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SOCIOLOGICAL THINKERS-II

B.S.O.C.-113

B.A. Sociology (Hons.) - 6th Semester

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By: Kshyama Sagar Mehier



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**Sample Preview
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QUESTION PAPER

June – 2023

(Solved)

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Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks : 100

Note: Attempt any five questions. All questions carry equal marks.

Q. 1. Being out the major influences on Radcliffe Brown's thought.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 1, 'Intellectual Climate and Influences'.

Q. 2. Discuss Parsons' idea of social system.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 16, 'The Concept of Social System'.

Q. 3. Explain the different models given by Levi Strauss.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 34, 'Types of Models'.

Q. 4. Differentiate between the concept of 'I' and 'Me' as part of the self.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 56, Q. No. 4.

Q. 5. Distinguish between 'front stage' and 'back stage'.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-5, Page No. 65, Q. No. 2 and Page No. 68, Q. No. 5.

Q. 6. What is 'Culture Industry'? How does it influence the consumers?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-7, Page No. 89, 'Culture Industry'.

Q. 7. Discuss the relevance of Marcuse's book 'One-Dimensional Man' to contemporary times.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 120, 'New Forms of Social Control'.

Q. 8. Discuss the concept of cultural capital with suitable examples.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-10, Page No. 132, 'Cultural Capital'.

Q. 9. How do you understand by the idea of panopticon through modern surveillance systems? Explain.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-11, Page No. 148, 'Understanding Panopticon through New Forms of Punishments, Surveillance and Control'.

■ ■

QUESTION PAPER

December – 2022

(Solved)

SOCIOLOGICAL THINKERS-II

B.S.O.C.-113

Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks : 100

Note: Attempt any five questions. All questions carry equal marks.

Q. 1. Describe the concept of social structure as elaborated by Radcliffe Brown.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 2 ‘The Concept of Social Structure in Redcliffe-Brown’s Work’ and Page No. 9, Q. No. 2.

Q. 2. Discuss the integrative functions of social system according to Talcott Parsons.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 24, Q. No. 6.

Q. 3. Elaborate on Levi-Strauss’ understanding of structure as models.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 39, Q. No. 4.

Q. 4. Bring out the role of language in the development of ‘Self’ as elaborated by G. H. Mead.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 52, ‘The ‘I’ and the ‘me’ and Page No. 54, Q. No. 1.

Q. 5. Explain Goffman’s usage of dramaturgy as a metaphor to understand the human interaction process.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-5, Page No. 66, Q. No. 1. and Page No. 67, Q. No. 2.

Q. 6. How is personal identity shaped by cultural constructions ? Explain with suitable examples.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-5, Page No. 70, Q. No. 3.

Q. 7. What is Frankfurt School’s contribution to the study of mass culture? Discuss.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-7, Page No. 90, ‘Mass Culture: Other Critiques’.

Q. 8. Discuss the nature of commodity fetishism in capitalist society.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-8, Page No. 111, Q. No. 2.

Q. 9. Discuss the role of education in reproducing different forms of capital.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-10, Page No. 135, ‘Education: Reproduction of Social Structure’.

■ ■

Sample Preview of The Chapter

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SOCIOLOGICAL THANKERS-II

BLOCK 1: FUNCTION, SYSTEM AND STRUCTURE

Radcliffe-Brown: Structural Functionalism



INTRODUCTION

To assist the new fieldworkers, Radcliffe-Brown provided a battery of notions. We shall understand some of these concepts in this chapter. We'll start by quickly tracing the philosophical currents that influenced Radcliffe Brown's particular style of social anthropology. We'll also know about Radcliffe-Brown's conception of social structure. A case study will be the main topic of the third and last portion. We will quickly go over some structural characteristics of tribes in Western Australia that Radcliffe-Brown investigated. This will provide tangible instances to assist explain some abstract concepts.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

INTELLECTUAL CLIMATE AND INFLUENCES

Holistic, analytical tradition and fact-finding, empirical ethnographic tradition are the two threads that make up modern social anthropology. British and American anthropology stand in for the former, while French social anthropology, which was greatly inspired by Emile Durkheim, represents the latter. Detailed analyses of specific civilizations around the turn of the 20th century led to the publishing of a number of ethnographic monographs. In Britain, a new academic field called social anthropology was made possible by these studies. Sociology and social anthropology have many similarities.

