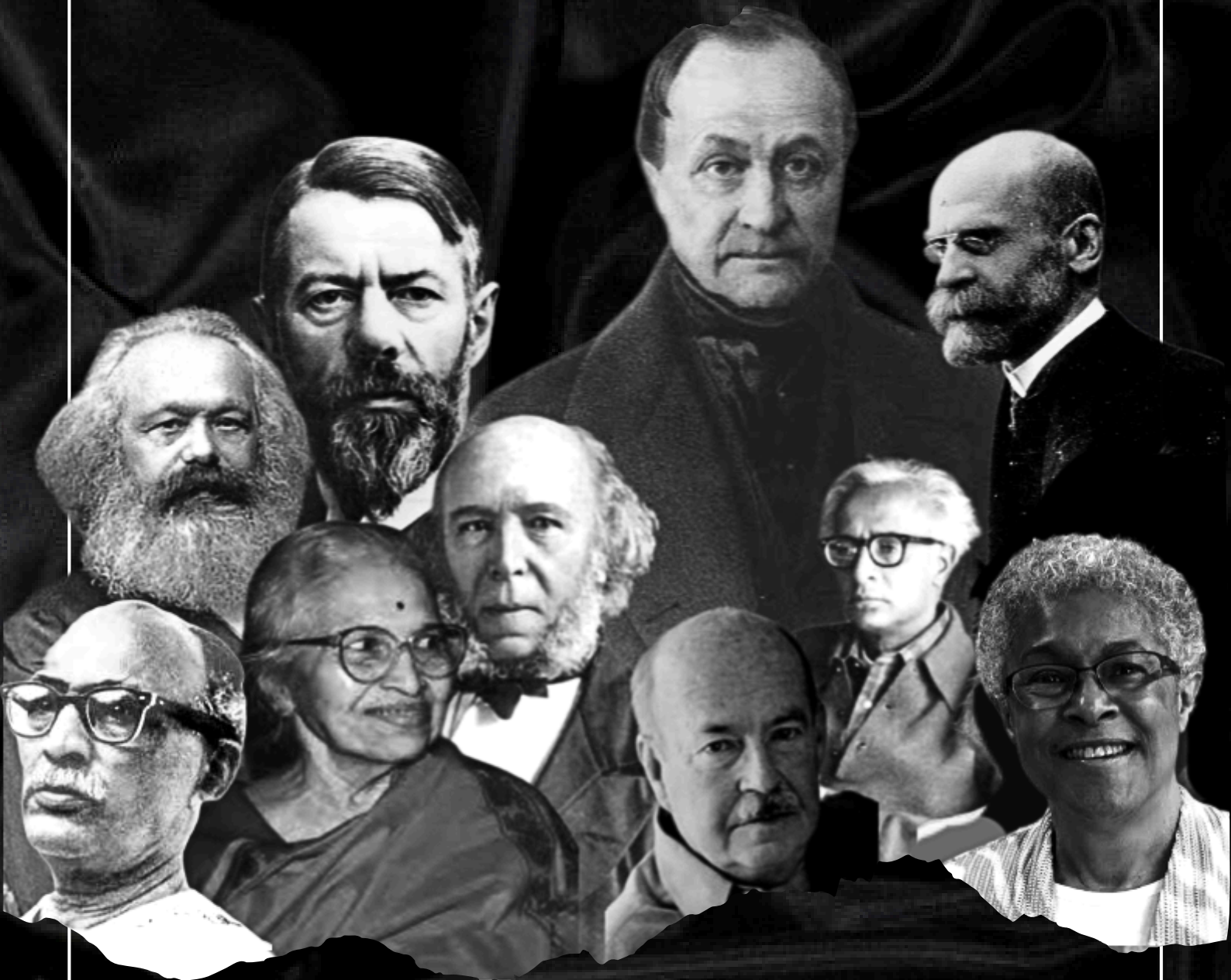


PULSE OF SOCIETY

THE MAGAZINE OF SOCIOLOGY



HESTIA, THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
BHARATI COLLEGE | UNIVERSITY OF DELHI



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Acknowledgement



Pulse of Society, Magazine of the Department of Sociology, Bharati College would like to express its sincere gratitude to all the contributors who have made this magazine possible. Their insightful analysis and scholarly contributions have enriched the publication. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our contributors Riya Sahadevan, Navya Aggarwal, Bhumiika Ajager, Sonam, Nayantika Verma, Akshita, Gungun, Aarna, Nandini, and Sangeeta. Their dedication and passion for sociology have made this magazine a reality.

This magazine explores various sociological perspectives, including functionalism, structural functionalism, conflict theory, symbolic interactionism,

feminism, and interpretivism. It also highlights the contributions of prominent Indian sociologists. The first edition aims to demonstrate the contemporary relevance of these perspectives and encourage students to engage with them. We extend our sincere gratitude to our editor, Dr. Bhawna Shivan. Her guidance, meticulous feedback, and encouragement were invaluable in shaping this magazine. We express our sincere gratitude to Grace for her exceptional creative direction and design work throughout the entire magazine, and Pragya Sharma, Bhumiika Ajager, Ngasepam Praneshwori, Mansi, Sneha Aggarwal, and Wendy for their valuable contributions to the process.

We hope that this publication inspires readers to delve deeper into the complexities of society. Also, we look forward to receiving feedback from our readers, as it will help us improve future issues.

from the

Editor's desk



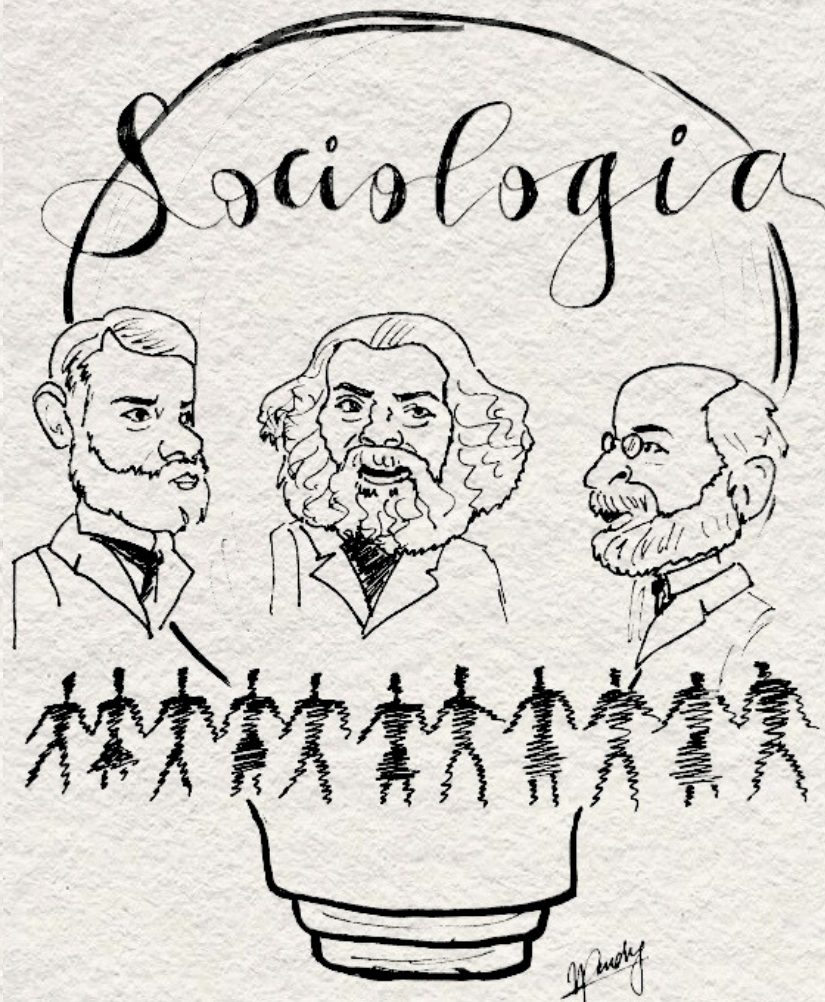
“ Our social world is constructed and to deconstruct the dogmas and orthodoxies of the same, we need to have sociologists on work. ”

Since its inception in 2017, the Department of Sociology at Bharati College has been dedicated to nurturing a new generation of sociologists. The Hestia Society, a key component of the department, provides a space for students to develop their critical thinking skills and engage in interdisciplinary dialogue. The department's commitment to fostering a culture of intellectual curiosity is evident in its organization of seminars, conferences, and annual fests, which provide platforms for exploring contemporary social challenges. The pedagogical approach emphasizes a nuanced understanding of everyday life, equipping students with the tools to critically examine social structures and inequalities.

The establishment of the Department of Sociology's magazine, Pulse of Society, aligns with the National Education Policy's emphasis on research and academic rigor. By encouraging students to write and publish their sociological insights, the magazine aims to cultivate a culture of intellectual inquiry and critical thinking.

Hence, we are launching Pulse of Society to inspire students to share their sociological ideas. It's all about promoting research, writing, and critical thinking among student fraternity.

Dr. Bhawna Shivan
Convenor, Hestia:
The Department of Sociology
Bharati College
University of Delhi



— The Three Classical Thinkers of Sociology (Karl Marx, Max Weber and Émile Durkheim) by Wendy Pebam, BA (hons) SOCIOLOGY, 2nd YEAR

Sociology originated in the 19th century as a response to the rapid social changes brought on by the Industrial Revolution. It seeks to understand how societies function, evolve, and affect human behavior. The classical thinkers—Émile Durkheim, Karl Marx, and Max Weber—shaped the foundation of sociology with their groundbreaking theories

Durkheim explored the role of social cohesion and institutions, Marx analyzed the conflicts within capitalism, and Weber focused on the influence of culture and ideas on society. In this magazine, we will dive into some of the foundational concepts, exploring how these and many more thinkers' ideas still resonate to be day and how they help us understand modern social issues.

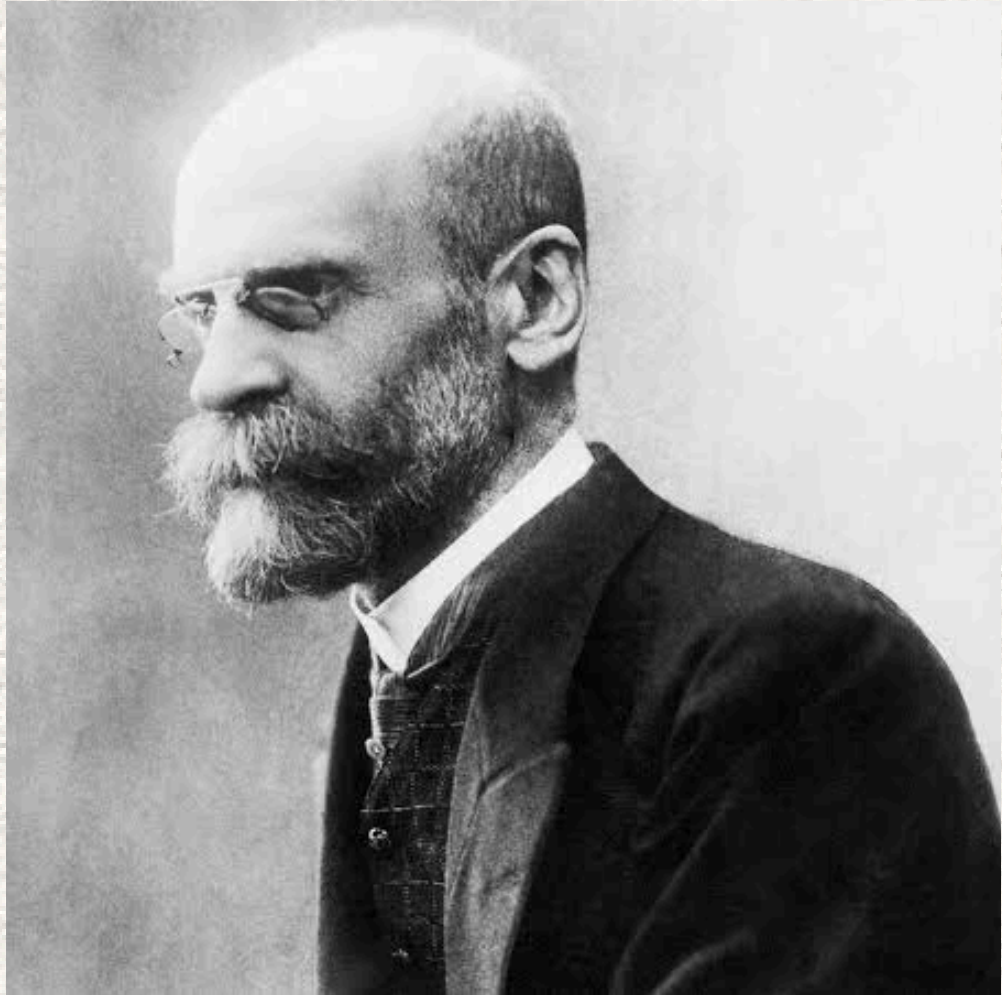
BEYOND THE SELF: SUICIDE AS A MIRROR TO SOCIETY'S FAILURES



RIYA SAHADEVAN
B.A HONS. SOCIOLOGY
3RD YEAR.

