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**COURSE: HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE**

**ASSIGNMENT:** In not more than 2 pages, do a review of Chapter 8 of Temidayo D. Oladipo and Noah O. Balogun, History and philosphy of science: A Brief Survey. ( pages 86-96)

**CHAPTER 8: PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND APPLIED SCIENCES**

The success recorded in natural science in the eighteenth and nineteenth century was so enormous on the social and intellectual life of the then people of Europe that they started trusting the words of scientists and even sought their opinion on matters unrelated to science such as law and forensic evidence. The positive response to science was due to the change in the socio-cultural milieu of the time and this explains why belief in science on any issue is called positivism.

The socio- cultural milieu in which positivism grew is called the renaissance and the enlightment period. It was called the renaissance period because it marked a period when people started a revolution of return to their Greek heritage of using reason in matters of public concern and not the dictate of religion. It was the aeon prior to the renaissance period which was called the dark ages because it was the time religious belief reigned supreme. The words of the pope was the final authority on any matter. It was during this period that women and men were burned because the church found them guilty of witchcraft and sorcery. Diseases were said to be direct consequences of sin and idolatry and so the church waged wars to remove the heathens.

The intellectual community saw this as a big threat to human happiness and survival. So they started infiltrating literature with the benefits of using reason to arrive at justified conclusions just as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle used to do. In arts and music were hidden Greek worldviews and this became known as the classical period of romanticism. Romanticism gave rise to humanism and naturalism and also works of art and literature at this time were regarded as classic.

Science was limited to the study of natural phenomenon until a French philosopher called August Conte was of the opinion that society behaves in a regular pattern much like material things and this behavior can be studied and somewhat accurate decisions can be made. This is the beginning of social sciences especially that August Conte was regarded as the father of sociology.

**SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Social sciences is an area of study dedicated to the explanation of human behavior, interaction and manifestations, either as an individual in a society or collectively as a group; including the institutions, norms and more of such interaction created. Disciplines in the social sciences include: sociology, economics, political science, archaeology and anthropology. Social sciences seek to employ the method of science in the investigation of social phenomena takin the human person as subject of study.

However, the philosophy of social sciences arouse out of the curiosity that the central focus and the propelling motive of social science may be impossible or unachievable due to methodological mismatch

**THE PROBLEM OF REASONS AND CAUSES**

One of the features of science is to provide a causal connection between an event and its cause. That is to explain why event A is the cause of event B which is the effect. Cause and effect must have an invariable or constant relation in the sense that whenever the alleged cause occurs, the effect must also occur. It must also be spatially contiguous, that is, the two events must occur in approximately the same location or at least be related by a chain of events that are spatially linked. Cause and effect must be temporally related such that the cause precedes the effect in time just as the effect must follow continuously from the cause and it must have an asymmetrical relation in that the occurrence of the alleged cause must be actual event, which brings about the effect, such that the effect must not be part of the original conditions necessary and sufficient for its own occurrence.

**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 is action or reaction. All these factors undermine the notion of predictability of behavior with which natural science is known to deduce their principles and laws.