

## **IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE DISCIPLINES AND THEIR PRESENT-DAY RELEVANCE IN HUMANISTIC STUDIES**

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### **Abstract:**

*The Social Sciences are a collection of disciplines that examine numerous elements of human society, such as its operation and evolution, interaction and interpersonal interactions, etc. The social sciences can be subdivided into numerous fields, each of which focuses largely on a certain facet of society and its institutions. Its birth was followed by the renaissance as Europe moved further away from church doctrine and further into more humanistic thoughts. However, it was only properly termed and organised in the 1950s as Behavioural Sciences. Those who supported this terminology did so in part because it moved these fields closer to sciences such as biological anthropology and psychology, which likewise study human behaviour. The idea of a scientific discipline of mankind, similar to the search of the objective truth through the procedure of speculation and refutation regarding any element of empirical facts, is extremely encouraging. But it can only grow in conditions that allow for its institutionalisation. Such circumstances may emerge hereafter, despite the fact that they do not currently prevail.*

*Social Sciences and humanistic studies were patronized during the times of Renaissance in Europe. The industrial age saw the uprooting of large numbers of people from the more established and defensive situations of towns, guilds, parishes, and families, and their swarming to the new centres of industry, starting to form slums, residing in prevalent squalor and wretchedness, their wages generally trailing behind the cost of living, their families growing larger, and their standard of living seemingly deteriorating; all of this is a common theme in the literature and cultural notion of the century. On this background my research paper looks into the emergence of Social Sciences as a branch of study right from the European Renaissance, industrial age, and finally as a separate field of studies in the Twentieth Century.*

### **Keywords:**

*Social Sciences, humanism, behaviour, Renaissance, population, rationality.*

### **Introduction:**

Social science subjects such as Economics, Political Science, Sociology, and History are centred on particular areas of research that are associated with aspects of society such as culture, human psychology, languages, organisations, and institutions that control and compose society as a whole. These subjects are further subdivided into specialised areas at

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the university level, such as sociology and psychology, economics and finance, demographic trends, ethnic studies, econometrics, and so on. This provides students with a variety of options from which to choose, depending on their career objectives and interests.

Students who study social science further gain a deeper understanding of their responsibilities to human society and gain insight into the ways in which individuals can meet their obligations. They gain an understanding of the fundamental rights outlined in our constitution and the freedom warriors who fought bravely for the nation as a result of their study of social science. In addition to this, it imparts knowledge of both the natural and social environments existing around them. It fosters the growth of positive character traits and attitudes of children in their formative years, as well as increases their capacity for critical thinking and imaginative creativity. Students gain an understanding of a wide range of topics through the study of social science. Some of these topics include cultural and social views, religions, castes, nationalities, languages, festivals, clothes, and food. Because of all of these factors, students are often able to understand that the society in which they live is multicultural, diverse, and interconnected amongst the various nations, ethnicities, and religions. Social sciences teach students further values, such as, the knowledge of civilization and culture, as well as understanding of social growth, social conduct, and civil traits; the ability to think and reason; proper skills and good habits; moral and social principles; and the formation of a well-rounded personality. It is these skills and habits that encourage proper civic sense and create model citizens.

### **The Influence of the Renaissance on the Social Sciences and Its Disciplines:**

When the influence of the church started to steadily decline, two major perspectives appeared on the scene, both of which were equally powerful, and they worked together to the development of the study of humanity and society that could be compared to the practical and observational foundational principles of the social sciences. The first factor was the enormous popularity of ancient Greek works throughout the Renaissance, particularly the works of the thinkers Plato and Aristotle. During the Renaissance, most of what was considered to be social thinking was little more than a supplement or reflection on the classics of Greek thought. This is something that persists all through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The second was the ideas of classical Latin thoughts. It was also nothing more than the revival of Roman thoughts, such as those of Publius Rutillius Rufus, Panaetius, Marcus Vigellius and Cato the Younger. As is the case in many other aspects of humanities and the social sciences, the legacy of Greece and Rome has played a significant role in its development throughout history.

