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Sociology

Contribution of Political Science to Sociology:

Plato - talked of human behaviour and social inequality - human beings have 3 distinctive characteristics - men in gold, silver and iron - distributive justice, corrective justice Aristotle - speaks about revolution - why, how and consequences - revolution leads to social change Thomas Hobbes - primitive vs feudal society, John Locke - state committed to public welfare, Rousseau - first to speak of revolution to change inequality to egalitarian society, Marx built on this - collective will, general will Anthropology incorporates archaeology, physical anthropology, cultural history, many branches of linguistics and the study of all aspects of life in "simple societies". Our concern here is with social anthropology and cultural anthropology for it is that which is close to the study of sociology. Sociology is deemed to be the study of modern, complex societies while social anthropology was deemed to be the study of simple societies. • Each discipline has its own history or biography. Social anthropology developed in the west at a time when western-trained social anthropologists studied non-European societies often thought of as exotic, barbaric and uncivilized. This unequal relationship between those who studied and those who were studied, remarked upon too often earlier. But times have changed and we have the erstwhile 'natives' be they Indians or Sudanese, Nagas or Santhals, who now speak and write about their own societies. • The anthropologists of the past documented the details of simple societies apparently in a neutral scientific fashion. In practice they were constantly comparing those societies with the model of the western modern societies as a benchmark. • The traditional study of simple, non-literate societies by social anthropology had a pervasive influence on the content and the subject matter of the discipline. Social anthropology tended to study society (simple societies) in all their aspects, as wholes. In so far as they specialized, it was on the basis of area as for example the Andaman Islands, the Nuers or Melanesia. • Indian sociology has been far more eclectic in borrowing from both traditions. Indian sociologists often studied Indian societies that were both part of and not of one's own culture. It could also be dealing with both complex differentiated societies of urban modern India as well as the study of tribes in a holistic fashion. • It had been feared that with the decline of simple societies, social anthropology would lose its specificity and merge with sociology. However, there have been fruitful interchanges between the two disciplines and today often methods and techniques are drawn from both. There have been anthropological studies of the state and globalization, which are very different from the traditional subject matter of social

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anthropology. On the other hand, sociology too has been using quantitative and qualitative techniques, macro and micro approaches for studying the complexities of modern societies. For in India, sociology and social anthropology have had a very close relationship - example: sociology can study tribes displaced by industrialization, while anthropology can study slum dwellers • Besides this, the diffusion of Marxist approach in social anthropology, as a result of the works of Block, Sodden and Godlier, etc. have acted as a bridge between the disciplines. On the other hand even sociologists working modern industrial societies like America have increasingly started to rely upon the methods of social anthropology. For example, the works of Talcott Parsons and R.K. Merton are attempts towards an adaptation of functionalist approach to study industrial societies and William Whyte has adopted participant observation for the study of modern industrial society. Thus the disciplines are increasingly merging into each other. • Sumner - studied folkways - society + tradition - example: why we celebrate Baisakhi Louis H Morgan - 3 stages of society development - savagery, barbarism and civilization EB Taylor - Lower, Middle, Higher culture = magic, religion, science Field Work in Anthro Research: Early social anthropological research was largely concerned with the study of small scale societies in their natural state – hence ‘field’ came to denote a distinct social group which was to be studied in its unique socio-cultural and geographical setting – methodological dualism (subject – object dichotomy) – the idea of ‘otherness’ remained remarkably central to early fieldwork researches – Case study by Amory regarding African studies in USA – African American scholars were discouraged from working in Africa – it was argued that they were “too close” to the field and would not manage to be “objective” – Kath Weston, in her study of gay and lesbian communities in USA, too arrived at a similar conclusion Reflexive sociologists Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson questioned the conventional notion of field based on the idea of ‘otherness’ – emphasized on the need for reconstruction of field and field-work practices in the light of new developments – argued that decolonization, industrialization, and most importantly globalization, accompanied by processes of diffusion and acculturation, have challenged the traditional definition of field and the very idea of a clearly demarcated space of ‘otherness’ – the idea of field, in terms of a homogenous social group with its unique culture and geographical surroundings, has come to be questioned – today cultural P1 - 1 b. Anthropology 21 Neha Bhosle - Rank 15, UPSC CSE 2019 a homogenous social group with its unique culture and geographical surroundings, has come to be questioned – today cultural heterogeneity is more common Further, ‘location’ of the field should not merely be seen

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in geographical sense alone but also in social and political terms – for example, subaltern approach in sociology has significantly contributed towards a better understanding of various socio-economic and political processes in India which were until now largely studied from an elitist perspective - they also question the assumption that only professionally trained observers could collect authentic ethnographic data – for example, Paul Radin in his research found that untrained native research assistants prove to be better sometimes for certain sorts of data collection.