Suicide is often seen through the lens of personal despair—a tragic culmination of individual suffering, mental illness, or acute emotional distress. The narrative is usually shaped by personal failures, losses, or disorders that lead someone to take their life. But what if suicide is not merely a personal tragedy? What if it's also a reflection of broader social conditions, a phenomenon that reveals deep truths about the structures of society itself?

Emile Durkheim, one of the founding figures of sociology, offered an audacious and thought-provoking reframe of suicide in his seminal work, *'Le Suicide'* (1897). He viewed it not simply as an individual act but as a social phenomenon, driven by the relationship between the individual and society. His theory proposed that societal forces, not just personal circumstances, have a profound influence on whether a person is more or less likely to commit suicide.



By analyzing suicide through Durkheim's theory, we begin to understand how our sense of belonging, societal norms, and collective consciousness shape one of the most intimate and devastating acts a person can commit.

Durkheim's Theory of Suicide: A Sociological Approach

Durkheim's groundbreaking approach was to frame suicide not merely as a result of psychological turmoil but as an outcome of societal factors. His

His theory suggested that suicide rates vary not just according to personal issues, but also depending on societal conditions such as religion, family structure, economic conditions, and social integration. This, he argued, was because humans are deeply social beings, intricately connected to the larger structures around them.

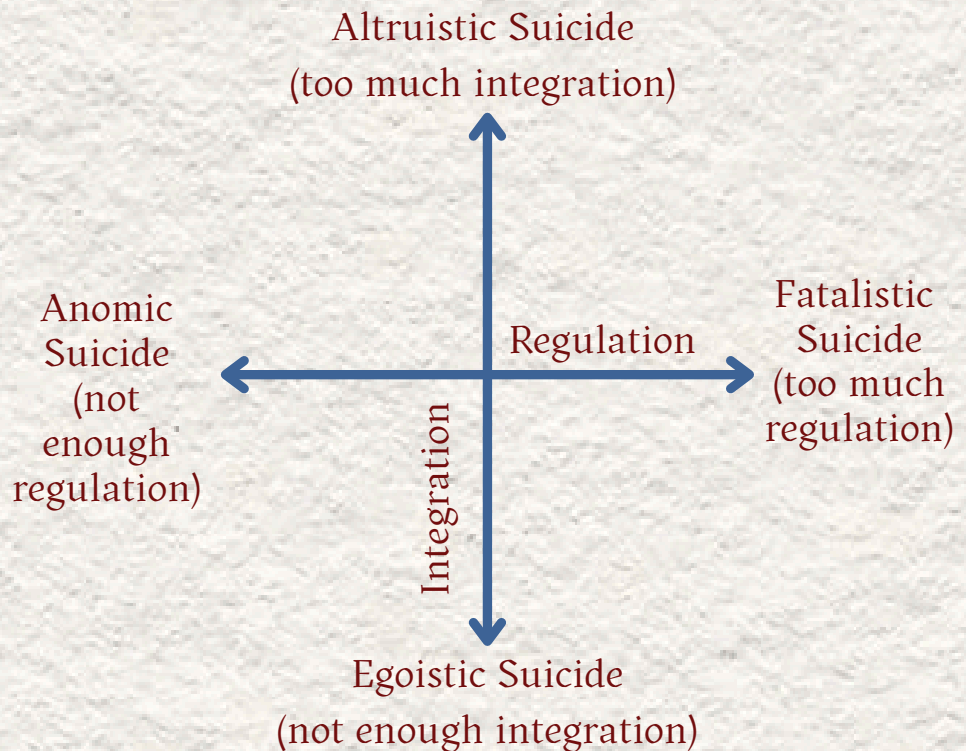
To understand suicide sociologically, Durkheim categorized it into four distinct types: **Egoistic, Altruistic, Anomic, and Fatalistic**. These categories are defined by the individual's relationship to society and its norms.

Egoistic Suicide: The Perils of Isolation

Egoistic suicide occurs when individuals feel alienated or disconnected from society. In this form of suicide, the lack of social integration plays a critical role. Durkheim believed that when people feel detached from the collective identity of their community—whether that's through family, religious institutions, or social groups—they are more likely to suffer from a sense of purposelessness or lack of meaning. In such cases, the individual no longer feels that their life is anchored in something greater than themselves.

For instance, Durkheim's studies showed that unmarried individuals, particularly those without children, were more prone to commit suicide compared to those embedded in familial and social relationships. Religion played a significant role, too: Protestants, who emphasized individual interpretation of scripture, had higher suicide rates than Catholics, who were more embedded in the strict, communal structure of the Church.

In today's world, the rise of individualism—where personal achievement and autonomy are highly prized—has led to a societal shift that, paradoxically, may increase feelings of isolation. Social media, often considered a bridge to greater connectedness, has at times become a platform for showcasing carefully curated lives that exacerbate loneliness in viewers. The disconnect between people's virtual and real lives can amplify feelings of inadequacy and isolation, leading to a modern form of egoistic suicide.



Durkheim's Four Types of Suicide

Altruistic Suicide: When Society Overwhelms the Individual

In contrast to egoistic suicide, **altruistic suicide** occurs when an individual's integration into society is so intense that they see their own life as secondary to the interests or beliefs of the collective. Here, the individual's identity is so deeply embedded in societal norms or group values that they may sacrifice themselves for what they perceive to be the greater good.

Durkheim pointed to instances of military personnel committing suicide to maintain honor, or religious followers who would end their lives in rituals like sati, where widows in certain cultures would immolate themselves on their husband's funeral pyre. These individuals are driven by a sense of duty or honor that outweighs their personal desire to live.

In contemporary times, we can see echoes of altruistic suicide in cases of suicide bombers or members of extremist groups who take their own lives in the name of a cause. The intensity of belonging to a group, coupled with a belief that their sacrifice will lead to a greater societal or spiritual reward, reflects the same dynamics that Durkheim described. Even in less extreme cases, suicides that occur after significant public disgrace or failure—especially in societies where honor is paramount—could be seen as altruistic.



- Émile Durkheim (1858 - 1917)
by Ngasepam Praneshwori
BA (hons) SOCIOLOGY
1st YEAR

Anomic Suicide: Disorientation in Times of Rapid Change

Perhaps the most relevant form of suicide in our modern world is **anomic suicide**, which occurs in periods of great social or economic upheaval. Durkheim defined anomie as a state of normlessness, where society fails to regulate the expectations or desires of its members. When societal structures break down or change rapidly, individuals may feel adrift, with no clear guidance on how to navigate the new social order.

Anomic suicide often occurs in response to events like economic depressions, job loss, or sudden wealth. These situations can create an existential crisis for individuals whose sense of identity and worth is closely tied to their socioeconomic status. In an anomic state, people no longer know what is expected of them or how to align their behavior with societal norms, creating a vacuum of meaning and direction.

Consider the 2008 global financial crisis: many individuals who had built their lives around their careers, wealth, and financial security were suddenly plunged into a world where those markers of success were stripped away. The sharp rise in suicide rates during that period can be seen as a reflection of the anomie these individuals faced. The same pattern can be observed in societies undergoing rapid modernization or social change, where traditional norms and values are replaced by more fluid or fragmented systems, leaving individuals struggling to find their place.

Fatalistic Suicide: The Strain of Overregulation

The final category, fatalistic suicide, is the opposite of anomic suicide. While anomic suicide arises from a lack of societal regulation, **fatalistic suicide** results from excessive regulation and oppressive social conditions. Individuals who experience overwhelming control, oppression, or restriction may see no escape from their circumstances except through death.

Durkheim offered examples like slaves or prisoners, who might commit suicide as a way to escape their intolerable conditions. In modern contexts, fatalistic suicide can occur in situations where individuals feel trapped by external forces—whether in abusive relationships, highly oppressive workplaces, or totalitarian regimes. For example, fatalistic suicide might be relevant in the context of contemporary discussions around high-pressure education systems, where students experience relentless academic stress and fear of failure, seeing no other way out than to take their own lives.

Durkheim's Legacy in Understanding Modern Suicide

Durkheim's theory of suicide offers a lens through which we can understand how individual choices are shaped by societal forces. Today, the act of suicide continues to be analyzed through psychological frameworks, but Durkheim's insights remind us that no individual exists in isolation. Our social networks, economic conditions, religious affiliations, and ever-shifting tides of societal norms play a pivotal role in influencing the

likelihood of suicide.

By reframing suicide as a social phenomenon, Durkheim opened up new possibilities for preventing it. If suicide is not only the result of personal suffering but also a reflection of societal conditions, then interventions must occur at the collective as well as the individual level. Public policies that strengthen social ties, provide support in times of crisis, and reduce the feelings of isolation or alienation can be powerful tools in suicide prevention. At the same time, social movements that address inequality, economic instability, and marginalization can also contribute to lowering suicide rates.

Conclusion: A Call for a Broader Perspective

In examining Durkheim's theory of suicide, we are called to look beyond the individual and consider the broader social fabric. While the tragedy of suicide is often felt most acutely by the friends and families left behind, understanding it as a social phenomenon compels us to ask important questions about the conditions that make suicide more or less likely. Are we, as a society, creating environments where people feel connected, valued, and supported? Or are we fostering conditions of alienation, excessive pressure, or hopelessness?

Durkheim's work challenges us to consider the collective responsibility we bear for the well-being of others. When we shift the focus from personal tragedy to social phenomenon, we gain new insights into how to address one of the most painful and complex human experiences. And in doing so, we can begin to build a society where fewer people feel that suicide is their only option.

A black and white portrait of Émile Durkheim, a man with a full beard and mustache, wearing a dark suit and a white shirt with a dark tie. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera.

Émile Durkheim, *Le Suicide* (1897)

Le terme suicide s'applique à tous les cas de mort résultant directement ou indirectement d'un acte positif ou négatif de la victime elle-même, qu'elle sait devoir produire ce résultat.

The term suicide is applied to all cases of death resulting directly or indirectly from a positive or negative act of the victim himself, which he knows will produce this result.

