 1967, Studies in Ethnomethodology.
7. Giddens, Anthony, 1979, Central problems in Social Theory.
8. Abraham, M.F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introduction.

Unit-03 George Herbert Mead

Structure

3.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To understand the idea of George Herbert Mead
- To let the reader know about the idea of language and mind.

3.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Mead, the development of the self and language are thoroughly tied toone another and to reinforce the theorem Mead begins by expressing what he learnt about the gesture from Wundt. Gestures should be comprehended in terms of the behavioral responses of animals to stimuli from other organisms. Animals without understanding the meaning of their gestures, simply respond, i.e. the use of symbols is without significance. For a gesture to have significance, it must exclaim in a second organism a retort that is functionally equal to the response .

3.3 Life and Times of George Herbert Mead

Born in South Hadley, Massachusetts, on February 27, 1863, George Herbert Mead was the second child (had an older sister, Alice) of Hiram Mead (a Congregationalist minister and pastor of the South Hadley Congregational Church, and Elizabeth Storrs Billings. In the year 1870, the family moved to Oberlin, Ohio, where Hiram Mead became the professor of homiletics at the Oberlin Theological Seminary. He held thespot until his death in 1881. Post his death, Mead's mother taught for two years at Oberlin College and afterward, , served as president of Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts for nearly a decade i.e. from 1890 to 1900.

As his parents were at the Oberlin College, it led G.H Mead to enter the same in the year 1879, when he was just sixteen. With a graduation degree in 1883, Mead and his closest best friend, Henry Northrup Castle, became passionate students of subjects like literature, poetry, and history. They also opposed supernaturalism. In literature, Mead was particularly fascinated in the writings of Wordsworth, Shelley, Carlyle, Shakespeare, Keats, and Milton; while he followed the writings of Macauley, Buckle, and Motley in the discipline of history. Mead's first published article was on Charles Lamb in the 1882-3 issue of the Oberlin *Review*. Once he was done with his college, Mead became a staunch naturalist and non-believer, but he had fought back for years with the religious sincerities his family and community had inculcated inhim. For a period of time after college he even considered Christian Social Work as a career.

Apart from social work, Mead also started teaching in a school where he continued for just four months. The only glitch in his job was that he was a strict disciplinarian and used to send back the dispassionate anddisruptive students from his class. Post his teaching job, Mead was a surveyor with the Wisconsin Central Rail Road Company from the endof 1883 till mid-1887. He toiled in the project that resulted in the eleven- hundred mile railroad line that ran from Minneapolis,Minnesota, to Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, and which connected there with the Canadian Pacific railroad line.

Mead's intellectual pursuit continued that fetched him an MA degree in philosophy at Harvard University during the 1887-1888 academic session. Mead was more inclined towards learning multi-linguist disciplines like Greek, Latin, German, and French and also studied psychology. His philosophy professors included George H. Palmer (1842-1933) and Josiah Royce (1855-1916). During this time, Mead was most inclined by Royce's Romanticism and idealism.

In the summer of 1888, Mead's friend, Henry Castle and his sister, Helen, had toured to Europe and had settled for the interim in Leipzig, Germany. Afterward, Mead, too, went to Leipzig in order to pursue a Ph.D. degree in philosophy and physiological psychology. At the University of Leipzig, during the academic session of 1888-1889, Mead became firmly attracted towards Darwinism and studied with Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920) and G. Stanley Hall (1844-1924) (two major founders of experimental psychology). On Hall's proposal, Mead shifted to the University of Berlin in the spring of 1889, where he was deeply engrossed in the study of physiological psychology and economic theory.Mead married his friend Helen Castle in Berlin on October 1, 1891. George and Helen Mead's only child, Henry Castle Albert Mead, was born in Ann Arbor in 1892. The boy grew up to be a physician and married Irene Tufts (James Hayden Tufts' daughter), a psychiatrist.

Mead's Ph.D. degree was interrupted in the spring of 1891 by the offer of an instructorship in philosophy and psychology at the University of Michigan and thus, he could never finish his work. Mead was employed the University of Michigan from 1891 till 1894 where he taught disciplines like philosophy and psychology. At the same university, he developed a close bonding with and influenced by the work of sociologist Charles Horton Cooley (1864-1929), psychologist Alfred Lloyd, and philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952). In addition, Mead andDewey became very intimate intellectual friends, who almost shared similar perspectives and interests in philosophy and psychology. In those times, there was no sharp compartmentalization between philosophy and psychology and Mead was involved both in teaching andconducting research in to psychology throughout his career (mostly social psychology after 1910).

American Pragmatism that earlier originated with Charles Sanders Peirce [1839-1914] and William James at Harvard) got a new destination at the University of Chicago. The "Chicago Pragmatists" were piloted by Tufts, Dewey, and Mead. Though, Dewey left Chicago for Columbia

University in 1904, Tufts and Mead carried on the legacy as the key protagonists for the Pragmatist movement in Chicago.

Mead spent rest of his academic career in Chicago where he was the assistant professor of philosophy from 1894-1902; associate professor from 1902-1907; and full professor from 1907 until his death in 1931. During his intellectual years, Mead made extensive contributions in both social psychology and philosophy and his prime thrust was to reveal how the human self arises in the process of social interaction, especially by way of linguistic communication or in other words, Symbolic Interaction.

Mrs. Helen Castle Mead died on December 25, 1929. George Mead was emotionally disturbed and eventually became terminally ill. ThoughJohn Dewey arranged for Mead's appointment as a professor in the philosophy department at Columbia University as of the 1931-1932 academic year, but before he could never join. Mead died in Chicago onApril 26, 1931.

During his more-than-40-year career, Mead thought deeply, wrote roughly continually and published plentiful articles and book reviews in philosophy and psychology. However, he never published a book. After his death, several of his students edited four volumes fromstenographic 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.

The most illustrious among Mead's published papers include, "Suggestions Towards a Theory of the Philosophical Disciplines" (1900); "Social Consciousness and the Consciousness of Meaning" (1910); "What Social Objects Must Psychology Presuppose" (1910); "The Mechanism of Social Consciousness" (1912); "The Social Self" (1913); "Scientific Method and the Individual Thinker" (1917); "A Behavioristic Account of the Significant Symbol" (1922); "The Genesis of Self and Social Control" (1925); "The Objective Reality of Perspectives" (1926);" The Nature of the Past" (1929); and "The Philosophies of Royce, James, and Dewey in Their American Setting" (1929). Twenty- five of Mead's most notable published articles have been collected in Selected Writings: George Herbert Mead, edited by Andrew J. Reck (Bobbs-Merrill, The Liberal Arts Press, 1964).

3.4 Language and mind

Dewey and Mead had similar intellectual routes and went through a phase in which Hegel was the most noteworthy philosophical stature for them. Both of them democratized and de-essentialized Hegelian thoughts about the self and community. Nonetheless, such neo-Hegelian

organic metaphors and notions of negation and conflict, reinterpreted as the problematic situation, remained essential to their positions.

For Mead, the development of the self and language are thoroughly tied toone another and to reinforce the theorem Mead begins by expressing whathe learnt about the gesture from Wundt. Gestures should be comprehended in terms of the behavioral responses of animals to stimuli from other organisms. Animals without understanding the meaning of their gestures, simply respond, i.e. the use of symbols is without significance. For a gesture to have significance, it must exclaim in a second organism a retort that is functionally equal to the response thatthe first organism foresees. In other words, for a gesture to be significant it must connote the similar thing to both organisms, and meaning revolves around the ability to deliberately predict how other organisms will act in response to symbols or gestures. This capacity, according to Mead, arises through the vocal gesture.

A vocal gesture can be thought of as a word or phrase and when used the person creating the gesture responds, unreservedly, in a similarway as the person hearing it. For example, if someone is all set to crossa busy street during a lot of traffic, the other person might shout out, “Don't cross!” As the shouting person also hears the same words, he might also pull himself back and not cross the road for traffic reasons.

According to Mead, Gestures become important symbols when they totally awaken in the individual making them the same responses whichthe explicitly arouse, or are supposed to arouse, in other individuals. He also tells us that, the vital significance of language in the development of human experience lies in this fact that the stimulus is one that can counter upon the speaking individual as it reacts upon the other. As noted, Mead was obliged to Hegel's work, and the idea of reflexivity plays a fundamental role in Mead's theory of mind. Vocal gestures—which depend on amply complicated nervous systems toprocess them—permit individuals to hear their own gestures in the similar manner that the others hear them.

In other words, vocal gestures let an individual to speak to himself in the absence of other people at the same place. According to Mead, by using vocal gestures one can twist experience back on itself throughthe loop of speaking and hearing at fairly the similar time. And when one is part of a multifarious set-up of language users, Mead argues that this reflexivity, the “turning back” of experience on itself, consents to the development of mind. Mentality on our approach basically arrives when the person is capable of pointing out meanings to other people and to himself. This is the point at which mind appears, or if you like, emerges…. It is absurd to look at the mind simply from the standpoint of the individual human organism; for, although it has its focus there, it is essentially a social phenomenon; even its biological functions are primarily social.

It is by means of reflexiveness—the turning back of the experience of the individual upon himself—that the whole social process is thus brought into the experience of the individuals involved in it; it is by such means, which enable the individual to take the attitude of the other toward himself, that the individual is able consciously to adjust himself to that process, and to modify the resultant of that process in any given social act in terms of his adjustment to it. Reflexiveness, then, is the essential condition, within the social process, for the development of mind (MSS, 134).

Mind is developed not only through the use of vocal gestures, but through the taking of roles, which will be addressed below. Here it is of great significance that even though people often utilize their capability for reflexivity to slot in reflection or deliberation, both Dewey and Mead view that habitual, non-deliberative, experience constitutes the most common way that we engage the world. The habitual involves a host of background beliefs and assumptions that are not raised to the level of (self) conscious reflection unless problems occur that warrant addressing. For Dewey, this background is described as "funded experience." For Mead, it is *the world that this there* and the "biologic individual."

The immediate experience which is reality, and which is the final test of the reality of scientific hypotheses as well as the test of the truth of all our ideas and suppositions, is the experience of what I have called the "biologic individual."…[This] term lays emphasis on the living reality which may be distinguished from reflection…. Actual experience did not take place in this form but in the form of unsophisticated reality (MSS, 352–353).

To sum up, Mead's account of the social emergence of the self is developed further through an elucidation of three forms of inter- subjective activity: language, play, and the game. These forms of "symbolic interaction" (that is, social interactions that take place via shared symbols such as words, definitions, roles, gestures, rituals, etc.) are the major paradigms in Mead's theory of socialization and are the basic social processes that render the reflexive objectification of the self possible.

Language, as we have seen, is communication via "significant symbols," and it is through significant communication that the individual is able to take the attitudes of others toward herself. Language is not only a "necessary mechanism" of mind, but also the primary social foundation of the self:

"I know of no other form of behavior than the linguistic in which the individual is an object to himself . . . (Mind, Self and Society 142). When a self does appear it always involves an experience of another; there could not be an experience of a self simply by itself. The plant or the lower animal reacts to its environment, but there is no experience of a self . . . . When the response of the other becomes an essential part in the experience or conduct of the individual; when taking the attitude of the other becomes an essential part in his behavior — then the individual appears in his own experience as a self; and until this happens he does not appear as a self" (Mind, Self and Society)

3.5 Roles, the Self, and the Generalized Other

One of the most notable segments of Mead's explanation of the significant symbol is that it presumes that anticipatory experiences are basic to the growth of language. We have the ability place ourselves in the positions of others—that is, to anticipate their responses—with regard to our linguistic gestures. This skill is also vital for the development of the self and self-consciousness. For Mead, the self is essentially social and cognitive and is to be distinguished from the personality, which has non-cognitive dimensions.

Thus, the self is not indistinguishable to the person and is associated with self-consciousness. It commences to develop when individuals interact with others and play roles. Roles, basically, are constellationsof behaviors that are responses to sets of behaviors of other people. The ideas of role-taking and role playing are common from sociological and social-psychological literature.

Role playing comprises of taking the attitudes or perspectives of others. It is of significance in this context that while Mead studied physiological psychology, his work on role-taking can be viewed as merging with the work of the Scottish sympathy theorists (which James appealed to in *The Principles of Psychology*), with Hegel's dialectic of self and other.

For Mead, by unquestionably taking others roles, one would never develop selves or self-consciousness. People would have an embryonic form of self-consciousness that corresponds to the sort of reflexive consciousness that is requisite for employing significant symbols. A role-taking (self) consciousness of this sort makes probable what might be called a proto-self, but not a self, because it doesn't have the complexity necessary to give rise to a self. How then does a self arise? Here Mead pioneers his well-known neologism, *the generalized other*.

Simple taking of roles is quite different from the more complex sets of behaviors that are obligatory to partake in games. In the latter, it is essential for people to learn not only the responses of specific others, but behaviors linked with every location on the field. These can be internalizedand people thrive in doing so they come to "view" their own behaviors from the viewpoint of the game as a whole, which is a structure of planned actions. 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. Thus, for example, in the case of such a social group as a ball team, the team is the generalized other in so far as it enters—as an organized process or social activity—into the experience of any one of the individual members of it (MSS, 154).

For Mead, although these communities can take diverse forms, they should be thought of as systems; for example, a family can be thought of systemically and can therefore give rise to a generalized other and a self that corresponds to it.

Generalized others can also be found in concrete social classes or subgroups, such as political parties, clubs, corporations, which are all actually functional social units, in terms of which their individual members are directly related to one another. The others are abstract social classes or subgroups, such as the class of debtors and the class of creditors, in terms of which their individual members are related to one another only more or less indirectly (MSS, 157).

In his *Principles of Psychology*, William James discusses a variety of empirical selves, specifically, the material, the social, and the spiritual. In addressing the social self, James notes how it is possible to have multiple selves. Properly speaking, *a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him* and carry an image of him in their mind. To wound any one of these his images is to wound him. But as the individuals who carry the images fall naturally into classes, we may practically say that he has as many different social selves as there are distinct *groups* of persons about whose opinion he cares. He generally shows a different side of himself to each of these different groups (James 1890, 294).

From Mead's vantage point, James was on the right track. However, the notion of audience is left undeveloped in James, as is the manner in which language is utilized in the genesis of the self and self-consciousness. For Mead, James's audiences should be thought of in terms of systemically organized groups, such as we find in certain games, which give rise to generalized others. Further, we need an account of how we come to view ourselves from the perspective of these groups that goes beyond the concept of "sympathetic attachments."

Such an account involves reflexivity, which originates with the vocal gesture and is essential to taking roles and the perspective of the generalized other. In addition, reflexivity helps make possible the capacity to "see" ourselves from ever wider or more "universal" communities. Mead relates the latter capacity to cosmopolitan political and cultural orientations.

The self, like the mind, is a social sprout and this social commencement of the self, involves that individual selves are the yields of social interaction and not the (logical or biological) preconditions of that interaction. Mead contrasts his social theory of the self with individualistic theories of the self (that is, theories that presuppose the priority of selves to social process). "The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process" (Mind,Self and Society 135).

It is perfectly true that the eye can see the foot, but it does not see the body as a whole. We cannot see our backs; we can feel certain portions of them, if we are agile, but we cannot get an experience of our whole body. There are, of course, experiences which are somewhat vague and difficult of location, but the bodily experiences are for us organized about a self. The foot and hand belong to the self. We can see our

feet, especially if we look at them from the wrong end of an opera glass, as strange things which we have difficulty in recognizing as our own. The parts of the body are quite distinguishable from the self. We can lose parts of the body without any serious invasion of the self. The mere ability to experience different parts of the body is not different from the experience of a table. The table presents a different feel from what the hand does when onehand feels another, but it is an experience of something with which we come definitely into contact. The body does not experience itself as a whole, in the sense in which the self in some way enters into theexperience of the self (Mind, Self and Society 136).

Self-consciousness, then, involves the objectification of the self. In the mode of self-consciousness, the "individual enters as such into his ownexperience . . . as an object" (Mind, Self and Society 225). How is this objectification of the self possible? The individual, according to Mead, "can enter as an object [to himself] only on the basis of social relations and interactions, only by means of his experiential transactions with other individuals in an organized social environment" (Mind, Self and Society 225). Self-consciousness is the result of a process in which the individual takes the attitudes of others toward herself, in which she attempts to view herself from the standpoint of others. The self-as-object arises out of the individual's experience of other selves outsideof herself. The objectified self is an emergent within the social structures and processes of human intersubjectivity.

It is necessary to be apparent, then, that the self-as-object of which Mead speaks is not an entity in a mechanistic, world of exterior relations, but rather it is an essential arrangement of human experiences that arises in response to other persons in an organic social-symbolic world of internal (and inter-subjective) relations. This becomes even clearer in Mead's interpretation of playing and gaming. In playing and gaming, as in linguistic activity, the key to the generation of self-consciousness is the process of role-playing." In play, the child takes the role of another and acts as though she were the other (e.g., mother, doctor, nurse, Indian, and countless other symbolized roles). This form of role-playing involves a single role at a time. Thus, the other which comes into the child's experience in play is a "specific other" (The Philosophy of the Present 169).

The game engrosses a more compound structure of role-playing than that involved in play. In the game, the individual is required to internalize, not merely the character of a single and specific other, but the roles of all others who are involved with him in the game. He must, moreover, comprehend the rules of the game which condition the various roles (Mind, Self and Society 151). This configuration of roles-organized- according-to- rules brings the attitudes of all participants together to form a symbolized unity: this unity is the "generalized other" (Mind, Self and Society 154). The generalized other is "an organized and generalizedattitude" (Mind, Self and Society 195) with reference to which the individual defines her own conduct. When the individual can view herself from the standpoint of the generalized other, "self- consciousness in the full sense of the term" is attained.

The game, then, is the stage of the social process at which the individual attains selfhood. One of Mead's most outstanding contributions to the development of critical social theory is his analysis of games. Mead explains the full social and psychological implication of game-playing and the extent to which the game functions as an apparatus of social control. The following passage contains a remarkable piece of analysis:

What goes on in the game goes on in the life of the child all the time. Heis continually taking the attitudes of those about him, especially the roles of those who in some sense control him and on whom he depends. He gets the function of the process in an abstract way at first. It goes over from the play into the game in a real sense. He has to play the game. The morale of the game takes hold of the child more than the larger morale of the whole community. The child passes into the game and the game expresses a social situation in which he can completely enter; its morale may have a greater hold on him than that of the family to which he belongs or the community in which he lives. There are all sorts of social organizations, some of which are fairly lasting, some temporary, into which the child is entering, and he is playing a sort of social game in them. It is a period in which he likes "to belong," and he gets into organizations which come into existence and pass out of existence. He becomes a something which can function in the organized whole, and thustends to determine himself in his relationship with the group to which he belongs. That process is one which is a striking stage in the development of the child's morale. It constitutes him a self-conscious member of the community to which he belongs (Mind, Self and Society 160, emphasis added).

3.6 The 'I' and the 'Me'

Another noteworthy contribution of Mead to social psychology is his difference between the "I" and the "Me." It is crucial to emphasize that while this dissimilarity is operated in sociological circles, it is grounded philosophically for Mead. His target, in part, is no less than the idea of the transcendental ego, especially in its Kantian incarnation. Whileestablishing the idea of self, Mead introduces a distinction betweenthe "I" and the "me", respectively, the active and socialized aspects of the person. An example of these concepts is the pygmalion effect whereby a person (I) behaves to match the sense of self (me) they derive from others, in a form of self-fulfilling prophecy.

The self that arises in relationship to a specific generalized other is referred to as the "Me." The "Me" is a cognitive object, which is onlyknown retrospectively, that is, on reflection. When we act in habitual ways we are not typically self-conscious. We are engaged in actions at a non- reflective level. However, when we take the perspective of the generalizedother, we are both "watching" and forming a self in relationship to the system of behaviors that constitute this generalized other. So, for example, if I am playing second base, I may reflect on my position as a second baseman, but to do so I have to be able

to think of “myself” in relationship to the whole game, namely, the other actors and the “rules” of the game. We might refer to this cognitive object as my (second baseman) baseball self or “Me.”

Although the self is a product of socio-symbolic interaction, it is not merely a passive reflection of the generalized other. The individual’sresponse to the social world is active; he decides what he will do in the light of the attitudes of others; but his conduct is not mechanically determined by such attitudinal structures. There are, it would appear, two phases (or poles) of the self: (1) that phase which reflects the attitude of the generalized other and (2) that phase which responds to the attitude of the generalized other.

Here, Mead distinguishes between the “me” and the “I.” The “me” is the social self, and the “I” is a response to the “me”. The ‘I’ is the response of the organism to the attitudes of the others; the ‘me’ is the organized setof attitudes of others which one he assumes. Mead defines the “me” as “a conventional, habitual individual and the “I” as the “novel reply” of the individual to the generalized other of the individual to the generalized other. There is a dialectical relationship between society and the individual; and this dialectic is enacted on the intra-psychic level in terms of the division of the “me” and the “I.” The “me” is the internalization of roles which derive from such symbolic processes as linguistic interaction, playing, and gaming; whereas the “I” is a “creative response” to the symbolized structures of the “me” (that is, to the generalized other).

Although the “I” is not an object of instant experience, it is, in a sense, knowable (that is, objectifiable). The “I” is apprehended in memory; but inthe memory image, the “I” is no longer a pure subject, but “a subject that is now an object of observation”. One can comprehend the structural and functional significance of the “I,” but cannot observe it directly — it appears only ex post facto. We remember the responses of the “I” to the “me;” and this is as close as we can get to a concrete knowledge of the“I.” The objectification of the “I” is probable only through an alertness of the past; but the objectified “I” is never the subject of present experience. If you ask, then, where directly in your own experience the ‘I’ comes in, the answer is that it comes in as a historical figure.

The “I” appears as a symbolized object in one’s consciousness of his past actions, but then it has become part of the “me.” The “me” is, in a sense that phase of the self that represents the past (that is, the already- established generalized other). The “I,” which is a response to the “me,” represents action in a present (that is, “that which is actually going on, taking place”) and implies the restructuring of the “me” in a future. After the “I” has acted, “we can catch it in our memory and place it in terms of that which we have done,” but it is now (in the newly emerged present)an aspect of the restructured “me”.

Because of the temporal-historical aspect of the self, the character of the “I” is determinable only after it has happened; the “I” is not, therefore, subject to predetermination. Particular acts of the “I” become aspects of the “me” in the sense that they are objectified through memory; but the “I” as such is

not contained in the "me."

The human individual exists in a social situation and responds to that situation. The situation has a particular character, but this character does not totally decide the retort of the individual; there seem to be substitute courses of action. The individual must select a course of action (and even a decision to do "nothing" is a response to the situation) and act accordingly, but the course of action she selects is not dictated by the situation. It is this indeterminacy of response that "gives the sense of freedom, of initiative". The action of the "I" is revealed only in the action itself; specific prediction of the action of the "I" is not possible. The individual is determined to respond, but the specific character of her response is not fully determined. The individual's responses are conditioned, but not determined by the situation in which she acts. Human freedom is conditioned freedom.

Thus, the "I" and the "me" exist in dynamic relation to one another. The human personality (or self) arises in a social situation. This situation structures the "me" by means of inter-subjective symbolic processes (language, gestures, play, games, etc.), and the active organism, as it continues to develop, must respond to its situation and to its "me." This response of the active organism is the "I."

The individual takes the attitude of the "me" or the attitude of the "I" according to situations in which he finds himself. For Mead, "both aspects of the 'I' and the 'me' are necessary to the self in its full expression". Both community and individual independence are necessary to identity. The "I" is process breaking through structure. The "me" is a necessary symbolic structure which renders the action of the "I" possible, and "without this structure of things, the life of the self would become impossible".

3.7 Summary

For Mead, the development of the self and language are thoroughly tied to one another and to reinforce the theorem Mead begins by expressing what he learnt about the gesture.

3.8 Self Assessment Questions

1. What is the idea of G. H. Mead idea?
2. What is language and mind?

3.9 Key Words

Gesture- Gestures should be comprehended in terms of the behavioral responses of animals to stimuli from other organisms.

3.10 Study Guide

1. Turner, J.H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories.
2. Giddens, Anthony, 1984, The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory ofStructuration.
3. Blumer, ‘Society as Symbolic Interaction’ in Human Behaviour and Social Process
4. Schutz, Alfred, The phenomenology of the Social world
5. Berger Peter L and Thomas Luckman, 1966, The Social construction of Reality
6. Garfinkel, Harold, 1967, Studies in Ethnomethodology
7. Giddens, Anthony, 1979, Central problems in Social Theory
8. Abraham, M. F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introduction

Unit-04 Herbert Blumer

Structure

4.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To provide the meaning and explanation of the theory of symbolic interactionism
- To let the reader know about the various exponents of the theory
- To provide the basic premises and approach of the theory
- To provide the key ideas of the theory

4.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Blumer believed that when positivistic methods were applied to social research, they created consequences that were uninformed to the pragmatic realties of the social world. Because people operate in the worldbased on the subjective meanings they attribute to different objects and individuals construct worlds that are innately subjective. Therefore "objective" analysis is essentially conquered by the researcher's own socialreality, only documents the researchers own bizarre individual postulationsabout social interaction, and eventually results in prejudiced findings. The researcher, hence, must understand their subject's subjective interoperations of reality to truly understand sociological phenomena.

