

Classical Sociological Theory
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Lecture – 41

Social Stratification: Class, Status Group, and Party

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**Social Stratification: Class,
Status Group, and Party**



Welcome back to the class. We are going to discuss a very important set of observations made by Max Weber, regarding the phenomenon of social stratification. For students of sociology, this term is very important, because it talks about how a society is stratified or how there are different divisions within the society and usually, we understand these divisions as hierarchically arranged or stratification. In other words, it is understood as the division of society into different strata, different strata with an understanding that some of this strata are considered to be superior, while others are considered to be inferior.

We know that there are different groups in every society, whether it is ethnic groups or linguistic groups or caste groups or religious groups and we understand these groups as manifestations of diversity. We call it as pluralism, as diversity, as multiculturalism in different sense of the words, depending upon the political and cultural context.

But when we talk about stratification, usually the examples given for stratification are say, caste system in India or racism in America and in European societies or gender also is considered to be a example of stratification, where there are very distinguishable strata, there are different layers

of people who are arranged in a vertical manner with the notion of superiority and inferiority. You know that, when we talk about racism, racial discrimination is a manifestation of this racial stratification.

Similarly, caste discrimination is a manifestation of the stratification based on caste system. Some of the castes are considered to be superior and while others are considered to be inferior, that has been the traditional way in which you visualize this ritual hierarchy or a vertical hierarchy, the hierarchical ritual scale on which certain caste are considered to be lower, certain castes are considered to be higher.

Now, Weber has a set of very important observations on this phenomenon of social stratification and that this theme of stratification has been one of the most central themes in sociology. Sociology is preoccupied with analyzing how different sections of societies are arranged and what are the consequences of this arrangement, because sociology has a discipline understands that no society is perfectly equal or there is no complete absolute egalitarianism in every society.

Sociology is really interested to know the arrangements of a particular society, how that it arranges different groups into different strata or different realms and what are the consequences of that. So, this whole debate or discussions about stratification is something very central to the debates of sociology.

We have discussed it when we discussed Karl Marx, how Marx has a very powerful argument about seeing stratification through the lens of the classes. So, the Marxian framework of stratification, offers you a class based understanding, where according to his definition of class, the people who own the means of production, according to this particular definition, he divides society into two categories the bourgeois and proletariat.

Weber enters into this debate, and he complicates the whole discussion. He, disagrees with Marx, saying that a stratification of societies cannot be reduced to or cannot be seen only through the lens of class, rather number of other important categories or other important frameworks also need to be brought in. We are going to discuss this important conversation between Marx and Weber on Social certification, class, status groups and party. Weber is talking about stratification based on class, status groups and party.

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- Important contribution to the study of the social structure; debate with Marxian explanation of social stratification
- More expansive explanation to social stratification and critique of an economic deterministic model
- Extremely useful to study societies like India where ritual position offered by caste is important in deciding social position
- Stratification based on class, status group and party → Power



This is an important contribution to study of the social structure and debate with Marxian explanation of social stratification. So, as I mentioned, the study of social stratification is also the study of social structure.

I do not think that I need to elaborate it further. Any society, whether it is a say tribal society or an agrarian society, or a society in the rural setting, or a feudal society or a modern society, the moment you talk about social stratification, what are the important groups of people and how people are divided in a particular society, we are actually talking about social structure. So, in that sense, this constitutes, one of the central themes of sociological analysis and the debate with Marxian explanation of social stratification, as I just discussed.

Now, Weber provides a more expansive explanation to social stratification and offers critique of an economic deterministic model. We know that we discussed in the previous class as well, about the debate whether Marx actually puts forward an economist, an economic deterministic model.

When we discussed the section on Marx, I made it a point to elaborate that, there is very important debate whether Marx actually use the term deterministic or he used the German term to indicate influence because, the moment you say something, determined something else, it is an absolutist argument, you do not give any leeway, you do not give any freedom or any space for the other thing to have its own agency or its own independence.