The results of social anthropology, which are mostly based on research on non-Western countries, are generally applicable to the study of all different kinds of society. Because of this, sociological thought

significantly advanced in the 1920s and 1930s thanks to the development of social anthropology. Under the direction of Bronislaw Malinowski, the focus of social anthropology on researching civilizations based on first-hand observation marked a turning point in the development of sociological theory. Social anthropologists' insistence that an ethnographic account must be based on a year-long or longer study of a particular civilization through personal visits was the reason why this was the case.

Additionally, they argued that societies should be researched for their own purpose and chastised individuals, who merely studied ancient cultures in order to rewrite human history. Early twentieth century ethnographers who adhered to the Malinowskian tradition of gathering first hand knowledge on prehistoric communities dominated the field. As its leader, Malinowski stood in opposition to both the diffusionists and the evolutionists and pursued the aim of building social anthropology as a different approach to examining human communities.

The Field-work Tradition

Radcliffe-Brown attended Cambridge University in England, which was undergoing a highly creative and productive intellectual era at the time. Teachers and students openly discussed and questioned one another's opinions. Under the guidance of W.H.R. Rivers, Radcliffe-Brown enrolled in anthropology for the first time in 1904. Haddon and Rivers had taken part in the renowned "Torres Straits" expedition. Radcliffe-Brown began fieldwork under the direction of Rivers and Haddon. His first fieldwork focused on the Andaman Islanders between 1906 and 2008. As a result, he joined the emerging, empiricist school of British scientific anthropology. This had a significant

forming impact on him that persisted throughout his career. Some British scholars were deeply impacted by Emile Durkheim's groundbreaking study, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912). One of them was Radcliffe-Brown.

The Durkheimian Tradition: Radcliffe-Brown's 'Conversion'

The Durkheimian tradition provided the scientific method, the belief that social activity was structured and amenable to in-depth investigation, and a certain detachment from personal interests. In a well organised society, that is, a society built on "organic solidarity", Durkheim was confident that people would be able to live both individual and communal lives.

Durkheim promoted the sociological study of "social facts". He mentioned looking at these data honestly and without bias. He believed that morality was the foundation of civilization. His work included the idea of the communal consciousness heavily. Durkheim aimed to create sociology as a "objective", exacting discipline, much like the scientific sciences. All of these concepts drew Radcliffe-Brown in. His beliefs on the perfect society of the future were influenced by Radcliffe-Brown's love for the natural sciences and Durkheimian sociology. In a nutshell, Radcliffe-Brown's work underwent a focus shift as a result of the influence of the Durkheimian tradition. The "ethnographer" changed her name to "sociologist", Radcliffe-Brown made an effort to interpret the descriptive, ethnographic information she collected using sociological principles. He made an effort to arrange his material in a thorough, theoretical manner.

Radcliffe Brown

The idea of structural functionalism was created by English social anthropologist Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown (17 January 1881-24 October 1955). He attended Trinity College in Cambridge as well as King Edward's School in Birmingham for his education. Under the direction of W. H. R. Rivers and A. C. Haddon, he pursued social anthropology while studying psychology. Under the influence of the latter, he went on field research expeditions to the Andaman Islands (1906-1908) and Western Australia (1910-1922) with Australian writer Daisy Bates and biologist E. L. Grant Watson. His latter works, *The Andaman Islanders* (1922) and *The Social Organisation of Australian Tribes* (1930), were inspired by his time spent in the Andaman Islands and Western Australia.

THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN RADCLIFFE-BROWN'S WORK

A corpus of cogent conceptions is, in Radcliffe-Brown's opinion, a fundamental prerequisite for any science. Technical terminology that are understood and used in the same manner by all of the subject's students should be used to denote these notions. For example, physicists employ words like "atom", "molecule", and "combustion", among others. These concepts' definitions and applications are consistent from student to student. According to Radcliffe-Brown, a lot of words are used in anthropological writing without a clear meaning and various authors use the same phrase in different contexts. This demonstrates how young science is.