4.3 Life & times of Herbert Blumer

Born on March 7, 1900, Herbert George Blumer was an American sociologist whose primary academic interests were symbolic interactionismand methods of social research. Blumer's growing years were in Webster Groves, Missouri where he lived with his parents and attended Webster Groves High School and later the University of Missouri from 1918 to1922. Though, after obtaining his graduation degree, he was appointed into a teaching position there, but in the year 1925 he relocated tothe University of Chicago. There he was immensely influenced by thesocial psychologist George Herbert Mead and sociologists W. I. Thomas and Robert Park. Once he finished his doctorate degree in 1928, he was recruited as a teacher at the University of Chicago, where he unrelenting carried out his own research and the work of Mead.

He not only was an enthusiastic interpreter and proponent of GeorgeHerbert Mead's work on symbolic interactionism but also believed that individuals create their own social reality through collective and individual action. Throughout his scholarly works, he propounded that that the formation of social reality is an incessant course. Although he faced criticisms for his negative critiques of positivistic social

research, Blumer was firm that convincing sociological research methods are founded upon naturalistic observation and exhaustive participant observation.

In addition, Blumer was the secretary treasurer of the American Sociological Association from the year 1930 to 1935 and was the editor of the American Journal of Sociology from 1941-1952. In 1952, he left the University of Chicago, and supervised and developed the newly- formed Sociology Department at the University of California, Berkeley. In 1952, he became the president of the American Sociological Association, and he received the association's award for a Career of Distinguished Scholarship in 1983. Blumer served as the 46th president of the American Sociological Association and his Presidential Address was his paper "Sociological Analysis and the 'Variable'". Apart from being academically brilliant, Blumer played football professionally for the Chicago Cardinals (now the Arizona Cardinals), a team in the American Professional Football Association at the University of Chicago. Herbert Blumer died on April 13, 1987.

4.4 Intellectual Contributions: Symbolic Interactionism

According to Herbert Blumer, the most convincing and advantageous social research should be conducted through qualitative ethnographic methodology. He persistently critiqued the thought that a totally objective perspective to be the only form of valid knowledge. But such a critique unswervingly confronts the traditional, positivism-based approach to sociological method and hence, much controversy enclosed Blumer's sociological approach to empirical research.

Blumer believed that when positivistic methods were applied to social research, they created consequences that were uninformed to the pragmatic realties of the social world. Because people operate in the worldbased on the subjective meanings they attribute to different objects and individuals construct worlds that are innately subjective. Therefore "objective" analysis is essentially conquered by the researcher's own social reality, only documents the researchers own bizarre individual postulations about social interaction, and eventually results in prejudiced findings. The researcher, hence, must understand their subject's subjective interoperations of reality to truly understand sociological phenomena.

This logic, subsequently, led Blumer to markdown the kind of social research that applies methods traditionally used in the natural sciences.He also added that quantitative and objective analysis does not recognize the distinction between human beings and animals. The distinction according to him is the difference in cognitive capability to intentionally think about opinions and to relate meanings to objects that enables human beings for a vigorous role in shaping their world. Because society comprises of interactions between individuals or "joint actions", therefore appropriate understanding of human action is inherent to proper social research.

Blumer was a staunch believer of a sociological research that sensitively and subjectively integrates the stances of the subject. Closing his argument that there is slight validity in research that endeavored to comprehend the social world objectively, Blumer felt that objective interpretations of society are fundamentally partial to the researcher's social location and thus have little empirical value. To candidly discoverthe social realities of individuals different from one's self, an observermust be watchful of their framework and be open to understand social reality.

As it is now understood that even though Blumer coined the term Symbolic Interactionism in 1969, the initial advancement of this academic approach to social analysis is principally attributed to the work of George Herbert Mead at the University of Chicago. According to Blumer, preceding Symbolic Interactionism, there were two conventional ways of understanding the meaning of things, i.e. the pragmatist approach or the opposite. The pragmatist would say that meaning is inherent in the thing itself and the opposite of realist the subjective theory that attributes meaning to psychological makeup. The following points expand Blumer's perspectives on Symbolic Interactionism:

- Humans act towards things (including other individuals) on the basis ofthe meanings they have for them.
- The meaning of things arises out of the social interactions one has withone's fellows.
- Meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive processa person uses in dealing with the things him or her encounters.

The first principle encapsulates the entire lot that a people have, jointly with physical objects, actions and concepts. Primarily, people carry out their work and conduct themselves towards objects and others supported on the individual meanings that they assign to such items. The second basic principle elucidates that the meaning of such things is a resultant of or arises out of, the social interaction people have with other human beings. Blumer, like Mead, asserted that people interact and intermingle with one another by interpreting or defining each other's actions instead of simply retorting to each other's actions. Their 'response' is not done openly through the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they append to such actions. Thus, human interaction is interceded by employing symbols and signification, by interpretation, or bydetermining the meaning of one another's actions. Meaning is either taken for granted and pushed aside as unimportant or it is regarded as a mere neutral link between the factors responsible for human behavior and this behavior as the product of such factors. (Blumer 1969).

Blumer also asserted the fact that language is the foundation of meaning and is negotiated through the use of it. People generally have the ability toname things, assign objects or actions to a certain idea or phenomenon. The utilization of symbols is an accepted procedure for interpretation and intellectual expression. Blumer distinguished this method with behaviorist explanations of human behavior that does not permitinterpretation between stimulus and response.

In Blumer's third premise the idea of minding comes to fore. Symbolic Interactionists depict thinking as an internal conversation. Mead called thisinner dialogue minding. Minding is the holdup in one's thought processthat occurs when one reflects about his next action. These meanings are carried out and customized through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the situations and things he encounters. It also generally happens that people get involved in self-talking or elf reflection in order to sort out the meaning of a difficult situation. At the foremost, language is needed that would facilitate in interacting symbolically before the thinking process actually commences. The stress on symbols, negotiated meaning and social construction of society brought on attentionto the roles people play. Role-taking is a typical device that allows human beings to view another person's standpoint to identify with the nature of the action might mean to another person. Role-taking is a part of our livesat an early age. Playing house and pretending to be someone else are examples of these phenomena. Though these roles don't undergo any significant provisions, but, according to Blumer, actors often take on a script that they follow. Because of the ambiguity of roles in social circumstances, the weight of role-making is on the person in the situation.This makes human beings proactive and involving participants in ourenvironment.

To sum up, Blumer supposed that people engaging in social interaction is what society is created of. It eventually means that social reality only survives in the context of the human experience. His theory of symbolic interaction, is thus nearer to a theoretical framework (based on theimportance of meanings and the interface between individuals) than an appropriate theory.

According to Blumer's theory, interaction between individuals is based on independent action, which in turn is founded upon the subjective meaning actors attribute to social objects and/or symbols. Thus individual actors regulate their behavior based on the meaning they attribute to objects andsymbols in their relevant situation. Blumer theorized that assigning meaning to the objects is an enduring, two-fold process: first is the recognition of the objects that have situational connotation, and the second is the process of in-house message to come to a decision which meaningful object to take action to.

Acknowledging that others are equally self-governing, persons use their subjectively resultant interpretations of others (as social objects) to envisage the upshot of certain behaviors, and use such analytical insights to make assessments of their own behavior in the hopes of reaching their goal. Thus, when there is harmony among individual actors about the implication of the objects that are relevant to their existing real world situation, social coordination follows. Social structures are, hence,determined by the action of individual actors.

Blumer recapitulated that this multifaceted interface among meanings, objects, and behaviors is an exceptionally human process as it asks for behavioral responses based on the elucidation of

symbols, rather than behavioral responses based on environmental stimuli (for example, the symbolic interpretation of language and gestures and of other's actions. As social life is a "fluid and negotiated process," to understand and value each other, humans must essentially appoint symbolic interaction. Blumer criticized the existing social science of his day because instead of using Symbolic Interactionism they fabricated conclusions about humans byplummeting human decisions to social pressures like social positions and roles.

4.5 Summary

Blumer supposed that people engaging in social interaction is what society is created of. It eventually means that social reality only survives in the context of the human experience.

4.6 Self Assessment Questions

1. Explain of Life Sketch of Herbot Blumar

4.7 Key Words

Self- In philosophy, the self is the relationship of an individual's own being, knowledge and values. Self relates the experiences of one's inner and outer living in presence. The first-person perspective distinguishes selfhood from personal identity.

Role- A role is a set of connected behaviors, rights, obligations, beliefs, and norms as conceptualized by people in a social situation. It is an expected or free or continuously changing behavior and may have a given individual social status or social position.

Gesture- A gesture is a form of non-verbal communication or non-vocal communication in which visible bodily actions communicate particular messages, either in place of, or in conjunction with, speech. Gestures include movement of the hands, face, or other parts of the body.

4.8 Study Guide

1. Turner, J.H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories
2. Giddens, Anthony, 1984, The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory ofStructuration
3. Blumer, ‘Society as Symbolic Interaction’ in Human Behaviour and Social Process

4. Schutz, Alfred, The phenomenology of the Social world
5. Berger Peter L and Thomas Luckman, 1966, The Social construction of Reality
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7. Giddens, Anthony, 1979, Central problems in Social Theory
8. Abraham, M.F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introduction

Block-02 Phenomenology& Ethnomethodology

Unit-05 Phenomenology

Unit-06 Alfred Schultz

Unit-07 Peter Berger

Unit-08 Harold Garfinkel

Unit-05 Phenomenology

Structure

5.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To explain the meaning of Phenomenology.
- To let the reader know the historical roots of phenomenology.

5.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Phenomenology (from Greek: phainómenon "that which appears"; and lógos "study") is the philosophical study of the structures of subjective experience and consciousness. As a philosophical movement it was founded in the early years of the 20th century by Edmund Husserl and was later expanded upon by a circle of his followers at the universities of Göttingen and Munich in Germany. It then spread to France, the United States, and elsewhere, often in contexts far removed from Husserl's early work.

5.3 Meaning of Phenomenology

Phenomenology is normally understood in either of two ways: as a disciplinary field in philosophy, or as a movement in the history of philosophy. At the outset, Phenomenology may be defined as the study of structures of experience, or consciousness. Literally, phenomenology is the study of "phenomena": appearances of things, or things as they appear in our experience, or the ways we experience things, thus the meanings things have in our experience. Phenomenology studies conscious knowledge as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view. This field of philosophy is then to be made distinct from, and related to, the other key fields of philosophy: ontology (the study of being or what is), epistemology(the study of knowledge), logic (the study of valid reasoning), ethics (the study of right and wrong action), etc.

Phenomenological inspection of a known type of experience will mark the ways in which we ourselves would experience that form of conscious action. And the most important assets of our familiar types of experience is their intentionality, their being a consciousness of or about something, something experienced or presented or engaged in a certain way. How I see or conceptualize or understand the object I am dealing with defines the meaning of that object in my current experience. Thus, phenomenology features a study of meaning, in a wide sense that includes more than what is expressed in language.

Phenomenology, hence, is chiefly concerned with the regular manifestation on and study of the structures of consciousness and the phenomena that appear in acts of consciousness. This can be clearly differentiated from the other methods of analysis which sees the world as objects, sets of objects, and objects acting and reacting upon one another. Husserl's conception of phenomenology has been criticized and developed not only by himself but also by students such as Edith Stein, by existentialists, such as Max Scheler, Nicolai Hartmann, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jean-Paul Sartre, and by other philosophers, such as Paul Ricoeur, Emmanuel Lévinas, and sociologists Alfred Schütz and Eric Voegelin.

5.4 Historical Roots

Initiated in the first half of the 20th century, the historical movement ofphenomenology is the philosophical tradition by Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jean-Paul Sartre, et al. In that movement, phenomenology was valued as the apt base of all philosophy — as opposed, say, to ethics or metaphysics or epistemology. The methods and characterization of the discipline were extensively discussed by Husserl and his successors.

Phenomenology has been practiced, with or without the name, since quite many years from now. For instance, the Hindu and Buddhist philosophers who reflected on states of consciousness through pensive states were practicing phenomenology. When Descartes, Hume, and Kant characterized states of perception, thought, and imagination, they were practicing phenomenology. When Brentano categorized varieties of mental phenomena (defined by the directedness of consciousness), he was practicing phenomenology. When William James appraised kinds of mental activity in the stream of consciousness (including their embodiment and their dependence on habit), he too was practicing phenomenology. And when recent analytic philosophers of mind have dealt with issues of consciousness and intentionality, they have habitually been practicing phenomenology.

Still, the discipline of phenomenology, its roots tracing back through thecenturies, came to a fully fledged status by Husserl.

(1) Husserl's work was followed by an outbreak of phenomenological writings in the first half of the 20th century and the multiplicity of conventional phenomenology

is evident in the Encyclopedia of Phenomenology which features different articles on nearly seven types of phenomenology. Transcendental constitutive phenomenology studies how objects are constituted in pure or transcendental consciousness, setting aside questions of any relation to the natural world around us.

(2) Naturalistic constitutive phenomenology studies how consciousness constitutes or takes things in the world of nature, assuming with the natural attitude that consciousness is part of nature.

(3) Existential phenomenology studies concrete human existence, including our experience of free choice or action in concrete situations.

(4) Generative historicist phenomenology studies how meaning, as found in our experience, is generated in historical processes of collective experience over time.

(5) Genetic phenomenology studies the genesis of meanings of things within one's own stream of experience.

(6) Hermeneutical phenomenology studies interpretive structures of experience, how we understand and engage things around us in our human world, including ourselves and others.

(7) Realistic phenomenology studies the structure of consciousness and intentionality, assuming it occurs in a real world that is largely external to consciousness and not somehow brought into being by consciousness.

In his book Logical Investigations (1900-01) Husserl delineated a composite system of philosophy, moving from logic to philosophy of language, to ontology (theory of universals and parts of wholes), to a phenomenological theory of intentionality, and finally to a phenomenological theory of knowledge. Then in Ideas I (1913) he focused exactly on phenomenology itself. Husserl defined phenomenology as “the science of the essence of consciousness”, centered on the defining trait of intentionality, approached explicitly “in the first person”.

Thus, phenomenology is the study of consciousness — that is, conscious experience of diverse kinds —as experienced from the first-person standpoint. In this discipline different forms of experience are studied just as they are experienced, from the outlook of the subject existing through or performing them. Thus, human beings typify experiences of seeing, hearing, imagining, thinking, feeling (i.e., emotion), wishing, desiring, willing, and also acting,

that is, embodied activities of walking, talking, cooking, carpentering, etc. However, not just any categorization of an experience willdo.

In Ideas I Husserl viewed phenomenology with a transcendental turn. This implies that Husserl borrowed the Kantian idiom of "transcendentalidealism", looking for circumstances of the likelihood of knowledge, or of consciousness usually, and questionably moving aside from any reality clear of phenomena. However, Husserl's transcendental twirl also concerned his discovery of the method of epoché (from the Greek skeptics' notion of abstaining from belief). We are to Husserl proposed the practice of phenomenology, by "bracketing" the inquiry of the continuation of the natural world around us. Therefore, one turns his attention, in reflection, tothe configuration of his own conscious experience with the primary that each act of consciousness is a consciousness of something. The subsequent philosophers debated the appropriate description of phenomenology and were at variance over its outcomes and its methods. Adolf Reinach, an early student of Husserl's argued that phenomenology should stay related with realist ontology, as in Husserl's Logical Investigations. Roman Ingarden, a Polish phenomenologist of the succeeding generation, unrelenting carried forward the confrontation to Husserl's views on transcendental idealism. For such philosophers, phenomenology should not categorize queries of being or ontology, as the method of epoché would suggest.In addition there was Martin Heidegger who not only studied Husserl's early writings but also succeeded Husserl in the prestigious chair at the University of Freiburg in the year 1928. Heidegger perceived phenomenology in his own way.

In Being and Time (1927) Heidegger unfolded his version of phenomenology.For him, we and our activities are always "in the world", our being is being- in-the-world, so we do not study our activities by bracketing the world, rather we interpret our activities and the meaning things have for us by looking to our contextual relations to things in the world. Indeed, for Heidegger, phenomenology decides into what he called "fundamental ontology". We must discriminate beings from their being, and we begin our investigation of the meaning of being in our own case, examining our own existence in the activity of "Dasein" (that being whose being is in each case my own). Heidegger opposed Husserl's neo-Cartesian stress on consciousness and subjectivity, together with how awareness presents thingsaround us. By contrast, Heidegger held that our additional essential ways of connecting to things are in practical activities like hammering, where the phenomenology divulges our state of affairs in a context of equipment and in being-with-others.

In Being and Time Heidegger drew near phenomenology, in a quasi-poetic idiom, through the root meanings of "logos" and "phenomena", so that phenomenology is defined as the art

or practice of “letting things show themselves”. In Heidegger's inimitable linguistic play on the Greek roots, “ ‘phenomenology’ means … — to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself.” (Heidegger, Being and Time, 1927, 7C.) Here Heidegger openly caricatures Husserl's call, “To the things themselves!”, or “To the phenomena themselves!” Heidegger went on to highlight practical forms of comportment or enhanced relating (Verhalten) as in hammering a nail, as opposed to representational forms of intentionality as in seeing or thinking about a hammer. Much of Being and Time expands an existential interpretation of our modes of being together with, notably, our being-toward-death.

In a very diverse method, in obvious logical writing style, in the text of a lecture course called The Basic Problems of Phenomenology (1927), Heidegger sketched the inquiry of the connotation of being from Aristotle through many other thinkers into the issues of phenomenology. According to him, one’s understanding of beings and their being comes eventually through phenomenology. Here the connection with conventional issues of ontology is more obvious, and consonant with Husserl's dream in the Logical Investigations (an early source of inspiration for Heidegger). One of Heidegger's most ground-breaking thoughts was his formation of the “ground” of being, looking to modes of being more basic than the things around us (from trees to hammers). Heidegger had queries regarding the present-day concern with technology, and his scripts probably propose that the scientific theories are chronological relics that are used in technological practice, rather than systems of supreme facts.

In the 1930s, the subject matter of phenomenology moved from Austrian and then German philosophy into French philosophy. The sensibility to experience maps out to Descartes' work, and French phenomenology has been an attempt to safeguard the essential power of Descartes' insights while rejecting mind-body dualism. The experience of one's own body or one's livedor living body has been a significant pattern in many French philosophers ofthe 20th century.

In Being and Nothingness Sartre formed his notion of phenomenological ontology. Consciousness is a consciousness of objects, as Husserl had given importance to. In Sartre's sculpt of intentionality, the key protagonist in consciousness is a phenomenon, and the incidence of a phenomenon just isa consciousness-of-an-object. Certainly, all the things in our surroundings that are generally experienced are phenomena but underneath lies their “being-in-itself”. For Sartre, the application of phenomenology ensues by a purposeful indication on the structure of consciousness. Sartre's techniqueis in result a literary style

of interpretive portrayal of various types of experience in pertinent situations — a practice that does not actually fit the methodological proposals of either Husserl or Heidegger.

Sartre's phenomenology in Being and Nothingness became the philosophical groundwork for his admired philosophy of existentialism, drafted in his famous lecture "Existentialism is Humanism" (1945). In Being and Nothingness Sartre stressed on the fact that experience of freedom of choice, particularly the project of choosing one's self, the defining pattern of one's past actions. Through vibrant picture of the "look" of the Other, Sartre set foundation for the existing political importance of the concept of the Other (as in other groups or ethnicities). In The Second Sex (1949) Simone de Beauvoir, Sartre's life-long companion, initiated contemporary feminism with her nuanced account of the apparent role of women as Other.

In 1940s Paris, Maurice Merleau-Ponty tied up with Sartre and Beauvoir in furthering the discipline of phenomenology. In Phenomenology of Perception (1945) Merleau-Ponty developed a rich diversity of phenomenology highlighting the role of the body in human experience.

Merleau-Ponty discarded associationist psychology, payingattention to connections between sensation and stimulus, and intellectualist psychology, focused on rational construction of the world in the mind. As an alternative, Merleau-Ponty focused on the "body image", our experience of our own body and its implication in our activities. Expanding Husserl's account of the lived body (as opposed to the physical body), Merleau-Ponty opposed theconventional Cartesian division of mind and body. For the body, an image is neither in the mental nor in the mechanical-physical sphere, but it is me in my occupied action with things I perceive including other persons.

The extent of Phenomenology of Perception is trait of the span of classical phenomenology, not least because Merleau-Ponty drew on Husserl, Heidegger, and Sartre while sketching his individual pioneering idea of phenomenology. His phenomenology focused on the role of attention in the phenomenal field, the experience of the body, the spatiality of the body, the motility of the body, the body in sexual being and in speech, other selves, temporality, and the character of freedom so important in French existentialism.

Since the inception of Husserl, Heidegger's writing on phenomenology, the other phenomenologists have discussed all the classical issues that comprise of

intentionality, temporal awareness, intersubjectivity, practical intentionality and the social and linguistic contexts of human activity. Understandings of historical texts by Husserl have had an outstanding partin this work, both because the texts are rich and difficult and because the chronological aspect is itself part of the application of continental European philosophy. Since the 1960s, philosophers skilled in the methods of analytic philosophy have also delved into the foundations of phenomenology. Phenomenology was already allied with logical and semantic theory in Husserl's Logical Investigations. Analytic phenomenology picks up on that connection. In particular, Dagfinn Føllesdal and J. N. Mohanty havediscovered historical and conceptual relations between Husserl's phenomenology and Frege's logical semantics. For Frege, an expression submits to an object by way of a sense: thus, two expressions (say, "the morning star" and "the evening star") may refer to the same object (Venus) but convey different senses with diverse manners of appearance. Similarly for Husserl, an experience (or act of consciousness) means or refers to an object by way of a noema or noematic sense: thus, two experiences may refer to the same object but have different noematic senses concerning special ways of presenting the object. Indeed, for Husserl, the theory of intentionalityis a generalization of the theory of linguistic reference: as linguistic reference is mediated by sense, so intentional reference is mediated by noematic sense.

Of late, analytic philosophers of mind have revived phenomenological issues of mental representation, intentionality, consciousness, sensory experience, intentional content, and context-of-thought. Some of these analytic philosophers of mind hark back to William James and Franz Brentano at the origins of modern psychology, and some look to empirical research in today's cognitive neuroscience. Some researchers have begun to combine phenomenological issues with issues of neuroscience and behavioral studies and mathematical modeling. Such studies will enlarge the methods of traditional phenomenology as the Zeitgeist moves on.

5.5 Summary

Phenomenology is the study of "phenomena": appearances of things, or things as they appear in our experience, or the ways we experience things, thus the meanings things have in our experience. Phenomenology studies conscious knowledge as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view.

5.6 Self Assessment Questions

1. What is phenomenology?
2. What is Husserl's idea of phenomenology?

5.7 Key Words

Phenomenology- phenomenology is the study of experience and consciousness.

5.8 Study Guide

1. Turner, J.H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories
2. Giddens, Anthony, 1984, The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration
3. Blumer, 'Society as Symbolic Interaction' in Human Behaviour and Social Process
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6. Garfinkel, Harold, 1967, Studies in Ethnomethodology
7. Giddens, Anthony, 1979, Central problems in Social Theory
8. Abraham, M.F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introduction

Unit-06 Alfred Schultz

Structure

6.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To explain the idea of Alfred Schultz.
- To understand what is life-world.

6.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Among all the then phenomenologists, Alfred Schultz's endeavor was to relate the notions of Edmund Husserl to the social world and the socialsciences. His work, 'Phenomenology of the Social World' provided philosophical foundations for Max Weber's sociology and for economics, with which he was well-known through contacts with the Austrian school colleagues. When Schultz leftHitler's Anschluss of Austria and shifted baseto the United States in 1939, he further developed his thought in liaison to the social sciences, American pragmatism, logical empiricism and to a variety of other fields of endeavor such as music and literature. His effort has been influential on novel movements in sociological thought such asEthnomethodology and conversation analysis.

6.3 Life & Time of Alfred Schultz

Born in Vienna, Alfred Schultz was a part of the artillery division of the Austrian army during World War I and kept serving on the Italian front prior to getting back to the University of Vienna for higher studies. At the university, Schutz studied law, social science, and business with famousfigures like Hans Kelsen and Ludwig von Mises, but his most important educational incident happened while he was a member of the Mises Circle, one of many Viennese circles, of which the "Schlick Circle" was the most famous.

In the interdisciplinary Mises Circle, Schutz created friendships that would prolong throughout the tragic decades of the 1930s and 1940s. That also included, among others, economists Gottfried von Haberler, Friedrich A. von Hayek, Fritz Machlup, Oskar Morgenstern, philosopher Felix Kaufmann, and political scientist Eric Voegelin. In 1927, during his ongoing pursuit of academics, Schutz was nominated the executive officer of Reitler and Company, a foremost Viennese banking firm with international business

relations, and thus he commenced a life-long pattern that led Edmund Husserl to portray him as "a banker by day and a philosopher by night."

