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COURSE: GST 118 (HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE)

ASSIGNMENT: DO A 2-PAGE REVIEW OF CHAPTER OF HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

This chapter begins by telling us the success recorded in natural science during the eighteenth and nineteenth century which was enormous on the social and intellectual life of the European people, who trusted the words of scientists and asked for their opinions on certain issues not related to science such as law.

There was a positive response to science as a result of of a change in the socio-cultural environment of that period and it displays why the believe in science is called positivism. This change in socio-cultural environment gave birth to the renaissance and enlightenment period. This period marked the beginning of a revolution for the return to the Greek heritage of using reason in matters of public concern and not religion to judge public matters. The aeon before the renaissance period was called the dark ages because religious beliefs were supreme. The words of the pope were supreme authority on any issue of public concern. People were burned on stakes because they were found guilty of witchcraft by the church and diseases were said to be the direct consequences of sin and idolatry. The intellectual community saw it as a threat to human existence, so they started infiltrating literature with the benefits of using reason to arrive at justified conclusion just like Socrates. The Greeks were said to have world views in music and art. This gave rise to the classical period of romanticism. Romanticism later gave rise to humanism and naturalism, works of art and literature created during this period were said to be classics also. Russell Bertand says that the period of history commonly called ‘modern’ has a mental outlook which differs from that of the medieval period in may ways.

Scientific approach to issues sprung up due to philosophical approach to issues but science restricted its study to that of natural phenomena. Later on French social philosopher August Comte thought otherwise. He believed that society behaves in a uniform pattern similar to material things and such behavior can be studied and accurate predictions can be made hence this marked the beginning of social science especially sociology and Comte is regarded as the father of social sciences and sociology. Positivism rejects theoretical speculations that are not based on facts of experience as a means of obtaining knowledge. Positivism is laden with errors such as: observations are concept-laden, observations are hypothesis-laden, observations are theory-laden etc.

Social science is said to be the study dedicated to the explanations of human behavior, interaction and manifestations either as an individual in a society or collectively as a group. Social science has various disciplines which include: Sociology, Psychology, Economics etc. the history of these disciplines dates back to the works of early philosophers such as St. Augustine, Ibn Khaldun, Karl Marx, Thomas Hobbes, Emile Durkheim and others, but August Comte is regarded as the father of social science. Social sciences seek to employ the method of science in the investigation of social phenomena taking the human person as object of study. The philosophy of science came up out of curiosity that the central focus and the propelling motive of social science may be impossible due to methodological mismatch. In other to understand these problems of cause and reason with social sciences, we need to understand one of the essential features of science and scientific explanation is to provide a casual or correctional connection between an event and its cause. Offors asserts that by using scientific methods in social investigation, the social sciences seeks to explain the cause of action involving human agents.

Another problem with the social science project according to Max Weber is that the methodology of science becomes inapplicable due to the object of study is man, a rational being with freewill, desires, emotions and other sentient features that come into play. For instance, the law of demand and supply in Economics predict that humans are rational and will buy more if the price is reduced and buy less if the price is increased.