‘A-G-I-L’ IN ACTION: NAVIGATING TODAY’S COMPLEX SOCIETIES

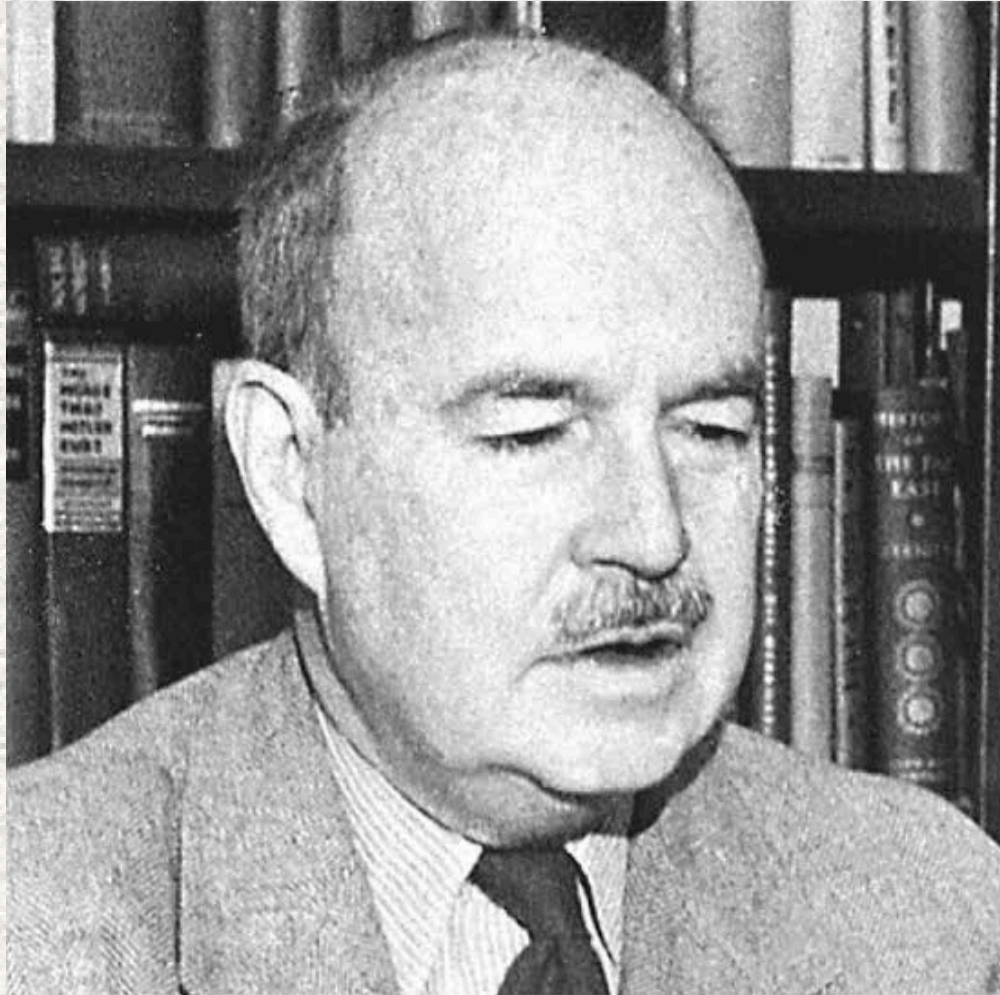


NAVYA AGGARWAL
B.A HONS. SOCIOLOGY
3RD YEAR.

Introduction

Talcott Parsons was an American sociologist and scholar whose theory of social action influenced the intellectual bases of several disciplines of modern sociology. Parsons is considered a structural-functionalism. ‘A-G-I-L’ theory focuses on analyzing the structure of the social system and its subsystems (Economics , polity , law and culture). The core concern is to understand how these structures contribute to maintaining social order, system equilibrium, and the functioning of society.

In today’s fast-paced, ever evolving world, understanding how societies stay functional and cohesive is more important than ever. The AGIL model provides a critical lens to explore how modern institutions adapt, set goals, integrate diverse elements and maintain core values amidst social change. Parsons divided society into four primary subsystems of action: Economy, Politics, Law and Culture.



Each subsystem serves specific functions including **adaptation** to the environment, **goal attainment**, **integration** into the societal community and **pattern maintenance** of shared values. This poses a question, Are we able to adapt to the emerging societal changes, a **shift from the physical world to the emerging digital platform**? Are we able to attain our goal of **maintaining world peace**? Are we **integrated into our institutions of family, religion and education**?

Parsons, in his theory explained that the choices we make are considered as voluntary rather than coerced or pre-determined. Despite the freedom to

choose, the choices are culturally bounded.

For example, we may consider having a love marriage still somewhere in our subconscious mind we keep a note of caste, status,sex, and religious group. These things unknowingly affect our choice making power. In the United States, individuals may have freedom in occupational choices, but cultural expectations regarding economic self-reliance and career orientation serve as constraints.

The prevailing social issues like female infanticide, marital rape, women rape, terrorism, war between nations prove

the AGIL model apt. We as homo sapiens sapiens are unable to track the growing, changing and ever evolving society. The goal of Gender Equality, safe environment to live, world peace still seem a distant notion to us. Integration is solely based on stratification parameters, like paring with like and the values seem distant to us.

Promoting the notion that we are independent beings, free to make our decisions and saying “MY LIFE, MY RULES” is baseless. We as individuals, as living beings and the member of society are influenced by the social world, the idea that can’t be falsified or neglected.

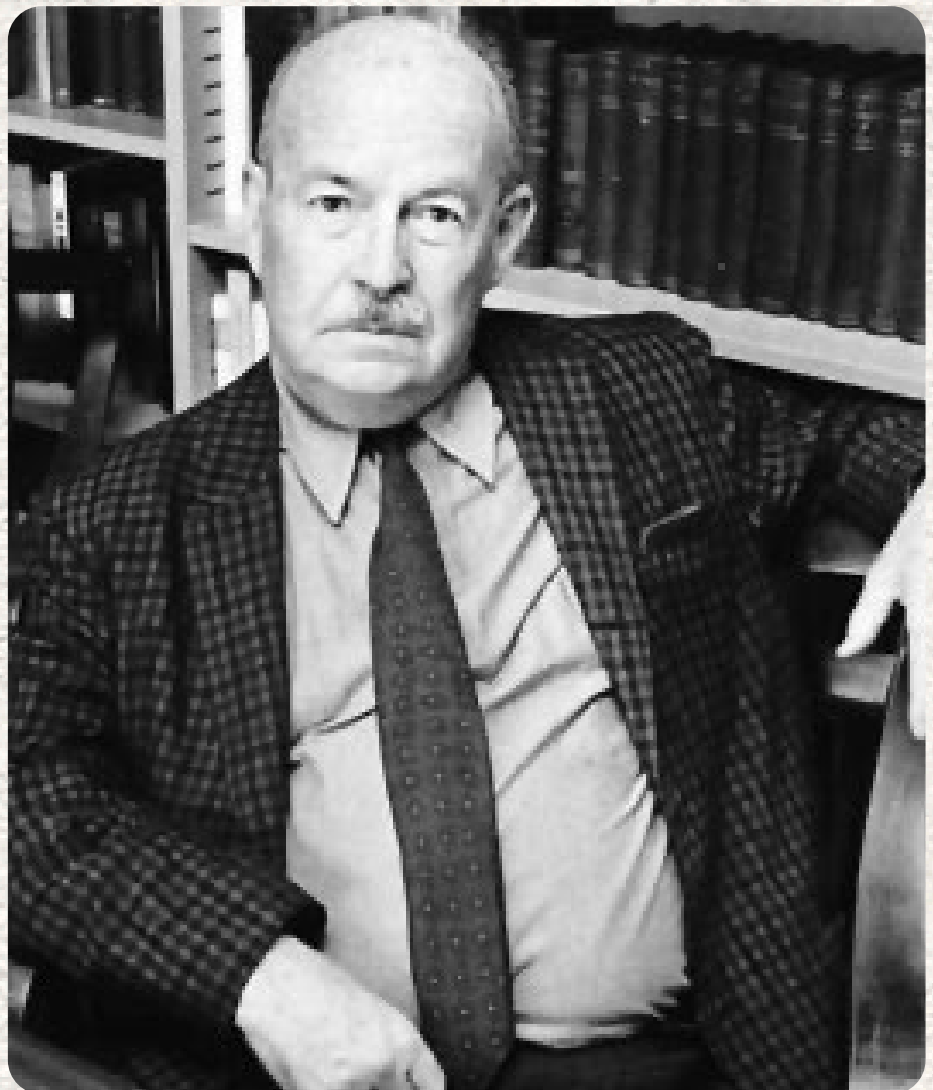
During the COVID-19 pandemic, corporations like Amazon adapted by scaling up logistics and reaping massive profits, while gig workers and low-income communities faced greater risks with limited safety nets. This reveals how adaptation is often shaped by systemic inequalities rather than a neutral process of resource allocation.

National security policies in many countries prioritize military expenditure over public welfare, reflecting elite-driven **goals** rather than the needs of the majority.

Social media platforms claim to **integrate** diverse communities, but algorithms frequently amplify polarizing content, fostering ideological divides rather than unity. The #BlackLivesMatter movement exposed these tensions, as marginalized groups used platforms to demand justice, challenging narratives of integration that overlook systemic racism.

The global promotion of neoliberal values like individualism and consumerism often undermines traditional, collectivist cultures, marginalizing alternative worldviews. Educational institutions, a key agent of latency, may propagate these hegemonic values, reinforcing existing power structures rather than fostering genuine cultural diversity.

By emphasizing consensus and overlooking conflict, Parsons’ model has limitations in analyzing complex, stratified societies. A critical sociological perspective enhances our understanding by revealing how power, inequality, and resistance shape the functioning of social systems.



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Controlled rules

Interactionalism

Nature theories

Feral Children

Post modernism

Functionalism

Globalisation

Socialisation

The new right

High culture

Mass culture

Collectival

Conflict

Feminism

Identity

Material

Marxism



MONEY TALKS: THE REAL STORIES BEHIND WAGES AND WORK

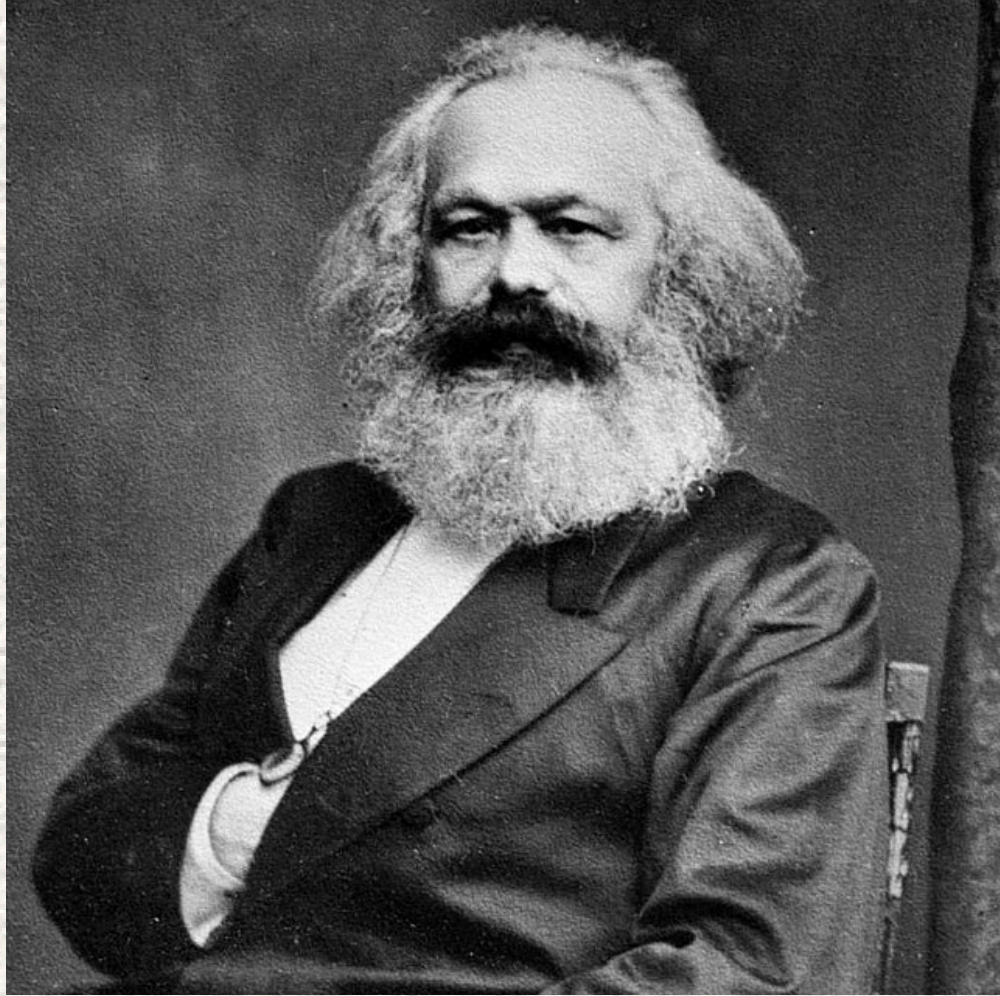


BHUMIKA AJAGER
B.A HONS. SOCIOLOGY
3RD YEAR.