Philosophy

Modern philosophy and sociology came into existence during one time period to explain the social crisis of Europe in the 19th century. Sociology aimed, to begin with, to provide a social doctrine that would guide social policy. This aim has now been abandoned. Even then some links exist between sociology and philosophy. First, there is a philosophy of sociology in the same sense as a philosophy of science: that is an examination of the methods, concepts and arguments used in sociology. • Secondly, there is a close relationship between sociology and moral & social philosophy. The subject-matter of sociology is human social behavior as guided by values. Moral and social philosophy studies values and the sociologists study values and human valuation as facts. • • Philosophy is the basis of the sociology of knowledge not vice versa. It can also be said here that while sociology leads on to philosophical reflections, much of it also begins there. Sociological research will become trivial if it ignores the larger problems of social life which are coordinated in philosophical world-views and in social doctrines. The stimulating character of early Marxism in social research was to a great extent due to the fact that Marxism was not only a sociological theory but also philosophical base, was helpful for social research. Active participation in social movement and commitment to a social doctrine helped Beatrice Webb in her social research. • In brief, although each social science, including philosophy, has its own specific area of study, there is a growing collaboration and faster cross fertilization among them. The unity of social science is best conceived as a unity of methods and of conceptual segments but not as a universal history. Language, symbols, relations are products of cultural ideology and shared cultural philosophy - thus the need to study this by a sociologist to understand society - example: mangalsutra is part of culture as per shared Indian philosophy. It will just be an ornament carrying mercantile value for a westerner. Sociology develops theories. Some of these theories become instrumental for collective mobilization and social transformation. Becomes an ideology

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- a philosophy - example: Marxism, Critical Theory (distract masses so that they can be controlled and do not criticize the government) and Feminism Giam Battista - philosophy of history should be studied, separating society from political society - because PM treated differently from ordinary citizens Gunnar Myrdal - chaos cannot organize itself into cosmos, we need viewpoints

Economics

The classical economic approach dealt almost exclusively with the inter-relations of pure economic variables: the relations of price demand and supply, money flows, output and input ratios, and the like. • Economists who are influenced by a political economy approach seek to understand economic activity in a broader framework of ownership of and relationship to means of production. The objective of the dominant trend in economic analysis was however to formulate precise laws of economic behavior. • The sociological approach looks at economic behavior in a broader context of social norms, values, practices and interests. For example: a Brahmin wouldn't go for leather industry even though it might be economically attractive - but not always true - example: Mohandas Pai has invested in 'Licious' a food tech start-up that delivers fresh meat (halal certified) to the homes of consumers. • An economist's predictive abilities often suffer precisely because of their neglect of individual behavior, cultural norms and institutional resistance which sociologists study. Pierre Bourdieu wrote in 1998, "A true economic science would look at all the costs of the economy not only at the costs that corporations are concerned with, but also at crimes, suicides, and so on. We need to put forward an economics of happiness, which would take note of all the profits, individual and collective, material and symbolic, associated with activity (such as security), and also the material and symbolic costs associated with inactivity or precarious employment (for example consumption of medicines: France holds the world record for the use of tranquilizers)". • Sociology unlike economics usually does not provide technical solutions. But it encourages a questioning and critical perspective. This helps questioning of basic assumptions. And thereby facilitates a discussion of not just the technical means towards a given goal, but also about the social desirability of a goal itself. • Sociology provides clearer or more adequate understanding of a social situation than existed before. This can be either on the level of factual knowledge, or through gaining an improved grasp of why something is happening (in other words, by means of theoretical understanding). • Attempts have been made to link the two disciplines with each other. One extreme position has been adopted by Marxists, according to whom the

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understanding of the super structure consisting of various social institutions can never be complete, unless seen in the context of economic substructure. Thus economic behavior of man is viewed as a key to understand social behavior of man or economics is given precedence over sociology. On the other hand sociologists have criticized the economic theory as being reductionist in nature and according to them the economist's conception of man ignores the role of various social factors which influence the economic behavior. • Various sociologists have tried to show that economics cannot be an entirely autonomous science. For e.g. A. Lowie in his book 'Economics and Sociology' has examined the laws of pure economics and discovers two sociological principles which underline a classical law of the market: "The economic man" and "competition or mobility of the factors of production". • Numerous sociological studies have directly concerned themselves with problems of economic theory. Such examples are to be found in the works of Thorstein Veblen and J.K. Galbraith. • Further, there are sociological works concerned with general features of economic systems. This is particularly so in the study of problems of economic development in the developing countries. One of the famous works of this kind has been that of 'dependency theorists'. Thus it can be said that increasingly the two disciplines are coming closer. • Sociologists critically examine limitations of economic theory and make contribution to economic phenomenon. Economists go beyond presuppositions of human behaviour. Study of economic behaviour of people.