The next influence to build up the Social Sciences was René Descartes, the French philosopher who had a significant impact in philosophy and other humanistic studies. His school of thought, which came to be known as Cartesianism, held that the best way to gain an understanding of the world, including humanity and society, was to start with a handful of basic, fundamental ideas of reality, and then proceed to rigorously and almost geometrically deduce more complex ideas and eventually large, all-encompassing theories from these simple ideas, all of which, Descartes insisted, were the stock of common sense, or the mind that is shared by all people from the moment of their birth (Paul Brains, 1999). It is difficult to overstate the influence that Cartesianism had on the development of social, political, and moral thought in the century and a half that followed the publication of his

Discourse on Method (1637) and his Meditations on First Philosophy. This period of time spans from approximately 1637 to 1837. Cartesianism was able to cast its enchantment over practically all individuals who were preoccupied with the challenges posed by human nature and human society during the Enlightenment and into the latter part of the 18th century.

The Cartesian mechanism was in opposition to the scholastic Aristotelian science that was backed by theologians of both the Roman Catholic and Protestant faiths. It was the belief of these philosophers that there was no such thing as evolution, either in the case of creatures or in the case of the cosmos as a whole, because everything is created by God with a predetermined nature. According to Aristotle, every living thing possesses a spirit or "soul," which is the form, or organising precept, of the material that makes up the organism. It is also the source of the organism's capabilities of expansion and development, nourishment, interpretation, and (in humans), the capacity to learn. The organism's essence, also known as its nature, and its end cause, also known as its purpose or objective, are both referred to as the soul. As a result, the transformation of an acorn into more of an oak tree can be rationalised by pointing to the fact that the acorn comprises a shape that guides it toward the achievement of this target. Descartes was opposed to the teleological, animism approach, as well as the associated notion of alchemy, which postulated the existence of living forces within objects. Instead, Cartesians claimed that just God and people have spirits, bequests, purposes, and goals, therefore they rejected the presence of what they perceived to be occult or mystical elements. They believed that both living and non-living bodies lacked any sense of purpose and were instead only objects that were passively moved around.

Therefore, in the eyes of Cartesians, the pursuit of scientific knowledge consisted not of searching for fundamental causes but rather of finding such laws that regulate the motions of entities. Descartes positioned the human spirit or intellect, like God, outside the bounds of deterministic nature when he insisted that people have free will. However, due to the fact that the body is indeed a part of nature, the manifest ability of the mind to control the movements of the body is, according to the assumptions of Cartesian thought, unexplainable and miraculous, and is therefore irreconcilable with mechanistic determinism. In a twist of irony, according to Descartes's theory, this ability is in itself a mystical or supernatural force.

It is these influences that gave rise to the social sciences that are being taught in the modern era. The end of the renaissance saw nationalism rise in the states of Europe. Expanding bureaucracies whose primary focus is the collection of information, primarily for the sake of revenue, the census, and trade, marked the era as society edged towards industrialism and the modern era.

### **Influence of the Industrial Age on Social Sciences:**

It is best to comprehend the crucial ideas, motifs, and concerns of social and political thought in the late nineteenth century as responses to the problem of that were created in people's minds as a result of the weakening of the old order, or European society as a whole, as a consequence of the twin blows of the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. The disintegration of the old order—an order that had been supported by kin, property, socioeconomic status, faith, community, and aristocracy—released, in a sense, the intricate

components of status, control, and power that had been accumulated for such a significant amount of time. In the same way that the history of politics, industry, and trade in the 19th century is primarily about the practical efforts that human beings made to reconsolidate these elements, the history of social thought in the 19th century is primarily about conceptual attempts to reincorporate these elements, which means to give them new contexts for how they should be understood. It would be difficult to discover upheavals in the history of mankind that were of comparable significance to the Industrial Revolution in terms of the rapidity and sheer immensity of their impact on mankind's cognition and ideals. The social, economic, and cultural shifts that were initiated in France and England just at the latter end of the 18th century quickly expanded throughout Americas and Europe in the late nineteenth century, and then made their way to Eurasia, Africa, and the Indo-Pacific region in the 20th century. The effects of the two revolutions, one of which was overwhelmingly democratic in its thrust and the other of which was industrial-capitalist in thrust, have been to subvert, stir, or overthrow institutions that had persisted for centuries, even millennia, and along with them, systems of power, status, faith, and larger society.