In March 2020, as the world faced the unprecedented challenge of COVID-19, the U.S. declared a national emergency, sparking a dramatic shift in the workforce. Unemployment surged, but what stood out was the staggering rise in workers on temporary layoff. By April, this group ballooned to an astonishing 18 million, reshaping the unemployment landscape and revealing the profound economic shockwaves caused by the pandemic. These numbers, reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, reveal more than just job losses—they tell the real story of how wages, work, and the economy were deeply impacted.

“The more the division of labor and the application of machinery expands, the more competition among the workers expands, and the more their wages contract”

– Karl Marx,
Wage Labour and Capital.



Karl Marx was a revolutionary sociologist, socialist, philosopher, economist, historian, and political theorist from Germany. His views on capitalism and communism are what made him most famous, and they have had a significant influence on contemporary political-economic philosophy and social theory. The COVID-19 pandemic made the quote a reality for millions of workers, who experienced layoffs and pay cuts firsthand. Companies, particularly in sectors like retail, hospitality, and manufacturing, scaled back their activities, unemployment surged. This situation reflects Marx's observations about how competition among workers increases, ultimately pushing wages downward.

Wages refer to the payment that a capitalist gives to a worker in exchange for their labor or output. For instance, a factory worker might earn ₹600 for a full day of assembling clothes. Karl Marx underlined that employees are effectively supplying their “labor power”, which is their ability to work, rather than the actual work they perform. For example, consider a delivery worker for a food delivery service like Swiggy in India. As many businesses shut down or

accelerated automation and digitalization, leading to fewer job opportunities for workers.

The company pays the worker ₹400 for completing a set number of deliveries in a day. This payment reflects the worker's capacity to work for that duration, rather than the specific meals they deliver. Wages are not directly a share of the product or its sales price. Karl Marx, believed that The financial value of labor is represented by wages. They have little to do with the final product's selling price or worth. Work was not always considered a commodity in the past. For instance, in the medieval era, slaves were sold as servants of a lord, bound by devotion to the land, and not entitled to salaries; instead, they paid tribute in the form of products or services. Modern wage work, on the other hand, functions differently. Consider the drives for a ride-sharing service like **Uber or Ola**. They can choose when to work and can easily switch to another platform if they wish. However, their need to secure enough rides to earn a living highlights the continuous reliance on employment within the capitalist system. This situation illustrates the shift from traditional forms of labor to the more flexible, yet still dependent, nature of modern wage labor. Karl Marx in his book "Wage Labour, and Capital" highlights three different types of competition i.e. Sellers compete to offer the lowest price to attract buyers. This competition tends to lower prices. Buyers compete to buy commodities, often leading to higher prices. Buyers want to pay as little as possible, while sellers want to sell at the highest price. The outcome depends on which side has stronger competition. Prices often increase when there is less supply of goods than there is demand for them and have a vice-versa effect. The demand for

COVID-19 vaccinations was incredibly strong during the early distribution, yet the supply was originally scarce. There was tremendous pressure on governments and health organizations everywhere to vaccinate their populations as soon as feasible. For instance, when vaccine slots became unavailable in a country, individuals hurried to book appointments, which increased the demand and price for vaccinations and caused widespread anxiety and annoyance. One of the key point that Marx highlights When the price of one commodity rises due to high demand or low supply, it can lead to a decrease in the prices of other commodities. Consider the example of fuel prices. When the price of crude oil rises significantly due to high demand or geopolitical tensions, it leads to higher prices at the pump for gasoline. As a result, consumers may cut back on driving and seek alternative transportation options. Producers determine their profit by comparing the selling price of a commodity to its cost of production.

Capital as a Social Relation was one of the major concepts of Karl Marx, for instance On the international stage, **Amazon** showcases the capital relationship in the e-commerce and logistics industry. The means of production include warehouses, delivery vehicles, and technology platforms for managing inventory and sales. The accumulated labor is represented by the workforce involved in order fulfillment, customer service, and technology development. The social relationship aspect manifests in the employment practices, such as wages, working conditions, and employee benefits. Amazon's focus on automation and efficiency in logistics also illustrates how capital and labor interact within a competitive market. Capital plays a crucial role in sustaining and enhancing itself, By investing in the means of production—

such as machinery, raw materials, and technology—capital enables businesses to generate goods and services efficiently. Capitalists leverage their accumulated resources to acquire labor, which is essential for creating additional value. In a capitalist economy, the relationship between capital and labor is foundational. Capital cannot exist in a vacuum; it fundamentally relies on wage labor to function and create value. Without workers to operate machinery, manage production processes, and provide services, capital is essentially dormant. For example, in a factory setting, the machines (capital) require skilled workers to run them effectively. If there are no workers to operate these machines, the capital investment becomes meaningless, as it cannot produce goods or generate profits. This interdependence highlights how capitalists must invest in human resources to realize the full potential of their capital assets. On the flip side, labor also depends on capital for its effectiveness. Workers require access to the means of production—such as tools, machinery, and infrastructure—to perform their jobs and earn wages, for example, Infosys invests heavily in software development tools and technology infrastructure (capital) to deliver services to clients. Meanwhile, its workforce of software developers and engineers relies on this technology to perform their jobs and earn salaries.

Competition among workers can significantly affect wages. When there are more workers available for the same job, they often compete with one another for employment. This competition can lead to a decrease in wages, as employers may take advantage of the surplus of labor by offering lower pay. Workers might feel pressured to accept these lower wages rather than risk unemployment. In the

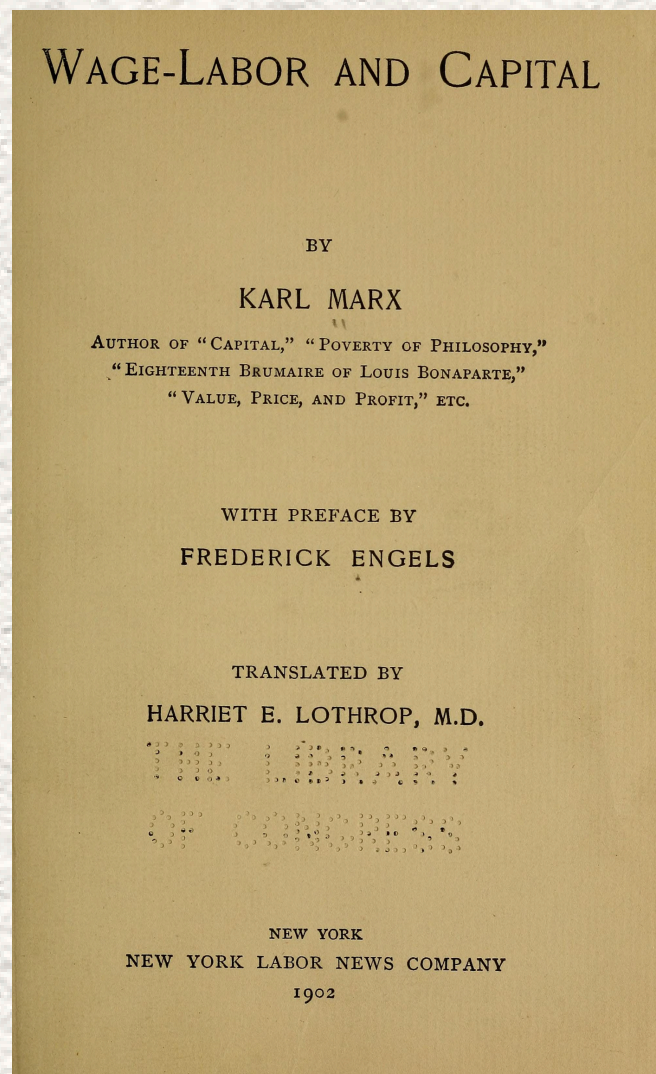
gig economy, platforms like **Uber** and **Zomato** illustrates how competition affects wages. Drivers and delivery personnel compete with each other for rides or orders, often resulting in lower pay rates as companies adjust their pricing based on the available workforce. If there are many drivers on the platform, they might have to accept lower fares to secure rides. This competition can lead to decreased earnings, pushing workers to work longer hours or take on multiple jobs to make ends meet. The introduction of machinery in various industries has significantly transformed the employment landscape. Machinery often replaces skilled workers with unskilled laborers, including women and children, as machines can perform tasks more efficiently and at a lower cost. For instance, many traditional weavers in places like Varanasi have lost their livelihoods as factories now produce textiles using machinery, requiring fewer skilled workers. The remaining workforce often consists of unskilled laborers who can operate machines but earn significantly lower wages than their skilled counterparts.

The relationship between wages, labor, and capital is not just an economic transaction—it's a deeply human story of struggle, exploitation, and inequality. Workers sell their labor power, not because they want to, but because they have to in order to survive. They toil for long hours, creating goods that generate immense wealth, yet receive only a fraction of the value they create. In this exchange, workers are left with just enough to meet their basic needs, while capitalists accumulate vast fortunes. From Marx's perspective, this is the very core of capitalist exploitation.

Workers become strangers to the products they create—they don't own them, they don't control them, and they have no say in how these products are used or profited from. Meanwhile, the capitalists, who control the factories and machinery, pocket the wealth produced by the workers' labor, leaving the workers with little more than scraps. It's a system that thrives on dependence, forcing workers into an endless cycle of survival, where they must sell their labor day after day just to make ends meet. Their labor builds fortunes, but their lives remain shackled to poverty and insecurity, as the rich grow richer at their expense.



1948 Soviet Union stamp, featuring Marx and Engels, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Manifesto



& Did You Know?



Karl Marx's wife once pawned his pants to buy food? After moving to England in 1849, Marx and his family lived in extreme poverty, often struggling to make ends meet. Within a year of arriving in London, they were evicted from their two-room apartment for unpaid rent. To avoid creditors, Marx used a fake name for decades. On some days, he couldn't even leave the house because his wife, Jenny, had to pawn his only pair of pants. Despite frequent financial help from his friend Friedrich Engels—who gave him the equivalent of \$36,000 between 1865 and 1869—Marx's hardships were so dire that he once remarked on his mother's quip: "If only Karl made capital instead of just writing about it."

STAGED LIVES: THE ART OF SELF PRESENTATION



SONAM KAINтура
B.A HONS. SOCIOLOGY
3RD YEAR.



Symbolic Interactionism

Developed at the University of Chicago in 1920s. This perspective focuses on understanding the everyday social interactions happening at different spheres of society from the subjective viewpoint and impact of meaning and symbols on human action and interaction. How individuals interact with each other and how their social lives are organized.

ERVING GOFFMAN (1922-82)

A Canadian born American Sociologist, Social Psychologist and is one of the leading proponents of symbolic interactionism. In his book “*Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*” (1952), he focused on *Dramaturgy*. A view of social life as a series of dramatic performances akin to those

performed on the stage. Goffman’s sense of ‘self’ was shaped by his dramaturgical approach. Dramaturgical analysis is to think of the social world as ‘stage’ and people as ‘actors’ and ‘audiences’ and how the social identities and the self are managed and constructed on and off these different ‘stages’.

