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Q12

Broadly explain G.H. Mead's ideas and their shortcomings. How can Mead's ideas be applied to Indian society.

Ans 2:

G.H. Mead was dozen in Symbolic Interactionist approach.

G.H. Mead's ideas

- ① Humans are endowed with internal thought process. It is between 'I' (dynamic) and 'me' (conformist).
- ② 'Self' is created during interaction using symbols.
- ③ 'Self' develops during 'play stage' taking role of discrete others and then in 'game stage', role of generalised others.

Shortcomings

- ① Marxist perspective highlights role of economic infrastructure, which Mead ignores.

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② Feminist criticise Interactionist perspective for neglecting gendered interactions (eg socialisation into a female - Ann Oakley)

③ Power, status shape interaction differently ~~⇒~~ of different people.

Application to Indian society

① Self of an Indian created as per how others look at him.

② eg → earlier caste hierarchy & one's place internalised by interaction so no revolt

② 'I' > 'me' of social reformers like Ram Mohan Roy to bring social change

③ Dynamic socialisation where structure changed by individuals.  
eg Dr B R Ambedkar and Gandhiji protested against rigid caste!

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Q2: How is the understanding of social action of Parsons and Weber different?

Ans: Both Parsons and Weber tried to connect micro social action with macro structures, still their approaches had differences.

## ① Definition

Weber

Social action is a meaningful action, oriented towards others.

Parsons

It happens between actors, in a boundary for goal optimisation, within societal norms & values

## ② Perspective

Weber

Interpretative perspective, focused on meanings.

Parsons

Integrative.  
Cluster of social actions make social system.  
(Voluntaristic theory)



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③ Types

Weber

Ideal types of social action -

- Traditional (beliefs)
- Affective (emotions)
- Zweckrational (goals rational)
- Wert rational (values)

Parsons

- Instrumental based on objective motives
- Affective based on cathetic motives
- Evaluative based on moral needs

④ Connect with macro

Weber

Social actions make types of authority

→ affective → charismatic authority

• rational action brings social change eg → Protestant ethic brought capitalisms.

Parsons

Cluster makes social system. Eg →

Instrumental → Social system

Affective → Personality system

Evaluative → Culture system

Both the theories bridged the gap between nomothetic and ideographic idea of the discipline.

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Specimen Booklet

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Q3: Merton has defined bureaucrats to be 'situationistic' world in today's scenario, we require bureaucrats who are 'rebel'. Examine.

Ans3: R K Merton propounded the theory of deviance and anomie.

The incongruence between culturally defined goals and structurally available means creates an anomic situation, leading to deviance.

| Type        | Goal acceptance | Means acceptance |
|-------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Conformists | +               | +                |
| Ritualists  | -               | +                |
| Innovators  | +               | -                |
| Rebels      | -               | -                |
| Rebellion   | ±               | ±                |

→ bring new means & new goals leading to social change.

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## Case of bureaucrats

① Merton says they excessively focus on rules & methods, leading to goal displacement.

② We need 'sebel' bureaucrats :-

- i) who define goals of people's welfare beyond plain administration
- ii) who are ready to devise new means. (Eg) → collaborating with NGOs

③ we don't need 'sebel' bureaucrats :-

- i) expected to follow rule of law instead of breaking them.
- ii) existing goals of efficiency, impartiality, objectivity equally important. (Eg) → ensuring timely meetings of all departments.

Bureaucrats must continue to focus on welfare with objectivity.



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Q4:

How does Marx view social conflict as an essential element in social change?

Ans4:

Karl Marx gave the conflict perspective ~~as a~~ in sociology.

Elements of social conflict in social change

① Historical Materialism

i) He traces progression of history in terms of changing mode of production

ii) In each mode, social conflict at many levels:-

→ a) Between opposing classes of 'haves' and 'have-nots'  
eg Landlords vs Serfs

→ b) Between new forces of production and existing

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relations of production.

Eg → new factory system wants  
mobile labour while feudalism  
wants serfs attached to land

→ c) between humans and nature  
to develop new forces of production

→ d) Alienation - Conflict b/w labour  
nature & social conditions.

This leads to social change →

① Class struggle acts between  
opposing classes, acts as 'motor  
of history' (TB Bottomore)

② Revolution in each stage for new  
mode of production.

③ 'Class for itself' in capitalism,  
brings socialism, then communism  
leading to de-alienation.

Conflict becomes the  
source of tension & change.



Q5: Farmer suicides is a major issue facing Indian agricultural society. Evaluate the same using Durkheim's theory of suicide and offer ways out of this issue.

Ans: Emile Durkheim gave a distinct sociological explanation of personal phenomena like suicide in 'Le suicide'.

## Durkheim's theory

① Social facts accounts for suicide  
Eg → higher in males, protestants, unmarried.

② Four types based on bonds of integration and regulation

|      | Integration | Regulation |
|------|-------------|------------|
| High | Altruistic  | Fatalistic |
| Low  | Egoistic    | Anomic     |

Types of Suicide.

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## Farmers suicide

- ① Egoistic suicide → Lack of bonds of extended family due to fragmentation of land.
- ② Altruistic - Hope to give family some compensation (e.g. Peepi Lino film)
- ③ Fatalistic . High debt of banks, moneylenders
- ④ Anomic - high expectation from Capitalistic farming used HYV, fertiliser etc → Crop failure later.

## Ways out of this

- ① Institutional methods of credit
- ② Community bonds strengthening.

Suicides are a challenge which must be dealt with compassion.