

SOC1105

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- What is the sociological imagination?
- How do sociologists conduct their research?
- Why were early thinkers concerned with social order and stability?
- What are the assumptions behind each of the contemporary theoretical perspectives?

Contentious politics

- How do social structures, institutions, and the character of contentious politics interact?
- We “must look systematically at the interplay among regimes, institutions, political opportunity structure, and repertoires...” (Tarrow &...)

What is Sociology?

- The relationships between humans and the social organisation they inhabit
- The interactions between humans and their social environment
- The study of human societies using empirical investigation and critical analysis
- According to sociologists, many of the things we do (shopping, eating, entertainment etc.) are processes that extend beyond our individual choices, and are rooted in the structural conditions of the social, political and economic order in which we live (Marxist influences)
- Accordingly, one of the roles of sociology is to uncover these structural conditions
- To this end, systematic research, and a value free approach is applied.

Sociological Inquiry

- Structural aspects of society are enduring patterns of social relations & institutions.
- EG- Political systems, voting, economic systems & taxation ‘structures’
- Society is organised through these ‘patterns’ within which individual & group action....

The Sociological Imagination

- Originated by Sociologist C. Wright Mills
- Defined as: ‘...the ability to see the relation between individual experiences and the larger society’
- More than homo economicus, as Mills argued, need for extrapolation, compilation, rumination on the understanding that humans have of their own society of their own place in the world

Examples :

- Personal trouble :) When a person commits suicide, there are likely personal and private reasons for it (poor self esteem, hatred of oneself and the like)
- Public issue : Suicide may also be a result of a variety of social reasons : lack of social cohesiveness; the negative impact that Europeans have had on Aboriginal peoples; poor education and economic bases (structural forces etc.)

For example, drinking tea

- One can examine tea drinking from a Variety of theoretical perspectives
- Can be seen as maintaining a good health
- Could be seen as some kind of drugs because it has caffeine (addiction)
- Social activity (meeting for tea)

Sociology

- Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès (1748- 1836) first coined the term
- Used later by A Comte
- Like Xenophanes, sociology attempts often to distinguish between, and analyse belief and knowledge

The Development of Sociological Thinking

- Classic origins go back to Ionic beginnings
- Aristotle and Plato, for example
- However, earlier thinkers stated what they thought society ought to be like, rather than describing what society actually was.
- The growth of the natural sciences in the 17th-18th centuries, beginning of the process of applying scientific principles to the analysis of society
- This was especially applicable after the Industrial Revolution

History of sociology

- Post enlightenment, post French Rev.
- Academic sociology emerges after & in response to, rationality, modernity, empiricism, capitalism, urbanism, emergence of nation states
- Industrial Revolution and emergence of Capitalism are crucial, as new rules new associations, new populations, new societies threw up new issues, problems: physical, psychological, and social
- Western world, at the time, was rife with creativity, wealth, luxury, but also disease, poverty, violence.. Authorities were concerned with a breakdown of social orders.

Early Thinkers: A Concern with Social Order and Stability

- Auguste Comte (1798-1857) Failed at suicide. Popularized the term sociology and considered the founder, he believed that societies contained : Social Statics - forces for social order and stability - Social Dynamics - forces for conflict and change (kinship and religion, respect, extreme inequality) - Natural science applied to society -Positivism
- Auguste Comte - Facts must be observed, but observation and understanding require theory - Comte's emphasis on the interconnectedness of social elements was a forerunner of modern functionalism
- 3 stages (social development)
 - Theological
 - Metaphysical
 - Positive

- **Theological phase** precedes the enlightenment, blind belief, gods and spirits
- **Metaphysical phase** involved the justification of universal rights as being on a vauntingly higher plane than the authority of any human ruler to countermand. Not god, but reason stages of the investigation, that reveal 'truth'
- **Positive phase**: people could find solutions to social problems and bring them into force despite the will of God. (phase he lived in)

Harriet Martineau (1802-1876)

- Made Comte's work more accessible
- Analyzed political economy, reviewed current works
- Until recently, she received no recognition in the field of sociology, partly because she was a woman in a male-dominated discipline and society
- She was an active sociologist studying social customs and consequences of industrialism and capitalism.
- She examined religion, politics, child rearing, slavery, immigration in categories of race, class and gender
- Staunch supporter & friend of Charles Darwin and an avowed secularist

Karl Marx (1818-1883)

- Believed that history is a continuous clash between conflicting ideas
- Conflict (especially class conflict) was necessary in order to produce social change and a better society
- **Class conflict**: the struggle between capitalist class and the working class
- **Bourgeoisie**: Comprises those who own and control the means of production (capitalist class)
- **Means of production**: refer to the tools, land, factories and money for investment that form the economic basis of a society
- **Proletariat**: Comprises those who must sell their labour because they have no other means of livelihood (working class)

“ Arise ye workers from your slumbers... “

- Capitalist system made poverty
- Capitalist class controls and exploits the masses of struggling workers by paying them less than the value of their labour.
- The results in workers Alienation: a feeling of powerlessness and estrangement from other people and from oneself
- Marx predicted that the workers would become aware of its exploitation and overthrow the capitalists, creating a free and classless society
- Hugely influential in sociology, conflict studies, anthropology, etc.