There is quite a lot of discussions and debate within Marxist about, to what extent Marx was convinced of this deterministic quality, whereas a lot of other Marxists argued that this kind of vulgar Marxism or kind of a fundamentalist Marxism is the one which actually talk about a deterministic model, rather, Marx was extremely aware of a kind of a reciprocal influence from the superstructure to the base as well.

But this particular intervention of Weber when in his elaboration of social stratification really helps to complicate Marxian notion of social stratification, which is based on his schema of class. Now, it is extremely useful to study societies like India, where ritual position offered by caste is important in deciding social position.

Now, there has been very fascinating discussions about the usefulness and the lack of usefulness of a Marxian framework to understand society like India, because for a typical Marxian framework, the existence of caste will not be something very important and traditionally, a lot of Marxian sociologists have tried to reduce the relevance of caste into the question of class.

They also very, rather innocently or superficially believed that if you bring-in a classless society, if you address the question of class, the question of caste also will be resolved or they were heavily influenced by the Marxian framework that they refuse to or they did not really provide sufficient importance to the existence of caste.


Now, we realize that, that was a very mistaken approach, that is an erroneous approach, because caste has been a central concern of Indian society and it has been kind of been so salient, at least for the past 2000 years, defining and influencing even the present day, manifestations of Indian society.

For societies like India, where the ritual position is important when we talk about the caste hierarchy, the conventional, the traditional caste hierarchy. Certain groups like Brahmins are considered to be at the topmost position, because they are considered to be ritually superior. Now, in a Marxian scheme, you have no way of understanding this ritual superiority, because this ritual superiority emerges from a religious understanding, not from the economic understanding.

Even a poor Brahmin will be considered as superior to a rich lower caste person and Marxism has no way of understanding that or Marxism has no way of explaining that. So, in a society like India, where these ritual positions or religious markers, identity markers influence your position in a hierarchy, this is something extremely important.

He talks about stratification based on class, status group and party and this also is something very important. Party of Marx Weber talks about using this term, Weber talks about power, it is political power.

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- Class**
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- For Weber, a *class* consists of those persons who have a similar ability to obtain positions in society, procure goods and services for themselves, and enjoy them via an appropriate lifestyle. ~~30~~ It should be recognized immediately that a class is defined, in part, by status considerations: the lifestyle of the stratum to which one belongs.
 - People's membership in a class can be determined objectively, based on their power to dispose of goods and services. For this reason, Weber believed that one's "class situation is, in this sense, ultimately [a] market situation."
 - A person's class situation is also objectively determined, with the result that people can be ranked by their common economic characteristics and life chances.



Now, let us see the Weberian discussion on class and in what extent, to what extent his definition of class differs from that of Marx, it is an interesting discussion. So, for Weber, a class consists of those persons who have a similar ability to obtain positions in a society, procure goods and services for themselves, and enjoy them via an appropriate lifestyle. It should be recognized immediately that a class is defined in part by status considerations, the lifestyle of the stratum to which one belongs.

Now, this is an important observation. So, for Weber, class is a group of people who belong to a similar economic condition and this economic condition is not solely defined, like Marx on the base of this means of or on the ownership of the means of production, rather they have a similar ability to obtain position society, procure goods and services for themselves and enjoy via an appropriate lifestyle.

So, a group of people who have almost identical kind of lifestyles, lifestyles in the sense, the kind of services and goods that they can use for their consumption, that when you look into society, you have this extremely rich group, the upper class in a very general sense, then you have this middle class, you have this lower middle class, then you have the extremely poor people.

This distinction is not only on the basis of amount of money that they generate, that they make in every month or every day, it is also in terms of, the kind of expenditure, the kind of consumption that they have. For example, in terms of leisure, how do they consume their time for leisure or in terms of education or in terms of say health, which are the hospitals that they go for their health issues.

When you look into these consumptions, going out for food or leisure, vacations, or the kind of quality of education, the kind of the dress that they wear, the kind of gadgets that they use, if you analyze this kind of questions of consumption, then you will see that there is a marked difference from the poorest of the poor to that of the richest of the rich, that is a huge difference.