He claims that by continually remembering a clear image of the nature of the factual world to be researched, unclear, unscientific thinking may be avoided. It is necessary to connect all ideas and theories to this reality. The process of social life in a specific, constrained location during a certain time period is, in Radcliffe-Brown's words, "the empirical reality with which social anthropology has to deal, by description, by analysis, and in comparative studies."

The "process of social life" refers to the diverse human behaviours, especially group behaviours and interactions. For instance, we can refer to agricultural tasks as "joint actions" in rural Indian society. Joint actions are also implied by the activities of youth clubs, women's groups, cooperative organisations, etc.

The social anthropologist must define a few broad characteristics to describe social life. For instance, a sociologist studying agricultural operations in rural India will attempt to identify its fundamental characteristics. Who does these things, when, and how? How do different people cooperate with one another and interact when the product is being sown, transplanted, harvested, threshed, and sold? The sociologist might be able to pinpoint general characteristics like the gender makeup of agricultural work or the role that women play. The science's data is made up of these generic descriptions. These can be acquired using a variety of techniques, including historical documents, participant observation, etc.

Different characteristics could evolve at various speeds. Using the aforementioned example, it is clear that agricultural operations have undergone a lot of modifications over time. The amount of workers available for agriculture has somewhat decreased. They reject exploitation that is violent, unlike in the

past. Machines, fertilisers, insecticides, and other tools are employed more often. Despite these developments, it is nevertheless true that majority of the nation's women continue to toil away on fields without receiving enough compensation. Diachronic descriptions refer to any anthropological description that takes changes across time into consideration. On the other hand, a 'synchronic' description refers to the social characteristics of a certain moment.

According to Radcliffe-Brown, social anthropology will become a unique discipline as a result of rigorous, explicit ideas since they allow for generalisations based on synchronic and diachronic explanations of social existence. The idea of social structure has significance in this situation, enabling us to view the complete web of interpersonal connections in a methodical manner. As a result, we may learn more about how society functions and maintains its cohesiveness.

Social Structure and Social Organisation

In the words of Radcliffe-Brown, "the concept of structure refers to an arrangement of parts or components related to one another in some sort of larger unity." As a result, the human body's structure first seems to be an assembly of different tissues and organs. If we dig a little deeper, it is essentially a configuration of cells and fluids.

Human beings or people who participate in social life are the fundamental components of social structure. The social structure is determined by how people are arranged in relation to one another. For instance, castes are used to group people in our nation. Caste is a structural aspect of Indian social life as a result. The relationship between parents, kids, grandparents, and other family members makes up the family structure. Because of this, Radcliffe-Brown believes that structure is an observable fact rather than an idea. The idea of social structure held by Radcliffe-Brown is distinct from other social anthropologists' conceptions, it should be mentioned.

We need to be on the lookout for social groupings of all stripes and analyse their structure, according to Radcliffe-Brown. People are divided into groups according to classes, categories, castes, etc. The arranging of people into dyadic or person-to-person connections, such as master-servant or mother's brother or sister's kid, is, in Radcliffe-Brown's perspective, a crucial structural characteristic. Intergroup interactions and individual interactions make a social structure abundantly clear. After briefly discussing the idea of

social structure, let's examine what Radcliffe-Brown meant by social organisation. Person arrangements are referred to as structures. Activities are organised through organisation. As an illustration, when studying this Block, you planned your actions, reading a certain portion, doing the tasks, consulting the Glossary as needed, etc. This is individual-level organisation. According to Radcliffe-Brown, "the arrangement of activities of two or more persons adjusted to give a united combined activity" is what Radcliffe-Brown refers to as social organisation. For instance, the bowlers, batsmen, fielders, and wicketkeeper on a cricket team all contribute to the game in some way.

The Concept of Social Structure

The idea of social structure rose to prominence in social anthropology in the decade that followed World War II. However, the idea has a lengthy history and has been interpreted differently by academics.

(i) The term "structure" originally meant "building constructions" in the English language. Early Marxist literature contains references to the idea of structure in the sense of a building or construction. Marx described the economic 'structure' as being made up of the relations of production. The evolutionist Morgan, whose work *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity* (1871) might be considered the first anthropological analysis of social organisation, had a significant impact on Marx and Engels.