At the very outset, Schutz had been taken with the methodological writings of Max

Weber, who had lectured in Vienna in the summer of 1918 and whose work was hugely admired among Viennese intellectuals. However, Schutz felt that Weber's work was based on implicit, unexamined assumptions resulting from his disinterest in basic epistemological problems that had no direct bearing on his special sociological problems. In 1925–1927, Schutz moved to Henri Bergson's philosophy of consciousness and inner time in order to illuminate notions such as meaning, action, and intersubjectivity, and his results have been collected in manuscripts published as Life Forms and Meaning Structure. Disgruntled with his analyses he never published them and encouraged by comments of Felix Kaufmann, he came to know the significance of the phenomenology of the consciousness of inner time of Edmund Husserl (1859–1938).

Gaining knowledge from Husserl's work, Shultz then produced his own major work, The Phenomenology of the Social World (1932). For this work of his, he was even praised by Husserl as an earnest and profound phenomenologist. During the end of the 1930s decade, he continued authoring short essays viewing how his phenomenology of the social world could be related to the economic thought of Mises and Hayek.

In addition, even before confronting with American pragmatism, he prepared a manuscript on personality in the social world that paid more attention to the pragmatic elements of the day by day social world. However, both of Schutz's academic and business careers were meticulously shaken when Adolf Hitler executed the seizure of Austria by Germany on March 13, 1938, especially since he, on a business trip in Paris, was separated for three months from his own family, whose emigration to Paris he finally arranged.

As a globally reckoned lawyer and businessperson, he was capable of providing aid to several intellectuals to escape Austria, but the westward movement of the Nazi juggernaut finally forced him to shift base with his family to the United States on July 14, 1939.

In the United States he unrelenting assisted immigrants and functioned with Reitler and Company in resurrecting its business. He also facilitated in the United States war effort by reporting on German and Austrian economic themes for the Board of Economic Warfare. Even, he helped Marvin Farber in forming the International Phenomenological Society and in instituting and editing Philosophy and Phenomenological Research. In 1943, Schultz started teaching sociology and philosophy courses on The Graduate Faculty of The New School for Social Research. There he was responsible for presenting papers in the school-wide General Seminar, overseeing dissertations and serving as chair of the Philosophy Department from

1952– 1956. In spite of his numerous functions, he continued a widespread philosophical association with Farber, Aron Gurwitsch, Fritz Machlup, Eric Voegelin, and Maurice Natanson, his graduate student from 1951 to 1953. Till date, however, only the correspondence with Gurwitsch has been published as Philosophers in Exile: The Correspondence of Alfred Schultz and Aron Gurwitsch, 1939–1959.

While in the United States, Schultz published a collection of articles on a wide variety of topics, explaining and criticizing Husserl's thought; examining the works of American philosophers such as William James or George Santanyana; engaging continental philosophers such as Max Scheler or Jean-Paul Sartre; developing his own philosophical positions on the social sciences, temporality, language, multiple realities, responsibility, and symbolism; addressing socio-political questions dealing with strangers, homecomers, well-informed citizens, and equality; and treating themes in literature and music.

A number of thinkers have sustained Schultz's tradition in philosophy and sociology. Maurice Natanson highlighted the tension between individual, existential and social, anonymizing dimensions of day by day life experience. Thomas Luckmann, who worked as co-author for the posthumous publication of Schultz's The Structures of the Life-World, developed the sociology of knowledge implications of Schultz's thought and focused on the distinction between science and the life-world as well as the importance of language, symbolism, and the moral order of society. While John O'Neill has fused Schultz's thought with that of Merleau-Ponty by a spotlight on the lived,communicative body, Richard Grathoff has investigated the experience of normality within the bounded and situated context of a milieu. Drawingon Schutz's thought, Harold Garfinkel launched Ethnomethodology, and George Psathas, a commentator on Ethnomethodology, played a primary rolekicking off the new discipline of conversation analysis. Ilja Srubar developed the pragmatic dimensions of Schultz's thought and several of its economic and political implications, Lester Embree clarified his typology of the sciences, and Fred Kersten has expanded his aesthetic insights. Globally, quite a lot of other scholars have devoted themselves to Schultz's work andto the development of his insights, and Germany, Japan, and the United States are home to archives containing Schultz's work and correspondence.

6.4 Works: Phenomenology and Life world

Phenomenology of the Social World (1932) is regarded as the pioneering work by Schultz where he has written three chapters on philosophical discussion between introductory and concluding chapters that have discussed the socio- scientific that positions his philosophy

endeavored to engage in. In the first chapter of his book, Schultz has admired the views on value-freedom in social science and the sovereignty of science vis-à-vis other activities (e.g. politics) by Max Weber, and he has also applauded Weber's methodological individualism and ideal-type methodology.

In addition, he also celebrated Weber's snub to diminish the social sciences to the natural sciences, while permitting their ideal-typical consequences to be testable for competence. In any case, Schultz also added to Weber, regarding the importance of interpretation involved even in choosing an experience out of one's stream of knowledge. Even stressing how the meaning of an action to an actor relied upon the project directing the extensive sequential process of the sub-acts leading to its comprehension.

Schultz, thereafter, developed his own theory of meaning and action. He started his theory with Husserl's lessons of the consciousness of internal time, in particular consciousness's capacity to capture reflectively and distinguish lived experiences, which at foremost emerge as undefined phases melting into each other. Schutz had appropriated this idea of flowing consciousness, or duration, from Bergson, whose manuscripts later published as Life Forms and Meaning Structure, he had depended upon. Those manuscripts, for systematic purposes, split the ego, indissoluble in its lived experience, into ideal-typical constructs of a variety of life forms that included the "I" living in duration, remembering, acting, thinking, and relating to a "Thou."

Husserl's explanation of the consciousness of inner time had therapies for problems by cautiously unfolding how the stream of duration was altered at every moment into a remembered having-just-been-thus, as the primitive impression passed into chief remembrance, or retention. The continuum widening backward from the now of the primal impression through its retentions formed a "specious" present, to which the reflective acts of secondary remembrance, that is, reminiscence or reproduction, turned, differentiating one experience from another. In sum, Husserl's phenomenological account of experience revealed the process of withholding that bridged the duration memory gap that had bedeviled Schultz's previous efforts insofar as he had relied on an ideal-typical methodology, which barred insight into what goes on within conscious processes themselves.

Schultz drifted the Husserl's description of temporality towards an action theory, isolating the levels of passive experience, spontaneous activity without a guiding project and deliberately planned and projected activity, identified technically as "action". In preparation

of an action to be executed and met in the future, a person has to rely on reflective acts of "projection", like those found in reflective memory, only now oriented in a future as opposed to past direction. Through such reflectivity, one presumes to for a perfect completion of a project, that is, what will have been realized after one's acting, and this project, also of prime significance for Martin Heidegger and the pragmatist tradition, establishes the "in-order-to motive" of one's action. By contrast, one's "because motives" consist in the environmental, historical factors that influenced the (now past) verdict to board upon the project and that can only be revealed by investigating in the "pluperfect tense," that is, exploring those past factors that heralded that past decision.

Schultz's characteristics here are pertinent to present-day debates about whether freedom is companionable with determinism since from the perspective of the lived in-order-to motive, one experiences oneself as free and morally responsible. But from the viewpoint of investigating one's 'because motives' after completing one's action, one correlates, as an observer of oneself, the option of the project with its historical determinants.

Certainly, Schultz, working inside the parameters of Husserl's non- naturalistic account of consciousness, would have envisaged such determinants not so much as empirico-mechanical causes but relatively as influences discoverable through an interpretive process, associating former events with the later ones they seem to have influenced. Schultz's position approximately comes adjoining to the compatibilist outlooks of P.F. Strawson and Thomas Nagel, who discerned between the participant and observer attitudes prior to theoretical discussions. They also aligned the participant attitude with liberty and the observer attitude with determinism. In any case Schultz gives the exceptional viewpoint that these attitudes take place within typical sequential frameworks, leaning towards the future or the past. Schutz's account of the temporal framework of motivation allowed disapproval of Weber's view that one could orient one's action to the past behavior of others, since, while such behavior might have served as the because motive of an action, one could not aim at affecting another's already completed action. Similarly, failure to understand temporality often leads to misinterpretations of action, as when one assumes that the outcome of anact may have been its motive without considering the actor's in-order-to motive, which due to unexpected events may have been accustomed or might have contradicted the intended outcome or result. Schultz argued that a person's own temporal stream of consciousness can never totally match with that of another person's, whose sequence of events and intensity of experience inevitably differs from one's own, places limits on one's understanding of another.

Schultz's basic point, hence, involves getting behind constituted meanings to the temporal processes by which actors build up the meaning of their own actions — a meaningful build-up accentuated by the German title of his Phenomenology of the Social World (Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt).

Additionally to this account of consciousness, motivation, and action, he looked at the structure of the social world, comprising:

- Consociates who share the same time and spatial access to each other's bodies,
- Contemporaries with whom one shares only the same time, and
- Predecessors and Successors with whom one does not share the sametime and to whose lived bodies one lacks access.

Schultz envisaged his work as developing a "phenomenological psychology" of "inner experience" and centering on the invariant features of the life-world toward which theoreticians, including social scientists, turn reflectively. Jurgen Habermas criticized Schutz's account of the life-world for being "abridged in a culturalistic fashion" and not addressing institutional orders and personality structures. According to Schultz, social scientists build up constructs, ideal types, of the meaning-contexts of life-world actors, and they check these types to decide if they are causally sufficient, that is conforming to past experience, and meaning adequate, that is, consistent with whateverelse is known about the actor.

During his final years, Schultz authored Reflections on the Problem of Relevance, an all-inclusive phenomenology of the natural attitude, edited by Richard Zaner that was published after his death. In addition with co-author Thomas Luckmann he wrote another masterpiece The Structures of the Life World. Reflections on the Problem of Relevance discerns various sets of interests or relevances: topical (which spotlight concentration on themes), interpretive (which bestow meanings on experiences or objects), and motivational. More often, such relevances engage a subject, with more or less organized interests, or relevances, interacting with the world. From this interaction between subject and world, it becomes obvious what is "of relevance" to an actor.

These relevances, inter-reliant on each other and attached with one's system of types or categories, comprise a stock of knowledge, which Schultz inspects in terms of its genesis and structure. He also discovers the meaning of one's biographical situation, including types and relevances, one's body, and the ontological restraints of space and time that, for instance, avert one from being at certain places at certain times or force one to wait.

The Structures of the Life-World symbolizes a most compound and methodical summary of many of the themes that Schultz addressed all through his life. After a more universal account of the life-world and its relation to the sciences, the book takes up its diverse stratifications, such as provinces of meaning, temporal and spatial zones of reach and social structure. Schultz and Luckmann then comment on the components of one's stock of knowledge, including learned and non-learned elements, relevance and types, and trace the build-up of such a stock.

The book carries contents on the social conditioning of one's subjective stock of knowledge and queries about the social stock of knowledge of a group and diverse probable combinations of knowledge distribution (generalized and specialized). They deem how subjective knowledge becomes embodied in a social stock of knowledge and what influence the latter has on the former. The book also contains issues as the structures of consciousness and action, the choosing of projects, rational action, and forms of social action, whether such action is unilateral or reciprocal, immediate or mediate. The final section analyzes the boundaries of experience, different degrees of transcendencies (from simply bringing an object within reach to the experience of death), and the mechanisms for crossing boundaries (e.g. symbols).

6.5 Summary

Social structure is the sum total of these typifications and of the chronic patterns of interaction established by means of them. As such, social structure is a necessary element of the reality of everyday life. Schulz's Phenomenology maintains that in this world of everyday life, people both create social reality and are constrained by the preexisting social and cultural structures created by their predecessors.

6.6 Self Assessment Questions

1. Discuss the Alfred Schultz's idea of phenomenology.
2. Describe the meaning of lifeworld.

6.7 Key Words

Lifeworld- is a world that is created in their thoughts and actions and is maintained as genuine by these.

6.8 Study Guide

1. Turner, J.H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories
2. Giddens, Anthony, 1984, The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration
3. Blumer, 'Society as Symbolic Interaction' in Human Behaviour and Social Process
4. Schutz, Alfred, The phenomenology of the Social world
5. Berger Peter L and Thomas Luckman, 1966, The Social construction of Reality
6. Garfinkel, Harold, 1967, Studies in Ethnomethodology
7. Giddens, Anthony, 1979, Central problems in Social Theory
8. Abraham, M.F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introd

Unit-07 Peter Berger

Structure

7.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To explain the idea of Peter Berge.
- To understand the social construction of reality.

7.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Peter Berger was highly influenced by the philosophy and thoughts of Max Weber and much of the empirical work of Berger and Weber have centered on the relationship between modern rationalization and options for social action. Berger argued that as sorts of philosophical discourse, reason and freedom are not empirically obtainable for scientific study. While Weber focused on the empirical realities of rationality as a characteristic of action and rationalization, Berger on the other hand postulated that the word 'options' instead of freedom should be used as an empirical concept.

7.3 Life & Time of Peter Berger

Born to George William and Jelka (Loew) Berger, Peter Ludwig Berger is an Austrian-born American sociologist. He is best known for his academic excellence in works like sociology of knowledge, the sociology of religion, study of modernization, and theoretical contributions to sociological theory. He is best known for his book, '*The Social Construction of Reality: A* Treatise *in the Sociology of Knowledge*' (New York, 1966), which he co-authored with Thomas Luckmann. The work is regarded as one of the most influential texts in the sociology of knowledge and played a central role in the development of social constructionism. The book was named as the fifth most influential book written in the field of sociology during the 20th century by the International Sociological Association. Berger has spent most of his career teaching at The New School for Social Research, Rutgers University, and Boston University.

In the year 1946, shortly after the 2nd World War he shifted base tothe United States, and in 1952 became a naturalized citizen. With Brigitte Kellner, whom he married on September 28, 1959, he has two sons, Thomas Ulrich and Michael George.

In 1949 he graduated from Wagner College with a Bachelor of Arts. As he continued his studies at The New School in New York, he earned his M.A.and Ph.D. in 1950 and in 1954 respectively. In 1955 and 1956 he worked at the Evangelische Akademie in Bad Boll, Germany. From 1956 to 1958 Berger was an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro; from 1958 to 1963 he was an associate professor at Hartford

Theological Seminary. The next stations in his career were professorships at the New School for Social Research, Rutgers University, and Boston College. Since 1981 Berger has been University Professor of Sociology and Theology at Boston University, and since 1985 also director of the Institute for the Study of Economic Culture, which transformed, a few years ago, into the Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs.

7.4 Thoughts and Perspectives

Peter Berger was highly influenced by the philosophy and thoughts of Max Weber and much of the empirical work of Berger and Weber have centered on the relationship between modern rationalization and options for social action. Berger argued that as sorts of philosophical discourse, reason and freedom are not empirically obtainable for scientific study. While Weber focused on the empirical realities of rationality as a characteristic of action and rationalization, Berger on the other hand postulated that the word 'options' instead of freedom should be used as an empirical concept.

Weber argued that rationalism can mean a multiplicity of things at the subjective level of consciousness and at the objective level of social institutions. In terms of rationality described by Weber, the threats to freedom come mainly from one: the objectified, formal rationality of rules and regulations. These threats are mostly remarkable in two institutional spheres: the bureaucratization of the state and the machine production of individuals. This rationality in the bureaucratization of the state and the machine production of individuals eventually confines the prospect for individual choice amongst human beings.

Conversely, though the threat possibilities to liberty arising out of modern rationality worry Berger, still he provides a varied scenario for probable alternatives for action. Both Berger and Luckmann viewed that technologization and bureaucratization stumble upon consequences at the micro-level that are more compound than Weber's estimation.

Modernization has speared in removing work from the home, and has thus separated experience between public and private spheres. As the spheres were divided, the public sphere of technological production and bureaucratic management became extremely rationalized, while the private sphere positioned serious importance on customary and poignant bonds. Therefore, it could be concluded that Berger drew significantly from Weberian philosophy of rationalization of the public sphere. However, Weber and Berger cling to diverse opinions about rationalization on options for individual actions. While Weber explained how

bureaucratization and technologization would cart off the individuality and differentiated behavior, Berger argues that modernity has formed unparalleled options especially in the private sphere.

Berger's work has revolved around the study of human reality and as a result of which, he studied into the sociology of knowledge and phenomenology. The sociology of knowledge debates that society and social position have a propensity to influence what we know. On wider terms, the sociology of knowledge centers on the epistemological foundations of knowledge, the history of knowledge production and the uses to which knowledge is applied (more specifically, the history of science and the ideology of the ruling class). Opposing this approach, Berger focused on everyday "common" knowledge, those things that "everybody knows".

Shifting his focus on the subjective reality of everyday life, Berger enters a dialogue with traditional sociologies of knowledge- more specific, those of Marx and Mannheim. Sociologists like Abercrombie and Stephen Ainlay have delved deep into his theoretical frameworks. They consider ways in which Berger goes beyond these figures and recognize the notable influenceof Berger's popularization of a variety of phenomenological concepts, in which Berger actually avoids certain areas of analysis.

In addition to his contributions to phenomenology, Berger has made many prominent works in the study of modernization. Sociologist Anton Zijderveld expands the association of technology and bureaucracy to contemporary consciousness, well-known concepts in Berger's work. Zijderveld discusses even further Berger's treatment on such issues in relationship to classical figures such as Marx, Weber, Pareto, and Gehlen. Berger contributed and laid the foundation to discover the relationship between political ideology and social criticism and the importance of this connection in order to understand modern life.

7.5 Work: Social Construction of Reality

Peter Berger's most noteworthy work has been the book on Social Construction of Reality and he is best known for his vision that social reality is a form of consciousness. The primary thrust of his work is the relationship between society and the individual. Both with the co-author of the book, Thomas Luckmann, Berger propounds a sociological theory: 'Society as Objective Reality and as Subjective Reality'. His study of society as subjective reality portrays the process by which an individual's conception of reality is produced by his or her interaction with social structures. He also mentions how novel human concepts or inventions become a part of our reality through the process of

objectivation. Often this reality is then no longer recognized as a human creation, through a process Berger calls reification.

Man produces himself in no way implies some sort of Promethean idea of the lonely individual. Man's self-production is at all times, and of inevitability, a social enterprise. Men mutually create a human environment, with the entirety of its socio-cultural and psychological formations. None of theseformations may be understood as products of man's biological constitution. Just as it is unfeasible for man to develop as man in remoteness, so it is impossible for man in isolation to produce a human environment. As soon as one earns phenomena that are purposely human, one enters the sphere of the social. Man's specific humanity and his sociality are inextricably intertwined. *Homo sapiens* is always, and in the same measure,*homo socius*.

The primary purpose in the treatise is a sociological analysis of the reality of everyday life. More precisely, the focus is on the knowledge that steers behavior in everyday life and the author's interest is to know how this reality may emerge in different theoretical perspectives to intellectuals. At the outset, the book seeks for a clarification of that reality as it exists to the commonsense of the ordinary members of society.

The book further queries how this commonsense reality may be influenced by the theoretical constructions of intellectuals. Nevertheless, if the reality of everyday life is to be comprehended then its intrinsic character must also be understood. Everyday life presents itself as a reality interpreted by men and subjectively meaningful to them as a rational world. Within the frame of reference of sociology as an empirical science it is likely to take this reality as given, to take as data particular phenomena arising within it, without further inquiring about the foundations of this reality.

The basic premise of the book is that the everyday life world is not only taken for granted as reality by the common members of society in the subjectively meaningful behavior of their lives. It is a world that is created in their thoughts and actions and is maintained as genuine by these. The phenomenological study of everyday life, or rather of the subjective experience of everyday life, desists from any causal or genetic hypotheses, as well as from assertions about the ontological status of the phenomena analyzed.

Commonsense encloses numerous pre- and quasi-scientific explanations about everyday reality, which it takes for granted. If one is to describe the reality of commonsense then one must refer to these interpretations, just as of its taken-for-granted character must be taken into account. Consciousness is always deliberate and always intends or is directed toward objects. It is always difficult to capture the supposed substratum ofconsciousness as

such, only consciousness of something or other. This is so despite the consequences of whether the object of consciousness is experienced as fitting in to an external physical world or held as an element of an inward subjective reality.

A thorough phenomenological analysis would reveal the diverse layers of experience and the different structures of meaning involved in, say, being bitten by a snake, remembering having been bitten by a snake, having a phobia about all snakes, and so forth. Berger and Luckmann were interested in the general intentional character of all consciousness. Different objects present themselves to consciousness as elements of diverse spheres of reality. Berger for example, mentioned that one recognizes the fellowmen he must deal with in the due course of day to day life as related to a reality quite unlike from the intangible figures that appear in one's dreams.

Berger furthers his statement by arguing that the aforementioned two sets of objects pioneer quite different tensions into one's consciousness and one is attentive to them in quite different manners. The consciousness becomes capable of shifting through different domains of reality. Therefore, one is conscious of the world as consisting of manifold realities and the transition from one reality to another provides a shock. According to Berger, this shock is to be understood as a resultant of the shift in attentiveness that the transition entails, for e.g. a sudden wake up from a dream exemplifies this shift most simply.

The reality of everyday life, among the other multiple realities, is the one thatpresents itself as the reality par eminence. Its advantaged place enables it to the title of paramount reality. Berger feels that the tension of consciousnessis uppermost in everyday life, that is, the latter inflicts itself upon consciousness in the most huge, imperative and intense mode, whose crucial presence is difficult to wane. People experience everyday life in the state of being wide-awake, which according to Berger is normal and self-evident, that is, it constitutes one's usual approach.

The reality of everyday life appears already objectified, that is, comprised by an order of objects that have been selected as objects before one's appearance on the scene. The language used in everyday life incessantly provides one with the essential objectifications and conceives the order within which these make sense and within which everyday life has meaningfor the one.

To elucidate further, a person lives in a place that is geographically designated; he uses tools, from can openers to super bikes, which are designated in the technical vocabulary of his society; he lives within a web of human relationships, from his cricket club to his city or state, which are also ordered by means of vocabulary. In this way language marks the co- ordinates

of a person's life in society and fills that life with objects that arefull of meanings.

Berger putforths that the reality of everyday life is ordered around the "here"of my body and the "now" of my present. This "here and now" is the focalpoint of attention to the reality of everyday life. The reality of everyday life is not, however, worn out by these instant presences, but also clinches phenomena that are not present "here and now." This implies that one experiences everyday life in terms of differing degrees of closeness and remoteness, both spatially and temporally.

The zone of everyday life that is directly accessible to one's bodily manipulation is the closest to the person and this zone holds the worldwithin his reach. This is the world in which the person acts either to alter its reality or the world in which he just works. The consciousness is subjugated by the pragmatic motive in the working world which means that the person'sattention to this world is mainly determined by what he is currently doing, what he has done in his past and what he plans to do in future.

Berger has provided some interesting instances of the zones with some being less intense and urgent. As per his perspective, he views that one is intensely concerned in the cluster of objects involved in his day to day occupation— say, the world of the garage, if he is a mechanic. The person would be interested, though less directly, in what goes on in the testing laboratories of the automobile industry in Detroit—he is unlikely ever to be in one of these laboratories, but the work done there will ultimately affect his everyday life. A person may also be interested in what goes on in outer space, but this interest is a matter of personal, "leisure time" choice rather than a critical requirement of his everyday life.

The reality of everyday life, according to Berger, presents itself as an intersub-jective world, a world that one shares with others. His phenomenological perspectives postulate that intersubjectivity plays a crucial role in differentiating everyday life from other realities of which a person is conscious. He pressed the fact that, though a person is alone in the world of his dreams, but he knows that the world of day to day life is asreal and genuine to others as it is to himself. In an intersubjective world, for existence, one needs to frequently interact and communicate with others.

Though people reside in a common world but their thought processes and perspectives don't necessarily match with each other. A person's "here" is another person's "there." A person's work projects might vary from others but differ from and may even conflict with theirs. But in any case there is a continuing association between people's meanings in this world and that they share a common sense about its reality. Commonsense knowledge, as per Berger, is the knowledge that one shares with other people in the usual and obvious

schedules of day to day life. The reality of everyday life is taken for granted as reality. It hardly requires supplementary confirmation over and beyond its uncomplicated incidence. It is simply there, as self-evidentand compelling facticity.

He continues in his treatise that while one is competent of engaging in doubt about its reality, he is obliged to suspend such doubt as he routinely exists in everyday life. The world of everyday life declares itself and when one wantsto confront the proclamation, one has to involve in a purposeful effort. But not all aspects of this reality are equally unproblematic. He again suffices his argument by citing the instance of an automobile mechanic. Suppose that one is an automobile mechanic who is extremely well-informed about all American-made cars. Everything that pertains to the latter is a routine, unproblematic side of his everyday life. But if one fine day someone appears in the garage and asks him to repair his Volkswagen, then he would be now bound to come into the problematic world of foreign-made cars. He might be reluctant or even professionally curious to repair the car, but in any case heis now confronted face with problems that have not yet been routinized for him. But also on a simultaneous basis he cannot leave the reality of everyday life that was already routinized for him. However, Berger also pointsout that the everyday routine life augments itself with the incorporation of novel knowledge and skills necessary for mending of foreign-made cars.