Stages

Following the theatrical analogy, Goffman spoke of a *front stage*, a *back stage* and the residual domain, the *outside*.

Front Stage

It is the part of the performance that functions in a fixed way to define the situation for those who observe the performance. The *front stage* is further differentiated between the *setting* and the *personal front*.

The *setting* refers to the physical scene that must be there if the actors are to perform and without which actors cannot perform.

The *personal front* consists of those items that the audience identify with the actors and they must carry with them in the setting.

Back Stage

It is adjacent to the *front stage* but it is cut off from it. All kinds of informal actions, suppressed in the front stage, may appear in this stage. Performers can reliably expect no members from the audience to appear in the back.

The Outside

It refers to the domain that is neither the *front stage* nor the *back stage*.

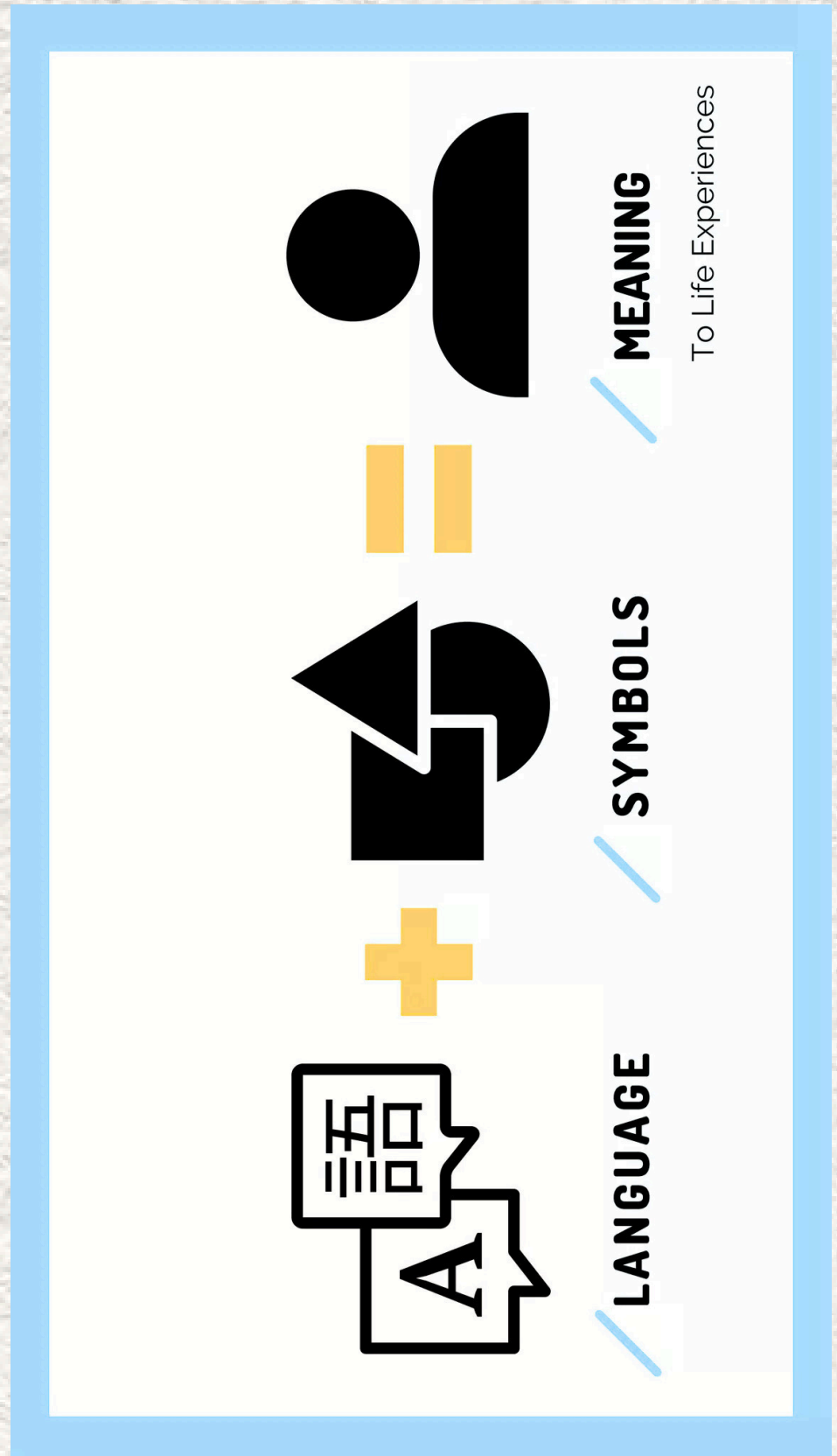
For Instance, the Doctor

In Goffman's dramaturgical framework, the *front stage* is further differentiated into the *setting* and the *personal front*. The *setting* includes the physical environment where the doctor performs, such as the operating room, examination table and so on.

The *personal front* includes items like a medical gown and stethoscope, expected by the audience to be carried by the performer.

In the *backstage*, where there is no audience, doctors can engage in all kinds of informal actions. This might include discussing cases or sharing personal frustrations with colleagues.

The *outside* or residual domain for a doctor is a space like a market or park, where they are neither actively performing their professional roles (frontstage) nor fully in their private state (backstage). Here, they are outside the formalities of their professional identity yet not entirely in a private setting.



THE UNRECOGNIZED BOND BETWEEN RELIGIOUS BELIEF AND FINANCIAL DRIVE



NAYANTIKA VERMA
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In a world where ambition drives everything from personal success to global economies, the link between hard work and moral worth is more powerful and more complicated than it appears. This deeply ingrained belief fuels modern "hustle culture," pushing individuals to measure their value through constant productivity and financial success.

Max Weber (1864-1920), a renowned German sociologist had made significant contributions to the development of social sciences, leaving a lasting impact on fields such as sociology, law, economics, political science, and religious studies. His influential works include: *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, the Rationalization thesis, his theory of Bureaucracy, and his ideas on Social Action.

Weber's book, "*The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*", was originally published in 1904. It was later translated into English by



American sociologist *Talcott Parsons* in 1930, making his ideas accessible to a broader audience. This book explores how religious beliefs, particularly within *Protestantism* and *Calvinism*, played a key role in the rise of modern capitalism in Western Europe. **Calvinism** was the idea of "**predestination**," which taught that God had already chosen who would be saved, which led to uncertainty and concern among believers about whether they were among the selected ones or not. To ease this uncertainty, many Protestants began looking for signs of God's favor in their everyday lives, particularly through hard work and success in business. They believed

that achieving success and managing money wisely might be proof of God's approval. This belief gave rise to what Weber called the "**Protestant work ethic**," which encouraged values like hard work, discipline, thrift, and careful management of resources. For many Protestants, success was not only about material gain but also seen as a moral and spiritual achievement. These values ranged perfectly with the emerging capitalist system, as they fostered habits such as investing and accumulating wealth, which were necessary for capitalism's growth.

Weber's analysis is still relevant today,

as cultural beliefs continue to shape how we think about work and success in modern society. In today's world, especially in capitalist economies, we see the influence of the Protestant work ethic in what is now called "hustle culture." This culture encourages the idea that hard work, discipline, and constant striving for success are the keys to achieving personal and financial goals. It encourages people to dedicate long hours to their work and to view success as not just a financial accomplishment but as a reflection of their moral worth. This is particularly apparent in industries such as technology and entrepreneurship, where wealth and productivity are often regarded as measures of personal achievement. Just as Protestants in Weber's time believed that economic success was a sign of God's favor, many people today see personal wealth and success as indicators of their own value. This belief fuels the constant push for productivity and wealth accumulation in modern capitalist societies, where individual effort is highly emphasized, and success is seen as the ultimate goal. However, Weber's ideas also encourage us to think critically about the potential unfavorable effects of these cultural values in modern economies. Even if the Protestant work ethic played a key role in advancing capitalism, it has also contributed to growing **inequality** and **exploitation** in the workforce. The strong focus on individual success and responsibility can sometimes overshadow the larger structural issues, such as inequality and unfair

labor practices, that limit opportunities for many. By placing so much importance on personal effort and achievement, the system can reinforce or strengthen economic divisions, benefiting some people while leaving others behind. Weber's work challenges us to reflect on the deeper moral and cultural assumptions that shape today's economic systems, reminding us that while hard work and discipline are valuable, they can also lead to greater social inequalities. As capitalism continues to evolve, Weber's ideas remind us to consider how cultural beliefs about work, success, and wealth influence not only individual achievements but also the overall fairness and justice of the society we live in.



- Max Weber (1864 - 1920)
by Nagesham Praneshwori
BA (hons) SOCIOLOGY
1st YEAR



- BY PRAGYA SHARMA, BA (HONS) SOCIOLOGY, 3RD YEAR

INVISIBLE INDIVIDUALITY



AKSHITA MISHRA
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Leela Dube, born on 27th March 1923 was a renowned Sociologist, Anthropologist and feminist scholar, fondly called Leeladee. She was a key person in the *Indian Sociological Society* in the 1970s and was responsible for introducing women's studies concerns into mainstream sociology. She wrote several books including *Matriliny and Islam: religion and society in the Laccadives and Women and kinship: comparative perspectives on gender in South and South-east Asia*. Also her famous Autobiographical Essay titled *Doing Kinship and Gender* is an inspiration to all.

Referring this Excerpt from the Inspirational Work of Renowned Indian Sociologist **LEELA DUBE**, Who's Journey has been a Milestone for the discipline of Sociology. Dube placed her status of being mother above being Sociologist, Feminist, and Teacher. Her work's felt so Relativel because She explains gender biases through her own lived

experiences, that how being a gendered person, we should be aware of the suffering and strengths of women. Her lived experiences give us a smell of reality as she stated, her own mother highlighting the importance of cooking and caring skills in the life of a woman. Her Mother is Constructing Identity of a woman to be soft speaking and must know how to take care of people around them and cook to feed others and keep them happy. Leela Dube had to work hard to eliminate it and to pursue The Path of a professional but that also was not an easy task for her as the responsibility of the household and the children were on her shoulders. This led to

interruptions in her profession and sidetracked her from her aims. The Above statement itself shows how her individual identity is now linked with her status of being a mother and how different roles of women determine different responsibilities that they wasn't able to see their Individuality and their own reflection's. This Vision lies in our deeply rooted culture and tradition, as she highlighted in one example using Telugu expression which translates into "*Bringing up a daughter is like watering a plant in another's courtyard*" which underscores the temporary and expendable nature of a girl's presence. Second reference from Leela Dube's



— by Wendy Pebam
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“Seed and Earth” concept likens men to “Seed,” representing active essence, and women to “Earth,” a passive receptacle, which demonstrates men as primary and influential, And Women as secondary and supportive, Also She talk about the idea of being a ‘kanya’ (a prepubertal girl) to becoming ripened (onset of puberty) as, they are obliged to perform various rituals and duties. In both north and south India, the onset of puberty is a definite point of departure in the life of a girl, where she is thought to have crossed the threshold of childhood and entered the most critical stage of life when her body has acquired the capacity to

reproduce but she has no authority to do so. She says here Motherhood is considered as the highest achievement in a woman's life, and that marriage is the only gateway to motherhood, and to be auspicious. Where women's own individuality is invisible to society and their role is to fulfill the objective of Society that's the reason for placing constraints on female sexuality because of women's roles as wives and mothers. This Social construct that passively forces women to limit their Individuality, and it created the image in their minds that they are inferior to men. And from the starting point of a

Girls life (pre-pubertal) she was told to follow the path society has created for them that knowingly makes girl's Individuality Invisible.



