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Q1(a)

How did the intellectual forces lead to the emergence of sociology? Discuss.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2020 · Sociology GS 1 · 10 marks · Sociology

Sociology - The Discipline: Modernity and social changes in Europe and emergence of sociology; Scope of the subject and comparison with other social sciences; Sociology and common sense.

Core demand of the question

- How did the intellectual forces lead to the emergence of sociology? Discuss
- Keep the discussion within a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Intellectual forces made society worldly, comparable, and criticisable.

Montesquieu, Smith, Rousseau, and Comte prepared comparison, market, inequality, and a named science.

Marx, Durkheim, and Weber filled the space with class, social facts, and action.

Nisbet's conservative problems also fed the tradition.

Ideas licensed the discipline; industry made it urgent.

Introduction

Sociology emerged when European thought made society a worldly object. Intellectual forces did not build factories, but they licensed a science of order and change. Auguste Comte named that science; older ideas made the name thinkable.

Body

Enlightenment and comparison

- Reason treated laws and manners as human products. Montesquieu compared types of society before the word sociology.
- Progress theories, from Condorcet to Saint-Simon, asked for a science that would reorganise the social body.

Political economy and moral philosophy

- Adam Smith's division of labour and David Hume's morals supplied regularities of exchange and sympathy.
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau politicised inequality. Karl Marx later inverted contract into class, but the intellectual permission was already there.

Science, history, and the German path

- Positivism, after Comte, demanded laws of society on the model of the natural sciences.

- German historicism and later **Max Weber** insisted on meaning and the ideal type, another intellectual door.
- **Emile Durkheim** used scientific rhetoric to fix social facts as a distinct object.

Discuss

- Ideas led by opening a space. Industry and revolution supplied the urgency. Robert **Nisbet** added conservative themes of community and authority.

Flow diagram

Enlightenment -> Sociology
Political economy -> Sociology
Positivism -> Sociology
Meaning and history -> Sociology

Conclusion

Intellectual forces-Enlightenment comparison, political economy, positivism, and the German science of meaning-made sociology possible. **Comte**, **Marx**, **Durkheim**, and **Weber** occupied that space. Ideas led; they did not replace the shock of the factory and the revolution.

Facts & figures

Comte

Named sociology as the positive science of order and progress.

Montesquieu

Comparative study of laws and manners as an intellectual antecedent.

Weber

Interpretative intellectual path: meaning, rationalisation, ideal types.

Nisbet

Community, authority, and the sacred as intellectual sources beside Enlightenment.