Hence, till the routines of everyday life prolong without any sort of disruption they are treated as unproblematic. But even the unproblematic sector ofeveryday reality remains so until its permanence is interrupted by the sudden or eventual appearance of a dilemma. On the eve of such occurrence, the reality of everyday life seeks to amalgamate the problematic sector into what is already unproblematic. The process of such kind of integration of the problematic realm into the unproblematic zone is guided by one's commonsense knowledge that contains a variety of instructions. He provides an instance at the workplace i.e. the other staff at the office with whom a person works are unproblematic to me as long as they carry out their common, taken-for-granted routines—say, typing away at desks next to the person's. However, they become problematic if they interrupt these routines—say; clustering in a corner and whispering about some topic.

Interestingly enough the common sense would provide a number ofpossibilities to the person as he would start finding the meaning of this unusual activity of the other staff members. That is, they may be consulting on how to fix a broken typewriter, or one of them may have some urgent instructions from the boss, and so on. On the other hand, the person mayfind that they are discussing a union directive to go on strike, which tough is yet

outside his experience but still well within the series of problems with which his commonsense knowledge can handle. But if the person concludes that all his colleagues have gone mad, the nature of the problem changes itself. This implies that the problem of collective madness transcends the boundaries of the reality of everyday life and points to an overall unusual reality. Indeed, the conclusion of colleagues going mad indicates that they have gone off into a world that does not fall into the category of the common world of everyday life.

Berger pointed out that the transition between realities is noticeable by the rising and falling of the curtain. With the rise of the curtain, the spectator is "transported to another world," with its own meanings and an order that may or may not have much to do with the order of everyday life. With the fall of the curtain, the spectator "returns to reality," that is, to the paramount or supreme reality of everyday life. The latter presented on the stage begins to appear shaky and short-lived, though it looked fascinating and impressive few moments previously. Aesthetic and religious experience is rich in producing transitions of this kind, in as much as art and religion are prevalent producers of finite provinces of meaning.

Such finite provinces of meaning are distinguished by moving away of attention from the reality of everyday life. In spite of many instances of shifts in attention in day to day life, the shift to a finite province of meaning consists of a more drastic/radical kind. It is important to stress, however, that the reality of everyday life retains its paramount status through the help of language. The common language that is used by a person to objectify his experiences is grounded in everyday life. The reality of such experiences is distorted as soon as one begins to use the common language in interpreting them. This implies that one translates the non-everyday experiences again into the paramount reality of everyday life.

Berger also pointed out about the social interaction in everyday life and queried about sharing the reality of everyday life is with others. But he was also anxious as to how are these others themselves experienced in everyday life and if it is possible to distinguish between numerous modes of such experience.

He furthered that the most significant experience of others occurs in the face-to-face situation, which is the ideal case of social interaction. "In the face-to-face situation the other is appresented to me in a vivid present shared by both of us. I know that in the same vivid present I am appresented to him. My and his "here and now" continuously impinge on each other as long as the face-to-face situation continues. As a result, there is a continuous interchange of my expressivity and his. I see him smile, then react to my frown by stopping the smile, then smiling again as I smile, and so on. Every expression of mine is

oriented toward him, and vice versa, and this continuous reciprocity of expressive acts is simultaneously available to both of us. This means that, in the face-to-face situation, the other's subjectivity is available to me through a maximum of symptoms. To be sure,I may misinterpret some of these symptoms. I may think that the other is smiling while in fact he is smirking. Nevertheless, no other form of social relating can reproduce the plenitude of symptoms of subjectivity present in the face-to-face situation. Only here is the other's subjectivity emphatically close".

The reality of everyday life encloses typificatory schemes in terms of which others are apprehended and "dealt with" in face-to-face encounters. Thismeans when one apprehends the other as "a man," "a European," "a buyer," "a jovial type," and so on. All these typifications continually affect the formers interaction with the latter i.e. one decides to show the other a good time on the town before trying to sell him his product. The typificatory schemes entering into face-to-face situations are reciprocal in nature and these typifications of social interaction become increasingly unidentified the farther away they are from the face-to-face situation. Every typification, of course, entails initial anonymity.

Berger provided an instance of his friend to explain typification. "If I typifymy friend Henry as a member of category X (say, as an Englishman), I ipso facto interpret at least certain aspects of his conduct as resulting from this typification—for instance, his tastes in food are typical of Englishmen, as arehis manners, certain of his emotional reactions, and so on. This implies, though, that these characteristics and actions of my friend Henry appertain to anyone in the category of Englishman, that is, I apprehend these aspects of his being in anonymous terms. Nevertheless, as long as my friend Henry is available in the plenitude of expressivity of the face-to-face situation, he will constantly break through my type of anonymous Englishman and manifest himself as a unique and therefore atypical individual-to wit, as my friend Henry. The anonymity of the type is obviously less susceptible to this kind of individualization when face-to-face interaction is a matter of the past (my friend Henry, the Englishman, whom I knew when I was a college student), or is of a superficial and transient kind (the Englishman with whom I have a brief conversation on a train), or has never taken place (my business competitors in England)".

An imperative aspect of the experience of others in everyday life is thus the directness or indirectness of such experience. At any given time it is feasible to differentiate between consociates with whom one interacts in a face-to- face situation and others who are mere contemporaries, of whom one has only more or less detailed recollections, or of whom he knows merely by gossip. In face-to-face situations he has direct evidence of his fellowman,

ofhis actions, his attributes, and so on. Not so in the case of contemporaries—of them he has more or less dependable information.

The social reality of everyday life is thus apprehended in a gamut of typifications, which are progressively anonymous as they are distant from the "here and now" of the face to-face situation. While at one end of the continuum are those others with whom one frequently and intensively interacts in face-to-face situations—his "inner circle", at the other end is extremely anonymous abstractions, which by their very nature can never be obtainable in face to-face interaction. Social structure is the sum total of these typifications and of the chronic patterns of interaction established by means of them. As such, social structure is a necessary element of the reality of everyday life. Apart from one's relations with others is not limited to consociates and contemporaries but he also relates to predecessors and successors, to those others who have preceded and will chase him in the encircling history of his society.

7.6 Summary

Modernization has speared in removing work from the home, and has thus separated experience between public and private spheres. As the spheres were divided, the public sphere of technological production and bureaucratic management became extremely rationalized, while the private sphere positioned serious importance on customary and poignant bonds. Therefore, it could be concluded that Berger drew significantly from Weberian philosophy of rationalization of the public sphere.

7.7 Self Assessment Questions

1. What is Berger's understanding?
2. Explain social reality briefly.

7.8 Key Words

Typification- is a process of creating standard social construction based on standar assumptions.

7.9 Study Guide

1. Turner, J.H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories
2. Giddens, Anthony, 1984, The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration
3. Blumer, 'Society as Symbolic Interaction' in Human Behaviour and Social Process
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7. Giddens, Anthony, 1979, Central problems in Social Theory
8. Abraham, M.F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introduction

Unit-08 Harold Garfinkel

Structure

8.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To explain the meaning of ethnomethodology.
- To understand indexicality.

8.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Ethnomethodology is the study of how social order is produced in and through processes of social interaction. It generally seeks to provide an alternative to mainstream sociological approaches. In its most radical form, it poses a challenge to the social sciences as a whole.

8.3 Life & Time of Harold Garfinkel

Harold Garfinkel was born and brought up in Newark, New Jersey and used to assist his father in his own business. But Garfinkel's academic interests drew him towards attending college at the University of Newark where he studied accounting. The prevalent theoretical approaches in the classroom teaching steered Garfinkel to formulate theories in his later life.

Though, a student of accounting, Garfinkel began gaining interest in Sociology during his volunteer ship at a Quaker work camp in Cornelia, Georgia. His association with students from diverse backgrounds helped him in adopting Sociology as his subject area and it there itself that he got toknow about the Sociology as a discipline in the University of North Carolina with specific focus on public work projects like one Garfinkel was working on. He compiled his master's thesis on interracial homicide and completed his Masters in 1942 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Post the IInd World War, Garfinkel met Talcott Parsons at the Department of Social Relations at Harvard University. While on one hand, Parsons studied and stressed on the abstract categories and generalizations, Garfinkel focused on detailed description. Garfinkel also took lectures at Princeton University for two years that brought him in contact with some of the most prominent scholars of the day in the behavioral, informational, and social sciences including like Gregory Bateson, Kenneth Burke, Paul Lazarsfeld etc. He completed his dissertation, "The Perception of the other: A Study in Social Order," in 1952.

8.4 Thoughts and Influences

Talcott Parson's study of Social Order held a great influence on Garfinkel's theoretical orientation where the former hunted for answers to the problem of social order and, in so doing, provides a disciplinary foundation for research in sociology. Parsons premised that

all the social action could be comprehended in terms of an "action frame" comprising of a fixed number of elements i.e. an agent, a goal or intended end, the circumstances within which the act occurs, and its "normative orientation").

Drawing from Parson's theory, Garfinkel mentioned that both Ethnomethodology and theory of Social Action were different and unavoidably related. Though, both of them sought to brief up the existing of social life, they enquire about different kinds of questions and devise pretty diverse sorts of claims. Garfinkel's goal was not to eloquent yet another explanatory system and he expressed an "indifference" to all forms of sociological theorizing. Rather perceiving social practice through a theoretical lens, Garfinkel sought to discover the social world directly and in a detailed manner. Following Durkheim's popular statement of the objective reality of social facts being sociology's fundamental principle, Garfinkel replaced 'phenomenon' for 'principle', indicating a different perspective to sociological inquiry. He envisaged that the task of sociology is to conduct investigations into just how Durkheim's social facts are brought into being. During his students years at Harvard, Garfinkel also became acquainted with a number of European scholars who had lately immigrated to the U.S. Few of them were Felix Kaufmann and Alfred Schütz who introduced him to newly-emerging ideas in social theory, psychology and phenomenology.

8.5 Work: Ethnomethodology

Ethnomethodology is a fractional derivative of phenomenological sociology with profound pedigree in classical social theory and sociolinguistics. It is the vivid study of the reporting and accounting practices ('methods') by which the socially embedded actors provide meanings and rationality to their own and others' behavior. Ethnomethodologists study interactive, ad hoc sense making at the sites where social structures are produced and reproduced through talk and coordinated action. According to Garfinkel, the central claim of Ethnomethodology is that 'phenomena of order are identical with the procedures for their local endogenous production and accountability'. By "ethnomethod," Garfinkel implies the methods or means used by individuals in interactions to generate a shared and significant meaning. Ethnomethodology, then, is the study of these ethnomethods.

The concept of Ethnomethodology commenced with Garfinkel's effort at analyzing a jury discussion after a Chicago case in 1945. Garfinkel was attempting to comprehend the way jurors knew how to act as jurors. Once he tried to understand the jurors actions, Garfinkel coined the term "Ethnomethodology" as a manner to explain how people use different methods in order to understand the society they live in. Garfinkel noticed through his study of Ethnomethodology that the methods people use to understand the society they live in are very

much rooted in people's natural attitudes.

Like symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology provides a broad theoretic structure for discovering the social world. But again like symbolic interactionism, it does not have foretelling schemes in the way that macro- level theory does. However, ethnomethodology approaches interactions in a different manner i.e. it seeks to form an exacting science out of small scale details that symbolic interactionism would tend to view as less significant.

Garfinkel viewed that Ethnomethodology is a theoretical approach premisedupon the belief that human interaction is always carried out within an accord without which no interaction can take place. This harmony or consensus is a fraction of what grasps society together and is created of the norms for behavior that people hold around them. It is hence often presumed that people in a society share similar norms and expectations for behavior. Therefore, by infringing these norms, ethnomethodologists can study more about that society and how they respond to broken normal social behavior.The point of argument of the ethnomethodologists is that many people are not conscious about the norms they follow; It is this sense of ignorance that deters them from explaining what norms they actually follow. It is, hence, the responsibility of Ethnomethodology to expose these norms and behaviors.

Quite often, the ethnomethodologists employ creative methodologies to unravel the prevalent social norms by postulating smart ways to interrupt normal social interaction. In a famous series of Ethnomethodology experiments, college students were asked to pretend that they were guests in their own home without telling their families what they were doing. They were instructed to be polite, impersonal, use terms of formal address (Mr. and Mrs.), and to only speak after being spoken to. When the experiment was over, several students reported that their families treated the episode as a joke. One family thought their daughter was being extra nice because she wanted something, while another's believed their son was hiding something serious. Other parents reacted with anger, shock, and bewilderment, accusing their children of being impolite, mean, and inconsiderate. Thisexperiment allowed the students to see that even the informal norms that govern our behavior inside our own homes are carefully structured. By violating the norms of the household, the norms become clearly visible. Hence, breaching has various propositions, i.e. first, it show just how habituated we are in regard to certain kinds of interactions unfolding in certain kinds of ways. Yet we concurrently are considerate to the developing sense of the interaction.

Garfinkel pointed out that Ethnomethological research teaches us that society behaves as if there were no other way to do so. Usually people go along with what is expected of them and the existence of norms onlybecomes evident when they are violated.

8.6 Indexicality

Indexicality points out to the ways in which a specific word or description has a particular connotation for the speaker—who in turn supposes it also has a specific meaning for the listener. In reality, these meaningsmay or may not be analogous, but if the two parties engage in a conversation, some sort of meaning will appear from it—even if it is nothing more than that the two participants do not comprehend each other. But usually we enter into conversations with others assuming that we have a shared or common understanding.

Furthermore, indexicality proposes that even where there is shared meaning, individual meanings might still come out and assist in shaping the emergent meaning. For example, perhaps the American flag has a similar meaning for two people, but if one had a son or daughter who died in battle, the meaning might be somewhat different for this individual. And this difference might divulge itself in conversation. Garfinkel regarded indexical expressions like here, now, and me as key terms as they alter their meaning depending on when and where they are used. Such terms are referred as indexicals as they indicate the situational context in which they are produced. Garfinkel contributed that such expressions go beyond "here", "now," etc. and include any and all utterances that members of society produce. Garfinkel viewed that speech tends to be basically non-objective in real experience, in spite of the likelihood for shared objective meanings.

8.7 Reflexivity

As Garfinkel specified that the pervasiveness of indexical expressions imply that all forms of action provide for their own understandability through the methods by which they are produced. That is, action has the property of reflexivity whereby such action is made meaningful in the light of the very situation within which it is produced.

He however furthered that the contextual setting ought not to be considered as a passive background for the action. Reflexivity essentially implies that members figure action in relation to context while the context itself isconstantly being redefined through action. The early insight into the significance of reflexivity occurred during the study of juror's deliberations, wherein what jurors had decided was used by them to reflexively organize the plausibility of what they were deciding. Other investigations discovered that parties did not always know what they meant by their own formulations; rather, verbal formulations of the local order of an event were used to gather the very meanings that gave them their logical sense. Garfinkel affirmed that the issue of how practical actions are tied to their context lies at the heart of ethnomethodological inquiry.

Quite often, Garfinkel has exemplified ethnomethodological analysis through illustrating service lines. It is common fact to stand in a line, for queues are an integral part of our everyday social life within which all participate to carry out daily chores. In other words, lines may seem impromptu and routine, but they exhibit an internal, member-produced embodied structure. A line is “witnessably a produced social object;” it is, in Durkheimian terms, a “social fact.” Participants' actions as "seeably" what they are (such as occupying a position in a queue) rely upon practices that the participant engages in relation to others' practices in the close environs. To be familiar with someone as in a line, or to be seen as "in line" ourselves requires consideration to bodily movement and bodily placement in relation to others and to the physical environment that those movements also comprise. This is another sense that we consider the action to be indexical—it is made significant in the ways in which it is attached to the situation and the practices of members who create it. The ethnomethodologist's job is to scrutinize how members' ongoing behavior is a component aspect of this or that course of action. Such analysis can be applied to any sort of social matter (e.g., being female, following instructions, performing a proof, participating in a conversation). These topics were used to delegate all kinds of inquiry that Ethnomethodology was proposed to embark on.

An account is the basic unit of analysis for the ethnomethodologist through which the social actors clarifies or comments on situations and hence people engage in sense-making. In other words, certain things or events become socially "real" only when it has been discussed and the nature of this "reality" gradually appears as the person or person keeps talking. A fundamental principle of this sense-making is that the things we experience can and will "make sense." It is only an issue of letting this sense unfurl as they are kept being talked about. Ethnomethodologists study the accounting practices that the participants engage in. For example, how does someone explain why they switched to a different job? What points are stressed upon? What phrases are repeated? Is it portrayed as a positive or negative development? Does the listener add points that strengthen or amend what the original speaker was saying? These are just some of the issues the ethnomethodologist might take note of. Such accounts are reflexive in nature i.e. as a conversation unfolds the observations that are made can modify the talked about social meaning. Virtually anything is subject to be redefined.

The research methods generated by ethnomethodology are inseparable from its theoretic assertions about society and tools such as tape or video recorders are crucial. The ethnomethodologist will play back the recorded interaction countless times to discover the surfacing of its social meaning.

For at its core, ethnomethodology—similarly to phenomenology—sees the nature of society as indivisible from the skill to analyze it. An additional vitaltool for the ethnomethodologist is the stopwatch which would help in interpretation of the length of the pauses people make between utterances. For example, consider someone pausing or saying "um, uh" while taking his or her wedding vows. The whole meaning of the ceremony might be tainted.In a similar sense, the term etcetera is used as a kind of verbal shortcut i.e.people leave out details that they feel are irrelevant given who the audienceis. For example, if you meet your best friend every Friday night for pizza, you might call him or her up and simply say: "Should we meet on Friday?" andleave out the stress on eating Pizza. The ethnomethodologist should listen to conversations frequently to collect the faint but significant presence of the etc. principle in conversations.

Garfinkel's work has been a major founding base for innumerable theorists and researchers have contributed to the development of Ethnomethodology, and specific kinds of studies thereof. A key area of sociological study thathas stemmed from Ethnomethodology has been conversation analysis. It works from the position that the conversation is the essential form of interaction and essential to conversational analysis is the concept of turn- taking. In other words, conversations are analyzed form the standpoint that the meaning of the conversation is formed around this belief of each speaker taking a turn. Conversation analysts will study in-depth shifts of topic ortone, interruptions, or other key moments on the basis of each person's turn to speak.

In a lot of social domains, forms of ethnomethodology such as conversational analysis have been engaged to view how diverse kinds of settings reinforce or create different kinds of meanings. Studies of institutional settings have been made to see how social actors in a variety of professional or service contexts divulge how the participants form and reinforce certain social practices.

Perhaps even more specifically than symbolic interactionists, the ethnomethodologist explore how conditions such as social inequality are maintained through interactions. Finally, ethnomethodology often concerns itself with the notion of "doing" or "accomplishing" a certain kind of social role. For example, studies have been done on accomplishing gender—how certain ways of appearing or speaking make one socially defined as a "man"or a "woman."

The issues generated by ethnomethodology are far less abstract in nature than in other forms of sociology. For the ethnomethodologist, things like turn-taking or mediating conflicts or generating applause are the very substance of society. For they feel that only by uncovering the ethnomethods of society can we truly understand it. Ethnomethodologists are critical of traditional sociology. They believe that traditional sociologists simply engage in so much reflexivity—redefining the very acts they are trying to learn the truth about. Thus, when other sociologists would say, "Person X is subordinate to Person Y," the ethnomethodologist would say, "Person X interrupted Person's Y's turn-taking in the conversation." For ethnomethodologists, the everyday world of conversation is commendable as a topic within itself, and is not just a reflection of (or resource for) a topic.

Critics of Ethnomethodology dispute that it concerns itself with relatively insignificant matters and not on bigger issues surrounding stratification, production of goods, or bureaucracy. Even within ethnomethodology there have been concerns raised as to the specificity of certain studies, without much attempt to link the findings to larger social issues, or even the phenomenological mental processes underlying the interactions. On equilibrium, while some support ethnomethodology, others do not. For some, it studies essential and important aspects about the life experience. But the opponents mark it as trivial and simple.

8.8 Summary

Garfinkel pointed out that Ethnomethological research teaches us that society behaves as if there were no other way to do so. Usually people go along with what is expected of them and the existence of norms only becomes evident when they are violated.

8.9 Self Assessment Questions

1. What is ethnomethodology?
2. Describe the meaning of indexicality.

8.10 Key Words

Ethnomethodology- implies the methods or means used by individuals in interactions to generate a shared and significant meaning.

Indexicality- points out to the ways in which a specific word or description has a particular connotation for the speaker.

Reflexivity- it essentially implies that members figure action in relation to context while the context itself is constantly being redefined through action.

8.11 Study Guide

1. Turner, J.H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories
2. Giddens, Anthony, 1984, The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory ofStructuration
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Block-03 Critical Theory

Unit-09 Critical Theory

Unit-10 Herbert Marcuse

Unit-11 Theodor W. Adorno

Unit-12 Jurgen Habermas

Unit-09 Critical Theory

Structure

9.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To trace the roots of Critical Theory/Frankfurt School
- To understand the western civilization.

9.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

The Frankfurt School (German*Frankfurter Schule*), located in Germany was a school of neo-Marxist interdisciplinary social theory, allied in part with the Institute for Social Research at the University of Frankfurt am Main. Originally, the school comprised of nonconformist Marxists who supposed that quite few of the followers of Marxism are usually in defense of orthodox Communist parties. In the interim, many of these theorists held that traditional Marxist theory were not thoroughly equipped to effectively clarify the unstable and unexpected development of capitalist societies in the twentieth century.

9.3 Roots of the critical Theory/ Frankfurt School

Their writings were critical towards both capitalism and Soviet socialism andalso indicated the possibilities of an alternative path to social development. Frankfurt School theorists, in order to fill up the apparent oversights of traditional Marxism, hunted for answers from other schools of thought, hence using the insights of antipositivist sociology, psycho analysis, existential philosophy, and other disciplines. The school's main figures sought to learn from and synthesize the works of such varied thinkers as Kant, Hegel, Marx, Freudand Max Weber.

The proponents of critical theory were alarmed by the circumstances which permitted for social change and the establishment of rational institutions. Their emphasis on the "critical" component of theory was a resultant from their effort to conquer the limits of positivism, materialism and determinism by returning to Kant's critical philosophy and its successors in German idealism, principally Hegel's philosophy, with its importance on dialectic and contradiction as inherent properties of reality.

Since the 1960s, Jurgen Habermas's work communicative reason, Intersubjectivity and what Habermas calls "the philosophical discourse of modernity" have been persistently guiding the Frankfurt School critical theory. In the contemporary times, critical theorists such as Nikolas Kompridis have uttered resistance to Habermas, asserting that he has undermined the goals of

social change which originally gave purpose to critical theory's various projects—for example the problem of what reason should mean, the analysis and enlargement of "conditions of possibility" for social emancipation, and the critique of modern capitalism.

The term "Frankfurt School" occurred unceremoniously to portray the thinkers affiliated or merely linked with the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research; it is not the title of any specific position or institution per se, and few of these theorists used the term themselves. The Institute for SocialResearch (Institut für Sozialforschung) was founded in 1923 by Carl Grünberg, a Marxist legal and political professor at the University of Vienna, as an adjunct of the University of Frankfurt; it was the first Marxist- oriented research center affiliated with a major German university. However, the school can draw its initial roots back to Felix Weil, who used his father's money from his grain business to finance the Institute.

Weil, a young Marxist, had written his doctoral thesis on the practical problems of implementing socialism and was published by Karl Korsch. In the year 1922 Weil hoped to assort the various trends of Marxism under one roof and hence, organized a week-long symposium (the Erste Marxistische Arbeitswoche, a meeting attended by Georg Lukács, Karl Korsch, Karl August Wittfogel, Friedrich Pollock and others. The enormous success of the event insisted Weil to build a permanent institute. Weil negotiated with the Ministry of Education that the Director of the Institute would be a full professor from the state system, so that the Institute would have the status of a University institution.

Even though György Lukács and Karl Korsch both attended the aforementioned event but their prior commitments towards political activity and Party membership prevented them from joining Weil's Institute to join the Institute (although Korsch participated in publishing ventures for a number of years). The manner in which Lukács was grateful to disclaim his History and Class Consciousness, published in 1923 and perhaps a major inspiration for the work of the Frankfurt School, was a pointer for others that autonomy from the Communist Party was essential for authentic theoretical work.

The philosophical tradition now referred to as the "Frankfurt School" is particularly associated with Max Horkheimer (philosopher, sociologist and social psychologist), who took over as the institute's director in 1930 and recruited many of the school's most talented theorists, including Theodor W. Adorno(philosopher, sociologist, musicologist), Erich Fromm(psychoanalyst), and Herbert Marcuse (philosopher).

9.4 Critical theory and the critique of ideology

The Frankfurt School's work cannot be fully realized without evenly comprehending the aims and objectives of critical theory. Originally delineated by Max Horkheimer in his Traditional and Critical Theory (1937), critical theory may be defined as a self-conscious social critique that is intended at change and liberation through enlightenment, and does not adhere dogmatically to its own doctrinal assumptions. At the outset, the theory was to analyze the true implications of "the ruling understandings" generated in bourgeois society, in order to show how they distorted realhuman interaction in the world, and in so doing functionedto justify or legitimize the authority of people by capitalism. A certain sort of story (a narrative) was provided to explain what was happening in society, but the story concealed as much as it revealed. The Frankfurt theorists normally assumed that their own task was mainly to interpret all the other areas of society which Marx had not dealt with, especially in the superstructure of society.

