

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCING WESTERN SOCIOLOGISTS

2Marks Questions:

1.Explain the term ‘Bourgeoisie’.

Answer:

According to Marx, Bourgeoisie are those few people who own the means of production in a capitalist society. They enjoy both economic and political power.

2. Explain the term ‘surplus value’.

Answer:

The term ‘surplus value’ refers to the quantity of value produced by the worker beyond the necessary labour time, i.e., the working time required to produce a value equal to the one he has received in the form of wages.

3. List two suitable grounds on which Marxian theory of class struggle has been criticised.

Answer:

Karl Marx has absolutely ignored the middle class. Middle class has a great importance in modern society especially that society which can be called the supreme capitalist society.

The class struggle cannot be accepted as constructive. Hence, it is always destructive and it leads to fascism which any society is unable to bear.

4.Explain briefly social fact as interpreted by Durkheim.

Answer:

Social facts are those ways of thinking, doing work and feel which has the special characteristics to maintain its existence exterior to the individual consciousness. Durkheim also writes, “Social facts are those ways of working, thinking and feeling which are exterior to man and which controls the man by their power of constraint”.

5.Why is Emile Durkheim called the ‘key classical theorists in sociology’?

Answer:

Emile Durkheim is one of the ‘key classical theorists in sociology’. He is best known for founding sociology as a scientific discipline and for defining the boundaries of its subject matter.

His key theoretical statement lies in his claim that social phenomena are realities that can only be explained by other social facts.

6.Differentiate between the sacred and the profane.

Answer:

The sacred is that which is considered holy and dreaded. It includes religious beliefs and rites, duties or anything related to religious treatment par excellence.

The profane relates to the ordinary, utilitarian aspects of life, dull or routine, full of impurity.

7.What is social fact, according to Durkheim?

Answer:

Social facts are those ways of working, thinking and feeling which are exterior to man and which controls the man by their power of constraints.

4Marks Questions:

1. Why is the Enlightenment important for the development of sociology?

Answer:

During the late 17th and 18th centuries, Western Europe saw the emergence of radically new ways of thinking about the world. It is referred to 'The Enlightenment'.

The ability to think rationally and critically transformed the individual human being into both the producer and the user of all knowledge, the 'knowing subject'.

Only persons who could think and reason could be considered as a complete human being.

To become the definite features of the human world, it was necessary to displace nature, religion and the divine acts of gods from the central position they had in earlier days of understanding the world.

2. How was the Industrial Revolution responsible for giving rise to sociology?

Answer:

Production moved out of houses and went over to factories. People left their rural areas and went over to urban areas to find jobs in newly established industries

Rich people started to live in large mansions and labour class started to live in slums.

Due to modern administrative system, monarchy was forced to take the responsibility of public subjects and public welfare.

3.What are the various components of a mode of production?

Answer:

A mode of production has the following components:

First is the means of production which means the labour class who produces.

Second is the capitalist class who owns the means of production.

Labour is sold in the market like commodity.

The capitalist class has wealth and means to get his production done by the labourers.

The capitalist class becomes richer at the cost of labourers.

4.Why do classes come into conflict, according to Marx?

Answer:

Karl Marx has studied two classes. Two opposite groups exist in each society.

First who does exploitation and second is that who is being exploited.

Conflict is always going on between these two classes from the very beginning.

Bourgeoisie owns all the means of production and it suppresses other groups with his means of production.

Second class is the labour class which was given the name of Proletariats.

Conflict is always going on between the exploiters and the exploited because capitalist hardly wants to give anything to labourer.

According to Marx, economic processes generally tend to generate class conflicts though this also depends on political and social conditions.

5.What are social facts? How do we recognise them?

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6.What are social facts? How do we recognise them?

Answer:

Social facts are collective representations which emerge from the association of people.

They are not particular to a person but of a general nature, independent of the individual.

Durkheim called the 'emergent level', that is the level of complex collective life where social phenomena can emerge.

One of Durkheim's most significant achievements is his demonstration that sociology, a discipline that dealt with abstract entities like social facts/could nevertheless be a science founded on observable empirically verifiable evidence.

The most famous example of his use of new kind of empirical data is in his study of suicide.

Each individual case of suicide was specific to the individual and his/her circumstances.

7.What is the difference between ‘mechanic’ and ‘organic’ solidarity?

Answer:

Durkheim says that in every society some values, ideas, beliefs, ways of behaviour, institutions and laws are there which binds the society in a single knot. Because of the presence of these elements, the relations and unity or solidarity exist in society.

