Detailed Timeline & Glossary of Sociology & Society

The birth and growth of Sociology are rooted in significant changes in European thought and society, which later had global consequences, particularly through colonialism.

Period/Year	Event/Movement	Significance to Sociology
Late 17th and 18th Centuries	The Enlightenment	An intellectual movement in Europe emphasizing **reason and individualism**. It fostered the conviction that the methods of the natural sciences could be extended to the study of human affairs.
Late 17th and 18th Centuries	Poverty Reclassified	Previously seen as a 'natural phenomenon,' poverty began to be viewed as a **'social problem'** caused by human factors (ignorance or exploitation) and thus capable of being studied and redressed.
1789–1857	Life of Auguste Comte	A French scholar considered to be the **founder of sociology**. He believed that the discipline would contribute to the welfare of humanity.
18th and 19th Centuries	The Industrial Revolution and Capitalism	This dynamic new economic activity drove the growth of industrial manufacturing. It introduced the systematic pursuit of profit, made markets the key instrument of productive life, and made labour a commodity. This created the core issues (urbanization, degraded labour) that sociology initially studied.
18th and 19th Centuries	New Social Organization of Time	The tempo of labour became increasingly set by the **clock and calendar**, replacing rhythms set by daylight or social duties. This led to the perception that **'time is now money'**.
19th Century	Influence of Natural Evolution	Early sociologists (like Comte, Karl Marx, and Herbert Spencer) were influenced by scientific theories of natural evolution, leading them to **categorise societies into types** (e.g., hunter-gatherers, industrialised societies). This often carried the bias that the West was the most advanced.
1810	Urbanization in Britain (Early)	Approximately **20 per cent** of the population lived in towns and cities.
1800s (Mid-19th Century)	Colonialism and Indentured Labour	While slavery declined in the 1800s, this period saw the British taking indentured labour from India in ships to run plantations in places like Surinam, the West Indies, and Fiji Islands.
1853	Marx's Comments on India	Karl Marx documented how India, once the world's great workshop of cotton manufacture, became inundated with

		British machine-made cotton goods, leading to the **ruin of native cotton fabrics** and forcing handicraftsmen back into agriculture.
1910	**Urbanization in Britain (Peak)**	Approximately **80 per cent** of the population lived in towns and cities, highlighting the massive societal shift in the seat of the Industrial Revolution.
1959	**Publication of *The Sociological Imagination***	C. Wright Mills published this defining text, emphasizing the task of grasping **history and biography** and the relationship between them within society.
2016	**Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna–Gramin**	Operationalization of this scheme by the Ministry of Rural Development, demonstrating how the state treats homelessness as a **public issue** requiring concrete, collective measures.

Glossary Of Key Terms

Capitalism: A system of economic enterprise based on **market exchange**. It involves the private ownership of assets (money, property, and machines) which are used to produce commodities for sale or invested in a market with the hope of achieving a profit.

Dialectic: Refers to the **existence or action of opposing social forces**, such as the tension between social constraint and individual will [74].

Empirical Investigation: A **factual enquiry** that is carried out in any specific area of sociological study. It ensures that sociological knowledge is systematic and based on evidence, unlike common sense.

Feminist Theories: A sociological perspective which emphasizes the **centrality of gender** in analyzing the social world. These theories aim to explain gender inequalities in society and work toward overcoming them.

Social Constraint: A term referring to the fact that the **groups and societies** of which we are a part exert a **conditioning influence** on our behaviour.

Values: These are the ideas held by individuals or groups about what is **desirable, proper, good, or bad**. Variations in human culture are represented by differing values.