It is enlightening to highlight a few of the crucial aspects in social thought that were almost the direct effects of the democratic and technological movements in the 19th century. These were the ideas that were discussed in this article. To start, there was a significant rise in the overall population. The population of Europe increased from 140 million to 266 million between the years 1750 and 1850, while the population of the world increased from 728 million to well over 1 billion. In his now-famous essay titled "Essay on the Principle of Population" (1798), an English priest and ethicist named Thomas Malthus was the first person to point out the huge significance that this increase in population had for human welfare (Libby Robin, 2013). Malthus was considered an economist. There were no easily foreseeable limits to the growth of population as a result of the lessening of historic checks on population growth, primarily those of high mortality rates. This lessening was one of the rewards of technological progress, as Malthus realised, and it was one of the factors that contributed to the lessening. And such growth, he emphasised, could only upset the conventional harmony between inhabitants, which Malthus described as expanding at a parametric rate, and food production, which he declared could only grow at an algorithmic rate. Even if not all of the social intellectuals of the century shared Malthus' dismal outlook on the issue, very few, if any, of them were oblivious to the effects that an exponential rise in population would have on the industry, politics, and society.

Secondly, was the issue of the working conditions? It is reasonable to view this condition, which existed at the beginning of the 19th century, as being in fact superior to the condition that the rural masses had been in during earlier eras. The crucial point, however, is that in the 19th century, a great number of writers considered it to be worse than it actually was and described it as such. Because authors who focused on economic issues, ranging from David Ricardo to Karl Marx, such as Karl Marx, could see little prospect of the position of labour developing under capitalism, economic thought earned the reputation of being known as "dismal science."

These are the major themes of 19th-century literature that might be viewed as direct outcomes of the two prominent revolutions. As themes, they can be found not only in social and political philosophy but also, as stated previously, in a significant deal of the century's philosophical and literary writing. The philosophers Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel,

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Ralph Waldo Emerson were, in their own ways, as influenced by the effects of the revolutions as were any social thinkers. Novelists such as Honoré de Balzac and Charles Dickens were similarly significant.

The Social Sciences at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century and Its Establishment as an Independent Field of Study.

At the turn of the 20th century, two European intellectuals, Emile Durkheim in France and Max Weber in Germany, coined the term "sociology" for the systematic science of humanity that both of them, independently, set out to achieve. Durkheim hypothesised that the topic of the new science was a phenomenon *sui generis*, which translates to "of its own type." It was autonomous, in the same way that life is, and was governed by its own causality. It was also irreducible to the rules of physics or chemistry, despite the fact that it existed inside the parameters of those laws. Weber was not quite as specific as Durkheim, but even he clearly recognised the sovereignty of the human domain. Without it, there would be no rational foundation for the creation of a distinct science of mankind in addition to physics and biology (Bastow, et al., 2014).

Sociology, in Durkheim's conception, is essentially the science of institutions, which he defines as collective social methods of thought process, acting in numerous sectors of human existence. Durkheim's conception of social sciences as primarily the scientific knowledge of institutions is reflected in his definition of sociology. In Max Weber's perspective, sociology was the study of "subjectively meaningful social action," which might be defined as "action taken that is conceived of or envisioned by the participant." Therefore, sociology was the science of symbolic reality for both of them, despite the fact that Durkheim concentrated on metaphorical occurrences at the communal level and Weber's concentration was on the individualised level, also known as the mind. However, neither of them emphasised on the highly symbolic nature of the subject they were discussing. Sociology, as a scientific method of emblematic truth about society and the psyche across the spheres of social activity, inevitably incorporated history and could never be envisioned as independent from it. For both Durkheim and Weber, social science divorced from history could very well amount to scientific knowledge separate from its statistics. Sociology is the science of emblematic truth, of society and of consciousness across the spheres of social activity. Since both of them, in general, would find the structure of the "social sciences" in American academic institutions as well as all of the academic institutions that were built on their model to be totally unintelligible (Bhattacharjee A. 2012). When Durkheim made reference to political theory, legal history, and ethnography as "social sciences," or subfields of sociology, he had this in mind. Specialties that focus on major financial institutions, like politics, the economy, family, faith, science, and the law, would be required. Durkheim knew this when he made this choice between two options.