This difference is based on all these things, the ability to obtain positions in society, procure goods and services for themselves and enjoy them by an appropriate lifestyle. It should be recognized immediately that a class is defined in part by status conservation. So, this lower caste, lower class, the poorest of the poor, definitely have lower social status, and the elites, the richest of the rich or the people belonging to the upper class, they are bestowed with very high degree of social status.

A Weberian definition of class is not on the basis of the ownership of means of production, your membership in a group is defined by your lifestyle, consumption and membership in a group of people who have similar kind of expenditure, lifestyle and consumption patterns. So, people's membership in a class can be determined objectively based on their power to dispose of goods and services.

You can objectively decide the class, in which you belong to, or somebody belongs to, by trying to understand based on their power to dispose of goods and services. So, to what extent somebody can buy the goods and services, how much money that they can dispose to buy the

services and goods is an important objective indication to understand the people's membership in a class.

For this reason, Weber believes that one's class situation is in this sense ultimately a market situation. So, the class in which you belong is definitely decided or determined by the market situation. For example, take the case of education, one family needs to send their children to the school, so what kind of education is affordable to them? Can they send their children to a school, a private school, which collects huge amount of money as capitation fee and also huge amount of money as tuition fees every year?

If they are not able to afford that, then what are the options for them, and if they are coming from extremely poor background, the only option for them is to send their children to the government schools, where either education is completely free, or education cost very less amount of money.

Now, this is purely a kind of market decision, or the kind of goods that you can buy, the kind of gadgets that you can buy, the kind of furniture that you can buy, the kind of workers that you can buy, or the kind of apparatus that you can buy, or the kind of tourist destinations where you can go during your vacation. So, each of these things Max Weber argues is defined by a market situation and is indicative of your class position.

A person's class situation is also objectively determined, with the result that people can be ranked by their common economic characteristics and life chances. It is also objectively determined with the result that people can be ranked by their common economic characteristics, as I told you, the amount of money that they generate, their income, either it could be in the form of salary or it could be the kind of profit that they make and life chances and life chances means the examples that I mentioned earlier.

What, for example, if somebody falls sick in your family, where do you take the sick person to? Do you take the sick person to a government hospital, a private hospital, a corporate hospital, all these things depend upon usually your ability and willingness to spend money.

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- *rentiers* are those who live primarily off fixed incomes from investments or trust funds. As a result of their possession of capital and values that they had acquired over time, the landowners chose to lead a less overtly acquisitive lifestyle. Weber called them rentiers because they did not work to increase their assets but simply lived off them, using their time for purposes other than earning a living.

- *entrepreneurs* are those, such as merchants, ship owners, and bankers, who own and operate businesses. Weber called them a commercial, or entrepreneurial, class because they actually work their property for the economic gain that it produces, with the result that in absolute terms the members of the entrepreneurial class often have more economic power, but less social honor (or prestige), than do rentiers.



He talks about two broad kind of classes, especially during Weber's time, one is the rentiers, Rentiers are those who live primarily off fixed incomes from the investment or trust funds, as a result of their possession of capital and values that they had acquired over time, the landowners chose to lead a less overtly accusative lifestyle and Weber called them rentiers, because they did not work to increase their assets, but simply lived off them using their time for purposes other than earning a living.

Maybe Weber talks about it because that is a time when Weber see a lot of people, the erstwhile feudal lords, they are finding it difficult to adapt and adjust to the modern times and these extremely rich feudal lords have huge money as ancestor property. They might have huge agricultural land or they must have sold off the land and then have huge fixed income from investment or trust funds, and they are considered to be the continuation or they belong to the lineage of extremely high status family groups.

As a result of their possession and capital and values that they have acquired over time, the land owners chose to lead a less overtly acquisitive lifestyle, they are not interested in or they do not generally try to create more wealth, Weber called them as rentiers because they did not work to increase their assets, but simply lived off them.