— by Mansi Rana
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2nd YEAR

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH INTERSECTIONALITY: PATRICIA HILL COLLINS' VISION



GUNGUN LAHKAR
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Intersectionality is one of the concepts that have gained traction in sociology, feminist studies, and social activism to name a few. It was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw 1989 in legal literature pointing that social categories such as race, gender, class, and sexuality are gradually related. The preeminent paradox is that these categories are not exclusive; rather, they reinforce each other and cumulatively exacerbate, recessively incorporate, or provide disability privileges to different people. Alongside numerous professions of anthropology expansion and development of intersectionality stands Patricia Hill Collins. Collins's research benefits from an understanding of intersectionality as a weapon that serves to empower groups that have been socially, culturally, and politically marginalized, with an emphasis on Black women.

To appreciate fully the striking potential of empowerment through intersectionality, it is crucial to delineate what has been Collins'

denominator in all these transformations of how we think about power and inequality. This paper aims to analyse Collins' position on intersectionality, critique the existing power relations within society, and how these relations impact the construction of a just society.

It was through her seminal work *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* published in 1990, that Patricia Hill Collins gained the attention of the academic circle. In this work, Collins understands that Black women have different types of oppression due to ethnicity, gender, social class structures and the relations

among them. Unlike early feminist theories that dealt largely with white, middle class women's experiences Collins', approach shows that the oppression of black women is inherent to all sociopolitical cultural systems of the world where the black women hearth and it is not self explanatory unlike where women of other races is angry or upset.

Collins puts forth the proposition of a transcendental concept of a "matrix of domination" so as to explicate how power is exercised along many dimensions of social identity. This matrix deals with attention to how various oppressions such as, racism,

sexism, and class oppression work together and enhance one another. For example, a Black woman is overexposed to racism and gender oppression and these cumulative characteristics of marginalization cannot be explained in terms of one race only that is white woman or one man who happens to be Black.

Collins also amplifies the role of authority spin and consciousness generation in relation to oppression. As she claims in the article, *The Third Wave of Feminism: Black Women as Emerging Leaders of the Feminist Movement*, this emic understanding possessed by Black women is not commonly found in other women and therefore does not have a robust impact across cultures.

Empowerment Through Intersectionality: Humanizing Patricia Hill Collins' Approach

Patricia Hill Collins' work on intersectionality has made a lasting impact on how we think about inequality and empowerment. At the heart of her work is the idea that empowerment is not just about personal success or advancement. Instead, it's about understanding the ways in which different forms of oppression, like racism, sexism, and classism, come together to shape people's experiences and limit their opportunities. Collins' approach emphasizes that real empowerment can only happen when we recognize and address these overlapping systems of power.

Empowerment and Intersectionality: A Complex Reality

When we think about empowerment, we often imagine someone taking control of their life and making decisions that improve their situation. But Collins argues that empowerment is much more complex than this, especially for people who belong to marginalized groups. For her, empowerment is deeply connected to intersectionality, a concept that explains how various parts of a person's identity—such as their race, gender, and class—interact to shape their experiences.

Intersectionality challenges the idea that we can look at inequality in a simple, one-dimensional way. For example, we can't fully understand a person's struggles by only considering their race or only looking at their gender. Instead, we need to see how these identities overlap and create unique challenges.

Take, for example, a Black woman who faces discrimination in the workplace. If we only consider her gender, we miss the racial discrimination she experiences. If we only focus on her race, we overlook the sexism she might also face. The combination of these two forms of discrimination—racism and sexism—creates a unique set of challenges that can't be understood by looking at either one alone. Collins argues that true empowerment requires addressing all of these intersecting issues, rather than just one or the other.

Critiquing Power Structures

One of the most important aspects of Collins' work is her critique of the power structures that keep inequality in place. These power structures are all around us, embedded in social

institutions like education, the media, and the legal system. They often reinforce stereotypes and marginalize certain groups, particularly women of color. For example, the media often portrays Black women in stereotypical roles, such as the "angry Black woman" or the "welfare queen." These harmful images not only misrepresent Black women but also justify their exclusion from positions of power and influence.

Similarly, in the legal system, Black women may face harsher punishments or be treated unfairly because of the combination of racial and gender biases. Collins points out that these stereotypes and institutional practices are part of a broader system that maintains inequality. She calls this system the "matrix of domination," and it's made up of interconnected forms of oppression that work together to keep marginalized people in subordinate positions.

Challenging these systems of power, according to Collins, requires a deep understanding of how they are linked and how they shape people's lives. Intersectionality gives us a way to see these connections and helps us to think more clearly about how to dismantle the systems that maintain inequality.

The Power of Knowledge and Lived Experience

A key part of Collins' approach to empowerment is the idea that knowledge comes from lived experience. This is particularly true for marginalized groups, who develop unique insights from navigating systems of oppression. Collins refers to this as "standpoint theory," which suggests that people who experience oppression have a unique perspective on how power works in society.

For example, Black women, through their lived experiences with both racism and sexism, gain a deep understanding of how these systems of oppression intersect. Their knowledge is valuable because it offers a different way of seeing the world, one that challenges the dominant narratives produced by those in positions of power. Collins calls this “subjugated knowledge” because it’s often overlooked or devalued by mainstream society, but it is essential for understanding and resisting oppression.

Empowerment, then, isn’t just about achieving material success or gaining access to resources. It’s also about challenging dominant ways of thinking and creating space for alternative forms of knowledge. By recognizing the value of marginalized people’s experiences, we can begin to break down the systems that perpetuate inequality and create a more inclusive society.

Building Inclusive Movements

Another important contribution of Collins’ work is her emphasis on the need for intersectionality in social movements. Throughout history, many movements for social justice have failed to fully address the specific needs of marginalized groups. For example, feminist movements have often focused on the experiences of white, middle-class women while overlooking the struggles of women of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, and working-class women. This narrow focus has limited the effectiveness of these movements in addressing the full range of social inequalities. Intersectionality offers a way to build more inclusive movements by encouraging activists to recognize the

multiple forms of oppression that people face. It requires a commitment to addressing not just one issue, like gender inequality, but the interconnected systems of power that affect people differently depending on their identities. By centering the experiences of the most marginalized individuals, intersectionality helps create movements that are better equipped to challenge systemic oppression.

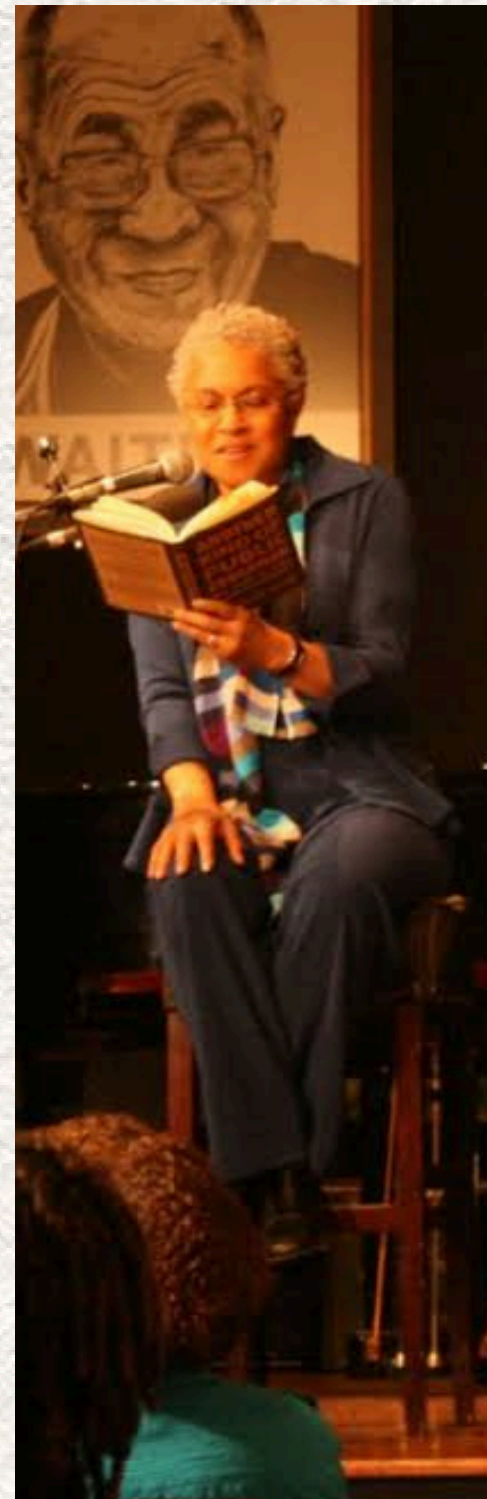
For example, a feminist movement that takes intersectionality seriously would not only fight for gender equality but would also address how racism, classism, and other forms of oppression impact women of color and other marginalized groups. This approach creates a more inclusive and effective movement that can bring about real, lasting change.

Conclusion: The Path to True Empowerment

Patricia Hill Collins’ work on intersectionality offers us a powerful framework for understanding inequality and working toward a more just society. By recognizing that people experience oppression in multiple, intersecting ways, we can develop a deeper understanding of the challenges they face. This understanding allows us to create more inclusive and effective strategies for empowerment.

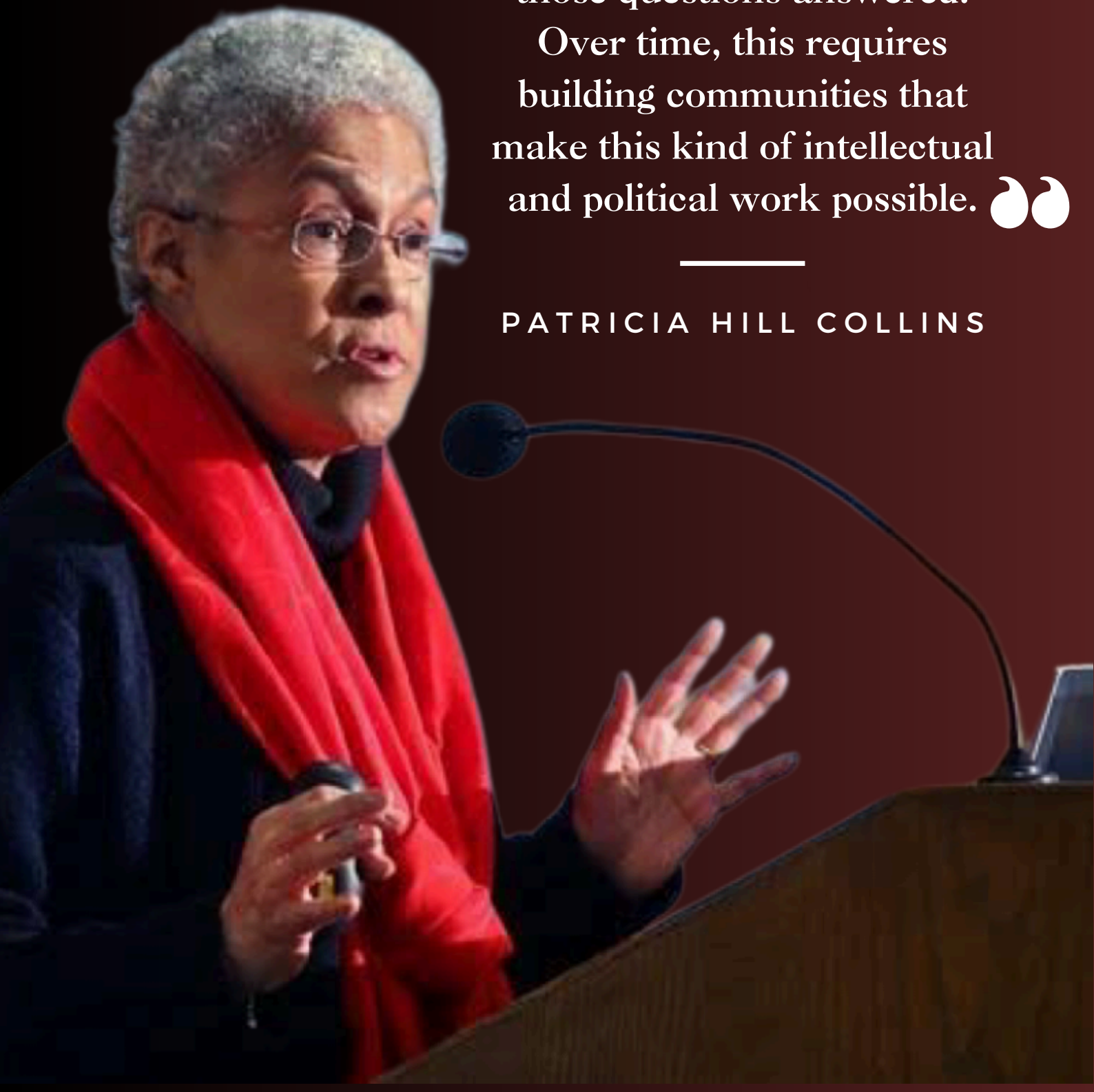
Empowerment, according to Collins, is not just about personal advancement or success. It’s about challenging the interconnected systems of power that keep people marginalized and working to create a society where everyone’s experiences and knowledge are valued. True empowerment comes from recognizing the full complexity of human identity and addressing the multiple forms of oppression that shape people’s lives. In the end, Collins reminds us that the

path to empowerment is collective. It requires solidarity among marginalized groups and a commitment to challenging the systems of power that maintain inequality. Only by working together, with a clear understanding of how oppression operates, can we hope to achieve a more just and equitable world.