(ii) Anatomy began to use the term "structure" by the 16th century. The words "structure" and "function" were introduced into sociology by Herbert Spencer, who had an anatomical conception of society in mind. The work of Durkheim, who Radcliffe-Brown took inspiration from for many of his concepts, also uses this picture. Following Radcliffe-Brown, a number of British academics focused on formal facets of society, such as the political system and kinship structure, including Evans-Pritchard, Fortes, and Forde.

(iii) The work of French structuralist Levi-Strauss reveals a further aspect of the notion of structure. His understanding of structure is derived from linguistics and is an analytical, abstract model that may be used to contrast actual systems. Then, certain patterns or regularities are found and described.

Radcliffe-Brown uses the example of a contemporary army to demonstrate the ideas of structure

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and organisation. The organisation initially consists of the grouping of people into divisions, regiments, companies, etc. These organisations have their own internal structure, which consists of ranks. So, we have soldiers who are corporals, majors, colonels, brigadiers, etc. The distribution of diverse tasks to different people and organisations reflects how the army is organised or how its activities are set up. An army's duties include guarding the nation's borders, assisting the government in times of national emergency, and other tasks.

Social Structure and Institutions

The assumption that people would abide by particular standards or regulations is one of the fundamental tenets of social relationships. A system of rules and behavioural patterns that has been in place for a while and is widely accepted by society is referred to as an institution. For instance, family-related organisations in a community define appropriate conduct patterns that family members are expected to follow. In contemporary culture, children are expected to respect their parents, just as parents are supposed to support and care for their children as well as the family's elderly members.

Institutions "define for a person how he is expected to behave, and also how he may expect others to behave", according to Radcliffe-Brown. Of course, people occasionally break these laws, and there are a number of penalties in place to deal with violations. According to Radcliffe-Brown, the institutions that control how people or groups interact must be used to define social structure. According to him, "the structural features of social life of a particular region consist of all those continuing arrangements of persons in institutional relationships, which are exhibited in the actions, and interactions that in their totality make up the social life."

Structural Continuity and Structural Form

If social structure, as Radcliffe-Brown claims, refers to a configuration of people, then it stands to reason that structure must likewise vanish when those people pass away or cease to exist. But this is not the case. Although people may come and go, structure remains or is maintained. Social groups, classes, and castes, for instance, constantly change who belongs to them. They lose people via death and gain people through birth. For instance, the Lok Sabha may lose members if they pass away, retire, or fail to win the upcoming election, but new ones will quickly take their place. Even if a tribal leader passes away, a

replacement will take over quickly. We now need to emphasise Radcliffe-Brown's difference between structural form and social structure.

The social structure is always changing. People are born and die, and society's makeup is always shifting. Despite the fact that social systems are changing, structural form, according to Radcliffe-Brown, is remarkably constant. The commonly accepted "social usages" or norms mirror this structural shape. These social practises continue despite changes in the population. The durability of this structural form depends on how cohesively its constituent elements (such as the family, educational system, political system, etc.) function and how successfully they carry out the unique maintenance responsibilities. For instance, raising and socialising children is a specific responsibility of the family.

Institutions of higher learning provide education, whereas the political system is focused on governing. These activities speak about the 'functions' of the system's component pieces. A word of caution should be given here: even in his own writings, when the latter is used interchangeably with social organisation, Radcliffe-Brown does not make a clear difference between social structure and social form. In a nutshell, Radcliffe-Brown's influential social anthropological idea of "social structure" refers to objectively observable events, namely the arrangements or interactions of a society's members.

There is also an organisational component, which refers to a system of structuring people's actions. Institutions have a role in social structure by defining interpersonal norms and standards of conduct. Although social structure is always changing, an abstract idea that takes into consideration social usages has a structural shape that is generally consistent. The efficiency with which each of its constituent elements performs its "functions" determines how stable it is. The use of examples is the most effective technique to make these concepts completely obvious. As part of his field research, Radcliffe-Brown travelled to the Andaman Islands, Africa, and Australia.

THE STRUCTURAL SYSTEM IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Some of the fundamentals of these tribes' social structures, as methodically laid out by Radcliffe-Brown.

The Territorial Basis

According to Radcliffe-Brown, the separation of the nation into multiple discrete areas served as the