Imagine a family who have sold off their land and that money or big fortune is invested in some bank or invested in some mutual fund or some other thing and they live off that particular interest or they have bought some huge commercial business and then on the basis of

commercial building, and they are living off the rent that they get from that, using their time for purposes other than earning a living.

The second group, according to Weber, are the entrepreneurs such as merchants, ship owners, and bankers who own and operate business, Weber called them a commercial or entrepreneurial class because they actually work their property for the economic gain, that it produces, with the result that in absolute terms the members of the entrepreneur class often have more economic power, but less social honor or prestige than do rentiers.

So, the second one, second group of entrepreneurs are the people who may not be the traditionally rich people, but who have entered into business or commerce, like say, a ship ownership or bankers or merchants or business and who have amassed, lot more money, but those who do not have a family tradition.

With less social honor or prestige, they do not belong to some very well-known families, they do not have the kind of pedigree if we can use that particular term, and they are not associated with some very honorable or honored family line. They are this newly rich people, the novice rich, who became rich very shortly, and they are usually looked down upon by the typical aristocratic rentiers as per the Weberian argument.

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- To differentiate between those who work as an avocation and those who work because they want to increase their assets—that is, this distinction reflects fundamental differences in values.



- Both rentiers and entrepreneurs can monopolize the purchase of expensive consumer items. Both pursue monopolistic sales and pricing policies, whether legally or not. To some extent, both control opportunities for others to acquire wealth and property. Finally, both rentiers and entrepreneurs monopolize costly status privileges, such as education, that provide young people with future contacts and skills.

- Next is the 'middle class': comprise those individuals who today would be called white collar workers because the skills that they sell do not involve manual labor: public officials, such as politicians and administrators; managers of businesses and so on



To differentiate between those who work as an avocation and those who work because they want to increase their asset, that is, this distinction reflects a fundamental difference in values. So, whether you are comfortable in living off the money that you have, you are not really keen in increasing money and because you have huge amount of money at your disposal, and you belong to a very reputable family or you do not have much to boast about your reputation, but you are really working hard and then you are increasing the wealth day by day.

So these two things Weber argues, there is a distinction, this distinction reflects fundamental difference in values. Both, rentiers and entrepreneurs can monopolize the purchase of expensive consumer items. Both pursue monopolistic sales and pricing policies, whether legally or not, to some extent, both control opportunities for others to acquire wealth and property. Finally, both rentiers and entrepreneurs monopolize costly status privileges, such as education, that provide young people with future contacts and skills.

So, these two groups, these rentiers as well as entrepreneurs, according to Weber, belongs to the almost similar kind of class, because they have quite a lot of similarities, even while their value systems differ significantly. Both pursue monopolistic sales and pricing policies, whether legally or not, because they always try to protect their business interests, and their way of making money and to some extent control opportunities for others to acquire wealth and property.

When they work as kind of a monopolistic group and finally, both rentiers and entrepreneurs monopolize costly status privilege, because they are the one who represent the creed. They are the ones who represent the elite groups, in terms of lifestyle, in terms of taste, in terms of attitudes, this very important sociologist Bourdieu, Bourdieu has this very important argument about cultural capital.

How certain abilities are considered to be highly valued, certain traits, certain qualities are considered to be highly valued, and these values are kind of a monopolistic values of the upper classes, certain tastes, certain exposure, certain kind of orientations towards certain ideas and other things, such as and costly status privileges, such as education, that provide young people with future contacts and scales.

You can easily understand that some of the very elite schools across the globe, including India, this elite schools are the place where children from the extremely rich family go and they study

together and once they grow up, these people, their relationship itself, that they developed during the school will be extremely useful for them to network together and then take their contacts and then business forward.

Next is the middle class, so, this first one, the rentiers and the entrepreneurs belong to the first group, the higher caste or higher class and then comes the middle class according to Weber, comprises those individuals who today would be called the white collar workers, because the skill that they sell, do not involve manual labor, public officials, such as politicians and administrators, managers of business and so on.

