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**COLLEGE/DEPARTMENT: LAW**

**COURSE/COURSE CODE: HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE-GST 118**

**Review of Chapter 8 of History and Philosophy of Science: A Brief Survey**

Philosophy of social sciences and applied sciences as a second order branch of philosophy is explicated in chapter eight of the text. The success recorded in natural science in the eighteenth and nineteenth century was transformational on the lives of Europeans as it made them embrace science and scientists, going as far as seeking their opinion on matters unrelated to science such as law. The positive response to science occurred as result of change in the socio-cultural condition of the time and from then on belief or application of science to any issue was called positivism.

Positivism thrived during the renaissance and enlightenment period. It was so called because it marked the period when people started a revolution of return to their Greek heritage of using reason in public matters and not dictates of religion as in the previous age. The time prior to the renaissance period was called the dark ages because it was the time religious belief supreme. The words of the Pope was considered final on any matter, be it political, social, intellectual. It was a time men and women were burned at stake because the church has found them guilty of witchcraft or sorcery. Diseases were ascribed consequences of sins and adultery, so the waged several wars to exterminate the heathens. However, the intellectual community saw this as a hindrance to human happiness and survival. To put a stop to this, they started infusing the benefits of using reason to arrive at justified conclusions in literary works just as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle used to do. Worldviews were also hidden in Greek arts and music.This became known as the classical period of romanticism. Romanticism gave rise to humanism and naturalism and works of art and literature produced at this time were also regarded as classic. Bertrand Russell put explicitly said that,”the period of history commonly called “modern” has a mental outlook which differs from that of the medieval period in many ways. Of these, two are the most important: the diminishing authority of the Church, and the increasing authority of science. He held that freedom from the authority of the church led individualism to the point of anarchy. Discipline,intellect,morals were associated with men of the Renaissance with the scholastic philosophy and ecclesiastical government.

Scientific approach to things grew out of philosophical approach to issues. However,science is restricted to study of material phenomena because it was the only material believed to behave in a regular and predictable way. This notion stood until a French philosopher named August Conte thought otherwise. He opined that society behaves in a regular pattern much like material things and this behaviour can be studied and somewhat accurate predictions made. This is the beginning of social sciences,especially sociology. Conte is regarded as the father of sociology and social sciences in general. Positivism rejects theoretical speculations that are not based on facts of experience as a means of obtaining knowledge. Following empirical sciences which gives it a methodology, positivism sees all propositions that cannot be substantiated by experience such as metaphysical statements due to a high degree of abstract nature as false. A lot of problems have been associated with the ideal knowledge seeking enterprise. The first of these problems is observation upon which the basic justification of positivism came is laden with error. These include the facts that: (i)observations are concept-laden(ii)observations are hypothesis-laden(iii)observations are theory-laden(iv)observations are value-laden(v)observations are interest-laden(vi)observations are laden with culture-specific ontologies. However, the shortcomings of positivism social science should be explicated. Social science is an area of study dedicated to the explanation of human behaviour, interaction and manifestations, either as an individual in a society or collectively as a group including the institutions,norms and mores such interactions created. Disciplines in the social sciences include: sociology, psychology, economics, political science etc. Although,the history of the discipline dates back to early philosophers who wanted to study how society works such as St Augustine and the 14th century historian Ibn Khaldun; down to Karl Marx Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Emile Durkheim and the likes. However, it was August Conte that is regarded as the father of social science. Social sciences employ the methods of science in the study of social phenomena taking humans as object of study. The objectives are: (i) understanding humans in both historical and cultural development context and factors responsible for such development or change(ii)being able to predict human behaviour based on the pattern of interaction, belief system, social norms and other factors influencing human behaviour, especially in relation to economic and political activities(iii)influencing human behaviour;grooming it towards a socially desirable conduct and development(iv)discovering and manipulating if possible,the laws governing the most of human behaviour(v)advancing beyond armchair philosophy,the knowledge about characteristic temperament and associated of a person or group,or that exhibited by those engaged in an activity. Philosophy of social science rose as a result of disagreements about methods of scientific enquiry to study man and his society. The disagreements arise from the fact that human beings do not behave in exact way objects of natural sciences behave.

The Problem of Reasons and Causes

To understand the problem with social sciences better, we need to understand that one of the essential features of science is to provide a casual or correlational connection between an event and its cause i.e to explain why event A is the cause of event B which is the effect. For anything to be the cause of another,the cause and effect must: (i)have an invariable or constant relation, whenever the cause occurs, the event must also occur (ii) spatially contiguous;they should occur in the same location (iii)be temporally related (iv)have an asymmetrical relation; the cause must be the actual event which brings about the effect. The effect must not be part of the original conditions necessary for the occurrence of the cause.By employing scientific method in social investigation, the social sciences seek to explain the cause of action involving humans. To avoid a situation where the reason of something maybe many but the cause of something cannot solutions have been proffered. One way is to accept reasons are not the causes but motive or intent but there are still scholars who insist that reasons can be treated as causes. Rolling Collingwood is one of such scholars who argues to the extreme that reasons are not only the causes but they are the ultimate casual power which lies in human and that ascribing casual power to inanimate objects in the physical world may be too naïve of us.

The Problem of Human Person as Object of Study in Social Sciences

Another problem with the project of social science is that, according to Max Weber, methodology of science becomes inapplicable due to the fact that the object of study in social science is man, a rational being with freewill, desires, emotions and other sentient features that come into play in his action or reaction. These factors undermine the notion of predictability of behaviour with which natural science is known to deduce their principles and laws.

This chapter examines philosophy of social science as a second order branch of philosophy. The introduction of reasoning into public affairs as opposed to the doctrinal religion(positivism). Explicates social sciences by giving it definitions, methodology used in its enquiry, its founding father and practitioners. It also delves into the problem of reasons and causes and human as an object of study and how it affects the study of social science. The explanations done shows that social science indeed, is a complex discourse.