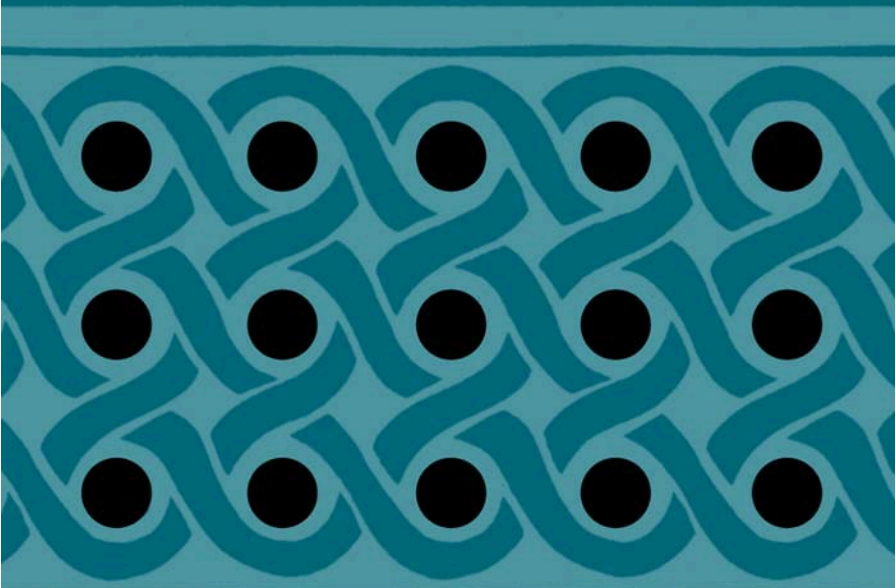


CLASSICAL HORIZONS

The Origins of Sociology in Ancient Greece



GEORGE E. MCCARTHY

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The Origins of Sociology in Ancient Greece

George E. McCarthy

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For my daughter and son
Alexa and Devin

To expand their horizons
and to awaken their dreams of justice

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O land of Ionia, they're still in love with you, their souls still keep your memory.

—Constantine Cavafy, "Ionic"



Beyond that, my vision weakens, but I see, at a great distance, a new world stirring in the ruins, stirring clumsily but in hopefulness, seeking its lost and legendary treasures.

—James Hilton, *Lost Horizon*



A person who has no horizon does not see far enough and hence overvalues what is nearest to him. . . . In the sphere of historical understanding, too, we speak of horizons . . . to see the past in its own terms, not in terms of our contemporary criteria and prejudices but within its own historical horizon. . . . In the process of understanding a real fusion of horizons occurs. . . .

—Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*



I have found confirmation that forgotten memories were not lost. They were in the patient's possession and were ready to emerge in association to what was still known by him; but there was some force that prevented them from becoming conscious and compelled them to remain unconscious.

—Sigmund Freud, *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*



Only with the look toward the uncertain, the anxious care, the prospective view, the hope at worry's threshold, the fear of the future—only then does that which distinguishes man begin.

—Erhart Kästner, "Dog in the Sun"

INTRODUCTION

CRITIQUE OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND RETURN TO CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY



Much has been written about the classical social theory of Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim. This short work will be another addition to the already extensive literature on the subject. Its goal is different, however, in that it attempts to trace some of the basic ideas of these three authors to their origins in classical Greek philosophy, politics, art, and literature, revealing a continuity of over two thousand years between the classics and the classical, between the ancient Greeks and the theorists of modernity. Their views on alienation, rationalization, and anomie, which have attracted so much attention in the past, have their foundations in classical antiquity and in its view of social justice. Marx's doctoral dissertation was written on the subject of the post-Aristotelian philosophy of nature and science of Epicurus and Democritus; Weber's first dissertation was on commercial law and trading organizations in ancient Rome and medieval German and Italian cities, while his second examined the economy in Roman agrarian society and its meaning for constitutional and civil law; and Durkheim's two theses dealt with ancient and modern social organizations and the division of labor and the foundations of sociology in the neo-Aristotelian political theory of Montesquieu. This book traces the impact of these ancient origins and their effects on the development of the discipline of sociology and its various methods and theories. Unlike the other social sciences grounded in the Enlightenment view of rationality, science, and political economy, classical sociology was reared in a radically different and critical environment. This accounts for its distinctiveness, as well as for its continued theoretical potential today.