Weber talks about the middle class as the people, they are employed somewhere, but they are not the people who sell the manual workers. This distinction between, white collar workers and blue collar workers where the blue collar workers are the people whom we consider as the laborers or the people whom we consider as the proletariat.

Whereas, the middle class or the white collar workers, they are at say, they are the managers, they are the supervisors, they are the bureaucrats, they are the teachers, doctors, so these people who use their certain skills and their intellectual ability rather than their physical ability, are considered to be this middle class or the white collar workers.

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- Worth of their services and the level of their skills; both factors are important indicators of people's ability to obtain positions, purchase goods, and enjoy them.
- Because their skills are in relatively high demand in industrial societies, these people generally have more economic and political power than those who work with their hands do.
- Finally, the less privileged, property less classes comprise people who today would be called blue-collar workers because their skills primarily involve manual labor. Without explanation, Weber said that such people could be divided into three levels: skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled workers.

• Debate with Marx



Worth of their services and their levels or their skills, both factors are important indicators of people's ability to obtain positions, purchase goods and enjoy them. So, what is something so distinctive of this white collar worker or this middle class is there the worth of their services and the levels of their skills, they are educated a lot and they are able to attain this white collar status only through education, because they have mastered certain skills, they are able to offer some very valuable services.

These factors are important indicators of people's ability to obtain position, purchase goods and enjoy them. We know that how, when the skill of a doctor or a skill of an engineer or a skill of a say a teacher is highly valued and how that becomes important in a society, because their skills are relatively high demand and in industrial societies these people generally have more economic and political power than those who work with their hands do.

In comparison with the blue collar workers, who have to really toil in the field or in the mines or in the factories or in the shop floor or a company, in comparison with these people, this group of people who belong to the white collar workers, because of their skills are in relatively high demand and in industrial societies, they generally have more economic and political power than the people who are considered to be the blue collar worker or the manual workers or the proletariat.

Then finally, the less privileged group, property less classes comprises of people who today would be called the blue collar workers, because their skills primarily involve manual. Weber said that such people could be divided into three levels, skilled, semiskilled and unskilled workers. So, here it is, are the group of people whom you are familiar with, or the group of people whom Marx describes as the proletariat.

The people who have nothing with them or nothing else with them, other than their ability to sell their labor power, they have no other resources, they have no other capital, they do not own anything, their only ability is to sell their work, to the highest bidder, their abilities to sell their body. Now, so this is something very important point when it comes to, as a debate with Marx, because Marx maybe the most important scholar who talks about classes, who talks about different types of people with different set of skills.

There is a very interesting debate between Marx and Weber about this distinction of or this division of people into different classes based on these qualities.

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Status groups

- status group comprises those individuals who share "a specific, positive or negative, social estimation of honor." Weber thus used the concepts of "status" and "status group" to distinguish the sphere of prestige evaluation (expressed by people's lifestyles) from that of monetary calculation (expressed by their economic behavior).
- Status and honor are based on the judgments that people make about another's background, breeding, character, morals, and community standing; and so a person's membership in a status group is always subjectively determined.



Now, as I told you, this Weber's understanding of class is quite different from a Marxian understanding and they personally feel that it is a broader, encompassing and more interesting division compared to that of a Marxian analysis, which was very reductive in his times. The second group is the status group according to Weber. So, status groups comprises those individuals, who share a specific positive or negative social estimations of honor.

Weber, thus used the concept of status and status group, to distinguish the spheres of privilege evaluation, expressed by people's lifestyle from that of monetary calculation expressed by their economic behavior. So, if this economic behavior is something that is the basis of the class analysis, Weber argues that the sphere of prestige evaluation, how certain families, how certain groups certain individuals are respected in a society on the basis of certain virtues.

What could be these virtues, a very, a noble family line to know that somebody belongs to this particular family, a family considered to be an aristocratic family, a family considered to be a noble family, so that gives so much of importance and prestige and honor to that and the best example is caste in India, we know that, the kind of respect or the kind of prestige associated with upper castes.