“ The power of a free mind consists of trusting your own mind to ask the questions that need to be asked and your own capacity to figure out the strategies you need to get those questions answered. Over time, this requires building communities that make this kind of intellectual and political work possible. ”

PATRICIA HILL COLLINS



DALIT FEMINISM: VOICES FROM THE MARGINS



AARNA PUROHIT
B.A HONS. SOCIOLOGY
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Dalit feminism addresses the unique challenges faced by Dalit women in South Asia, particularly in India, where they endure both caste and gender oppression. This feminist approach underscores that Dalit women's struggles cannot be understood through gender alone; their position at the bottom of the caste hierarchy plays a pivotal role. While mainstream feminism often overlooks these issues, Dalit feminism brings to light how caste-based exploitation and gendered violence intersect to oppress these women.

Feminist perspectives in sociology help explain how social structures such as patriarchy, caste, and class shape women's lives and contribute to their marginalization. For Dalit women, an intersectional approach—examining the overlap of caste and gender—provides insight into the multiple layers of oppression they face due to these intertwined systems of power.

Sunaina Arya, editor of *Dalit Feminist Theory: A Reader* (with Aakash



Singh Rathore, Routledge, 2019), and Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Philosophy, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, explores feminist philosophy from a Dalit perspective in her work. Her research focuses on social and political philosophy, particularly the philosophy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, alongside philosophy and psychology.

Her book redefines feminism by centering the category of Dalit in feminist discourse. It enriches feminism by incorporating caste into its analysis and praxis, rethinking Indian feminism with a new paradigm. This paradigm argues that caste -

based feminist inquiry offers the only comprehensive theoretical framework to tackle gender-based injustices.

Drawing from a variety of disciplines, the chapters in Arya's book explore key themes such as the contrast between Indian feminism and Dalit feminism, the emerging concept of Dalit patriarchy, the foundational figures of Dalit feminism like Phule and Ambedkar, the role of lived experience, the concept of Difference, and the relationship between Black feminism and Dalit feminism. They also delve into intersectionality, theory versus experience debates, and offer a philosophical and empirical

understanding of feminism in India today.

In her article **Dalit or Brahmanical Patriarchy? Rethinking Indian Feminism**, Arya critiques mainstream Indian feminism for its limited view of caste and gender intersections. She argues that Dalit women face a dual form of patriarchy—one from within their Dalit communities and one from dominant caste structures. This "Dalit patriarchy" refers to the patriarchal control exerted by Dalit men over Dalit women, even as both groups face marginalization by upper-caste systems. The concept, introduced by Gopal Guru, suggests that Dalit men, despite their oppression by caste hierarchies, still engage in patriarchal behaviors towards Dalit women.

Several feminist scholars have debated the validity of "Dalit patriarchy." Some argue that it is distinct because of the caste-based oppression Dalit men experience, while others contend that what Dalit women endure is better explained as Brahmanical patriarchy, a system rooted in upper-caste control. Arya calls for Indian feminism to move beyond a one-dimensional approach and adopt a Dalit feminist perspective to fully address the intersection of caste, class, and gender in the pursuit of gender justice.

The article also critiques mainstream feminist interpretations of patriarchy, asserting that Dalit women's experiences cannot be fully captured by concepts like Brahmanical patriarchy or "multiple patriarchies," as proposed by some scholars. Dalit women face distinct forms of oppression, from both external and

internal patriarchal forces. Scholars like Lucinda Ramberg, Anjali Arondekar, and Kumkum Sangari highlight how Dalit women resist both these forces. For instance, Shailaja Paik examines how Dalit women challenge caste-specific gender norms, such as resisting traditional dress codes imposed by their communities.

In "Theorising Gender in South Asia", Arya examines how the caste system in South Asia reinforces both caste and gender inequalities. The caste system is deeply intertwined with patriarchal structures, reinforcing a hierarchy that privileges men and upper-caste communities. This system divides people into rigid caste categories, with Dalits at the bottom, facing severe social exclusion and violence. Women's roles are strictly controlled to uphold caste purity, often leading to the exploitation of their sexuality and restricting their rights. Endogamy, the practice of marrying within one's caste, further enforces these inequalities, limiting women's autonomy over their marital choices.

Dalit women face compounded oppression as both women and Dalits, enduring dual forms of exploitation and violence. They are frequently victims of sexual violence, abuse, and harassment, issues often overlooked in mainstream feminist discourse that tends to focus more on upper-caste women. These experiences underscore the need for an intersectional approach that accounts for the complex ways caste and gender oppression intersect in Dalit women's lives.

Arya critiques the concept of "Dalit patriarchy," arguing that it misrepresents the root cause of Dalit women's oppression, which is primarily Brahmanical patriarchy, not internal community dynamics. She calls for a Dalit feminist framework to address the intersectionality of caste

and gender, stressing the importance of recognizing the distinct struggles of Dalit women within feminist theory in India. Only by confronting both caste and gender inequalities can a more inclusive feminist movement emerge.

Dalit feminism remains critically relevant today as it addresses the ongoing caste- and gender-based violence and discrimination that Dalit women continue to face. Despite legal protections, Dalit women remain among the most marginalized groups in India and South Asia. They continue to face rampant caste-based violence, such as sexual assault, physical abuse, and public humiliation. High-profile cases like the Hathras rape case in 2020, in which a young Dalit woman was brutally raped and murdered, highlight how the intersection of caste and gender leaves Dalit women particularly vulnerable. These crimes are often ignored or minimized by authorities, exposing the systemic failure to protect Dalit women and deliver justice. Dalit feminism highlights this violence and advocates for structural reforms to prevent such atrocities.

Dalit women experience various forms of violence, including physical assault, verbal abuse, sexual harassment, rape, and domestic violence. Verbal abuse often escalates into physical or sexual violence, particularly when dominant caste members assert their power. Domestic violence is prevalent within Dalit households, exacerbated by factors like dowry expectations, alcoholism, and entrenched patriarchal attitudes.

Violence against Dalit women occurs both in public spaces—such as streets, fields, and workplaces—and in private spaces, like their homes. Public attacks are particularly humiliating,

representing collective punishment. Perpetrators include dominant caste landlords, employers, and police officers, who often act with impunity, reinforcing the systemic nature of this violence.

The caste-based violence Dalit women endure is intricately tied to the patriarchal structure of Indian society. Women from dominant castes also perpetuate violence, often driven by economic or social conflicts. Additionally, Dalit men may replicate patriarchal norms within their own community, further perpetuating gender-based violence. These patterns exemplify the intersectionality of caste, class, and gender oppression.

In conclusion, Dalit feminism is a critical framework for understanding the unique and compounded oppression that Dalit women face in South Asia, particularly in India. It highlights how the intersection of caste and gender creates multiple layers of exploitation and violence that cannot be adequately addressed through mainstream feminist approaches. By centering caste within feminist discourse, Dalit feminism not only challenges the limitations of traditional feminist theory but also offers a more comprehensive understanding of gender-based injustices. Dalit women's experiences of oppression—ranging from sexual violence to socio-economic exclusion—demand an intersectional approach that acknowledges both caste and gender as integral to their marginalization.

Moreover, Dalit feminism is essential for creating a more inclusive feminist movement that advocates for structural reforms and social justice.

It calls for the recognition of the distinct struggles Dalit women face and the urgent need to challenge the Brahmanical patriarchy that reinforces their marginalization. Without confronting the intersectionality of caste and gender, true gender justice will remain elusive. Dalit feminism not only demands the inclusion of Dalit women's voices but also offers a transformative vision for a more equitable society, where both caste and gender hierarchies are dismantled.



— by Mansi Rana
BA (hons) SOCIOLOGY
2nd YEAR

Mansi

Sociological Perspective

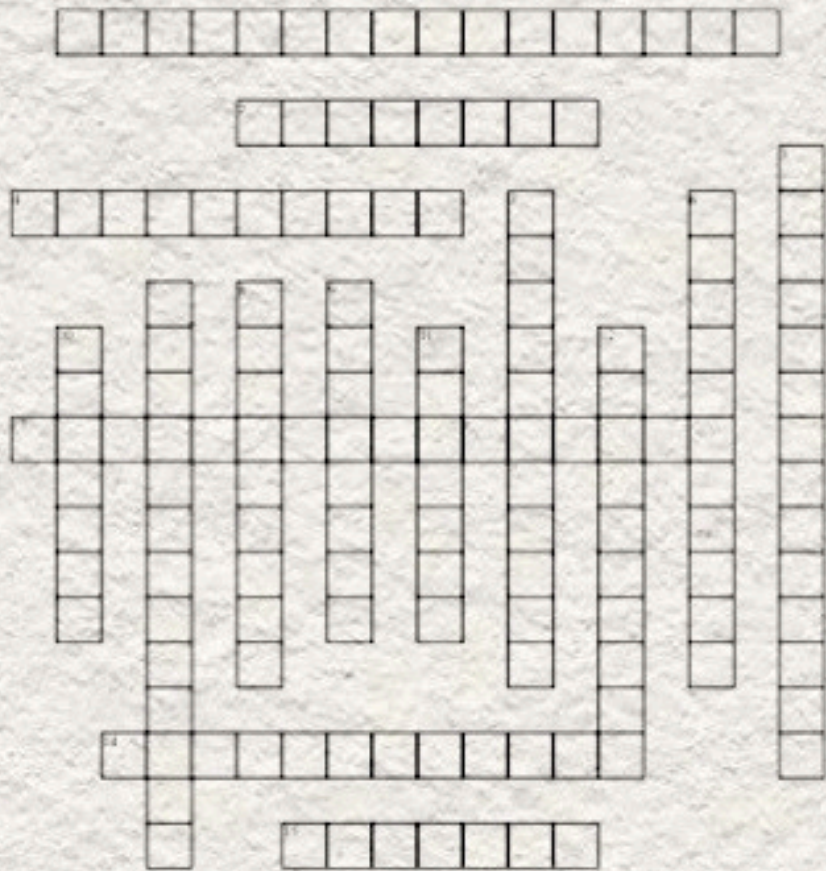
Across

1. affects on a particular person (or people) in their immediate life.
2. leads to on going.
4. the study of mental and emotional process of people.
13. investigates organization, administration, history, and theory of government.
14. a social science that invesitgate culture, customary beliefs and materal traits of a group.
15. members are taught to value the group's way even if the do not

Down

3. interactions between population and the places they lived.
5. sociologist look at groups rather than
6. a vewing of ones behavior of groups sociological
7. deals with human society.