Horkheimer opposed it to "traditional theory", which refers to theory in the positivistic, scientistic, or purely observational mode – that is, which derives generalizations or "laws" about diverse aspects of the world. Portraying from Max Weber, Horkheimer argued that the social sciences are dissimilar from the natural sciences, in as much as generalizations cannot be effortlessly made from so-called experiences, because the understanding of a "social" experience itself is always fashioned by ideas that are in the researchers themselves. What the researcher does not grasp is that he is wedged in a historical situation in which ideologies form the thinking; thus theory would be in compliance to the ideas in the mind of the researcher rather than the experience itself:

“The facts which our senses present to us are socially performed in two ways: through the historical character of the object perceived and through the historical character of the perceiving organ. Both are not simply natural; they are shaped by human activity, and yet the individual perceives himselfas receptive and passive in the act of perception”.

For Horkheimer, approaches to understanding in the social sciences cannot simply emulate those in thenatural sciences. Although various theoretical approaches came within a proximity to breaking out of the ideological constraints which controlled them, such as positivism, pragmatism, neo- Kantianism and phenomenology, Horkheimer would dispute that they failed, because all were subject to a "logico-mathematical" prejudice which divides theoretical activity from actual life. According to Horkheimer, the appropriate response to this dilemma is the

development of a critical theory.

The trouble, Horkheimer argued, is epistemological: we should not merely reconsider the scientist but the knowing individual in general. Unlike orthodox Marxism, which just applies a ready-made "template" to both critique and action, critical theory seeks to be self-critical and rejects any posturing to absolute truth. Critical theory protects the dominance of neither matter (materialism) nor consciousness (idealism), arguing that both epistemologies deform reality to the benefit, eventually, of some small group. What critical theory attempts to do is to place itself outside of philosophical strictures and the confines of existing structures. However, as a way of thinking and "recovering" humanity's self-knowledge, critical theory often looks to Marxism for its methods and tools.

Critical theory, as per Horkheimer, should be aimed at the totality of society in its historical specificity (i.e. how it came to be configured at an exact pointin time), just as it should perk up understanding of society by incorporating all the major social sciences, including geography, economics, sociology, history, political science, anthropology, and psychology. While every time critical theory must be self-critical, Horkheimer was firm that a theory is only critical if it is explanatory. Hence Critical theory musttherefore unite practical and normative thinking in order to "explain what is wrong with current social reality, identify actors to change it, and provide clear norms for criticism and practical goals for the future." While traditional theory canonly mirror and explain reality as it actually exists, critical theory's rationale is to change it; in Horkheimer's words the goal of critical theory is "the emancipation of human beings from the circumstances that enslave them".

The theorists under the Frankfurt School were overtly connecting up with the critical philosophy of Immanuel Kant, where the term critique meant philosophical reflection on the limits of claims made for certain kinds of knowledge as opposed to traditionally deterministic and static theories of human action. In a context defined by dogmatic positivism and scientism on the one hand and dogmatic "scientific socialism" on the other, critical theorists proposed to restore Marx's ideas through a philosophically critical approach.

While on one hand, Marxist-Leninist and Social-Democratic orthodox thinkers viewed Marxism as a fresh kind of positive science, Frankfurt School theorists, such as Horkheimer, rather based their work on the epistemological base of Karl Marx's work, which presented itself as critique, as in Marx's Capital: A Critique of Political Economy. They thus highlighted that Marx was endeavoring to generate a new kind of critical analysis

leaning towards the unity of theory and revolutionary practice rather than a new kind of positive science. Critique, in this Marxian sense, meant taking the ideology of a society – e.g. the belief in individual freedom or free market under capitalism – and critiquing it by comparing it with the social reality of that very society – e.g. social inequality and exploitation. The methodology on which Frankfurt School theorists grounded this critique came to be what had before been established by Hegel and Marx, namely the dialectical method.

9.5 Early influences

The intellectual influences on and theoretical focus of the first generation of Frankfurt School critical theorists can be summarized as follows:

Historical context	Transition from small-scale entrepreneurial capitalism to monopoly capitalism and imperialism; socialist labor movement grows, turns reformist; emergence of the welfare state; Russian revolution and the rise of Communism; neo technic period; emergence of mass media and mass culture, "modern" art; rise of Nazism.
Weberian theory	Comparative historical analysis of Western rationalism in capitalism, the modern state, secular scientific rationality, culture, and religion; analysis of the forms of domination in general and of modern rational-legal bureaucratic domination in particular; articulation of the distinctive, hermeneutic method of the social sciences.
Freudian theory	Critique of the repressive structure of the "reality principle" of advanced civilization and of the normal neurosis of everyday life; discovery of the unconscious, primary-process thinking, and the impact of the Oedipus complex and of anxiety on psychic life; analysis of the psychic bases of authoritarianism and irrational social behavior.

Critique of Positivism	Critique of positivism as a philosophy, as a scientific methodology, as a political ideology and as everyday conformity; rehabilitation of–negative–dialectic, return to Hegel; appropriation of critical elements in phenomenology, historicism, existentialism, critique of their ahistorical, idealist tendencies; critique of logical positivism and pragmatism.
Aesthetic modernism	Critique of "false" and reified experience by breaking through its traditional forms and language; projection of alternative modes of existence and experience; liberation of the unconscious; consciousness of unique, modern situation; appropriation of Kafka, Proust, Schoenberg, Breton; critique of the culture industry and "affirmative" culture; aesthetic utopia.
Marxist theory	Critique of bourgeois ideology; critique of alienated labor; historical materialism; history as class struggle and exploitation of labor in different modes of production; systems analysis of capitalism as extraction of surplus labor through free labor in the free market; unity of theory and practice; analysis for the sake of revolution, socialist democracy, classless society.
Culture theory	Critique of mass culture as suppression and absorption of negation, as integration into status quo; critique of Western culture as a culture of domination, both of an external and internal nature; dialectic differentiation of emancipatory and repressive dimensions of elite culture; Kierkegaard's critique of the present age, Nietzsche's transvaluation, and Schiller's aesthetic education.

In response to the escalation of alienation and irrationality in an advanced capitalist society, critical theory is a wide-ranging, ideology-critical, historically self-reflective body of theory aspiring concurrently to clarify domination and point to the possibilities of bringing about a rational, compassionate and liberated society. Frankfurt School critical theorists developed several theories of the economic, political, cultural, and psychological domination structures of advanced industrial civilization

9.6 Critique of western civilization

The second chapter of Frankfurt School critical theory basically revolves around works of Horkheimer's Dialectic of Enlightenment (1944) and Adorno's Minima Moralia (1951). Though it preserved the flavor of Marxian analysis, but in these works critical theory eventually shifted its prominence and the critique of capitalism turned into a critique of Western civilization. The Dialectic of Enlightenment uses the odyssey as an example for the scrutiny of bourgeois consciousness. In their respective works, Horkheimer and Adorno provided many themes that have dominated the social thought of recent years. Their explanation of the domination of nature as a central characteristic of instrumental rationality in Western civilization was made long before ecology and environmentalism had become admired issues.

Their analysis of reason explained that the rationality of Western civilization is basically a synthesis of domination and of technological rationality that gathers together all of external and internal nature under the authority of the human subject. However, in such process, the subject itself gets ingested and no social force analogous to the proletariat can be identified that will enable the subject to emancipate itself. Hence the subtitle of Minima Moralia: "Reflections from Damaged Life". In Adorno's words,

"For since the overwhelming objectivity of historical movement in its present phase consists so far only in the dissolution of the subject, without yet giving rise to a new one, individual experience necessarily bases itself on the old subject, now historically condemned, which is still for-itself, but no longer in-itself. The subject still feels sure of its autonomy, but the nullity demonstrated to subjects by the concentration camp is already overtaking the form of subjectivity itself".

From a sociological point of view, both Horkheimer's and Adorno's works enclose a certain ambivalence concerning the ultimate source or foundation of social domination, an ambivalence which gave rise to the "pessimism" of the new critical theory over the possibility of human emancipation and freedom. This ambivalence was ingrained in the circumstances in which the work was initially produced, in particular, the rise of National Socialism, state capitalism and mass culture as totally novel forms of social domination that could not be sufficiently explained within the terms of customary Marxist sociology.

For Adorno and Horkheimer, state intervention in the economy had successfully eliminated the tension in capitalism between the "relations of production" and "material productive forces of society"—a tension which, according to traditional Marxist theory, formed the main challenge within capitalism. The formerly "free" market and "irrevocable" private property of Marx's era have steadily been replaced by the centralized state planning and socialized ownership of the means of production in current Western societies.

Of this second "phase" of the Frankfurt School, philosopher and critical theorist Nikolas Kompridis writes that:

"According to the now canonical view of its history, Frankfurt School critical theory began in the 1930s as a fairly confident interdisciplinary and materialist research program, the general aim of which was to connect normative social criticism to the emancipatory potential latent in concrete historical processes. Only a decade or so later, however, having revisited the premises of their philosophy of history, Horkheimer and Adorno's Dialectic of Enlightenment steered the whole enterprise, provocatively and self-consciously, into a skeptical cul-de-sac. As a result they got stuck in the irresolvable dilemmas of the "philosophy of the subject," and the original program was shrunk to a negativistic practice of critique that eschewed the very normative ideals on which it implicitly depended".

With the development of advanced industrial society during the Cold War era, critical theorists accepted that the trail of capitalism and history had altered decisively, that the modes of oppression operated differently, and that the industrial working class no longer remained the determinate negation of capitalism. This directed the attempt to trace the origin of the dialectic in an absolute method of negativity, as in Marcuse's One-Dimensional Man (1964) and Adorno's Negative Dialectics (1966). During this time, the Institute of Social Research was re-established in Frankfurt (although many of its associates stayed back in the United States) with the task not merely of enduring its research but of becoming a foremost power in the sociological education and democratization of West Germany. This led to a certain systematization of the Institute's whole accretion of empirical research and theoretical analysis. The Frankfurt School also endeavored to characterize the fate of reason in the new historical period. While on one hand, Marcuse did so through analysis of structural changes in the labor process under capitalism and intrinsic features of the methodology of science, Horkheimer and Adorno concentrated on a re-examination of the foundation of critical theory.

9.7 Summary

Critical theory is a school of thought that stresses the reflective assessment and critique of society and culture by applying knowledge from the social sciences and the humanities

9.8 Self Assessment Questions

1. Discuss critical theory.
2. Explain western civilization.

9.9 Key Words

Frankfurt School- an institute who propounded critical theory.

9.10 Study Guide

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2. Giddens, Anthony, 1984, The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration
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Unit-10 Herbert Marcuse

Structure

10.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To understand the philosophy of Herbert Marcuse

10.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Marcuse visualized the American University system as "an oasis of free speech and real critical thinking", and felt that students should work to revolutionize the departments inside the schools while protecting the institution as a whole. Even though he openly criticized the already prevalent order, Marcuse felt the student demonstrations of 1968 to be ill-advised. Afterwards his works became more pessimistic, full of his observations of post-war consumerism and its role in maintaining the constancy of capitalism while keeping the masses in a kind of intellectual and spiritual captivity.

10.3 Life and Times of Herbert Marcuse

Born in Berlin on July 19, 1898 Herbert Marcuse earned his Ph. D. from the University of Freiburg in the year 1922 and published in first paper in 1928. While a student, he became a member of the Social Democratic Party and worked as a bookseller in Berlin after completing his studies. At this time he was tried to create a synthesis in his work of phenomenology, existentialism and Marxim, an approach which would be continued by thinkers such as Sartre and Merleau-Ponty.

In 1929, under the guidance of Martin Heidegger and upon his return to Freiburg, Marcuse began write his habilitation entitled Hegel's *Ontology and the Theory of Historicity*. With cooperation from Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer, Marcuse co-founded the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research. The members of the Institute have been attributed for the development of a model of Critical Theory, a type of Marxism influenced by psychoanalysis and existentialism, and their influential aesthetic theories and critiques of capitalist culture. Among the various projects carried out at the Institute, is a theory of the contemporary condition of state and monopoly capitalism, and an analysis and critique of German fascism. Marcuse was involved in the Institute's many interdisciplinary projects, identifying in particular with critical social theory, and also maintained a close relationship to the other members of the Institute all through his life.

With Hitler at the helm of affairs, insisted Marcuse to flee to Geneva in 1933 Marcuse and then in 1934 to the United States. The Institute for Social Research was arranged offices and an academic affiliation with Columbia University, and Marcuse worked there for seven years. Marcuse became a U.S. citizen in 1940. In the 1930s he was a patriotic American, and when the War began he offered his service to the Office of War Information and the Office of Secret Services as an analyst of German culture. Later, he headedthe State Department's Central European Bureau.

In 1951 Marcuse returned to his academic career, disenchanted with U.S. policies of the Cold War period. Marcuse's foremost major work *Reason and Revolution* comprised of the relationship between Hegelian and Marxist thought was published in 1941. It was a foreword to Hegel's dialectical method combined with Marxist influenced critical social analysis. In 1955 Marcuse dedicated his book *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, to his former wife Sophie who had died of cancer in 1951. This book not only forms the foundation for his critique of modern society but also it looks at Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* and its argument that civilization necessarily involves repression and suffering.

According to Marcuse, a thorough understanding of Freud's work divulges evidence in the unconscious of an instinctual drive toward freedom and happiness. He even provides the evidence of this instinct in daydreams, art, philosophy, and other cultural productions. Marcuse describes thepossibility for a non-repressive civilization, furthering freedom and happinessthrough non-alienated labor, play, and open sexuality. The 1960scountercultural movement was intellectually and politically prejudiced by hisvisions of liberation, pushing him into the limelight at that time. In 1958, Marcuse started working as a professor of politics and philosophy at Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass. Considering the political environment in the United States at the time, and Marcuse's affirmed Marxism, it was a daring decision to employ him.

In 1964 Marcuse published *One-Dimentional Man*, a critique of both advanced capitalism and communism. It assesses the loss of possibility for revolution and novel forms of social control in capitalist society. He affirms that Mass media, advertising and industrial management are efforts to calm any oppositional activity to the dominant system of production and consumption. He furthered that this abolition of negativity creates a one-dimensional universe, a place bereft of ability for critical thought. Marcuse's admired lectures at the university were harshly critiques of American civilization. His audience included many

students who would ultimately stand as significant thinkers, such as Angela Davis and Abbie Hoffman. Marcuse was considered as a charismatic teacher, inspiring high regard and support from students even when the institution would fail to sustain him.

Marcuse visualized the American University system as "an oasis of free speech and real critical thinking", and felt that students should work to revolutionize the departments inside the schools while protecting the institution as a whole. Even though he openly criticized the already prevalent order, Marcuse felt the student demonstrations of 1968 to be ill-advised. Afterwards his works became more pessimistic, full of his observations of post-war consumerism and its role in maintaining the constancy of capitalism while keeping the masses in a kind of intellectual and spiritual captivity.

However, in 1965, due to a divergence between Marcuse's Marxist views and the University sponsors, Marcuse's contract was not renewed. During the last lap of his intellectual career at the University he was quite outspoken about his views against American policy in Vietnam. He even compared the American militarism and repression to the ascent of the Nazi party in Germany.

Until his retirement in the 1970s, he taught at the University of California at La Jolla. Marcuse continued to write critiques of capitalist society in *Repressive Tolerance* (1965), *An Essay on Liberation* (1969), and *Counterrevolution and Revolt* (1972). He was married again in 1976 to Erica Sherover after the death of Inge in 1972. He lectured all over the world, and received an uncommon amount of attention from the press for an American intellectual. Marcuse never gave up his revolutionary vision and commitments, and defended Marxian theory and libertarian socialism till the end. In 1979 he published his last book entitled *The Aesthetic Dimension*, defending his belief in the emancipatory potential of "high culture". He argued that within bourgeois art there exist influential indictments of bourgeois society and visions of emancipation. He saw great art and Cultural Revolution as unavoidably bound to revolutionary politics. Marcuse died in July of 1979.

10.4 Philosophy and views

Marcuse's views were fundamentally considered as anti-Marxist, in that they overlooked Marx's critique of Hegel and discarded the historical theory of class struggle completely in support of an upturned Freudian reading of human history where all social rules could and

should be discarded to create a "New World of Happiness". In Marcuse's ideal society, a progressive group who has realized in themselves the unity of Logos and Eros, and thrown off the vexatious authority of logic, mathematics, and the empirical sciences,should be at the helm of affairs.

He coined a famous concept, repressive desublimation that refers to his argument that post-war mass culture, with its abundance of sexual provocations, serves to strengthen political repression. If people arepreoccupied with counterfeit sexual stimulation, their political energy will be "desublimated"; instead of acting constructively to change the world, they remain reserved and naive. Obviously, Marcuse advanced the prewar thinking of critical theory toward a critical account of the "one-dimensional" nature of bourgeois life in Europe and America.

During his years in Freiburg, Marcuse authored a number of essays in quick succession that discovered the likelihood of fusing Marxism and Heidegger's basic ontology, as commenced in the latter's work "Being and Time" (1927). This initial interest in Heidegger followed Marcuse's demand for “concrete philosophy,” which, he affirmed in 1928, “concerns itself with the truth of contemporary human survival. These words were directed against the neo-Kantianism of the mainstream, and against both the revisionist and orthodox Marxist alternatives, in which the subjectivity of theindividual played petite role. Though Marcuse swiftly drifted from Heidegger following Heidegger's endorsement of Nazism, it has been suggested by thinkers such as Jürgen Habermas that an understanding of Marcuse's later thinking demands an approval of his early Heideggerian influence.

Objectification, one of Karl Marx’s key concepts which under capitalism becomes Alienation, played a significant role in Marcuse’s analysis of capitalism. As per Marx’s perspective capitalism was exploiting human beings in a manner by which it asked them to produce objects but ultimately the workers became alienated and got dehumanized into functional objects. Following the theory, Marcuse argued that capitalism and industrialization pressed laborers so stiff that they began to see themselves as extensions of the objects they were producing.

In his book, One-Dimensional Man, Marcuse mentions that people identify themselves in their commodities; they find their soul in their automobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment. This implies that under capitalism (in consumer society) humans become extensions of the commodities that they buy, thus making commodities extensions of people's minds and bodies. Prosperous mass technological societies, it argued,

were completely controlled and manipulated.

Thus, in societies founded upon mass production and mass distribution, the individual worker had become simply a consumer of its commodities and entire commodity way of life. Modern Capitalism had created fake needs and false consciousness geared to consumption of commodities. It locked one- dimensional man into the one-dimensional society which produced the need for people to identify themselves in their commodities.

Marcuse furthered that the very mechanism which binds the individual tohis society has altered and social control is anchored in the new needs which it has produced. Most important of all, the pressure of consumerism had led to the total integration of the working class into the capitalism system. Its political parties and trade unions had become thoroughly bureaucratized and the power of negative thinking or critical reflection had speedily reduced.The working class was no longer a potentially dissident power competent enough to result in a revolutionary change.

As a result, instead of looking to the workers as the revolutionary precursor, Marcuse believes in a coalition among radical intellectuals and those groups not yet integrated into one-dimensional society, the socially marginalized, the substratum of the outcasts and outsiders, the exploited and persecuted of other race and other colours, the unemployed and the unemployable. These were the people whose standards of living demanded the ending of unbearable conditions and institutions and whose resistance to one-dimensional society would not be diverted by the system. Their opposition was revolutionary even if their consciousness was not.

10.5 Summary

According to Marcuse the very mechanism which binds the individual to his society has altered and social control is anchored in the new needs which it has produced. Most important of all, the pressure of consumerism had led to the total integration of the working class into the capitalism system.

10.6 Self Assessment Questions

1. Discuss briefly the idea of one-dimensional man.

10.7 Key Words

One-Dimensional- a world without critical thought.

10.8 Study Guide

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2. Giddens, Anthony, 1984, The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory ofStructuration
3. 3. Blumer, ‘Society as Symbolic Interaction’ in Human Behaviour and Social Process
4. Schutz, Alfred, The phenomenology of the Social world
5. Berger Peter L and Thomas Luckman, 1966, The Social construction of Reality
6. Garfinkel, Harold, 1967, Studies in Ethnomethodology
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8. Abraham, M.F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introduction

Unit-11 Theodor W. Adorno

Structure

11.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To understand the dialectic of understanding.
- To know aesthetic theory.

11.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Post the Second World War, Theodor W. Adorno was one of the most significant philosophers and social critics in Germany. During the 1960s he was the most famous contender to both Sir Karl Popper's philosophy of science and Martin Heidegger's philosophy of existence. He also taught Jürgen Habermas, who was also considered as Germany's leading social philosopher after 1970. Adorno's influence basically is rooted in the interdisciplinary nature of his research and of the Frankfurt School to which he fitted in. It also branches out from the meticulousness of his scrutiny of the Western philosophical traditions, especially from Kant onward, and his critique of the existing Western society. He was an influential social philosopher and a foremost member of the first age band of Critical Theory.

11.3 Life and Times of Theodor W.Adorno

Born on September 11, 1903 as Theodor Ludwig Wiesengrund, Adorno lived in Frankfurt am Main for the first three decades of his life and also spent his final years there. Being the only son of a wealthy German wine merchant of mixed Jewish background and an accomplished musician of Corsican Catholic descent, Adorno studied philosophy with the neo-Kantian Hans Cornelius and music composition with Alban Berg. He accomplished his *Habilitationsschrift* on Kierkegaard's aesthetics in 1931, under the guidance of the Christian socialist Paul Tillich. Merely after two years as a university instructor (*Privatdozent*), he was debarred by the Nazis, along with other professors of Jewish heritage. A few years later he turned his father's surname into middle initial and adopted "Adorno," the maternal surname by which he is best known.

In mid-1934, while Germany was under Nazism, Adorno shifted base from Germany and resided in Oxford, New York City, and southern California. He authored many influencial books that included Dialectic of Enlightenment (with Max Horkheimer), Philosophy of New Music, The Authoritarian Personality (a collaborative project), and Minima

Moralia. Afterhis return to Frankfurt in 1949, Adorno established himself as a top German intellectual and a key figure in the Institute of Social Research.

Adorno's writings are widely recognized for their quintessential contributions to the development of critical theory and he unambiguously shared the moral commitment of critical theory. In addition, he also remained intensely doubtful of positivistic social science and directed a large part of his intellectual interests to a critical analysis of the philosophical basis of this approach. He shared the Frankfurt School's common position in respect of orthodox Marxism and economic determinism, in particular. Adorno determinedly criticized all philosophical perspectives which posited the existence of some ahistorical and unchallengeable basis to social reality.

Eventually Adorno ensued to elucidate an account of the entwinement of reason and domination that was to have an insightful consequence upon the prospective development of critical theory. Confronting the philosophical principle which counter-posed reason and domination, whereby the latter is to be tackled with and melted by the application of reason so as to attain enlightenment, Adorno was to fall out with the view that reason itself had become entwined with domination. Reason had become a tool and device for domination and suffering. This led Adorno to reconsider the prospects for overcoming domination and suffering. Put simply, Adorno was far more confident in respect of the prospects for realizing critical theory's aims than other members of the Frankfurt School. The Frankfurt School provided Adorno with an intellectual platform to work and the development of Adorno's thought had a reflective effect upon the future development ofcritical theory and his philosophy itself owed much to the works of Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche. The greater part of Adorno's thought, his account of reason, his understanding of the role of consciousness in the constitution of reality, and his vision of domination and human suffering are all instilledwith the thought of these earlier philosophers. Largely Adorno's philosophy comprises of a dialogue with these philosophers and their particular, and very different, visions of the formation and deformation of social reality.

During the final years of his academic life, Adorno became a prominent figure in debates about restructuring German universities and a lightningrod for both student activists and their right-wing critics. Such debates did not deter him from publishing plentiful volumes of music criticism, two morevolumes of Notes to Literature, books on Hegel and on existential philosophy, and collected essays in sociology and in aesthetics. Negative Dialectics,

Adorno's masterwork on epistemology and metaphysics, appeared in 1966. Aesthetic Theory, the other magnum opus on which he had worked throughout the 1960s, appeared posthumously in 1970. He died of a heart attack on August 6, 1969, one month away of his sixty-sixth birthday.

11.4 Work: Dialectic of Enlightenment

Adorno and Horkheimer emerged among the progressive European intellectuals and authored one of the most searching critiques of modernity i.e. the Dialectic of Enlightenment. The book was written during their wartime deport phase and was which initially was held as a mimeograph titled Philosophical Fragments in 1944. This title became the subtitle when the book was published in 1947.

The initial portions of their book provide a dismal appraisal of the modern West. They pose a severe query as to how Enlightenment that is understood in a popular notion as the advance of thought can be aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters. They further that how can the growth of modern science and medicine and industry promise to liberate people from ignorance, disease, and brutal, mind-numbing work, yet help create a world where people willingly follow fascist ideology, intentionally perform purposeful genocide, and energetically develop lethal weapons of mass destruction. However, Horkheimer and Adorno do not consider modern science and scientism to be the sole culprits. The propensity of rational progress to become irrational regress arises much earlier. In addition, they quote both the Hebrew Scriptures and Greek philosophers as contributing to regressive tendencies. Therefore, if Horkheimer and Adorno are correct, then a critique of modernity must also be a critique of premodernity, and a drift toward the postmodern cannot simply be a return to the premodern. Otherwise the failures of modernity will continue in a novel pretext under current conditions. Society as a whole needs to be altered.