Whether it is justifiable or unjustifiable, it is a completely different question. But, the very fact that somebody belongs to Brahmin is always a fact of higher prestige and higher respect in comparison with somebody who is traditionally associated, somebody who is seen from a caste that is seen as a lower caste or a polluting caste. So, status groups are comprised of those individuals who share a specific positive or negative social estimation or honor. Weber thus uses this concept of status and status group to distinguish the sphere of prestige evaluation from that of monetary calculation.

Status and honor are based on the judgment that people make about another's background, breeding character, morals, and community standing, and so a person's membership in a status group is always subjectively determined. This is interesting because, the status group you can't really define or decide your status group. It has to be accepted, reciprocated, and acknowledged by the others.

This is a very interesting thing, see in the case of economic position, or economic class, you can increase your wealth, you can create more wealth and you can go up in the ladder, but in the case of status group, your status is always accepted, it must be accepted and acknowledged by others, only then you consider or they consider you belonging to a particular high status group.

This is an extremely important point again, when you analyze the caste system in India, because lower castes were discriminated they were humiliated, throughout at least for the past 2000

years, because of the fact that they were seen as people who belong to this lower caste and mainly because they are or they do work with some of these polluting jobs.

So, an individual irrespective of how good or bad he or she is, is often given a very low status or a very high status, on the basis of this perceived qualities and these qualities could be that of a breeding character morals and community standing.

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- Status “always rests on distance and exclusiveness,” by
- (1) People extend hospitality only to social equals.
- (2) People restrict potential marriage partners to social equals through various mechanisms
- (3) People practice unique social conventions and activities. Thus, they tend to join organizations, such as churches and clubs, and spend their leisure time with others who share similar beliefs and lifestyles.
- (4) People try to monopolize “privileged modes of acquisition,” such as their property or occupations



Weber says that, status “always rests on distance and exclusiveness,” by people extend hospitality only to social equals, people restrict potential marriage partners to social equals through various mechanisms, people practice unique social conventions and activities, thus, they tend to join organizations such as churches and clubs, and spend their leisure time with others who share similar beliefs and lifestyles. People try to monopolize privileged mode of acquisition, such as their property or occupation.

Now, he is talking about an extremely important mechanism through which the status groups perpetuate themselves or status groups are able to hold on to their privilege, you must be knowing that, there is a very close connection between the status group and privileges, historical privileges, or social privileges that certain groups enjoy.

He argues that the status group always rests on distance and exclusiveness, this high status group is always seen as an important commodity, it is an important virtue which has to be very

fiercely protected and it rests on the exclusiveness. You do not open that membership to others, it is something like some very elite clubs in India, especially those started in British period, where getting a membership is very difficult, even if you are ready to pay lakhs of rupees, it will not be given.

But it is always limited to some of the most elite groups or some elite member will have to recommend you and if that has to happen, you have to have a kind of connection with that or you will be evaluated on the basis of your social standing, your income and your prestige and a host of other things. So, this maintenance of exclusion, or maintenance of exclusivity is something very important for each of these status groups.

Unlike class, where nobody tries to make that kind of an exclusivity, if you have the wherewithal, if you have the ability to create more money, you can get into that group of millionaires or billionaires or the richest people, but a status group is quite different. So, people extend hospitality only to social equals and I do not think that I need to explain that further.

The clubs, or your friendship circles and other things, they always try to maintain this exclusivity, then people rustic potential marriage partners to social equals, through various mechanisms and in the case of India, we have a well-entrenched institutionalized system, where any other marriages, other than our same caste marriage would be very seriously dealt with.

We know that even in contemporary times we hear about honor killings where the son or daughter would be murdered if they dare to fall in love with somebody, especially that person is coming from a lower caste background, but even in European countries, even in western world, this is ensured, not on the basis of caste, but through a number of other mechanisms.

So, this restriction of potential marriage is an extremely important one, when you talk about the issue of compatibility, you say that, always family's needs to be compatible with each other, when alliances are sought. This compatibility is nothing but, this kind of an exclusiveness the kind of a compatibility in terms of status and then people practice unique social conventions and activities.