In spite of this, neither Durkheim nor Weber were able to successfully outline a research agenda that was rationally warranted for the science that they envisioned. They were led astray by the word "sociology." By directing attention toward society, it gave the impression that humanity was ultimately a social phenomenon. In other words, it assumed humanity's epistemology rather than studying it. However, it only takes a few moments of reflection to understand that many different kinds of animals are capable of social interaction. As a natural consequence of existence, it clearly belongs only within the territory of biology,

which automatically makes sociology a biological discipline and entails that all sociologists, as a general rule not acquainted with biology, are incapable to be sociologists. (The same could be said for all of the other social sciences.) The existence of sociology as an independent field of study is warranted solely by the affects of the entire reality, as it presupposes to study natural and material phenomena. This is the sole rationale for the establishment of sociology as an independent discipline (Calhoun, C. 2008).

### **Development of Separate Disciplines within Sociology:**

Two opposing and, for a time, equally powerful tendencies first dominated the disciplines that came together to constitute sociology. These inclinations were initially dominant. The first trend was a push for consolidation, toward a singular, all-encompassing social science, or any other term one may choose to call it. The second process observed was a shift toward increasing specialisation within each of the social sciences. Even while the second strategy appears to have been more successful, as evidenced by the fact that the results can be observed in the various, competitive, and highly specialised fields that exist today, the first strategy was nevertheless of great significance and should also be analysed.

### **Economics:**

Economics was perhaps the first social science to gain the stature of a distinct field of inquiry and study. The vast volumes on administration written by German cameralists, with their extensive lexicons, and the self-control and autonomy that the physiocrats and Smith had discovered, or assumed they must have discovered, in the procedures of income, in the procedure of price levels, rental prices, interest, and wage rates, during the eighteenth century, established the foundation of a distinct and unique school of thought known as "political economy" in the late nineteenth century (Gerring, J. 2006). Consequently, the focus was placed on what became commonly known as the laissez-faire policy. If, as was suggested, the mechanisms of wealth work on their own, they need to be looked at individually and left alone by both the government and the community.

Throughout the century, individuals who came to be known as socialists were also prominent. They also often opposed the assumption that capitalism and its characteristics of privately owned enterprise, competition, and profitability are universal and enduring. This system was not only a transitory phase of economic development; it could have been, as Marx was to emphasise, be—quickly replaced by a more humanistic and then also realistic economic system based on cooperation, public ownership of the resources and means of production. Further he stated that state planning would completely remove the social evils of conflict and rivalry.

### **Political Science:**

Long before "science" was adopted as the legitimate term for the objective investigation of the factual world, "political science" was a prominent field of study during the twentieth century. As a result of the two revolutions of the 19th century, the line of methodical interest in the state that had begun in contemporary Europe with Niccole Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, amongst many others, extended and lengthened. If the Industrial Age

appeared to be the source of all the obstacles to the survival of a stable and compassionate society, then perhaps the political-democratic revolution could be considered as the source of many solutions to these issues. The democratic revolution, particularly in France, generated the concept of a political administration that was accountable for all areas of human society and, more importantly, had the authority to exercise this obligation. This authority, known as autonomy, had the same relationship to political theory in the nineteenth century that capital did to economic philosophy. A huge number of political "experts" pondered the various characteristics of sovereignty. Bentham, Austin, and Mill in England, as well as Francis Lieber and Woodrow Wilson in the U. S., had a strong inclination to view the government and its claimed sovereignty over human life similarly to how classical political economists viewed capitalism (Mariell J, et al. 2012).

