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The term sociology was first coined in 1780 by the French essayist Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès (1748–1836) in an unpublished manuscript (Fauré et al. 1999). In 1838, the term was reinvented by Auguste Comte (1798–1857). Comte originally studied to be an engineer, but later became a pupil of social philosopher Claude Henri de Rouvroy Comte de Saint-Simon (1760–1825). They both thought that social scientists could study society using the same scientific methods utilized in natural sciences.

Comte named the scientific study of social patterns positivism. He described his philosophy in a series of books called *The Course in Positive Philosophy* (1830–1842) and *A General View of Positivism* (1848). He believed that using scientific methods to reveal the laws by which societies and individuals interact would usher in a new “positivist” age of history. While the field and its terminology have grown, sociologists still believe in the positive impact of their work.

Karl Marx (1818–1883) was a German philosopher and economist. In 1848 he and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) coauthored the *Communist Manifesto*. This book is one of the most influential political manuscripts in history. It also presents Marx’s theory of society, which differed from what Comte proposed.

Marx rejected Comte’s positivism. He believed that societies grew and changed as a result of the struggles of different social classes over the means of production. At the time he was developing his theories, the Industrial Revolution and the rise of capitalism led to great disparities in wealth between the owners of the factories and workers.

Marx predicted that inequalities of capitalism would become so extreme that workers would eventually revolt. This would lead to the collapse of capitalism, which would be replaced by communism. Communism is an economic system under which there is no private or corporate ownership: everything is owned communally and distributed as needed. Marx believed that communism was a more equitable system than capitalism. While his economic predictions may not have come true in the time frame he predicted, Marx’s idea that social conflict leads to change in society is still one of the major theories used in modern sociology.

**Comprehension:**

1/How Auguste Comte named the scientific study of social patterns?

2/Why Karl Marx rejected Comte's positivism?

3/What do you make of Karl Marx's contributions to sociology?

4/ Choose the appropriate title for the text

**Vocabulary:**

1/ Give me a synonym for these words

Believe ; change ; system .

**Fill in each gap with the appropriate word from the list given:**

of Sociology ; of class struggle ; capitalism ; sociologists.

In 1873, the English philosopher Herbert Spencer published *The Study.....*, the first book with the term “sociology” in the title. Spencer rejected much of Comte's philosophy as well as Marx's theory .....and his support of communism. Instead, he favored a form of government that allowed market forces to control..... His work influenced many early..... including Émile Durkheim (1858–1917).