EBULUE KAMSIYOCHUKWU ARNOLD

19/LAW01/070

14TH APRIL,2020.

**A REVIEW OF CHAPTER 8 OF TEMIDAYO D. PLADIPO AND NOAH O. BALOGUN’S, *HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE: A BRIEF SURVEY.***

The title of this chapter is **Philosophy of Social Sciences (And Applied Sciences).** The chapter opens with some positive effects that natural science exhibited during the 18th and 19th century, how they affected the intellectual and social life of the then Europeans and how it was all a result of a change of the socio-cultural milieu of the time.

The socio-cultural milieu, a period in which positivism grew, is called The **Renaissance and The Enlightenment** period. It marked when people started a revolution to return to their Greek heritage of using reason in matters of public concern and not religion. In this period, the words of the Pope were the final authority on any matter. This period was called the dark age where religion was believed supreme as the word of the pope was final and this was not in the favour of heathens as they were charged for witchcraft and soxery and then, people were burnt at stake because the church believed that sin and idolatry cause terror on the people. This was a threat to people’s freedom, happiness and survival as people living in a community. So they started infiltrating literature with the benefits of using reason to arrive at justified conclusion just as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle used to do. In arts and music were hidden Greek worldwide views too. This became known as the classical period of romanticism which gave rise to humanism and naturalism, and works of art and literature produced at he same time were also regarded as classic. Bertrand Russell said that the period of history “modern” as it was commonly known as, has a mental outlook which is different from that of the medieval period in ways such as; the diminishing authority of the church and the increasing authority of sciences.

The effect of this manoeuvring was overwhelming as scientific approach to things grew out of philosophical approach to issues but science was restricted to the study of natural phenomenon because it was the only material that is believed to behave in a regular and predictable way. This was until a French social philosopher called August Comte thought otherwise. He was of the opinion that society behaves in a regular pattern much like material things and this behaviour could be studied and somewhat accurate prediction made, this was the beginning of social science. This positivism rejected theoretical speculation that are missing facts and experience. There a lot of problems in the concepts of ideal knowledge seeking enterprise. First of these problems is observation upon which the basic justification of positivism came is laden with errors which includes fact like; observations are concept, hypothesis, theory, value, interest and culture-specific ontology laden.

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. Decipline in the social science includes sociology, psychology, economics, political science, archaeology and anthropology. Although the history of the discipline dates back to early philosophers who wanted to study how the society works such as St Augustine and the fourteenth century historian Ibn Khaldun; down to Karl Max, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Emile Durkheim and a host of other social thinkers. Social sciences seek to employ the method of science in the investigation of social phenomena taking the human person as a study object of endeavour which includes: understanding humans, being able to protect their behaviour, influencing their behaviour, discovering and manipulation if possible and advancing beyond arm chair philosophy. The philosophy of social science came about out of curiosity that the central focus and the propelling motive of social science may be impossible die to methodological mismatch.

In order to understand the problem of cause and reason with social sciences better, we need to understand that there is a correlational connection between an event and it’s cause so for anything to be the cause of another, the cause and effect; must have an invariable relation I.e whenever the alleged case occur, the effect must also occur, must be specifically contiguous I.e the both event must occur approximately the same place or linked, be temporarily related such that the case precedes the effect in time just as the effect follows continuously from the cause and lastly, it must have an asymmetrical relation in that occurrence. Francis Offor asserts that by employing this scientific method in social investigation, the social sciences seek to explain the cause of action involving human agents. An example of a man punching another in a gym was given and his reason being that he was angry but the thing is that anger is the reason or cause for him to punch his friend but those two concept can be substituted for each other without loss of meanjng. If the reason for something can be many but the cause of something cannot be, to what extent can we take reason for cause, can’t the man punching his friend out of laughter, teasing or in jubilation. This can be solved by accepting reasons are not causes but motive or intent. A good example is if a man goes to buy canned beef and comes back with a soda drink because there wasn't any canned beef. So in other words, his motive which is to buy canned beef, if we go with the substitution thesis, we will say the cause of him going to the market is the effect.

Another problem with the project of social science is that according to Max Weber, methodology of science becomes inapplicable due to the object of study is rational and free willed, desire, emotions and other sentiment. Take for instance, the law of demand and supply in economics which predicts that humans are rational and will buy more if the price is reduced and buy less if the price increased. This has been observed by economists that these laws hold no time as human behave rationally all the time. Now if a supposed scientific law is neither absolute nor hold quite oftem, should we continue to call it scientific laws of economics?