He classified a society by the nature of social solidarity which existed in the society which are as follows:

Mechanical Solidarity

It is predominant in less advanced societies.

It is segmental in nature.

In this social bonds are relatively weak.

It exists more where population is less.

In it, collective authority is absolute.

It is highly religious.

It is concrete and specific.

Organic Solidarity

It is predominant in more advanced societies.

It is organized in nature.

In this, the social bonds are strong.

It exists where population is more.

In this, there is more room for individual initiative.

It is highly secular.

It is abstract and general.

7Marks Questions:

1.Try to find out what Marx and Weber wrote about India.

Answer:

Marx argued that people's ideas and beliefs originated from the economic system of which they were part.

Marx laid great emphasis on economic structure and processes because he believed that they formed the foundation of every social system throughout human history.

Marx believed that class struggle was the major driving force of change in society.

Weber argued that the overall objective of the social sciences was to develop an 'interpretative understanding of social action'.

The central concern of the social sciences was with social action and since human actions necessarily involved subjective meanings, the methods of enquiry of social science also had to be different from the methods of natural science.

The social world was founded on subjective human meanings, values, feelings, prejudices, ideals and so on.

Social scientists had to constantly practise 'empathetic understanding'. But this investigation has to be done objectively.

Sociologists are meant to describe, not judge, the subjective feelings of others.

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2. What is the concept of "the sociological imagination," and how did C. Wright Mills contribute to this idea?

Answer:

"The sociological imagination" is a concept introduced by American sociologist C. Wright Mills (1916-1962). It refers to the ability to understand the relationship between personal troubles and public issues, linking individual experiences to broader social structures. Mills argued that sociologists should use this perspective to examine the intersection of biography (individual experiences) and history (social structures).

By doing so, individuals can better comprehend how their personal challenges are connected to larger societal forces. Mills believed that developing a sociological imagination is crucial for a deeper understanding of the social world.

Durkheim argued that societal factors, rather than individual psychological factors, played a crucial role in determining suicide rates. His work laid the groundwork for the structural-functional approach in sociology, which focuses on how social structures contribute to the functioning of society.

Egoistic Suicide: A person gives too much importance to his own self or ego; is not properly integrated in society; excessive self- reflection on personal matters leading to withdrawal from the outside world; as a result there is weakening in the bonds of solidarity in the family, religious and political organizations.

3.How did Max Weber contribute to the understanding of social action and the concept of the "Protestant Ethic"?

Answer:

Max Weber (1864-1920) was a German sociologist known for his diverse contributions to sociology. One key aspect of his work is the concept of "social action," which he defined as any action carried out by an individual that takes into account the actions of others. Weber categorized social action into four types: instrumental rational action, value-rational action, affectual action, and traditional action.

This framework has been influential in understanding human behavior in different social contexts.

Weber also explored the "Protestant Ethic," a term he used to describe the influence of Protestantism, particularly Calvinism, on the development of capitalism. According to Weber, the Protestant work ethic, which emphasized hard work, discipline, and frugality, played a role in the economic success of Protestant regions. This idea has sparked extensive debate and research within sociology, economics, and history.

Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) was a pioneering French sociologist known for his foundational work in the field of sociology.

He is particularly recognized for his emphasis on the study of social facts and his groundbreaking research on suicide.

4. Who are some key Western sociologists and what are their contributions to the field of sociology?

Answer:

Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist, is considered one of the founding figures of sociology. He made significant contributions to the study of social order and integration. Durkheim's work on suicide explored the social factors influencing individual behavior, highlighting the relationship between societal norms and individual actions. His concept of "anomie" emphasized the importance of social cohesion in maintaining a stable society.

Max Weber, a German sociologist, is known for his theory on the relationship between religion and capitalism. In "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism," Weber argued that certain Protestant values contributed to the development of modern capitalism. Additionally, he introduced the concept of the "ideal type" to simplify and understand complex social phenomena, emphasizing the importance of interpretive understanding in sociology.

Karl Marx, a German philosopher and sociologist, co-authored "The Communist Manifesto" and laid the groundwork for conflict theory. Marx's ideas focused on the role of economic structures in shaping society.

He introduced the concept of historical materialism, arguing that the development of society is driven by conflicts between social classes. Marx's work has had a profound impact on the study of social inequality and class struggle.