Psychology

Psychology involves itself primarily with the individual. It is interested in her/his intelligence and learning, motivations and memory nervous system and reaction time, hopes and fears. • Social psychology maintains a primary interest in the individual but concerns itself with the way in which the individual behaves in social groups collectively with other individuals. • J.S. Mill believed that a general social science could not be considered firmly established, until its inductively established generalizations, can be shown to be also logically deducible from laws of mind. Thus, he clearly sought to establish primacy of psychology over all other social sciences. • Durkheim - "Society is not simply an aggregate of individuals; it is a system formed by their association and represents a specific level of reality possessing its own characteristics". Thus sociology and psychology are totally separate disciplines. Society came first, it teaches the child. • Thus the views of Mill and Durkheim represent two extreme views. Most sociologists however have adopted various

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intermediate positions. According to Ginsberg, "many sociological generalizations can be more firmly established by being related to general psychological laws." • Similarly S. F. Nadal argued that some problems posed by social enquiry can be illuminated by a move to lower levels of analysis, viz psychology and biology. • Similarly the interdependence of sociology and psychology for the study of human behavior has also been emphasized in the work of psychologists belonging to post Freudian School especially Karen Horney and Erich Fromm. Fromm's concept of social character is intended precisely to relate individual psychological characterization to the characteristics of a particular social group of social system. • In spite of such recognition of complementarities between sociology and psychology, divergence persists between the two. In the study of conflict and war there have been mutually exclusive sociological and psychological explanations. Similarly in the studies of social stratification and political behavior the two disciplines have remained divergent. • According to Bottomore, in almost every field of enquiry it can be shown that psychology and sociology continue for the most part as two separate universes of study. • GH Mead - symbolic interactionism - every person interprets symbols differently and so behaves differently Simmel - forms of interaction (formal or informal) and types of interactants (whether known or strangers, behaviour varies) Alfred Vierkandt - Sociology is sum total of social and psychological behaviour, which can be explained by abstract conceptual design Leopold Von Wiese - all human behaviour can be divided into associative and dissociative Ginsberg - many sociological generalizations can be further enriched if an attempt is made to understand social behaviour in terms of underlying meanings - social roles Merton - individual psychology is subject matter of sociology Marx - alienation "Authoritarian Personality" - Adorno Herbert Marcuse - 1 dimensional man Elite theory of power - masses want a powerful leader, political stability, territorial sovereignty • Positivism school - opposing to psychology • Interpretative approach and verstehen • Development of micro sociology and increasing convergence with psychology • Development of social psychology.

Historians earlier were content to delineate the actual events, to establish how things actually happened, while in sociology the focus was to seek to establish causal relationships. • History studies concrete details while the sociologists are more likely to abstract from concrete reality, categorize and generalize. Historians today are equally involved in doing sociological methods and concepts in their analysis i.e. Social History. • Conventional history has been about the history of kings and war. The history of less glamorous or exciting events as changes in land relations or

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gender relations within the family have traditionally been less studied by historians but formed the core area of the sociologist's interest. • H.R. Trevor-Roper has tried to make a weak distinction by stating that historian is concerned with the interplay between personality and massive social forces and that the sociologist is largely concerned with these social forces themselves. • However, it is becoming increasingly clear that historiography and sociology cannot be radically separated. They deal with the same subject matter; viz. men living in societies sometimes from the same point of view and the trends indicate that the two shall continue to borrow from each other extensively. • Today, however, history is far more sociological and social history is the stuff of history. It looks at social patterns, gender relations, mores, customs and important institutions other than the acts of rulers, wars and monarchy. • Malinowski - primitive societies in Trobriand islands - history existing in present times GE Howard - sociology is present history and history is past sociology Similarities in different events v/s differences in similar events Focusses on pattern of events v/s focusses on personalities and events Analytical v/s descriptive Generalizing v/s particularizing Durkheim - empirical evidence, evolution of societies - mechanical, organic solidarity Many times history is objective understanding of objective reality.