

HS8.101 Making of Contemporary World

Quiz 2

Q1:

Analyze the decision-making process in your housing colony/society/mohalla. Are they characteristic of gemeinschaft, Gesellschaft or a mix? In other words, can a 'community' survive in an industrial society?

Q2:

Give examples from real-life situations:

- a. The Marxist notion of class
- b. The Weberian notion of class

Note: You are expected to give examples of class dynamics operating in modern society. The first example will be from the Marxist understanding of class, and the second from the Weberian understanding of class.

Q3:

The Special Marriage Act was passed in India in 1954, and the Hindu Marriage Act was passed in 1955. Please read up on their provisions from the internet. What social formation do these acts visualize (Gemeinschaft, Gesellschaft or a mix)? Justify your answer by looking up the characteristics of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft.

Ans 1:

My housing colony's decision-making process is a mix of *gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, but it is more inclined towards being a *Gesellschaft*. In our colony, most development decisions are taken by an elected personality. However, many decisions regarding the small gathering and various functions around festivals depend upon the residents' will and mutual understanding.

Most people in our colony work in different sectors and don't intervene in others' lives. Anyone is independent in deciding what they want to do without any other person's influence. Many people in my colony are anonymous to each other and vice-versa. But in decision-making, one has to think if it will affect one's family's social status. But, if we analyze a smaller scale, my neighbours are like a part of my extended family. And we include each other in many functions with our natural will, and many times my father and uncle seek advice from each other regarding any important decision. They may have an indirect influence on our decision but not direct.

I can summarize that I live in a *Gesellschaft* society, but when I analyze it on a micro-level. Due to our relations and behaviour with my street residents, it's a tiny *gemeinschaft* society too. So, considering the situation and harmony of my society. Yes, I believe a community can survive in an industrial society where people don't intrude on others' personal space and maintain the love and harmony of the region.

Ans 2:

The real-life situation that resonates with the Marxist notion of class is the present agriculture system of India.

Some people own the means of production, i.e., capitalists who own significant parts of the land and don't have to work themselves. Instead, they appoint workers on daily wages to work in their fields. They are usually referred to as *Zimidar/Zamindar*, i.e. the one who owns the land. Then the daily wage workers who work for them are *serfs/Majdoor*. They are usually poor people who don't own any land and depend on *Zamindar* for their living. The other type of workers are those who own a small part of the land, but the amount is insufficient for their family to sustain. So they work on the land of *Zamindar* by sparing time working on their part of the land, and they get resources by being a worker for *Zamindar*.

The real-life situation that reflects the Weberian notion of class is the wealthy elite businessmen of the country. They have servants at their house who work for them. And the servants are totally dependent on them for their family's living. They have an impact on the decision-making of society directly or indirectly. Their decisions affect the ecosystem of a place, and it is an excellent example of the social and political power they enjoy with the use of the money they possess. They are the dominant ones and affect the lives of the workers working for them by labouring them. And the resources they possess generate a certain amount of respect among people, thereby increasing their cultural impact on society.

Ans 3:

The Special Marriage Act 1954 is an example of Gesellschaft.

"The Special Marriage Act, 1954 is enacted to provide a special form of marriage for the people of India and all Indian nationals in foreign countries, irrespective of the religion or faith followed by either party." It signifies that if two adults who are above the legal age of marriage in the country can marry each other by their will, disregarding the biases made by society such as caste, creed and religion and thereby residing the decision of one's life to oneself with the impact of any other human being whether he is one's blood-related person or anyone anonymous, which is an example of Gesellschaft.

The Hindu Marriage Act 1955 is also an example of Gesellschaft. The act's primary purpose was to amend and codify the law relating to marriage among Hindus and others.[1] Besides amending and codifying Sastrik Law, it introduced separation and divorce, which did not exist in Sastrik Law. This enactment brought uniformity of law for all sections of Hindus. In India, there are religion-specific civil codes that separately govern adherents of certain other religions.

This act was used to make everyone in a Hindu marriage equal, disregard his social status and treat everyone equally and defy society's norms of living with one eternally, making it a Gesellschaft.