

Although the world is moving forward all the time. And as society undergoes constant change, with new topics constantly entering the societal discourse, the role of sociology is rather constant over time. In what way, then, has sociology spoken to us, and should it continue to speak to us today? Sociology should primarily tell a story. Tell the story of all of us. Tell the story of societies. And this regardless of our views and attitudes, our gender, race, age, education, social status, or place of birth. It should tell the story of attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and relationships. And it is based on individuals, which almost inevitably form groups and already formed interest and power groups. Setting these stories in storylines that are grounded in time and place.

When talking about sociology, several names come to mind, such as Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, to mention a few and perhaps, most notable alumni of the field. Auguste Comte can be considered the first to baptise the discipline with a name—or at least to bring such name under the spotlight—within the positivist paradigm; his idea, to apply the scientific method proper of the natural sciences (e.g. biology, chemistry) to Society—which he interpreted as a single element moving unidirectionally in time toward a common end—so to identify any hindrance preventing its betterment (Sica, 2019) or the re-establishment of a social order which was disrupted by past and contemporary changes (i.e. the French revolution, the scientific revolution, the industrial revolution). Similarly, Émile Durkheim, under the influence of Comte’s positivist approach, speculates a Society—which contrary to Comte’s vision does not entail a common end nor a shared evolutionary progression—compounded by Social Facts which he defines as “ ... *manners of acting, thinking and feeling external to the individual, which are invested with a coercive power by virtue of which they exercise control over him.* ” (Durkheim, 2013, pp. 21), in other words, objective elements of psychological nature, created by common mutual interaction, discoverable through scientific inquiry. If Comte and Durkheim are prone to analyse the social order of things, the German front takes conflict as a focal point for sociological elaboration, with Karl Marx and Max Weber being historically the leading figures. Karl Marx sees the struggle of social classes—which stems from the economic character of Society—as a central element of analysis. The social structures (e.g. law and politics) entailed in a specific Society are necessarily affected by its economic nature (McLellan, 2009). Expanding on Marx’s ideas, Max Weber identifies other factors, besides the economic one, at the basis of the differentiation of social structure (Allen, 2004).