The authors believed that society and culture shape a historical totality, such that the pursuit of freedom in society is undividable from the pursuit of enlightenment in culture. However, a lack or loss of freedom in society in the political, economic, and legal structures signals a failure in cultural enlightenment in philosophy, the arts, religion, and the like. The book also proposed that the cause of the modern day disaster is a prototype of blind domination, domination in a triple sense: the domination of nature by human beings, the domination of nature within human beings, and, in both of these forms of domination, the domination of some human beings by others.

However, Horkheimer and Adorno neither outrightly rebuff the eighteenth- century Enlightenment nor do they offer a negative "metanarrative" of universal historical decline. Rather, through an extremely extraordinary blend of philosophical argument, sociological reflection, and literary and cultural commentary, they construct a "double perspective" on the modern West as a historical formation. They abridge this double perspective in two interlinked theses: "Myth is already enlightenment, and enlightenment reverts to mythology". The first thesis permits them to propose that, despite being declared mythical and unfashionable by the forces of secularization, older rituals, religions, and philosophies may have contributed to the process of enlightenment and may still have something valuable to add. The second thesis allows them to picture ideological and destructive tendencies within modern forces of secularization, but without refuting either that these forces are progressive and enlightening or that the older conceptions they shift werethemselves ideological and destructive.

In any case, a basic error in many interpretations of Dialectic of Enlightenment happens when the audience takes such theses to be theoretical definitions of static categories rather than grave judgments about historical tendencies. The authors are neither proclaiming that myth is a force of enlightenment by nature nor are they asserting that enlightenment unavoidably revert to mythology. In fact, what they find really mythical in both myth and enlightenment is the thought that basic alteration is unfeasible. Such confrontation to change characterizes both antique mythsof fate and modern fidelity to the facts.

11.5 Critical Social Theory

Dialectic of Enlightenment assumes a critical social theory obliged to Karl Marx where Adorno reads Marx as a Hegelian materialist whose assessment of capitalism inevitably comprises a critique of the ideologies that capitalism maintains and requires. The most significant of these is what Marx called "the fetishism of commodities." Marx intended his critique of commodity fetishism against bourgeois social scientists who merely portray the capitalist economy but, in so doing, concurrently provide a wrong description and lay down a false social vision.

Marx viewed that bourgeois economists essentially disregards the exploitation inherent to capitalist production. They fall short to comprehend that capitalist production, for all its surface "freedom" and "fairness," must haul out surplus value from the labor of the working class. Bourgeois economists treat the commodity as a fetish just like the normal producers and consumers under capitalist conditions. They treat it as if it were an unbiased

object, with a life of its own that unswervingly relates to other commodities, in sovereignty from the human interactions that actually sustain all commodities. However, Marx confronts this view and argues that whatever makes a product a commodity goes back to human needs, desires, and practices. The commodity would not have "use value" if it did not gratify human wants. It would not have "exchange value" if no one wished to exchange it for something else. And its exchange value could not be calculated if the commodity did not share with other commodities a "value" created by the expenditure of human labor power and measured by the average labor time socially necessary to produce commodities of various sorts.

Adorno's social theory attempts to make Marx's central insights pertinent to "late capitalism." Although he agrees with Marx's assessment of the commodity, Adorno still believes that his critique of commodity fetishism does not have far reach. Noteworthy changes have transpired in the structure of capitalism since Marx's times, which requires revisions on a number of topics like the dialectic between forces of production and relations of production; the relationship between state and economy; the sociology of classes and class consciousness; the nature and function of ideology; and the role of expert cultures, such as modern art and social theory, in criticizing capitalism and calling for the transformation of society as a whole.

The key signs to these amendments could be derived from a theory of reification proposed by the Hungarian socialist Georg Lukács in the 1920s and from interdisciplinary projects and debates carried out by members of the Institute of Social Research in the 1930s and 1940s. Capitalizing on Max Weber's theory of rationalization, Lukács argues that the capitalist economy is no longer one sector of society alongside others and commodity exchange has become the vital organizing code for all sectors of society. This allows commodity fetishism to pervade all social institutions (e.g., law, administration, journalism) as well as all academic disciplines, including philosophy. "Reification" refers to "the structural process whereby the commodity form permeates life in capitalist society. Lukács was particularly concerned with how reification makes human beings seem like mere things complying with the unalterable laws of the marketplace.

Though, originally, Adorno agreed to this concern, he never had Lukács's confidence that the revolutionary working class could conquer reification. Afterwards, Adorno named the reification of consciousness an "epiphenomenon." What a critical social theory actually

needs to address is why hunger, poverty, and other forms of human suffering continue in spite of the technological and scientific capability to lessen them or to eradicate them in total. Adorno answers that the primary reason lies in how capitalist relations of production have come to govern society as a whole, leading to tremendous, although often invisible, concentrations of wealth and power. Society has come to be organized around the production of exchange values for the sake of producing exchange values, which, of course, always already requires a silent appropriation of surplus value. Adorno refers to this nexus of production and power as the "principle of exchange" (*Tauschprinzip*). A society where this nexus prevails is an "exchange society" (*Tauschgesellschaft*).

Adorno's analysis of the exchange society has three levels: politico-economic, social-psychological, and cultural. Politically and economically he reacts to a theory of state capitalism suggested by Friedrich Pollock during the war years. An economist by training who was supposed to contribute a chapter to *Dialectic of Enlightenment* but never did Pollock argued that the state had acquired overriding economic power in Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and New Deal America. He named this new constellation of politics and economics "state capitalism." While acknowledging with Pollock that political and economic power has become more firmly interlocked, Adorno does not think this fact alters the essentially economic nature of capitalist exploitation. Rather, such exploitation has become even more conceptual than it was during Marx's era and therefore all the more effectual and all- encompassing.

The social-psychological stage in Adorno's analysis doles out to exhibit the efficacy and occurrence of late capitalist exploitation. His American studies of anti-Semitism and the "authoritarian personality" argue that these pathologically enlarge "the logic of late capitalism itself, with its linked dialectic of enlightenment." Adorno's cultural studies illustrate that a comparable reason exists in television, film, and the recording industries. In fact, it was Adorno who was the foremost in discovering late capitalism's structural change through his work with sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld on the Princeton University Radio Research Project. He manifested this discovery in a widely anthologized essay "On the Fetish-Character in Music and the Regression of Listening" (1938) and in "The Culture Industry," a chapter in Dialectic of Enlightenment. There Adorno argues that the culture industry incorporates an altercation in the commodity character of art, such that art's commodity character is deliberately acknowledged and art "abjures its autonomy".

With its importance on marketability, the culture industry gives out completely with the "purposelessness" that was vital to art's sovereignty and with total demands for marketability the inner economic structure of cultural commodities shifts. Instead of promising autonomy from societal dictated uses, and thereby having an unadulterated use value that people can enjoy, products interceded by the culture industry have their use value replaced by exchange value everything has value only in so far as it can be exchanged, not in so far as it is something in itself. For consumers the use value of art, its essence, is a fetish, and the fetish—the social valuation which they oversee for the merit of works of art— becomes its only use value, the only quality they enjoy.

Hence the culture industry liquefies the "genuine commodity character" that artworks once possessed when exchange value still presupposed use value. Lacking a background in Marxist theory, and desiring to secure legitimacy for "mass art" or "popular culture," too many of Adorno's anglophone critics merely pay no attention to the major point to his critique of the culture industry. His primary thrust is that culture-industrial hyper- commercialization evidences a significant shift in the structure of all commodities and therefore in the structure of capitalism itself.

11.6 Aesthetic Theory

Majority of Adorno's collected works comprise of philosophical and sociological studies of the arts and literature and all of his most vital social- theoretical assertion are depicted in these studies. Still his aesthetic writings are not simply test cases for theses developed in nonaesthetic texts. Adorno discards any such division of subject matter from methodology and all neat divisions of philosophy into specialized sub disciplines. This is one reason why academic specialists find his texts so demanding, not only musicologists and literary critics but also epistemologists and aestheticians. All of his writings contribute to a comprehensive and interdisciplinary social philosophy.

First published the year after Adorno died, *Aesthetic Theory* marks the uncompleted finale of his astonishingly rich work of aesthetic reflections. It sheds retrospective beam on the whole corpus. Persistently tracing concentric circles, *Aesthetic Theory* carries out a dialectical double reconstruction. It reconstructs the modern art movement from the viewpoint of philosophical aesthetics and concurrently reconstructs philosophical aesthetics, particularly that of Kant and Hegel, from the perspective of modern art. From both sides Adorno tries to draw out the socio-historical significance of the art and philosophy.

Adorno's claims about art in common shoots from his reconstruction of the modern art movement. His book begins and ends with reflections on the social character of (modern) art. Two themes stand out in these reflections i.e. one is an updated Hegelian query that if art can survive in a late capitalist world and the other is an updated Marxian question whether art can contribute to the alteration of this world. While answering both questions, Adorno retains from Kant the notion that art proper is characterized by formal autonomy. He also unites this Kantian importance on form with Hegel's emphasis on intellectual import and Marx's emphasis on art's embeddedness in society as a whole. The result is a compound account of the concurrent necessity of the artwork's autonomy. The artwork's necessary autonomy, in turn, is the key to (modern) art's social character, namely, to be "the social antithesis of society".

According to Adorno, authentic works of (modern) art are social monads andthe inescapable tensions within them utter inescapable conflicts within the broader socio-historical process from which they occur and to which they fitin. Such tensions pierce the artwork through the artist's resist with sociohistorically loaded materials and they call out conflicting interpretations. Many of these interpretations misconstrue either the work- internal tensions or their association to conflicts in society as a whole. As per Adorno, he views all of these tensions and conflicts as contradictions ultimately to be resolved. Their complete resolution, however, would require a transformation in society as a whole, which, given his social theory, does not seem forthcoming.

As commentary and criticism, Adorno's aesthetic writings are unmatched in the refinement and erudition with which they map out work-internal tensions and relate them to inevitable sociohistorical conflicts. One gets frequent glimpses of this in *Aesthetic Theory*. A significant and central polarity found in Adorno's theory of artworks as social monads, occurs between the categories of import (*Gehalt*) and function (*Funktion*). Adorno's explanation of these categories differentiates his sociology of art from both hermeneutical and empirical approaches. While a hermeneutical approach would highlight the artwork's intrinsic meaning or its cultural importance and downplay the artwork's political or economic functions, an empirical approach would examine causal connections between the artwork and various social factors without asking hermeneutical questions about its connotation or significance.

Adorno, by contrast, argues that, both as categories and as phenomena, import and function

need to be understood in terms of each other. While on the one hand, an artwork's import and its functions in society can be diametrically opposed and on the other hand, one cannot give a proper account of an artwork's social functions if one does not raise import-related questions about their importance. Even, an artwork's import embodies the work's social functions and has possible bearing for various social contexts. Adorno, however, gives precedence to import, understood as societally mediated and socially significant meaning. The social functions emphasized in his commentaries and criticisms are chiefly intellectual functions rather than simply political or economic functions.

11.7 Negative Dialectics

Adorno's thought of artistic truth assumes the epistemological and metaphysical claims he works out most methodically in Negative Dialectics. These claims, in turn, combine and expand the historiographic and social-theoretical arguments already researched. Negative Dialectics tries to devise a philosophical materialism that is historical and critical but not rigid. On the other hand, the book can also be described as a "metacritique" of idealist philosophy, especially of the philosophy of Kant and Hegel.

Adorno says the book targets to finish out what he regarded his lifelong task as a philosopher i.e. to use the power of the [epistemic] subject to break through the deception of constitutive subjectivity. This occurs in four stages. Firstly, an extended introduction works out a concept of "philosophical experience" that both challenges Kant's dissimilarity between "phenomena" and "noumena" and discards Hegel's construction of "absolute spirit." Secondly, the Part One distinguishes Adorno's project from the "fundamental ontology" in Heidegger's *Being and Time*. Thirdly, the Part Two of the book works out Adorno's alternative with respect to the categories he reconfigures from German idealism. And finally, the Part Three, comprising nearly half the book, elaborates philosophical models. These parts of the book present negative dialectics in action upon key concepts of moral philosophy ("freedom"), philosophy of history ("world spirit" and "natural history"), and metaphysics.

On similar terms with Hegel, Adorno criticizes Kant's division between phenomena and noumena by asserting that the transcendental conditions of experience can be neither so pure nor as separate from each other as Kant seems to maintain. As concepts, for example, the a priori categories of the faculty of understanding would be incomprehensible if they were not already about something that is non-conceptual. On the contrary, the evidently pure

forms of space and time cannot simply be nonconceptual intuitions. Theconcept of the non-identical, in turn, marks the disparity between Adorno's materialism and Hegel's idealism. Although he shares Hegel's stress on a speculative identity between thought and being, between subject and object, and between reason and reality, Adorno refutes that this identity has been attained in an optimistic manner. For the most part this identity has occurred negatively instead i.e. human thought, in realizing identity and unity, has imposed these upon objects, suppressing or ignoring their differences and diversity.

Such imposition is motivated by a societal formation whose exchange principle insists the equivalence (exchange value) of what is inherently nonequivalent (use value). While Hegel's speculative identity amounts to an identity between identity and nonidentity, Adorno's amounts to a nonidentity between identity and nonidentity. This is the reason why Adorno calls for a "negative dialectic" and why he castoffs the affirmative character of Hegel's dialectic.

Adorno does not snub the necessity of conceptual identification, however, nor does his philosophy assert to have straight access to the non-identical. Under current societal conditions, thought can only have access to the non- identical by means of conceptual criticisms of false identifications. Such criticisms must be "determinate negations," pointing up specific contradictions between what thought claims and what it actually delivers. Through determinate negation, those aspects of the object which thought misidentifies receive an indirect, conceptual articulation.

The motivation for Adorno's negative dialectic is not simply conceptual, however, nor is its intellectual resources. His epistemology is "materialist" in both regards and is motivated, he says, by undeniable human suffering—a fact of unreason, if you will, to counter Kant's fact of reason. Suffering is the corporeal imprint of society and the object upon human consciousness. The most visible distinction between Adorno's materialist epistemology from "idealism," whether Kantian or Hegelian, is his perseverance on the priority of the object. Adorno considers as "idealist" any philosophy that asserts an identity between subject and object and in so doing allocates constitutive priority to the epistemic subject.

In maintaining on the priority of the object, Adorno repeatedly makes three claims:

- first, that the epistemic subject is itself objectively constituted by the society to which it belongs and without which the subject could not exist;

- second, that no object can be fully known according to the rules and procedures of identitarian thinking;
- third, that the goal of thought itself, even when thought forgets its goal under societally induced pressures to impose identity on objects, is to honor them in their nonidentity, in their difference from what a restricted rationality declares them to be.

Against empiricism, however, he argues that no object is simply "given" either, both because it can be an object only in relation to a subject and because objects are historical and has the prospective to change. Adorno argued that under existing conditions the only means for philosophy to give precedence to the object is dialectically. He explains dialectics as the effort to be familiar with the nonidentity between thought and the object while carrying out the project of conceptual identification. Dialectics is "the consistent consciousness of nonidentity," and contradiction, its central category, is "the nonidentical under the aspect of identity."

He also added that thought itself forces this emphasis on contradiction upon us and to think is to identify, and thought can only achieve truth by identifying. So the semblance of total identity lives within thought itself, mingled with thought's truth. The only way to break through the semblance of total identity is immanently, using the concept.

Accordingly, everything that is qualitatively dissimilar and that opposes conceptualization will show up as a contradiction. "The contradiction is the nonidentical under the aspect of [conceptual] identity; the primacy of the principle of contradiction in dialectics tests the heterogeneous according to unitary thought. By colliding with its own boundary, unitary thought surpasses itself. Dialectics is the consistent consciousness of nonidentity".

The point of thinking in contradictions is not merely negative; however, it has a fragile, transformative sphere. That implies a society that would cease to be woven with basic antagonisms, thinking that would be rid of the compulsion to govern through conceptual identification and the flourishing of particular objects in their particularity. Because Adorno is swayed that contemporary society has the resources to alleviate the suffering it nevertheless perpetuates, his negative dialectics reaches a utopian stage: "In view of the concrete possibility of utopia, dialectics is the ontology of the false condition. A right condition would be freed from dialectics, no more system than contradiction". Such a "right

condition" would be one of reconciliation between humans and nature, including the nature within human beings, and among human beings themselves. This idea of reconciliation sustains Adorno's reflections on ethics and metaphysics.

11.8 Summary

Adorno poses a severe query as to how Enlightenment that is understood in a popular notion as the advance of thought can be aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters. According to Adorno, authentic works of (modern) art are social monads and the inescapable tensions within them utter inescapable conflicts within the broader socio-historical process from which they occur and to which they fit in.

11.9 Self Assessment Questions

1. Discuss negative dialectic.
2. Explain what enlightenment is.

11.10 Key Words

Enlightenment- Enlightenment is understoodin a popular notion as the advance of thought

11.11 Study Guide

1. Turner, J.H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories
2. Giddens, Anthony, 1984, The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration
3. 3. Blumer, 'Society as Symbolic Interaction' in Human Behaviour and Social Process
4. Schutz, Alfred, The phenomenology of the Social world
5. Berger Peter L and Thomas Luckman, 1966, The Social construction of Reality
6. Garfinkel, Harold, 1967, Studies in Ethnomethodology
7. Giddens, Anthony, 1979, Central problems in Social Theory
8. Abraham, M.F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introduction

Unit-12 Jurgen Habermas

Structure

12.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To the theory of communicative action.
- To know the discourse theory.
- To explain the idea of truth and knowledge.

12.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Habermas's reproach of modern societies turns on the explanation of the relationship between two very diverse theoretical terms: a micro-theory of rationality based on communicative coordination and a macro-theory of the systemic integration of modern societies through such mechanisms as the market. In tangible terms, this implies that Habermas develops a two-level social theory that comprises of an investigation of communicative rationality, the rational potential built into everyday speech, on the one hand; and a theory of modern society and modernization, on the other. On the basis of this theory, Habermas hopes to be able to evaluate the advantages and fatalities of modernization and to overcome its prejudiced type of rationalization.

12.3 Biographical Sketch and Early Works

Jurgen Habermas was born outside Düsseldorf in 1929 and created his own niche in postwar Germany. The Nuremberg Trials were a key significant epoch that taught him the profoundness of Germany's moral and political failure under National Socialism. This information was later reinforced when, as a graduate student interested in Heidegger's existentialism, he read the latter's reissued *Introduction to Metaphysics*, in which Heidegger had retained (or more accurately, reintroduced) an allusion to the "inner truth and greatness" of National Socialism. When Habermas (1953) openly demanded an explanation from Heidegger, the latter's quietness established Habermas's belief that the German philosophical tradition had been disastrous in its moment of reckoning, providing intellectuals with the resources neither to comprehend nor to disapprove National Socialism. This adverse understanding of the relation between philosophy and politics consequently stirred his hunt for conceptual resources from Anglo-American thought, chiefly its realistic and democratic traditions. After shifting from the German tradition, Habermas amalgamated with many novel postwar intellectuals.

In the year 1954, Habermas finished his dissertation in 1954 at the University of Bonn. His writing was based on the conflict between the absolute and history in Schelling's thought. He achieved paramount and foremost public attention, at least in Germany, with the 1962 publication of his habilitation, Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit (Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere; English ed., 1989). It was a thorough social history of the development of the bourgeois public sphere from its roots in the 18th century salons up to its transformation through the effect of capital- driven mass media. In his explanation of the salons one clearly views his inclination towards a communicative ideal that later would deliver the essential normative standard for his moral-political theory: the idea of inclusive critical discussion, free of social and economic pressures, in which interlocutors treat one another as equals in a supportive effort to reach an understanding on matters of shared concern. Consequently, Habermas's concentration in the political steered him to a series of philosophical studies and critical-social analyses that ultimately appeared in English in his Toward a Rational Society (1970) and Theory and Practice (1973b). Whereas the latter entails principally of reflections on the history of philosophy, the former represents an effort to apply his emerging theory of rationality to the critical analysis of contemporary society, in particular the student protest movement and its institutional target, the authoritarian and technocratic structures that held sway in higher education and politics.

12.4 The theory of communicative action

Beginning with Marx's historical materialism, large-scale macro sociological and historical theories have long been held to be the most suitable descriptive foundation for critical social science. However, such theories have two shortcomings for the critical project. First, comprehensiveness does not ensure explanatory power. Certainly, there are many such large-scale theories, each with their own idiosyncratic and typical social phenomena that guide their attempt at fusion. Second, a close inspection of standard critical explanations, such as the theory of ideology, shows that such explanations typically call for a variety of diverse social theories.

Habermas's reproach of modern societies turns on the explanation of the relationship between two very diverse theoretical terms: a micro-theory of rationality based on communicative coordination and a macro-theory of the systemic integration of modern societies through such mechanisms as the market. In tangible terms, this implies that Habermas develops a two-level social theory that comprises of an investigation of communicative rationality, the rational

potential built into everyday speech, on the one hand; and a theory of modern society and modernization, on the other. On the basis of this theory, Habermas hopes to be able to evaluate the advantages and fatalities of modernization and to overcome its prejudiced type of rationalization.

To achieve the theoretical and methodological ends, Habermas initiates with a dialogue of theories of rationality and offers his personal unique definition of rationality, one that is epistemic, practical, and intersubjective. For Habermas, rationality consists not so much in the possession of particular knowledge, but rather in the way speaking and acting subjects acquire and use knowledge. Any such account is "pragmatic" because it shares a number of distinct features with other views that see interpreters as capable and knowledgeable agents. Most prominently, a pragmatic approach develops a version of practical knowledge in the "performative attitude," that is, from the point of view of a proficient speaker. A theory of rationality thus efforts to rebuild the practical knowledge necessary for being a knowledgeable social actor among other knowledgeable social actors. As already mentioned, Habermas's reconstruction attempts to eloquent invariant structures of communication.

What is the "performative attitude" that is to be reconstructed in such atheory? From a social-scientific lens, language is a medium for managingaction, even though not the only such medium. The essential form of coordination through language, according to Habermas, necessitates speakers to approve a practical stance leaning toward "reaching understanding," which he regards as the "inherent telos" of speech. When actors address each other with this kind of practical attitude, they involve in what Habermas appeals as "communicative action," which he differentiates from strategic forms of social action.

In strategic action, actors are not so much concerned in mutual understanding as in accomplishing the individual goals they each bring tothe condition. For example Actor X, will thus plea to Y's desires and fears so as to stimulate the behavior on Y's part that is obligatory for X's triumph. As reasons motivating Y's cooperation, Y's desires and fears are only contingently related to X's goals. Y liaises with X, not because Y finds X's project intrinsically exciting or worthy, but because of what Y gets out of the bargain: evading some danger that X can create or gaining something X has assured (which may be of innate concern to Y but for X is only a means of stirring *Y*).

In communicative action, speakers organize their action and quest of individual (or joint)

goals on the foundation of a common understanding that the goals are fundamentally rational or merit-worthy. Whereas strategic action thrives insofar as the actors attain their individual goals, communicative action succeeds insofar as the actors freely agree that their goal (or goals) is reasonable, that it merits cooperative behavior. Hence, Communicative action is an inherently consensual form of social coordination in which actors "mobilize the potential for rationality" given with habitual language and its telos of rationally motivated agreement.

To support his conception of communicative action, Habermas must specify the apparatus that assists in the possibility of rationally motivated agreement possible. Toward that end, he contends for a specific account of utterance meaning as based on "acceptability conditions," by similarity to the truth-conditional account of the meaning of sentences. Habermas takes a pragmatic approach, examining the conditions for the success of the speech act. According to the central principle of his pragmatic theory of meaning, one understands a speech act when he/she knows the kinds of reasons that a speaker could deliver in order to persuade a hearer that he is entitled in the given circumstances to claim validity for his utterance—in short, when we know what makes it acceptable. With this principle, Habermas links the meaning of speech acts to the practice of reason giving: speech acts integrally include claims that are in need of reasons—claims that are open to both criticism and justification. In our daily speech (and in much of our action), speakers implicitly obligate themselves to explaining and justifying themselves, if required. To comprehend what one is doing in making a speech act, therefore, one must have some logic of the apt response that would validate one's speech act, were one defied to do so.

A speech act succeeds in attaining understanding when the hearer takes up "an affirmative position" toward the claim made by the speaker. In doing so, the hearer believes that the claims in the speech act could be braced by noble reasons. When the proposal made by the speaker flops to obtain approval, speaker and hearer may alter reflexive levels, from ordinary speech to "discourse"—processes of argumentation and dialogue in which the claims understood in the speech act are tested for their rational justifiability as true, correct or authentic. Thus the rationality of communicative action is tied to the rationality of discourse. In resistance to the positivist obsession on fact-stating styles of discourse, Habermas does not bound intersubjectively valid, or justifiable, claims to the group of empirical truth, but instead distinguishes a spectrum of "validity claims" that also includes claims to moral rightness, ethical goodness or authenticity, personal sincerity, and aesthetic

value.Even though Habermas does not contemplate such claims to signify a mind-independent world in the method of empirical truth claims, they can be both publicly disapproved as unwarrantable and fortified by publicly conclusive arguments. To this degree, validity involves a notion of precision equivalent to the idea of truth. In this context, the phrase "validity claim," rather connotes a social idea—that a claim merits the addressee's acceptance because it is justified or true in some sense, which can fluctuate according to the sphere of validity and dialogical context.

