

**Programme:- Master in Sociology**

**SEMESTER II**

**Postgraduate Department of Sociology**

**Patna University, Patna**

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**Compulsory Paper:- C.C. 8 (Urban Sociology)**

**Unit II :- Theoretical Perspectives in Urban Sociology**

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**URBAN SOCIOLOGY THEORIES**

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**CLASSICAL THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES:-**

**Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels - macro-sociological**

- People in preindustrial, traditional societies were generic, tribal beings
- Rise of city was transition from barbarism to civilization
- People realize political and economic freedom, productive specialization
- Social evolution of humans not complete until capitalism was transformed into socialism
- Emphasis of economics and problems of inequality and conflict

**Ferdinand Tonnies (1855-1936) German (pessimistic) - macro-sociological**

- Considered social structure of city
- Defined and described two basic organizing principles of human association or two contrasting types of human social life, a typology with a continuum of pure type of settlement:
  1. Gemeinschaft (community): characterized country village, people in rural village have an essential unity of purpose, work together for the common

good, united by ties of family (kinship) and neighbourhood, land worked communally by inhabitants, social life characterized by intimate, private and exclusive living together, members bound by common language and traditions, recognized common goods and evils, common friends and enemies, sense of we-ness or our-ness, humane

2. Gesellschaft (association): characterized large city, city life is a mechanical aggregate characterized by disunity, rampant individualism and selfishness, meaning of existence shifts from group to individual, rational, calculating, each person understood in terms of a particular role and service provided; deals with the artificial construction of an aggregate of human beings which superficially resembles the Gemeinschaft in so far as the individuals peacefully live together yet whereas in Gemeinschaft people are united in spite of all separating factors, in Gesellschaft people are separated in spite of all uniting factors
- There are three types of Gemeinschaft relationships: Kinship, Friendship, and Neighborhood or Locality
    1. Kinship Gemeinschaft is based on Family; the strongest relationship being between mother and child, then husband and wife, and then siblings. Gemeinschaft also exists between father and child, but this relationship is less instinctual than that of mother and child. However, the father-child relationship is the original manifestation of authority within Gemeinschaft.
    2. Kinship develops and differentiates into the Gemeinschaft of Locality, which is based on a common habitat
  - There is also Friendship, or Gemeinschaft of the mind, which requires a common mental community (eg: religion).
  - He feared the undermining of the fabric of social life

### **Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) French (optimistic) - macro-sociological**

- Considered social structure of city
- Social solidarity--the bond between all individuals within a society
- Developed model of contrasting social order types: both types are natural

- **Mechanical solidarity:** refers to social bonds constructed on likeness and largely dependent upon common belief, custom, ritual, routines, and symbol, people are identical in major ways and thus united almost automatically, self-sufficient; social cohesion based upon the likeness and similarities among individuals in a society. Common among prehistoric and pre-agricultural societies, and lessens in predominance as modernity increases.
- **Organic solidarity:** social order based on social differences, complex division of labour where many different people specialize in many different occupations, greater freedom and choice for city inhabitants despite acknowledged impersonality, alienation, disagreement and conflict, undermined traditional social integration but created a new form of social cohesion based on mutual interdependence, liberating; social cohesion based upon the dependence individuals in more advanced society have on each other. Common among industrial societies as the division of labor increases. Though individuals perform different tasks and often have different values and interests, the order and very survival of society depends on their reliance on each other to perform their specific task.

### **Georg Simmel (1858-1918) German (pessimistic) - micro-sociological**

- Considered importance of urban experience, i.e. chose to focus on urbanism (life within the city) rather than urbanization (development of urban areas), "The Metropolis and Mental Life" is an essay detailing his views on life in the city, focusing more on social psychology
- Unique trait of modern city is intensification of nervous stimuli with which city dweller must cope, from rural setting where rhythm of life and sensory imagery is more slow, habitual and even, to city with constant bombardments of sights, sounds and smells
- Individual learns to discriminate, become rational and calculating, develops a blasé attitude – matter-of-fact, a social reserve, a detachment, respond with head rather than heart, don't care and don't get involved
- Urbanites highly attuned to time
- Rationality expressed in advanced economic division of labour, and the use of money because of requirement for a universal means of exchange

- Acknowledged freedom, transcendence of pettiness of daily routine, new heights of personal and spiritual development but sense of alienation could override this
- To maintain sense of individuality and not feel like cog in machine, do something different or odd to stand out
- Social distance
- Author of this concept, from which we have Bogardus Social Distance Scale (Emery Bogardus – Chicago School)
- A complex interpretation of social interaction as forms of distance in two ways
  1. geometric form (Euclidian) and 2) a metamorphic sense, or
  1. spatial and 2) symbolic
  1. Euclidian and 2) imagined
  1. Physical and 2) symbolic

### ***Philosophy of Money***

- Economic exchange is a form of social interaction
- When monetary transactions replaced earlier forms of barter, significant changes occurred in the form of interaction between social actors
- Money is subject to precise division and manipulation, it permits exact measurement of equivalents
- Money is impersonal, objects of barter are/were not
- Money promotes rational calculation in human affairs, furthering rationalization characteristic of modern societies
- Money replaces personal ties by impersonal relations that limited to a specific purpose
- Abstract calculation invades areas of social life, e.g. kinship relations or realm of esthetic appreciation

- Shift from qualitative to quantitative appraisals
- Money increases personal freedom and fosters social differentiation
- Money in modern world is standard of value and means of exchange
- Above economic functions, it symbolizes and embodies modern spirit of rationalism, calculability and impersonality
- Money is the major mechanism for shift between gemeinschaft to gesellschaft

### **The blasé attitude**

- incapacity to react to new sensations due to saturation.
- reinforced by the money economy: money--a common denominator of all values, regardless of their individuality.
- reserve, indifference, apathy--forms of psychological protection--become parts of the metropolitan lifestyle.
- Positive aspect of metropolitan life: reserve and detachment produce individual freedom.
- Paradox of city life : objectivization leads to greater individualism and subjectivism.
- [The most significant characteristic of the metropolis] "functional extension beyond its physical boundaries"—a person's life does not end with the limits of his/her body and the area of his/her immediate activity.