I. Auguste Comte (1798-1857)

A. Social context

1. French revolution

2. Enlightenment

3. moral anarchy, intellectual chaos, non-scientific dogma

a. the Terror

b. the individual

B. Intellectual context

1. Enlightenment thinkers

2. natural science

B. Sociology

1. Definition

a. science of society: instrumental value

b. social physics

c. hierarchy of sciences

2.Goal

a. diagnose social ills

b. discover laws of society

i. structure (social statics)

ii. change (social dynamics)

c. progressive improvement of society.

d. moral society: new spiritual order

3. method

a. positivism

i. determinism

ii. empiricism

b. comparative method (“indirect experimentations”)

i. statics: human to non-human, society at same levels

ii. dynamics: historical method

C. Social theory (The Positive Philosophy)

1. Society

1. Social statics

i. Society is real: sui generis

ii. like a biological organism

iii. parts are functionally interrelated to whole

iv. tends toward stability/order

v. family most important unit

vi. individuals are abstraction

vii. disharmony

b. Social dynamics: society is evolving

i. stages of development

ii. teleology: towards universal society

iii. progressive: better and better

iv. one society: “the great being of humanity”

2. Law of Three Stages

a. Theological Stage

i. fetishism (animism) to polytheism to monotheism

ii. monotheism ex RCC

iii. main characteristic: warfare

b. Metaphysical stage (Reformation to French Revolution)

i. Enlightenment

ii. critique of Monotheism: Protestant to deistic

iii. transition period of disharmony: negative

critique of religious doctrine

free inquiry

natural rights

iv. fundamentally critical/short duration/disharmony

v. no new forms of social organization

vi. failure of French revolution

c. Scientific or Positive Stage

i. all sciences reach positive stage: unified

ii. discover social laws to organize

society harmoniously

iii. “positive society”: institutions, practices

iv. under control of “sociological priests”

D. Individual (Anti-Enlightenment)

1. Attributes

a. Affective (emotions)

i. egoistic

ii. intermediate

iii. social

b. cognitive (rational)

i. conception

ii. expression

c. active (character)

2. rational: reflect the stage of the society

3. positive society and individual

a. education

b. restraints

4. gender

a. men cognitive

b. women emotional/social

5. race

E. Enlightenment influence

1. Comte’s positivism

a. Newton and physics

b. scientific analysis could be extended to all

phenomena.

c. explanation had to be in the form of laws

grounded in observation (empiricism).

d. presupposes determinism

e. b. is the only form of knowledge (positivism)

2. Comte’s social evolutionism

a. developing moral order in the universe

b. natural and necessary direction to this order.

c. science can discover and explain the laws

of this moral order.

d. when discovered and explained human beings can shape

institutions in moral way

3. Theory as instrumental: applied

F. Counter-enlightenment influence

1. anti-individualism

a. anti- natural rights

b. freedom of thought

1. “medievalism”
   1. “positivistic church”
   2. control
2. education

ii. regulate gender relationships

iii. moral guide to secular leaders

iv. new world government

G. Comte’s influence

1. Durkheim
2. Structural-functionalism

3. Positivism

I. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)

A. Social Context:

1. industrializing England

2. emergence of working class

3. industrializing America

B. Intellectual Influence

1. Thomas Malthus (*Essays on the Principle of Population*)

a. population pressure on subsistence

b. struggle for survival

1. modern science

a .biology

i.natural selection

ii. Lamarckian theory of development

b. physics: theory of the conservation of energy

3. “middle class rural radicalism”

a. egalitarianism

i. equality

ii. aristocrats: “survival”

b. limit centralized authority

i. protect individual rights

ii. defense

c. separation of church and state

i. Church of England

ii. “survival”

d. private property: freedom to own and use

C. Theory (*Social Statics*, *The Study of Sociology*, *Synthetic Philosophy*)

1. Sociology

a. Goal: chart the normal course of social evolution

b. Purpose: demonstrate the futility of trying to control the process of evolution

* 1. Method

i. positivisim

ii. deduction

iii. historical comparative

1. Society

a. definition: a natural phenomenon that can be explained by the natural sciences, especially biology and the theory of evolution

b. super organic

i. organism

ii. functionally related parts (sustaining, regulating, and distributing)

iii. complexity=s efficiency and stability

b. evolving: naturalistic evolutionism

i. uniformitarianism: inert, living, psychological, social

ii. growth: small to large

iii. development: simple to complex

iv. one direction

v. evolution =s progress

vi. equilibrium (“equilibration”)

“stable, harmonious, competed adapted state”

vii. survivals

c. goal: exists to provide environment for individual success

i. natural selection happens within society

ii. economic competition leads to survival of fittest

iii. survival of fittest makes society stronger

d. evolution demands limited government

i. gov interferes with natural change

ii. police, military, contracts

iii. no aid to poor

“the whole effort of nature is to get rid of such”

iv. no state supported education, no regulation of housing conditions, no government postal service

e. organizational complexity/purpose

i. simple, compound, doubly compound, trebly compound

ii. society: militant phase of evolutionary development

organized for survival

despotic

compulsive cooperation

submerges individual

iii. society: industrial phase of evolutionary developement

organized by contract

peaceful

respectful of the individual

3. Individual

a. Larmarkianism

i. traits develop through use (disappear/disuse)

ii. intergenerational transmission

iii. “survival of the fittest”

iv. laissez-faire

b. psychological characteristics really social

c. emotions dominate intellect

d. example: militant society

i. patriotism

ii. faith in authority

iii. fatalism

e. example: industrial society

i. resist unjust authority

ii. respect for rights of others

iii. concern for genuine human welfare

4. gender

a. arrested development

b. psychological characteristics: military society

c. intellectual ability of simple societies

5. race

a. limited intellectual ability

b. childlike: boys playing w/o superivsion

6. working class

D. Spencer and American Sociology

1. foundation
2. middle class values

3. evolutionary change/Social Darwinism

4. positivism

1. “ahistorical” comparative method
2. sociology as value neutral

II. Summary: Comte and Spencer

1. Social Context: Great Transformation
   1. World View: religious to secular
   2. Institutions: political, economic.
   3. Communities: gemeinschaft to gesellschaft
2. Goal: Explain new world
3. Main question: Hobbesian “problem of social order”
4. Means: Science
5. Answer
   1. Comte: Law of Three Stages
      1. universal and progressive
      2. teleology: moral order
      3. problem: individual
      4. positive society: “medievalism”
   2. Spencer: naturalistic evolutionism

a. uniformitarianism

b. teleology: modern industrial society

c. individual: social values

i. rights

ii. human welfare