By involving meaning with the acceptability of speech acts, Habermas transfers the scrutiny beyond a narrow focus on the truth-conditional semantics of representation to the social intelligibility of interaction. The intricacy of social interaction, according to him, then allows to find three basic validity claims potentially at stake in any speech act used for cooperative purposes. His argument relies on three "world relations" that are possibly tangled in strongly communicative acts in which a speaker aims to say something to someone about something.

However, opposing to Habermas's route of argument, McCarthy and others have contended that it is not an essential condition that interpreters take a stand in order to comprehend reasons, even if we have to trust on our own capability to critic the validity and soundness of reasons and to identify themas reasons at all. Nevertheless, Habermas uses this idea in his social theory of modernity to display the ways in which modern culture has unbridled communicative rationality from its preceding cultural and ideological restrictions. In contemporary modern societies, social norms have ceased to be presumed to be binding but rather are subjected to critical reflection, as for example when the ethical life of a specific culture is criticized from the standpoint of justice.

12.5 Habermas's Discourse Theory

Habermas's theory of communicative action is based on the idea that eventually social order rests on the capability of actors to identify theintersubjective validity of the different claims on which social cooperation relies on. In comprehending collaboration in relation to validity claims, Habermas highpoints it's rational and cognitive character: to recognize the validity of such claims is to presume that good reasons could be given to validate them in the face of criticism. Habermas proposed a multi- dimensional notion of reason that articulates itself in various forms of cognitive validity: not only in truth claims about the empirical world, but also in appropriateness claims about the kind of conduct we owe one another as

persons, authenticity claims about the good life, technical- pragmatic claims about the means suitable to different goals, and so on.

Whether or not his pragmatic theory of meaning prospers, the discursive analysis of validity brightens significant alterations in the argumentative demands that come with different types of defensible claims. To see how

Habermas identifies these different features, it is first essential to know thecommon structures of argumentation. Habermas's discourse theory accepts that the precise type of validity claim one aims to justify—the cognitive goal or topic of argumentation—governs the detailed argumentative practicessuitable for such justification. Thus, the Discourse theory asks for a pragmatic analysis of argumentation as a social practice. Such analysis targets to rebuild the normative presuppositions that construct the discourseof capable arguers.

To reach at these conjectures, it is difficult to easily define argumentation asit empirically occurs. Therefore, one must embrace the performative attitude of a participant and eloquent the shared, though often implicit, ideals and rules that form the foundation for concerning some arguments as superior toothers. Following modern argumentation theorists, Habermas dons that one cannot completely express these normative assumptions exclusively in terms of the rational properties ofarguments. Reasonably, he differentiates three features of argument-making practices: argument as product, as procedure, and as process, which he roughly parallels with the customary standpoints on argument evaluation of logic, dialectic, and rhetoric.

Pragmatically, each of these perspectives works as a “level of presupposition” involved in the assessment of the intensity i.e. the goodness or strength of the arguments. Habermas seems to regard these perspectives, takentogether, as constituting the pragmatic idea of cogency. At the logical level, participants are concerned with arguments as products, that is, sets ofreasons that support conclusions. From this viewpoint, arguers aim to construct cogent arguments that are convincing in virtue of their intrinsic properties and with which validity claims can be redeemed or rejected. Vigorous critical testing of rival arguments depends in turn on the rhetorical quality of the convincing process. Habermas considers the rhetorical level in terms of highly idealized properties of commnication, which he originally presented as the conditions of an ideal speech situation.

Habermas recognized four presuppositions as the most important:

(i) no one proficient of making a pertinent contribution has beenexcluded,

(ii) participants have equal voice,

(iii) they are internally free to speak their honest opinion withoutdeception or self-deception, and

(iv) There are no sources of coercion built into the process andprocedures of discourse.

Such conditions, in effect, articulate what it would mean to measure all the pertinent information and arguments as rationally as possible, balancing arguments chastely on the merits in a unbiased hunt for truth. Unlike moral discourse, in which participants endeavor to validate norms and courses of action that accord due concern and esteem for persons in general, moral discourses emphasize on questions of the good life, either for a given individual or for a particular group or polity. Accordingly, the sort of reasons that comprise persuasive arguments in ethical discourse depend on the life histories, traditions, and specific values of those whose good is at issue. However, Habermas appears to identify one class of ethical questions that do confess of universal harmony. Selections of technologies that tolerate on the future of human nature, such as genetic augmentation engineering, pose species-wide ethical issues. Such issues concern not simply one's self- understanding as members of this or that specific culture or tradition, but how we should comprehend one's rudimentary human dignity. In his view, the core of human self-respect, and thus the basis for a human-species ethics, lies in the capacity of human beings for autonomous self-determination.

To sum up, Habermas's discourse theory aligns various types of validity claim with different types of justificatory discourse. At the logical level, persuasive arguments must engage somewhat different sorts of reasons to justify different types of claims. Although some kinds of reasons might arrive into each type of discourse, the set of relevant considerations that are independently necessary and conjointly adequate for making logically strongarguments will differ.

Therefore, claims about what human beings requirement are relevant clarifications in moral arguments about welfare obligations, but not for associate the truth claim that quarks exist. At the dialectical level, one mustmeet different burdens of proof by responding to various kinds of encounters. Ultimately, at the linguistic level, the scope and depth of agreement varies according to the sort of claim. Moral rightness claims and empirical truth claims are justified by reasons that should be acceptable to a universal audience, whereas ethical claims are addressed to those who share a specific common history and tradition of values.Having distinguished among the types of discourse, Habermas further explains that some discourses rely on other types. The moral and ethical discourses partially depend on empirical claims, and thus depend on the result of empirical discourses about the circumstances and consequences of behavioral rules and the communal quest for a better life. The enquiry of interrelationship becomes specifically crucial in the political sphere, where different discourses interweave and lead to contending conclusions, or when issues arise in which discourse types cannot be easily separated, so that the standards of cogency become vague or deeply contested.

12.6 Habermas's Theory of Truth and Knowledge

In his numerous essays on empirical truth, Habermas frequently regardspropositions as the truth-bearer in making an assertion. Nevertheless, in his initial treatment, he immediately compared empirical truth with ideal justifiability—the consensus theory of truth. According to that theory, the truth condition of propositions is the potential assent of all others, thus determining the universal-pragmatic meaning of truthby the mandate of attaining a coherent consensus. Such formulations clearly indicate that Habermas associated the meaning of truth with the consequence of a universal, rational consensus, which could be comprehended in orientationto the ideal speech situation.

However, he could soon visualize the problems with consensus theory, i.e. like the "epistemic" theories of truth that link truth with ideal justified assertibility, consensus theory downplays the justification-transcendent character of truth.In his theory of truth he becomes realist in conveying that it is not the ideal consensus but the objective world that should be connoted as the truth maker.

If a statement) for which truth is claimed is indeed true, it is so because it precisely denotes to existing objects, or accurately embodies actual states of affairs. Although objects and states of affairs about which we can state facts only under explanations that rest on our

linguistic resources. The unavoidability of language orders the pragmatic epistemological character of Habermas's realism. Specifically, Habermas avoids the effort to elucidate the relationship between proposition and world metaphysically. Instead, he explains the meaning of exact illustration pragmatically, in terms of its inferences for everyday practice and discourse. Insofar as one takes propositional contents as unproblematically true in day to day practical engagement with reality, one acts assuredly on the foundation of well- corroborated views about objects in the world.

Habermas's "theoretico-empirical" or "theoretical" discourse becomes essential when beliefs lose their trouble-free standing due to practical difficulties, or when new circumstances enquire about the natural world. These cases require an empirical inquiry in which truth claims about the world succumb to critical examination. Although Habermas inclines to abruptly detach action and discourse, it seems more reasonable to regard such critical testing as combining discourse with experimental actions. However, Habermas has not sketched out the implications of his discourse theory for a detailed account of truth-oriented discourses which is generally highly developed in the sciences. At the dialectical level the principal trials ascend from theories and observations that apparently conflict with the claim at issue or with its subsidiary reasons. At the linguistic level, one seeks the arrangement of a possibly universal audience, given that truth claims are about an objective world that is identical for all humans.

12.7 Summary

Habermas develops a two-level social theory that comprises of an investigation of communicative rationality, the rational potential built into everyday speech, on the one hand; and a theory of modern societyand modernization, on the other.

12.8 Self Assessment Questions

1. Discuss communicative theory briefly.
2. What is theory of discourse?

12.9 Key Words

Discourse- the discourse theory asks for a pragmatic analysis of argumentation as a social practice.

12.10 Study Guide

1. Turner, J.H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories
2. Giddens, Anthony, 1984, The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration

3. 3. Blumer, ‘Society as Symbolic Interaction’ in Human Behaviour and Social Process
4. Schutz, Alfred, The phenomenology of the Social world
5. Berger Peter L and Thomas Luckman, 1966, The Social construction of Reality
6. Garfinkel, Harold, 1967, Studies in Ethnomethodology
7. Giddens, Anthony, 1979, Central problems in Social Theory
8. Abraham, M.F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introduction

Block-04 Post Modernism

Unit-13 Post -Modernism

Unit-14 Michel Foucault

Unit-15 Jacques Derrida

Unit-13 Post -Modernism

Structure

13.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To define and discuss the basic components of Post Modernism
- To trace the historical roots of Post Modernism

13.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Although it is generally held that postmodernism is indefinable, it can still be described as a set of critical, strategic and rhetorical practices employing concepts. Concepts like difference, repetition, the trace, the simulacrum, and hyper reality are used to dislocate other concepts such as presence, identity, historical progress, epistemic certainty, and the unicity of meaning. Postmodernism is a term that defines the postmodernist movement in the arts, its set of cultural propensities and related cultural movements. Postmodernism basically succeeds the milieu of Modernism. It recurrently serves as an abstruseall-encompassing term for cynical interpretations of culture, literature, art, philosophy, economics, architecture, fiction, and literary criticism. It is often allied with deconstruction and post- structuralism because its practice as a term grew significantly at the same time as twentieth-century post-structural thought.

13.3 Historical Roots

The term "Postmodern" was first used around the 1870s when John Watkins Chapman suggested "a postmodern style of painting" as a means to drift beyond French Impressionism. In his article published in the year 1914, J.M. Thompson, used the term to pronouncevariations in attitudes and beliefs in the critique of religion. Similarly, in the year 1917, Rudolf Pannwitz used the term postmodernism to describe a philosophically-oriented culture. He borrowed his views from Friedrich Nietzche's analysis of modernity and its end results of decadence and nihilism. In 1921 and 1925, the term postmodernism had been used to explain novel forms of art and music. In 1942 H. R. Hays described it as a new literary form. However, as a generaltheory for a historical movement it was first used in 1939 by Arnold J. Toynbee "Our own Post-Modern Age has been inaugurated by the general war of 1914-1918."

13.4 Architecture

The notion of Postmodernism in architecture started as a reply to the apparent insipidness, inhumanity, and failed Utopianism of the Modern movement. Modern Architecture, as founded and developed by Walter Gropius and Le Corbusier,

concentrated on the hunt of a theoretical ideal perfection and tried harmony of form and function and removal of "frivolous ornament". Critics of modernism claimed that the qualities of excellence and minimalism themselves were subjective, and pointed out anachronisms in modern thought and interrogated the welfares of its philosophy. Definitive postmodern architecture such as the work rejects thenotion of a 'pure' form or 'perfect' architectonic detail, instead noticeably drawing from all methods, materials, forms and colors obtainable to architects. Postmodernist architecture was one of the first aesthetic movements to openly dare Modernism as antiquated and "totalitarian", supporting private preferences and diversity over objective, ultimate truths or principles.

13.5 Urban Planning

Postmodernism is a denial of 'totality', of the idea that planning could be 'comprehensive', extensively applied regardless of context, and rational. Since the 1920s the Modern movement required to design and plan cities whichtrailed the logic of the new model of industrial mass production reverting to large-scale solutions, aesthetic standardization and produced design solutions. Postmodern provided a refreshing shift from the notion that planning and architecture could yield social reform, which was an essential aspect of the plans of Modernism. Furthermore, Modernism batteredurban living by its failure to identify differences and aim towards standardized landscapes.

Within Modernism, urban planning signified a 20th-century step towards establishing something stable, structured, and rationalised within what had become a world of chaos, flux and change. The role of planners preceding Postmodernism was one of the 'qualified professional' who supposed they could find and implement one single 'right way' of planning new urban establishments. Post 1945, urban planning became one of the methods through which capitalism could be managed and the interests of developersand corporations could be administered.

13.6 Literature

Literary postmodernism was formally installed in the United States with the first issue "Journal of Postmodern Literature and Culture", which appeared in 1972. David Antin

Charles Olson John Cage, and the Black Mountain College school of poetry and the arts were integral figures in the intellectual and artistic exposition of postmodernism at the time. "Boundary 2" remains an influential journal in postmodernist circles today. Jorge Luis Borges's (1939) short story Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote, is often considered as predicting postmodernism and conceiving the ideal of the ultimate parody. Sometimes seen as an important precursor and influence. Novelists who are commonly connected with postmodern literature include Vladimir Nabokov, William Gaddis, John Hawkes, William Burroughs, Giannina Braschi, Kurt Vonnegut etc.

13.7 Music

Postmodern music is either music of the postmodern era, or music that trails aesthetic and philosophical trends of postmodernism. Postmodern music is typically defined in hostility to modernist music, and a work can either be modernist, or postmodern, but not both. The postmodern impulse in classical music arose in the 1960s with the advent of musical minimalism. Some composers have been categorically affected by popular music and world ethnic musical traditions. Postmodern Classical music as well is not a musical style, but somewhatdenotes to music of the postmodern era. It accepts the same relationship to postmodernist music that postmodernity bears to postmodernism. Postmodern music, on the other hand, shares characteristics with postmodernist art—that is, art that comes after and reacts against modernism.

Postmodernist notions in philosophy and the analysis of culture and society prolonged the significance of critical theory and has been the point of departure for works of literature, architecture, and design, as well as being visible in marketing/business and the interpretation of history, law and culture, starting in the late 20th century. These developments—re-evaluation of the entire Western value system (love, marriage, popular culture, move from industrial to service economy) that took place since the 1950s and 1960s, with a peak in the Social Revolution of 1968—are described with theterm **Postmodernity.**

13.8 Summary

- Post-Modernism is a general and wide-ranging term which is applied to literature, art, philosophy, architecture, fiction, and cultural andliterary criticism, among others.
- It is mainly a response to the expected certainty of scientific, orobjective, efforts to explain reality.

13.9 Self Assessment Questions

1. Discuss post-modernism briefly.
2. What is urban planning?
3. How music is changed over the time due to modernism?

13.10 Key Words

Post-Modern- novel way of thinking and belief.

13.11 Study Guide

1. Abraham, M.F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introduction.

2. Turner, J.H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories.

Unit-14 Michel Foucault

Structure

14.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

1. To define and discuss the basic idea of Madness and Civilization.
2. To provide the academic orientation of Michel Foucault.

14.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

To contain Foucault's academic orientation into a singular cage would be a herculean task as his thoughts were rooted in disciplines like psychology and its history and in philosophy. He mostly wrote books on medical and social sciences though his passions were literary and political. Nevertheless, roughly all of Foucault's works can be prolifically being considered as philosophical in either or both of two ways: he successfully forwarded the philosophy's traditional critical project in a new (historical) manner; and also engaged with the thought of traditional philosophers.

During the days (around 1946) when existential phenomenology was ruling the charts, Foucault enrolled himself in the École Normale Supérieure, also considered as the basic springboard for majority of French philosophers. Foucault was impressed and considered the lectures of Merleau-Pontyand Heidegger as significant and also followed the works of Hegel and Marx.However, works of Jean Hyppolite and Louis Althusser put a profound impact on Foucault at the École Normale. Such was the impact that his initial works i.e. "Introduction" to *Dream and Existence* by Ludwig Binswanger, a Heideggerian psychiatrist, and *Maladie mentale et personalité*, a short book on mental illnesswere written in the clasp of, respectively, existentialism and Marxism. But he soon moved on quite resolutely fromboth these ideologies.

14.3 Early life of Michel Foucault

Born to a surgeon father in 15th October, 1926 in Poitiers, Michel Foucault was inherently supposed to carry forward his father's profession. But at the tender age of 13, he faced the ordeal of living through the World War II and it somehow set the stage forth for drifting from being a surgeon like his father. As a teenager, Foucault was troubled by depression and hated the company of others. After seeing a psychiatrist, it was revealed that he was tilting towards homosexuality. On the other hand Foucault began generating his own ideas about psychiatrist being a mental police who decides what ought to be and ought not to be in the society. Trouble didn't leave Foucault thereas he was also involved in sodomy. According to him, sodomy was antonymous to cruelty and violence; instead it was a

game that experimented the nature of power. Though he faced a psychologically tormented student life but his ideologies were still considered as intellectually brilliant.

As far as his school education is concerned, Foucault was an extremely intelligent boy who in spite of changing schools was never a low scorer. As a matter of fact, he placed himself among the top cadre students who competed for an entry into the Ecole Normale Superieure in Paris- the most intellectually intense college-level school in France. Academically he established himself during the 1960sand was at the helm of affairs with quite many positions at French universities. However, in the year 1969 he was elected to the premier Collège de France, where he served as the Professor of the History of Systems of Thought till he breathed his last.

1970s onwards, Foucault became an ardent political personality and founded the *Groupe d'information sur les prisons* and also championed the cause of the homosexuals and other marginalized communities. He used to give lectures in various countries, United States of America being the most prominent one. As per records, he had also agreed to teach at the He frequently lectured outside France, particularly in the United States, and in 1983 had University of California at Berkeley on an annual basis. A victim of AIDS, Foucault died in Paris on June 25, 1984. In addition to works published during his lifetime, his lectures at the Collège de France, being published posthumously, include significant elucidations and extensions of his ideas.

14.4 Academic Orientation& Ideology

To contain Foucault's academic orientation into a singular cage would be a herculean task as his thoughts were rooted in disciplines like psychology and its history and in philosophy. He mostly wrote books on medical and social sciences though his passions were literary and political. Nevertheless, roughly all of Foucault's works can be prolifically being considered as philosophical in either or both of two ways: he successfully forwarded the philosophy's traditional critical project in a new (historical) manner; and also engaged with the thought of traditional philosophers.

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impact on Foucault at the École Normale. Such was the impact that his initial works i.e. "Introduction" to *Dream and Existence* by Ludwig Binswanger, a Heideggerian psychiatrist, and *Maladie mentale et personalité*, a short book on mental illnesswere written in the clasp of, respectively, existentialism and Marxism. But he soon moved on quite resolutely fromboth these ideologies.

Being a French master-thinker preceding Foucault, the influence Jean-Paul Sartre's academic background always remains as a benchmark. Similar to Sartre, Foucault commencedhis academic journey from a persistentabhorrence of bourgeois society and culture and with anartlesscompassion for the disadvantaged and marginalized communities (For E.g. artists, homosexuals, prisoners, etc.). Foucault and Sartre's interests in literature, psychology and philosophy were similar but in a sense Foucault insisted on defining himself in opposition to Sartre. Philosophically, he discarded Sartre's idea of centralization of the subject (which he ridiculed as "transcendental narcissism").

Apart from drawing similarities with Sartre's work and philosophy, there were other factors that had a prolific impact on the works for the young Foucault. Foucault's academic orientation was also influenced by the French tradition of history and philosophy of science, as represented by Georges Canguilhem, a powerful figure in the French University. The latter's work inthe history and philosophy of biology gave a model of what Foucault was later to do in the history of the human sciences. Canguilhem not only sponsored Foucault's doctoral thesis on the history of madness but also remained as one of the most important and effective supporters throughout Foucault's career. Canguilhem's approach to the history of science proved tobe platform for Foucault with a powerfullogic of the discontinuities in scientific history, along with a "rationalist" understanding of the chronological role of concepts that made them free of the phenomenologist's' transcendental consciousness. Foucault's understanding was strengthened in the structuralist linguistics (by Ferdinand de Saussure), psychology (by Jacques Lacan) and proto-structuralist work on comparative religion (by Georges Dumézil's). Such anti-subjective perspectives provided the framework for Foucault's marginalization of the subject in his "structuralist histories", *The Birth of the Clinic* (on the origins of modern medicine) and *The Order of Things* (on the origins of the modern human sciences).

Foucault was alsofascinated by French avant-garde literature and its prolific writings by Georges Bataille and Maurice Blanchot. There he found the experiential concentration of

existential phenomenology devoid of what he thought as uncertain philosophical suppositions about subjectivity. The aforementioned philosophical setting provided components for the evaluation of subjectivity and the parallel “archaeological” and “genealogical” methods of historical inscriptions inform Foucault's development of historical critique.

Despite all these influences Foucault always claimed that he has never beena Freudian or a Marxist and even a structuralist. The vital theme of Foucault’s work was to uncover the knowledge which in turn, he thought, would let him to find power. Through many of his works he established that there is an interconnection of power, truth and knowledge through discourses and truth.

14.5 Madness and Civilization

Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason is Foucault's first major book published in 1961.It examines the emerging meaning of madness in European culture, law, politics, philosophy and medicine from the Middle Ages to the last leg of the eighteenth century. It is also considered as a critique of historical method and the very notion of history. The work also provided a foundation for drifting Foucault's thought away from phenomenology towards structuralism. In any case he continued using the language of phenomenology to define an embryonic experience of "the other" as mad, he attributes this evolution to the influence of precise influential social structures.The origin of this book dates back to his previous writings on psychology, his own psychological difficulties, and his experiences working in a mental hospital. The book was primarily written mainly between 1955 and 1959 while working in cultural-diplomatic and educational posts in Sweden, Germany, and Poland.

Foucault hintsat the development of the concept of madness through three phases:

- the Renaissance,
- the Classical Age
- the modern experience.

He views that during the Renaissance phase, the mad people were depicted in art as owning a kind of wisdom i.e. knowledge of the limits of our world. While on other hand, they were portrayed in literature as enlightening the difference between what people pretend to be and what they actually are. This Renaissance art and literature depicted the mad as affianced with the reasonable while representing the mysterious forces of cosmic tragedy,

but it also marked the beginning of an objective description of reason and unreason associated with the more intimate medieval descriptions fromwithin society.

Foucault contends that in the mid-seventeenth century, also termed as the age of reason, the rational response to the mad, who till then had been relegated to society's margins, was to discrete them completely from society. They were confined along with prostitutes, vagrants, blasphemers and the like, in newly created institutions all over Europe – a process Foucault calls "the Great Confinement."

The social factors, according to Foucault, driving this confinement comprise the need for a legal mechanism singling out the 'so called' undesirables, and the strategy to regulate unemployment and wages in a way. The ailment of these outcasts was seen as one of moral error. They were seen as having freely picked prostitution, vagrancy, blasphemy, unreason, etc. and the regimes of these new rational institutions were scrupulous programs of punishment and reward aimed at causing them to converse those choices.He also argues that the conceptual difference between the mad and the rational was in a sense a derivative of this physical separation into confinement. Such kind of confinement made the mad handily available to medical doctors who started seeing madness as a natural object worthy enough to be studied, and then as an illness that needs to be treated and cured.

According to Foucault the modern experience commenced at the end of the eighteenth century with the formation of places dedicatedentirely to the confinement of the mad under the command of medical doctors.These newer institutions solved a blended motive i.e. the new goal of *curing* the mad away from their family who could not afford the necessary care at home, and the old purpose of *confining* undesirables for the security of society. These distinct purposes soon lost their vision and the institution soon came to be seen as the sole place where therapeutic treatment can be administered. He sees the technically more enlightened and compassionate treatment of the mad in these new medical institutions as just as cruel and controlling astheir treatment in the earlier, rational institutions had been.

In this work, Foucault stated that the modern man no longer communicates with the madman. There is no common language: or rather, it no longerexists; the constitution of madness as mental illness, at the end of the eighteenth century, bears witness to a rupture in a dialogue, gives the separation as already enacted, and expels from the memory all those imperfect words, of no fixed syntax, spoken falteringly, in which the exchange between madness and reason was carried out. The language of psychiatry, which is a monologue by

reason *about* madness, could only have come into existence in such a silence.

14.6 The birth of the clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception

The Birth of the Clinic is a history of the medical profession, medicine, and disease which also depicts the story of experience concerning humans and the simultaneous experience of politics, bodies and systems. Within these frameworks the Birth of the Clinic also critically looks at the perennial history of public health around the globe, the advent of strict and regulated social spaces and ultimately self-regulated bodies.

Foucault suggests in his book that there is a history of displacement where disease is displayed from the body, the body displaced from pain, and the individual displaced from the social to the pathological. Foucault has focused on two vital parameters in its elaboration of the history of medicine, namely 'the gaze' and 'the language'. Foucault depicts the act of looking or gazing by a doctor in a manner that renders the body as an object; the patient becomes an object and is snatched off his person hood or self-identity.