8. scientific study of society.
9. personal characteristics cannot be predicted from ones.
10. the study of economics
11. written record of the human past that analyzes artifacts.
12. groups incourage what as they think, feel, adn bahve in similar ways

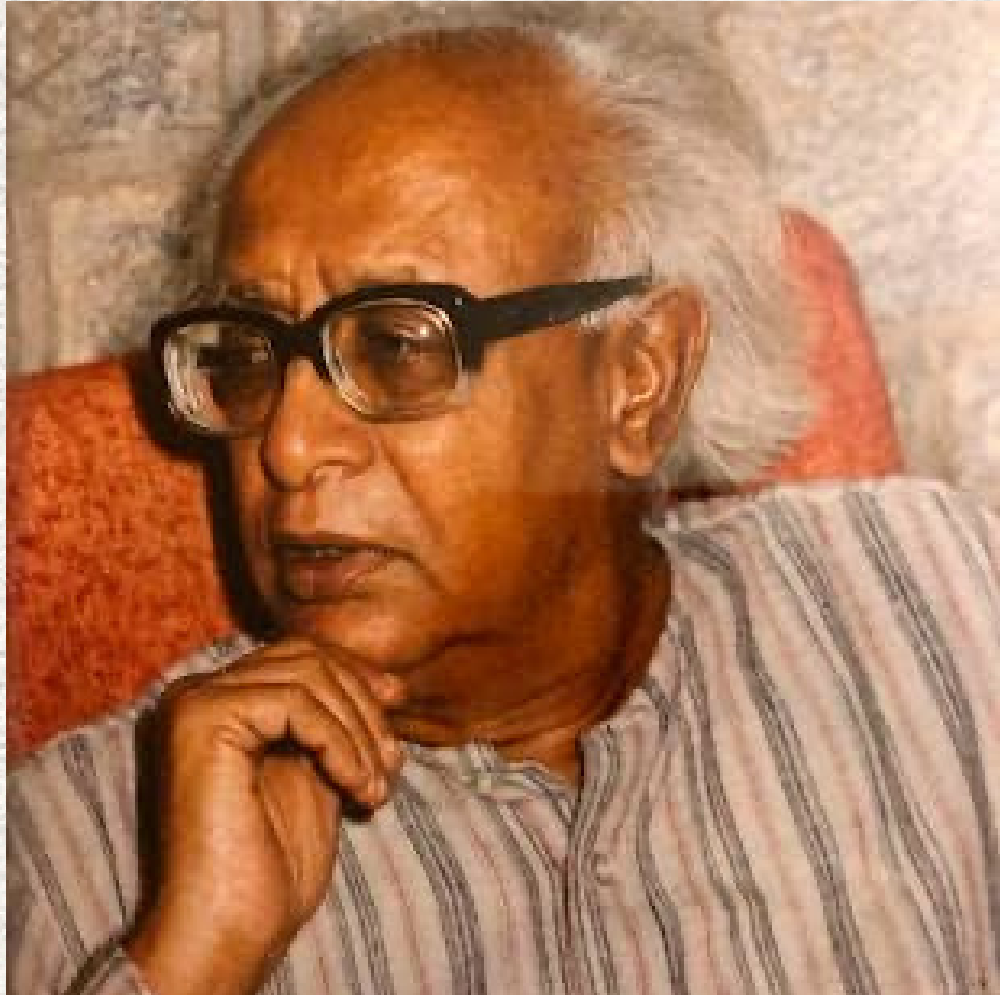


— made by sneha Aggarwal. BA (hons) Sociology. 2nd Year

UNVEILING THE LAYERS: M.N. SRINIVAS AND THE COMPLEX DYNAMICS OF CASTE IN INDIA



NANDINI TYAGI
B.A HONS. SOCIOLOGY
3RD YEAR.



Introduction to M.N. Srinivas

Mysore Narasimhachar Srinivas (1916–1999), commonly referred to as M.N. Srinivas, is one of India's most prominent sociologists and anthropologists, credited with significant contributions to the study of caste, social structure, and Indian society. Srinivas, born in Mysore, pursued his higher education at the University of Bombay and later at Oxford University, where he was mentored by the famous anthropologist A.R. Radcliffe-Brown. His work began with the study of Indian society using fieldwork-based anthropological methods, and he is most recognized for his work on caste dynamics, particularly his theories of Sanskritization and Dominant Caste.

Srinivas' research, primarily conducted in South India, especially in the village of Rampura. He changed

how social scientists looked at caste by shifting from studying ancient Hindu texts to focusing on real-life, hands-on research. His method highlighted the complexities and changes within the caste system, showing how it worked in everyday life, something earlier studies had often missed.

Caste in India: An Overview

Caste, or jati, is a unique form of social stratification found in India, characterized by hereditary transmission of lifestyle, occupation, and social status. It is typically understood through the lens of the

of the fourfold varna system—Brahmin (priests), Kshatriya (warriors), Vaishya (merchants), and Shudras (laborers)—but in practice, Indian society is divided into thousands of sub-castes (jatis) based on region, occupation, and kinship. The caste system has evolved over centuries, deeply entrenching itself in Indian society's political, social, and economic fabric.

While early British colonial and Scholars often viewed caste as a rigid, static hierarchy, M.N. Srinivas's work revealed it to be a much more dynamic, flexible system that changes based on socio-economic and political pressures.

M.N. Srinivas and the Dynamics of Caste

1. Sanskritization

One of Srinivas' most influential concepts is Sanskritization. This theory explains the upward mobility of lower castes by adopting the rituals, practices, and values of higher, usually Brahmin, castes. According to Srinivas, Sanskritization is a process whereby a caste or group emulates the customs, norms, and lifestyle of a higher caste in an effort to raise its social standing. This could involve changing food habits (e.g., adopting vegetarianism), modifying social practices, or emphasizing greater ritual purity.

Srinivas observed this phenomenon during his fieldwork in Karnataka, where non-Brahmin lower castes began practicing Brahminical practices to claim higher status in the caste hierarchy. It demonstrated that caste mobility, while constrained, was possible within the larger framework of the caste system. Sanskritization also revealed how caste, far from being a static system, was not that difficult to change and was used as a tool of social advancement by marginalized groups.

However, Sanskritization is not without its critics. Some sociologists argue that it perpetuates the caste hierarchy rather than destroying it because lower castes strive to conform to the very system that oppresses them,⁸ instead of challenging its existence. Despite these criticisms, the concept remains essential in understanding how caste identities are negotiated in India.



2. Dominant Caste

Another seminal contribution by Srinivas is the concept of the Dominant Caste. He defined the dominant caste as one that is numerically large and wields significant economic and political power in a region, regardless of its position in the caste hierarchy. This caste may or may not be at the top of the traditional varṇa system but exerts dominance due to its land ownership, numerical strength, political influence, and social control over local resources. Srinivas first introduced this concept while studying the Okkaliga caste in the village of Rampura, Karnataka. The Okkaligas, despite not being at the top of the caste system (they were primarily agriculturists), held significant sway over the local

economy and politics due to their numerical strength and control over agricultural land. This led to their dominance over the Brahmins and other higher castes in the village.

The concept of the dominant caste shifted the understanding of power relations within the caste system. It highlighted that caste dominance was not merely about ritual purity or the traditional caste hierarchy but was deeply influenced by economic and political factors. This insight helped scholars move beyond the simplistic idea of caste as a purely ritualistic system and opened up analyses of how power is exercised and contested in rural India.

3. Westernisation

Srinivas also discussed the process of Westernization, which referred to the

the adoption of Western lifestyles, values, and institutions by Indians, especially the urban elite and the educated middle class. Westernization included the spread of modern education, the rise of professions like law and medicine, and the adoption of Western dress, food habits, and individualistic values.

While Westernization often overlapped with Sanskritization, Srinivas made a clear distinction between the two. Sanskritization was an internal process aimed at improving status within the caste system, whereas Westernization involved the adoption of Western ways of life, which often bypassed caste considerations. For example, English education and participation in modern professions could provide mobility opportunities for lower castes and Dalits that were not available through Sanskritization alone.

However, Srinivas was cautious in his analysis, noting that Westernization did not necessarily eradicate caste; instead, it coexisted with caste practices, creating a complex social dynamic where modernity and tradition intersected.

The Changing Nature of Caste in Modern India

Srinivas' research on caste was groundbreaking not only for its concepts but also for its methodology. His approach marked a shift from the study of caste as a rigid, pan-Indian system rooted in ancient religious texts to a more dynamic, localized understanding of caste in everyday life. Through his ethnographic work, Srinivas highlighted the regional variations and changes in caste

practices, revealing that caste is a flexible, evolving institution.

His work also influenced subsequent studies on caste in urban areas, as well as research into how modernization, democratization, and economic reforms have impacted caste relations in India. The rise of caste-based political mobilization, the growing influence of Dalit movements, and the increasing participation of backward castes in democratic processes all underscore the continued relevance of caste in modern India.

Criticism and Legacy

While M.N. Srinivas' theories of Sanskritization and dominant caste were highly influential, they were not without critique. Some scholars argue that Srinivas' work, while highlighting the fluidity of caste, underplayed the enduring oppression and structural violence inherent in the caste system. Critics point out that Sanskritization, for instance, may promote upward mobility for some but does not address the deep inequalities and systemic discrimination faced by Dalits (formerly known as "Untouchables"). Furthermore, with the rise of caste-based political movements and assertions of Dalit identity, scholars have questioned whether Sanskritization remains relevant in a context where caste identities are more likely to be mobilized for political resistance than for upward social emulation. Nonetheless, Srinivas' work remains a crucial starting point for any serious study of caste in India. M.N. Srinivas provided a nuanced understanding of caste in India that went beyond ritualistic or textual interpretations. Through his concepts of Sanskritization, dominant caste,



and Westernization, he illuminated the fluid, multifaceted nature of caste and how it shapes and is shaped by socio-political forces. His legacy continues to influence sociological studies, reminding us that caste, though ancient, continues to evolve and adapt in contemporary India.

For students of sociology, Srinivas' work offers a window into the complexities of caste and encourages a deeper exploration of how traditional social structures interact with modernity, politics, and power in India. His empirical and theoretical contributions remain vital for anyone seeking to understand the intricate layers of caste dynamics in Indian society.

CASTE AND OCCUPATION



SANGEETA SHUKLA
B.A HONS. SOCIOLOGY
3RD YEAR.



G.S Ghurye, Govind Sadashiv Ghurye was born on 12 December 1893 and died on 28 December 1983 was a sociologist and anthropologist and is known as the founder of Indian Sociology. His work majorly focused on caste, Family, religion and Ethnicity. He led the first post graduate Sociology department at Bombay University.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Caste system plays a major part in GS Ghurye's contribution in Sociology. He examined the origin and history of caste and its impact on the society. His work shows how caste plays an important role in influencing one's identity and social relations. According to Ghurye there was a disability in the caste system and people were provided with unequal privileges. Lower and backward classes used to suffer a lot, they were not allowed to pass through the place from where upper class used to pass.

They were not allowed to drink water from public Wells and even they were not allowed to live in the main areas and used to live in the outskirts. The caste system according to him was hierarchical which places Brahmins at the top then Kshatriyas then Vaishyas and lastly the shudras which led to the division in society. People were not allowed to select the occupation of the choices and forced to follow occupations allotted to them by birth. There were even restrictions on social interaction and food served on special occasions.

There were 2 types of food katcha (raw) and pakka (cooked) which were accordingly provided to people on the

basis of their caste. Endogamy is the most important feature of the system and sub caste are there in caste.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CASTE

- Segmental division of the society.
- Hierarchy.
- Civil and religious disability and privileges.
- Lack of unrestricted choice of occupation.
- Restriction on food drinks and social intercourse.
- Endogamy.



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