Fill in the Blanks:

1. _____ is often referred to as the "father of sociology" for his contributions to the development of sociological theory in the 19th century.
2. _____, a German sociologist, is known for his ideas on social action, verstehen (understanding), and the Protestant Ethic.
3. _____ is a French sociologist who introduced the concepts of mechanical and organic solidarity, and is famous for his work on suicide.
4. _____, an American sociologist, is renowned for his studies on the African American community, particularly in Philadelphia, and his concept of the "double consciousness."
5. _____ is a British sociologist known for his structural functionalist perspective and concepts like manifest and latent functions.

Answer:

1. Auguste Comte
2. Max Weber
3. Emile Durkheim
4. W.E.B. Du Bois
5. Talcott Parsons

Multiple Choice Questions:

1. Who is considered the founding figure of sociology?

- a. Auguste Comte
- b. Karl Marx
- c. Max Weber
- d. Emile Durkheim

2. Which sociologist is known for his theory of social conflict and class struggle?

- a. Max Weber
- b. Emile Durkheim
- c. Karl Marx
- d. Jane Addams

3. Who is credited with the concept of the "Protestant Ethic" and its influence on capitalism?

- a. Max Weber
- b. Auguste Comte
- c. Karl Marx
- d. Emile Durkheim

4. Which sociologist focused on the study of suicide and its social causes?

- a. Karl Marx
- b. Max Weber
- c. Emile Durkheim
- d. Jane Addams

5. Who is known for the theory of symbolic interactionism, emphasizing the role of symbols in shaping social interactions?

- a. Max Weber
- b. George Herbert Mead
- c. Emile Durkheim
- d. Jane Addams

6. Which sociologist is associated with the concept of the "looking glass self"?

- a. Erving Goffman
- b. Herbert Blumer
- c. Charles Horton Cooley
- d. Talcott Parsons

7. Who is known for his work on the concept of anomie and its impact on society?

- a. Max Weber
- b. Karl Marx
- c. Emile Durkheim
- d. Jane Addams

8. Which sociologist is known for his studies on bureaucracy and the iron cage of rationalization?

- a. Max Weber
- b. Karl Marx
- c. Emile Durkheim
- d. Herbert Spencer

9. Who co-founded the Hull House in Chicago and was a prominent figure in social work and activism?

- a. Max Weber
- b. Jane Addams
- c. W.E.B. Du Bois
- d. Herbert Spencer

10. Who is known for his research on the "McCarthy era" and the concept of the sociological imagination?

- a. C. Wright Mills
- b. Robert K. Merton
- c. Talcott Parsons
- d. Herbert Spencer

Answer:

- 1. a
- 2. c
- 3. a
- 4. c
- 5. b
- 6. c
- 7. c
- 8. a
- 9. b
- 10.a

Summary:

Auguste Comte (1798-1857): Often regarded as the founder of sociology, Comte emphasized the scientific study of society. He developed the idea of positivism, advocating for the application of scientific methods to social phenomena.

Emile Durkheim (1858-1917): Durkheim focused on social integration and solidarity. His work on suicide and the concept of anomie highlighted the impact of social factors on individual behavior. He also emphasized the importance of social institutions in maintaining social order.

Karl Marx (1818-1883): A prominent figure in sociology and economics, Marx analyzed class struggles and economic systems. His theory of historical materialism and emphasis on the role of capitalism in shaping society have had a profound impact on sociological thought.

Max Weber (1864-1920): Weber explored the relationship between religion, economy, and social structure. His concept of the "Protestant Ethic" and the spirit of capitalism emphasized the cultural and religious influences on economic behavior.

Georg Simmel (1858-1918): Simmel's work focused on the micro-level interactions in society. He explored social forms, social geometry, and the concept of social distance, laying the groundwork for later developments in symbolic interactionism.

Talcott Parsons (1902-1979): Parsons contributed to the development of structural functionalism, emphasizing the importance of social institutions in maintaining stability and equilibrium in society. His work laid the foundation for mid-20th-century sociological theory.

Erving Goffman (1922-1982): Goffman is known for his dramaturgical approach to social interaction. He viewed social life as a series of performances, with individuals managing their impressions to control how they are perceived by others.

C. Wright Mills (1916-1962): Mills introduced the concept of the sociological imagination, encouraging scholars to connect personal troubles with public issues. He emphasized the intersection of individual experiences with broader social structures.

These sociologists have significantly shaped the discipline, and their theories continue to influence the study of society and social dynamics.