### **Sociology:**

Sociology arose in essentially these circumstances, and for long of the twentieth century, it was difficult to discern between much so-called sociology and cultural and social anthropology. Even though nearly no sociologists in the era conducted empirical investigations of indigenous groups of people, as did anthropologists, their curiosity in the origins, evolution, and likely future of humanity was no less intense than that found in anthropologists' publications. Comte coined the term sociology to refer to what he envisioned would be a singular, all-encompassing discipline which would take its position at the pinnacle of the hierarchical of fields of science, a hierarchy that Comte saw to include astrophysics (the oldest of the disciplines chronologically) at the bottom and mathematics, chemistry, and biology ascending in that sequence to sociology, the youngest and noblest of the sciences (Mohanrajan, P.A. 1990). There was no concept of any competing social sciences in Comte's thinking, nor in Spencer's, whose general perspective of sociology was very similar to Comte's. Sociology would be for the social, i.e., humanly, universe what all of the other great disciplines were to their respective spheres of reality.

### **History:**

History or its more official form, Historiography, the writing of history, particularly the composition of history based on analytical evaluation of sources, the extraction of specific facts from authentic assessment in those source materials, and the fusion of those information into a narrative that withstands critical investigation. For hundreds of thousands of years, humans lived with language and consequently with stories about the old days, but without writing.

Historical narrative is still essential in all regions of the world, and the effective transfer of tales over several centuries demonstrates that people who do not have access to written history can possess a nuanced chronological awareness. However, the historical evidence must begin with a written tradition and appropriate writing technology. Cuneiform and pictographs, which were carved on stone and mud tablets in Egypt and Mesopotamia, were some of the oldest kinds of writing, as were Chinese ideograms, which were incised in metal as well as on oracle bone fragments. Egyptians, Mesopotamians, and Chinese cultures were among the first to keep records of their predecessors, which took the shape of lists of rulers and forebears (Nwagbara, U. 2013).

The immense increase of higher education worldwide in the first years after World War II, as well as the place of honour that historical instruction had in universities and colleges, contributed to the exponential rise of the historic profession in the latter half of the twentieth century. This, in turn, reflected a general public interest in, if not obsession with, the past. Thus history has taken up a major role in the Social Sciences as perhaps one of the oldest and most refined of the humanistic sciences.

### **Conclusion:**

As we found out, the Social Sciences are a group of disciplines that investigate various aspects of human civilization. These include the operation and evolution of the system, interaction and interpersonal interactions, and so on. The social sciences are separated into many fields, each of which focuses on a different aspect of society and its institutions.

Through the study of social science, students obtain an understanding of a wide range of issues. It encourages the development of positive character characteristics and attitudes in youngsters. Students realise that their society is multicultural, diversified, and interwoven among nations, ethnicities, and religions. When the church's power began to wane, two primary opinions emerged on the scene. The first was the Renaissance's immense popularity of ancient Greek writings. The second was the rebirth of Roman ideas through the works of philosophers like that of Publius Rutillius Rufus'. However Cartesianism was able to enchant nearly all individuals who were concerned with the issues provided by human nature. The Cartesian mechanism was opposed by theologians of both the Roman Catholic and Protestant religions who supported scholastic Aristotelian science. The dissolution of the old system liberated the intricate components of status, control, and power that had collected over such a long period of time. The history of social thinking in the nineteenth century is mostly concerned with conceptual attempts to reintroduce these aspects.

Between 1750 and 1850, Europe's population expanded from 140 million to 266 million. The world's population grew from 728 million to well over 1 billion people. Thomas Malthus was perhaps the first to recognise the enormous importance of population growth for human welfare. The revolutions of 1815 and 1848 were prominent themes in nineteenth-century writing. To those who saw no chance of a post-capitalist position for labour under capitalism, economic philosophy received the moniker "dismal science." The term "sociology" was coined by Emile Durkheim and Max Weber to describe the methodical study of humanity (Ruth Levitt, et al. 2010). Sociology is fundamentally the science of institutions, or collective social techniques of thought process that operate in various areas of human existence.

Despite the fact that it existed inside those laws, it was irreducible to the norms of physics or chemistry. Sociology, as a scientific approach of discovering iconic truths about society and the mind in various realms of social activity, invariably includes history. Social science freed from history, according to both Durkheim and Weber, may amount to scientific knowledge apart from its data. The phrase "sociology" led them astray. The first was a quest for unification, toward a single, all-encompassing social science. The second apparent phenomenon was a shift toward greater specialisation within each of the social sciences such as the subjects of Economics, History, Sociology and Political Science.

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