To put in other words, the person is considered as a possible subject of knowledge through an meritoriously objective process that dehumanizes him or her. Foucault stressed that the individual's body becomes an object of medical examination and analysis and also essentially becomes a site where medical knowledge is generated, where disease finds space. The doctor's 'gaze' keeps glued only towards the disease, symptoms and its diagnosis rather than focusing on the person or the patient. Foucault elucidates that many things are then happening to reconstitute the human and the human body into grids of understanding and specification and all this happens between the territories of 'the gaze' and the 'the language'.

Foucault also discusses the concept of nosologies – which emerges as a classificatory field of medical theory and practice where the disease is given an organisation, and ranked into families, genres and species. The body is then extracted from the disease or vise versa, and the doctors gaze is not directed towards the concrete body, but of the nature, lacunae, the distances in which these appear- like negatives- the signs that differentiate one disease from another. Foucault further elaborates that the disease and the body communicate only thru the non-spatial element of 'quality'.

Subsequently, Foucault suggests the presence of two sphere that shelter and lead to the creation of the 'gaze' and the 'language' of health, illness and medicine, namely 'the clinic'

and ‘the teaching hospital’. These physical shifts of space via a vis disease impact the way in which ultimately medicine and the teaching of medicine emerges. He views that this historical transformation gave scope for terms like gaze and the signs and symptoms. The disease condition presented itself in the form or signs and symptoms, and there was thought to be no longer a pathological essence beyond the symptoms. Their collective form is what came to be known as the disease and the role of the hospital is to discover disease in the patient.

In the clinic one deals with diseases that happen to be affecting any patientin the hospital and he/she is the subject of disease whereas in the clinic oneis only dealing with examples. The science of life is then perpetuated taught and understood on the ontology of the death. The medical space in fact now would also actively involve not just people who were ill or various disease conditions but also the dead. In the eighteenth century for classificatory medicine as it developed, death not only instituted the end of life but also the end of disease itself. But this soon changed. The dead body could literally be opened up to show where disease was present, thereby marking in a sense a continuation of the disease state. In anatomo-clinical medicine death was almost a vantage point from which to examine life and disease. This marked according to Foucault ‘the great break in the history of Western medicine’ and consequently marked the advent of the anatomo-clinical gaze. From the nineteenth century onwards, the association between disease and life startedto be considered in terms of the conception of death; the focus moved from cases and classification to individuality.

Foucault explains that the gaze not only spreads the body and the diseasebut also forms the empirical observance of the governance system. The hospital eventually tends to get innately linked with bigger and operational social and political structures in the society. Thus, it could be analyzed as to what kind of investment in hospital structures and what determines that or rather who, and the various laws of medical practice and teaching, and how this in turn shapes the priorities of the discipline, namely public health. Medicine also gets allied to the prevailing scenario in the state i.e. the matters of epidemics, plagues and their control. The growth of a policed stateblends into the construction of the gaze, diseased bodies, medicine, the poor and the bourgeoisie. This creation of state and medicine facilitated in forming systems of a guardianship of public morals and public health alike.

14.7 The History of Sexuality

It is a pioneer work of Foucault and is constituted in three volumes. The first volume, The Will to Knowledge (la volonté de savoir), was first published in 1976 by Éditions Gallimard, before being translated into English by Robert Hurley and published by Allen Lane in 1978. It was followed by The Use of Pleasure (l'usage des plaisirs), and The Care of the Self (le souci de soi), both published in 1984. In this book, Foucault maintains that by the 19th-century, when capitalism and industrialisation paved way for the creation and stronghold of a dominant bourgeois social class, discourse on sex was not suppressed, but in fact proliferated. Bourgeois society "put into operationan entire machinery for producing true discourses" surrounding sex,perhaps believing that it harbored a "fundamental secret" that had to be learned.

The first volume of this book provides the reader the Foucault's views on the "repressive hypothesis". To elaborate further, the idea that western society inhibited sexuality from the 17th to the mid-20th century; he argues thatthis hypothesis is an illusion and actually the discourse on sexuality flourished during this period. He also contends that during that phase, the experts began to scrutinize sexuality in a scientific manner, categorizing different types of sexuality and inspiring people to acknowledge their sexual feelings and actions only to understand the "truth" of sex. What caught Foucault's fascination are that the creation of the subject and how the individual was constituted and how people's identities became increasingly tied to their sexuality.

Volume I: The Will to Knowledge

Part I: We "Other Victorians": The first part of this volume mentions of a repressive, the most common belief among late 20th-century westerners that sexuality, and the open discussion of sex, was socially repressed during the late 17th, 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, a by-product of the rise of capitalism and bourgeois society. Foucault has however counter argued that nothing as such existed. He questions as to why modern westerners believe such a hypothesis, noting that in exposing past sexuality as repressed. On the other hand, it provides a foundation for the idea that in rebuffing past moral systems, sexuality in the future course can be free and uninhibited.

Part II Repressive Hypothesis: In this portion of the book, Foucault mentions that from the 17th century to the 1970s, there had been a "veritable discursive explosion" in the discussion of sex, notwithstandingusing an "authorized vocabulary" which codified where,

when and with whom one could talk about it. He maintains that this craving to talk so willingly about sex in the western world stems from the Counter- Reformation, when the Roman Catholic Church called for its followers to confess their sinful desires as well as their actions. As an indication for the obsession of talking about sex, he provides the publication of the book '*My Secret Life*' anonymously written in the late 19th century with details of the sex life of a Victorian gentleman. He also mentions that at the start of the 18th century, there was a rise of "a political, economic, and technical incitement to talk about sex," with self-employed experts speaking both moralistically and rationally on sex, the latter sort trying to label it. He furthers that in the said century, governments became progressively conscious that they were not simply having to manage "subjects" or "a people" but a "population. Moreover, as such they had to concern themselves with such issues as birth and death rates, marriage, and contraception, thereby increasing their interest and changing their discourse on sexuality.

Part III: *Scientia Sexualis*: The third part of his book, explores the advancement of the scientific study of sex, the attempt to excavate the "truth" of sex, a phenomenon which Foucault argues is atypical to the West. Additionally, he also contends that this *scientia sexualis* has often been used for political tenacities, being exploited in the name of "public hygiene" for backing state racism. While discussing the influence of the Catholic confession, Foucault stresses at the relationship between the confessor and the authoritarian figure that he confesses to. He also argues that as Roman Catholicism was eclipsed in much of Western and Northern Europe following the Reformation the concept of confession survived and became more widespread, entering into the relationship between parent and child, patient and psychiatrist and student and educator. By the 19th century, he maintains, the "truth" of sexuality was being readily explored both through confession and scientific enquiry. Foucault furthers his analysis as to how the confession of sexuality then comes to be "constituted in scientific terms," arguing that scientists started to find the reasons behind all aspects of human psychology and society to sexual factors.

Part IV: The Deployment of Sexuality: This part discovers the question the reason for the western society's desire to find for the "truth" of sex. Foucault argues that one needs to create an "analytics" of power through which to understand sex. He also highlighted that power controls sex by prescribing rules for it to follow and power demands obedience through domination, submission, and subjugation. It also hides its true intentions by concealing itself as beneficial. As an example, he highlights the manner in which the feudal

absolute monarchies of historical Europe, themselves a form of power, disguised their intentions by claiming that they were necessary to maintain law, order, and peace. As a leftover concept from the days of feudalism, Foucault argues that westerners still view power as originating from law, but he rejects this, proclaiming that we must "construct an analytics of power that no longer takes law as a model and a code," and announcing that a different form of power governs sexuality. Foucault views that we must at the same time conceive of sex without the law, and power without the king. On the other hand, the second chapter, "Method", discusses Foucault's meaning of power. In the chapter, Foucault maintains that, power doesn't only convey domination or subjugation exerted on society by the government or the state. Instead, power should be understood as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate. In this way, he argues, "Power is everywhere . . . because it comes from everywhere," emanating from all social relationships and being imposed throughout society bottom-up rather than top-down".

Part V: Right of Death and Power over Life: This portion of his book provides the view that the motivations for power over life and death have altered. During the feudal era the "right to life" was more or less a "right to death" as autonomous powers were able to decide when a person died. The alteration in current times is the right to live as sovereign states are more anxious about the control of how people survive. Power, thus, connotes how to nurture life. For example, a state decides to execute someone as a safe guard to society not as defensible, as it once was, as revengeful justice. This new importance of power over life, is called Bio-power, and is prevalent in two forms. First, Foucault says is "centered on the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls."The second form, Foucault says appeared later and emphases on the "species body, the body instilled with the mechanics of life and serving as the basis of the biological processes: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that cause these to vary. Bio-power it is argued is the prime factor for the rise of capitalism, as states became interested in regulating and normalizing power over life and not as troubled about punishing and accusing actions.

14.8 Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison

This book is basically an analysis of the social and theoretical mechanisms that fostered huge modifications that happened in western penal systems during the modern age, it focuses on historical documents from France.

Foucault contends the notion that the prison became the constant form of punishment only due to the humanitarian concerns of reformists. He traces the cultural shifts that led to the prison's supremacy, centering on the body and questions of power. Prison is a form used by the "disciplines", a new technological power, which can also be found in places such as schools, hospitals and military barracks.

According to Foucault, the main ideas of Discipline and Punish can be grouped according to its four parts: torture, punishment, discipline, and prison.

Torture: He commences his insights into torture by scrutinizing public torture and execution. He views that the public display of torture and execution was a theatrical forum the new intentions of which ultimatelymade numerousi inadvertent consequences. Foucault stresses the exactness with which torture is carried out, and labels an all-embracing legal outline in which it functions to attain detailed purposes. Foucault pronounces public torture as ceremony. Public torture and execution was a technique the sovereign arranged to express his or her power, and it did so through the ritual of enquiry and the ceremony of execution. Torture was made public so as to instill terror in the people and to force them to partake in the process of control by approving with its decisions. But problems arose in cases in which the people through their actions disagreed with the sovereign. Thus, he argues, the public execution was eventually an unsuccessful use of the body, qualified as non-economical. As well, it was applied non-uniformly and chaotically. Foucault looks at public torture as the consequence "of a certain mechanism of power" that views crime in a military schema. Crime and rebellion are akin to a declaration of war. The sovereign was not concerned with demonstrating the ground for the enforcement of its laws, but of recognizing enemies and attacking them.

Punishment: The switch to prison was not instant and there was a more sorted change, though it ran its course swiftly. Prison was preceded by a different form of public spectacle and punishment gradually became "gentle", though not for humanitarian reasons. He contends that reformists were not that satisfied with the unpredictable, unevenly distributed nature of the violence the sovereign would impose on the criminal. The sovereign's right to punish was so uneven that it was unsuccessful and unrestrained. Reformists viewed that the power to punish and judge should become more squarely dispersed and the state's power must be a system of public power. According to Foucault, this was of more apprehension to reformists than humanitarian arguments. Foucault views

that this theory of "gentle" punishment signified the foremost phase away from the extreme force of the sovereign, and towards more generalized and controlled means of punishment. He also maintains that the drift towards prison that followed was the result of a new "technology", the "technology" of discipline.

Discipline: The advent of prison as the form of punishment for every crime rose out of the development of discipline in the 18th and 19th centuries. He looks at the growth of highly refined forms of discipline concerned with the smallest and most precise aspects of a person's body. He suggests that discipline developed a new economy and politics for bodies. It was a prerequisite for modern institutions that the bodies must be individuated according to their tasks, training, observation, and control. Therefore, he argues, discipline shaped an entirely new form of individuality for bodies. It permitted them to achieve their duty within the new forms of economic, political, and military organizations developing in the modern age.

The individuality that discipline constructs (for the bodies it controls) has four characteristics, namely it makes individuality which is:

- Cellular—determining the spatial distribution of the bodies
- Organic—ensuring that the activities required of the bodies are "natural" for them
- Genetic—controlling the evolution over time of the activities of the bodies
- Combinatory—allowing for the combination of the force of many bodies into a single massive force

The crux of Foucault's argument is that discipline creates "docile bodies", idyllic for the new economics, politics and warfare of the modern industrial age. These bodies function in factories, ordered military regiments and school classrooms. But, to construct docile bodies the discipline must occur minus extreme force through cautious observation and edging of the bodies into the precise form through this observation. Having laid out the arrival of the prison as the governing form of punishment, Foucault dedicates the rest of the book to probing its precise form and function in our society, laying bare the reasons for its continued use, and interrogating the expected results of its use.

Prison: In inspecting the creation of the prison as the dominant means of criminal punishment, Foucault provides the idea that prison became part of a larger "carceral

system" that has become an all-inclusive supreme institution in modern society. Prison comprises of just a single portion of a massive network, including schools, military institutions, hospitals, and factories, which build a panoptic society for its members. This system creates "disciplinary careers" for those who are impenetrable within its corridors. It is functioned under the scientific authority of medicine, psychology and criminology. Moreover, it operates in lieu of principles that guarantee that it "cannot flop to yield delinquents. Delinquency is produced when social petty crime is no longer tolerated, generating a class of specialized "delinquents" acting as the police's substitution in scrutiny of society.

14.9 Summary

It is mainly a response to the expected certainty of scientific, or objective, efforts to explain reality. In essence, it stems from a recognition that reality is not simply mirrored in human understanding of it, but rather, is constructed as the mind attempts to comprehend its own specific and personal reality

14.10 Self Assessment Questions

1. Discuss the idea of Madness and Civilization.
2. Explain the academic orientation of Michel Foucault.

14.11 Key Words

Clinic- is the language of health, illness and medicine.

Prison- is the dominant means of criminal punishment.

14.12 Study Guide

1. Abraham, M.F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introduction
2. Turner, J.H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories

Unit-15 Jacques Derrida

Structure

15.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, the learner will be able-

- To discuss the basic idea and philosophy of Jacques Derrida.
- To understand the ideology and works of Jacques Derrida.

15.2 Introduction / Assessment of Prior Knowledge

The structural difference became the very first constituent on which his theory of deconstruction was founded upon. Difference is basically the methodical drama of differences, of the bits of differences, of the spacing by means of which elements are associated to one another. This spacing is the concurrently active and passive creation of the intervals without which the full terms would not signify, would not work. But keeping in mind that all structure denotes to the procreative measure in the play of differences, all the structural difference will not be deliberated without Derrida already destabilizing from the start its stationary, synchronic and ahistorical themes.

15.3 Life and Times of Jacques Derrida

Jacques Derrida was born in 1930 to Jewish parents in Algiers, the latter where discrimination was quite prevalent. Due to his Jewish lineage, he had too many disruptions during his schooling years. He was barred from one school since there was a 7% limit on the Jewish population, and he later pulled out from another school on reason of the anti-semitism. While Derrida would counterattack any reductive understanding of his work founded upon his biographical life, it could be debated that these kinds of experiences played a huge part in his firmness upon the significance of the marginal, and the other, in his advanced thought processes.

Twice in his professional career, Derrida was not allowed a place in the prominent *Ecole Normale Superieure* (where Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir and the majority of French intellectuals and academics began their careers), but he was ultimately accepted by the institution at the age of 19. Soon after, he shifted from Algiers to France, and also began to play a chief role in the leftist journal *Tel Quel*. The early works of Derridain philosophy were largely phenomenological, and his first training as a philosopher was done largely through the lens of Husserl. Other important inspirations on his early thought include Nietzsche, Heidegger, Levinas and Freud. Derrida admits his gratitude to all of these thinkers in the growth of his approach to texts, which has come to be known as 'deconstruction'.

During the Sixties, after receiving formal invitation from Hyppolite and Althusser, Derrida commenced his teaching at the École Normale. Only in the year 1967 that Derrida rose to prominence of utter significance and published three historic texts (*Of Grammatology*, *Writing and Difference*, and *Speech and Phenomena*). All of these works have been leading for various reasons, but it is *Of Grammatology* that remains his most famous work. In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida discloses and then challenges the speech-writing hostility that he contends has been such an important aspect in Western thought. His obsession with language in this text is archetypal of much of his early work. Since the publication of these and other major texts (including *Dissemination*, *Glas*, *The Postcard*, *Spectres of Marx*, *The Gift of Death*, and *Politics of Friendship*), deconstruction has progressively relocated from lodging a major role in continental Europe, to also becoming a noteworthy player in the Anglo-American philosophical context. This is chiefly so in the areas of literary criticism, and cultural studies, wheredeconstruction's method of documented enquiry has enthused theorists like Paul de Man. He has also had lecturing positions at various universities, the world over.

In the year 1983, he became "Director of Studies" in "Philosophical Institutions" at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris; which he held until his death. In the Seventies decade, he was provided with many appointments in American universities, in particular Johns Hopkins University and Yale University. From 1987, Derrida taught one semester a year at the University of California at Irvine. Derrida's close relationship with Irvine led to the establishment of the Derrida archives there. Also during the same decade, Derrida linked himself with GREPH ("Le Groupe de Recherche sur l'Enseignement Philosophique," in English: "The Group Investigating the Teaching of Philosophy").

As its name suggests, this group examined how philosophy is taught in the high schools and universities in France. Derrida complied numerous texts based on this research, many of which were collected in *Du droit à la philosophie* (1990, an approximate English title would be: "Concerning the Right to Philosophy"). In 1982, Derrida was also one of the founders of the Collège Internationale de Philosophie in Paris, and served as its first director from 1982 to 1984. Derrida died in 2004 due to cancer related complications.

15.4 Ideology and works

Jacques Derrida was basically a post structuralist and was profoundly influenced by the works and ideologies of Ferdinand Saussare. He was of a strong opinion that meanings or truths are never absolute or eternal, but is determined by the particular existing socio-

historical milieu.

Theory of Deconstruction

The theory of deconstruction plays a pivotal role in Derrida's body of work. The simplest way to understand deconstruction is that the term means to digout the meaning of meaning. He basically is interested to search how the meanings of the texts can be plural and rickety than in fixing them to a stiff structure. According to the words of George Ritzer, Derrida's antagonism towards logo centrism was the main reason that led him to formulate his theory of deconstruction. He carried the view that all the available texts are constructed around elemental disagreements which all treatises has to eloquent if it aims to make any logic. The reason could be that identity is observed in non-essentialist footings as a construct, and because constructs only yield meaning through the interaction of difference inside a system of distinct signs. In a wider sense, this tactic to text arises from semiology put forth by Ferdinand de Saussure.

Regarded as one of the prominent advocates of Structuralism, Saussureexplained that meanings get attached to words in mutual determination with other terms within language. He overtly recommended that linguistics was only a branch of a more general semiology, of a science of signs in common; being human codes only one among others. Nonetheless, Derrida concluded that he a regulatory model using linguistics and for essential, and fundamentally metaphysical, motives had to privilege speech, and entirety that links the sign to phone. On the other hand, Derrida desired to trail the more formalized paths of a general semiotics without dwindling in what he reflected "a hierarchizing teleology" benefitting linguistics. Thereafter, Derrida views such differences, as elemental oppositions functioning in all "languages", all "systems of distinct signs", all "codes", where terms don't have an "absolute" meaning, but can only get it from reciprocal determination with the other terms.

Hence, structural difference became the very first constituent on which his theory of deconstruction was founded upon. Difference is basically the methodical drama of differences, of the bits of differences, of the spacing by means of which elements are associated to one another. This spacing is the concurrently active and passive creation of the intervals without which the full terms would not signify, would not work. But keeping in mind that all structure denotes to the procreative measure in the play of differences, all the structural difference will not be deliberated without Derrida already destabilizing from the start its stationary, synchronic and ahistorical themes.

Deferring is also regarded as another chief component of difference that explains that meaning is not only an enquiry of synchrony with all the other terms within a structure, but also diachronic with everything that was said and will be said i.e. difference as structure and deferring as genesis. It is quite often that the relationship to the present or the reference to a present reality, to a being - are always deferred.

Deferred by feature of the very opinion of difference which holds that an element functions and signifies, takes on or conveys meaning, only by referring to another past or future element in an economy of traces. This approves the subject as not present to itself and founded on becoming space, in temporizing and also, as Saussure said, that language is not a function of the speaking subject. At this juncture where the concept of difference, and the shackle involved in it, arbitrates in all the conceptual oppositions of metaphysics to the extent that they ultimately refer to the presence of something present become non-pertinent. Derrida provides a significant idea that the relations of terms with other terms express both meaning and values. The manner in which the rudimentary antagonisms are put to work in all texts it is not merely a theoretical process but also a practical decision. He affirmed that the initial job of deconstruction, opening with philosophy and subsequently enlightening it operating in literary texts, juridical texts, etc, would be to upturn these oppositions.

Firstly, to deconstruct the opposition, is to reverse the hierarchy at a given period and to oversee this stage of overturning is to disremember the conflicting and subordinating edifice of opposition. To exceed all oppositions is not the only task of deconstruction as it is fundamentally and structurally essential to create some sense/meaning. They simply cannot be deferred once and for all. But that doesn't imply that they don't require any analysis or criticism in all its manifestations. This exhibits the manner in which these oppositions are at work in all discourse for it to be capable enough to produce meaning and values. In addition it could be deduced that deconstruction should only uncover the way oppositions function and how meaning and values are produced in speech of all kinds. To be effective, it is required that deconstruction should be able to formulate new concepts, not to blend the terms in opposition, but to spot their difference and perpetual interplay.

Therefore, as put by George Ritzer, "In doing deconstruction, Derrida often focuses on the small, tell-tale moments in a text. The goal is to locate the key moment, the key contradiction. It in values, working with the point in the text where things are concealed,

covered up. However, such a demonstration is never oriented to ascertaining the truth. It is deconstructing in order to deconstruct endlessly again and again; there is no sense in ever hitting the bottom, of ever finding the truth. While reconstruction may take place along the way, it will only give way to further deconstruction".

Hence, in precise terms, deconstruction is a method of enquiry and is a post structural blend of philosophy, linguistics and literary analysis. Derrida opines that the reader and analyst should approach any text with the arbitrariness of sign and meaning. This signifies that one should not see the text as a unified single whole and one should also never try to search for a unified coherent meaning of the text.

Grammatology and writing:

For Derrida, Grammatology is not a positivistic science but is a writing whichis a display of knowledge. The basic difference between in Derrida's and Saussure's work is that the former talks about writing while the later talks about speech. Rather emphasizing on the graphic notation as writing, Derrida is more concerned with 'living' or natural writing. He furthers his argument that writing is all about signs, the radical alternative to those signs and their relationship to each other. Again, though Derrida uses signs he refuses to accept any sense of binary i.e. black: white; day: night etc. For Derrida, erasure holds significance in natural writing, where he asserts that any word written by us should be able to be erased and replaced by another word. Such gestures would enable the writing to be decipherable and wouldalso erode the presence of a thing.

He furthered that the concept of writing should outline the field of a science. The science of writing should search for its object at the roots of scientificity. The history of writing should reverse toward the origin of historicity. Derrida's intentions were not to evaluate any prejudicial or superficial question of right, against the power and effectiveness of the positive researches which we may witness nowadays. The origin and system ofscripts had never led to such reflective, protracted, and assured surveys. The matter does not lie in weighing the question against the importance of the discovery; since the questions are unquantifiable, they cannot be weighed. The grammatologist least of all can avoid questioning himself about the essence of his object in the form of a question of origin: "What is writing?"means "where and when does writing initiate?" The responses generally come very rapidly i.e. writing revolves around concepts that are hardly criticized these writings move within evidence which

always seems indisputable and it is around these responses that a typology of and a perspective on the growth of writing are always ordered. All works dealing with the history of writing are compiled along similar lines i.e. often a philosophical and teleological classification finishes the critical problems in a few pages; one passes next toan explanation of facts. Then the reader has a distinction between the theoretical brittleness of the reconstructions and the historical, archaeological, ethnological, philosophical affluence of information.

The query of the beginning of writing and the question of the origin of language are difficult to distinct. Grammatologists, who are generally by training historians, epigraphists, and archaeologists, rarely relate their researches to the modem science of language. It is all the more surprising that, among the "sciences of man," linguistics is the one science whose scientificity is given as an example with an enthusiastic and firm agreement. Then the question arises whether grammatology has the right to expect a necessary assistance from linguistics.

The science of linguistics regulates language — its field of objectivity — in thelast instance and in the irreducible simplicity of its essence, as the unity of the phonè, the glossa, and the logos. This justification is by rights anterior to all the eventual differentiations that could ascend within the systems of terminology of the various schools of thought. With regard to the unity, writing would always be derivative, accidental, particular, exterior, doubling the signifier: phonetic. "Sign of a sign," said Aristotle, Rousseau, and Hegel. Yet, the intention that institutes general linguistics, is a science remains in this respect within an inconsistency. Its declared purpose indeed authorizes, saying what goes without saying, the subservience of grammatology, the historico-metaphysical reduction of writing to the rank of an instrument enslaved to a full and original spoken language. But another gesture liberates the future of a general grammatology of which linguistics-phonologywould be only a dependent and circumscribed area.

15.5 Summary

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15.6 Self Assessment Questions

1. Discuss the idea and philosophy of Derrida.
2. Explain the theory of deconstruction.

15.7 Key Words

Deconstruction- plays a pivotal role in Derrida's body of work. The simplest way to understand deconstruction is that the term means to digout the meaning of meaning.

15.8 Study Guide

1. Abraham, M. F. 1990, Modern Sociological Theory: An Introduction
2. Turner, J. H. 1995, The Structure of Sociological Theories