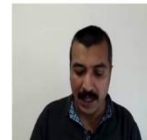
Thus, they tend to join organizations such as churches, clubs, and spend their leisure time with others, who share similar beliefs and lifestyles. You can imagine, for example, a golf course, and

the people who come there to play golf, there would be a group of extremely elite rich people. It is not that easy for an ordinary person coming from a blue collar background or a white collar background to break through into that place and then very comfortably start playing golf.

It is impossible, I am giving golf because golf is always considered as a game of the elite. So, a club, which has a golf club and facilities would be definitely a place of the rich, of the elite, and it has a strong exclusive character. Then people try to monopolize privileged modes of acquisition, such as their property or occupation. So, these are the people who are highly specialists in certain things, they have a huge amount of property, so they have this highly privileged forms of resources.

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- Party** — *Political power*
- Party denotes the “house of power” or the way in which power is organized and used to control members in a society
 - In contrast to Marx, who tended to view power and status as mere reflections of who owned the means of production, Weber argued that class, status group, and party constitute separate bases of stratification, although they often highly correlate with each other.
 - Weber’s analysis of stratification emphasized that when there is a high correlation among class, status group, and party—that is, those high or low on one are also high and low on the other two
 - Monopolization of resources and the resentment of the others



Then the third one, the third important feature that, Weber talks about is party. And this is another point where, Marx argued a party is nothing but it is the political, it is a political power. Marx, kind of included political power within that of economy, I hope you remember that. So, for Marx, the ruling class, is always the class who belonged to the bourgeoisie, but here Weber differs with Marx.

Party denotes the house of power, or the way in which power is organized and used to control members in a society, it is nothing but the political power, how the society organizes itself so that there is a, its members are governed efficiently. In contrast to Marx, who tended to view power and status as mere reflections of who own the means of production, Weber argued that

class, status groups and party constitute separate basis of stratification, although they often highly correlate with each other.

This is the central difference between Marx and Weber, something that I have been mentioning all throughout. So, for Marx, the central concern is that of economy, and he tend to subsume the status and power under economy, I hope you remember, we talked about this base and superstructure, for Marx this economy is the base and everything else is a reflection of that, which Weber does not agree with that.

Weber argues that both ritual status, as well as political power are independent spheres, they cannot be reduced to that of economy. Weber's analysis of stratification emphasize that when there is a high correlation among class, status groups and party, that is those high or low on one, are also high and low on the other two, we are talking about the consolidation of power, the people who are ritually superior, politically powerful, are most often they are the economically well off as well.

In the case of India, this is extremely accurate statement. There is a very specific correspondence between the caste structure and the class structure, the people are considered to be the traditional upper caste, are by definition upper class as well, I am talking on the basis of this evidence collected from various surveys including NSS various, this National Sample Survey reports vary undoubtedly state that.

People who belong to the lower caste, the traditional, groups traditionally considered to be the lower, the OBCs and, Dalits and tribals, they occupy the lowest strata, not only in terms of the ritual position, but also in terms of their economic position and monopolization of resources and resentment of others.

So, this particular consolidation of all these forms of privilege, whether it is money or power, or status, this leads to monopolization of resources, and the resentment of the vast majority of others, and Weber thinks that, that will lead to kind of social change, but unlike Marx, who always looked at the social conflicts as something welcoming, something positive, Weber does not take up that particular position.

Weber also does not look at that, he does not have that kind of an activist zeal of Karl Marx, as we are familiar with that. So, he is not an activist, he was not a political activist, he was not a political party member, rather he was a sociologist, he was a social scientist, who wanted to objectively analyze the reality.

So, the point that we discuss or the theme that we discuss today is about stratification, a very important theme, and especially for students of sociology, the dialogue between Marx and Weber becomes very important through his analysis of social stratification as well as his analysis of religion and society. So, let us stop today's class, and we will meet for the next class. Thank you.