Albion Small (1854-1926)

- **Founded the first Department of Sociology** in the US at the University of Chicago in 1892
- Founding editor of the American Journal of Sociology for 30 years

Max Weber (1864-1920)

- **Emphasized cultural and political factors as key influences on economic development and individual behavior**
- Economic systems as one but not the only source of change
- Famous “Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism”
- Verstehen - Value free sociology : research should be conducted in a scientific manner and should exclude the researcher’s personal values and economic interests.

(Reading - Staggenborg Chapter 1 - social movement)

LECTURE 3

Social Activism

- Sms rarely engage more than a small fraction of the population
- But their efforts have consequences for everyone
- Activist in SMs are disproportionately advantaged in terms of education, resources, familial support and social connections, why?
- Theoretical formulations are applied in order to answer this and other questions

Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives

- Functionalist
- Conflict
- Feminist
- Symbolic interactionist
- Postmodernist

Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)

- Believed that people are a product of the social environment and behaviour cannot be fully understood by biological or psychological traits
- Societies are built of social facts- patterned ways of acting, thinking and feeling that exist social control over each person
- Durkheim set up the first European department of sociology at the University of Bordeaux in 1895
- Early focus on religion & society
- Believed that rapid social change produced strains in society and this would lead to the breakdown in traditional organizations, values and authority and would increase Anomie

- a - condition when social control becomes ineffective as a result of the loss of shared values and a sense of purpose in society

- Advocate of the scientific approach to the examining social facts
- He was the first to publish a statistical study, he explored the relationship between anomic social conditions and suicide

George Herbert Mead (1863-1931)

- American philosopher and social theorist
- ‘Father’ of the school of Symbolic interactionism(cf. Herbert Blumer) in sociology and social psychology
- Social forces are dominant source of human behaviour not biology
- Tabula rasa
- Development of the self and self-consciousness through language/communication
- ‘Mind Self, and Society from the Standpoint of a social

Herbert Spencer (1829-1903)

- Used an evolutionary perspective
- Society evolves like a biological organism
- Interdependent parts that work to ensure the stability and survival of the entire society
- **Survival of the fittest** - Believed that societies developed through the process of struggle (to exist) and fitness to (survive) and only the fittest would succeed

Key Issues

- The origins of the Social Movement
- Defining Social Movements
- Resources
- Outcomes

Politics

- **NB element = Historical overview**

Le petite movement

- Narbonne, France, 1680s
- Localised collective action
- Singular issue, mostly
- Localised collective action
- Local people

SM Changes

- The SM emerged in a particular historical period as a result of large-social changes and political conditions ; the expansion of nation-states and the spread of capitalism
- Tactics and the ‘repertoire’ adapted to these changed circumstances

Ca. 1760-1850

- Overwhelmingly agricultural

- Vast increase in the market for European goods in part drove the conversion to an industrial, manufacturing economy

Industrial Revolution

- Born on the back of machine friendly materials
- Cotton
- Iron
- Pottery

The Factory Act 1833

- Children under 9 no longer allowed work in factories
- Those aged 9-13 limited to 48 hour week (2hrs school per day)
- Act applied only to Large Textile factories, and was poorly implemented
- 70 for men
- 60 hours per week for women and young people under the age of 18

Life expectancy :

- Rural wealthy = 52
- Rural poor = 38
- Urban wealthy = 38
- Urban poor = 17
- “A spectre is haunting Europe - the spectre of Communism
- Communism will make ownership communal, make labour communal and thus do away with private property
- In the 1850's while Marx was now in London working on Das Kapital
- English working conditions characterized as Subsistence slavery
- Workers did not even have the breaks that an Agricultural regime afforded

Frederick Engels

- Sept. 1844, meets Marx
- Engles was a revolutionary socialist

Abolitionists

- August 28, 1833, the Slavery ABolition Act was given Royal Assent, which paved the way for the abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire
- USA, slavery lingers until 1860

19th Century

- Industrialization
- Urbanization
- Colonialism - universities - Academia

His Own Words

- “The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it
- First sustained protests were economically based

- Growth of Contentious Politics

Contentious Politics

- Social Movements are intertwined with Contentious Politics
- Other contentious politics exist : Nationalism, War, Revolution

Early 20th century : Suffragettes

- 1903 - The women's social and political Union was founded by Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters Christabel and Sylvia