The dissertations of the three social theorists were not the exuberant and adventurous works of youth that were later abandoned with age and maturity. Rather, they were the wellspring from which Marx, Weber, and Durkheim drew their insights about a critique of political economy and Enlightenment science, the origins of capitalism and historical sociology, and the formation of the col-

lective consciousness and social solidarity, respectively. Even their different views of science and method, from Marx's critical science and dialectical method to Weber's historical science and interpretive method and Durkheim's moral science and comparative method, were influenced by the tradition of classical humanism. All three believed in different ways that the role of social science was moral—to aid in the development of human dignity, self-enlightenment, rational discourse, and citizenship within a free and democratic community. The ideals of classical Greek ethics and politics were civic virtue and practical wisdom (*phronesis*) within a democratic polity. When incorporated into the logic and method of sociology they represented a rejection of a discipline based on a technical and utilitarian science (*techne*) of explanation and formal causality. In its most succinct form it may be said that the origins of classical sociology lie within the overall framework of the ancient ideal of social justice as expressed in Aristotle's theory of universal, distributive, corrective, and reciprocal justice found in his *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*.¹

From this perspective, sociology is distinctive among the social sciences since its intellectual foundations rest in the remembered landscape of Attica. Modern social theory, science, and critique were formed by a synthesis of empirical and historical research methods with classical Greek assumptions about the nature of knowledge, community, virtue, political freedom, and social justice. By blending together the ancients and moderns, nineteenth-century sociology became the most unusual of the social sciences because it self-consciously attempted to integrate empirical research and philosophy, science and the humanities, as no other discipline before or since. However, this distinctive element has been all but lost and forgotten today.

Their training in the classics affected the way in which Marx, Weber, and Durkheim viewed the major issues of industrialization and modernization. It was the American tradition, and especially the writings of Talcott Parsons, which later repressed these origins in order to transform sociology into a utilitarian and positivist science of explanation, prediction, and social control.² Epistemology was replaced by a one-dimensional philosophy of science, methodological self-reflection by a narrow self-assuredness about the nature of knowledge and truth. In the end, both philosophy and history were lost in a sociology geared to measure what is, but unable to understand what was or what could be—that is, unable to understand the historical past or society's future possibilities. It became mired in a measurement of the status quo without the ability to conceptualize alternatives. American sociologists embraced the Enlightenment with its Cartesian dualisms and scientific rationality; its method of causal determinism and explanatory laws; its political philosophy of possessive individualism and liberal rights; and its economic theory of utilitarian values, market freedoms, and consumer choices. Scholars within the European tradition took a much more critical and romantic view of the unfolding of the logic and structures of modernity. For them, Enlight-

enment reason in the form of scientific and technological rationality was implicated in the maintenance and legitimation of oppressive economic power and authoritarian political domination. Reason obfuscated and ideologically distorted social issues, as well as technically manipulated the decision-making process in corporate and state bureaucracies. Critical self-consciousness was never able to penetrate below the surface of sociological phenomena to the structures of class power and privilege in society.

The purpose of this book is to recover the lost traditions of classical antiquity with the hope that it will lead to a renewed inquiry into the nature and function of sociology and expand the range of questions and methods of social analysis. By returning to antiquity the present homogeneity of approaches is transformed into a surprising display of diversity so as to excite even the most passing student of the discipline. The book that follows represents an archaeological investigation into the lost world of the cathartic tragedies of Argos and Thebes, the exhilarating travels and daring adventures of the Achaeans on the fields of Ilium and before the battlements of Priam's palace, and the collective hopes and political aspirations of the public Assembly in Athens. Accompanying the fleet of Odysseus, Menelaus, and Agamemnon to Troy, reflecting on the democratic reforms of Solon and Cleisthenes, watching the performances of the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles, attending the public debates under the shadow of the Acropolis with Themistocles and Pericles, or listening in the agora to the philosophical discourses of Protagoras and Plato—all this became part of the classical sociologist's desire to walk in the footsteps of the ancients.

Recovering the Hellenic ideals of the classical tradition, we see a new richness and subtlety hidden by years of conformity to a narrow form of science and rationality. By going back to the Greeks, Marx, Weber, and Durkheim come alive in new and unexpected ways. Their theories of science and truth, capitalism and industrialization, as well as their criticisms of modern society, take on a more refined and penetrating look. New approaches emerge that inquire into the meaning, method, and logic of science; into new ways in which concepts are formed and theories developed; and into new techniques that are presented for verification and validation of truth claims. Their views of humanity and philosophies of human nature and their underlying humanistic values and social criticisms form the foundation for their sociological categories of alienation, rationalization, and anomie. If we appreciate that the origins of Marx's criticism of the market and class society rest in Aristotle's political treatises; Weber's theories of the iron cage and rationalization lie in Friedrich Nietzsche's view of Greek culture and Dionysian tragedy; and Durkheim's examination of the representations and political forms of the *conscience collective* evolves out of his understanding of the Greek polis and democratic polity, we need to rethink not only the groundings of modern sociology but also their implications and relevance as well. Marx was enraptured by the beauty and simplicity of Greek art and was inspired by the ideals of

Athenian democracy and freedom, Weber was awed by the power of Greek tragedy and numbed by Nietzsche's existential nihilism and critique of scientific rationality, and Durkheim wondered aloud at the balanced integration and organic harmony of the Greek communal experience.

These social theorists longed for the dreams of the ancients (*Griechensehnsucht*) in art, philosophy, literature, and politics. Whether it involved a recalling of the ancient communitarian ideals of the polity; the classical views of knowledge and science (*episteme*, *phronesis*, and *techne*); the power of the collective spirit over individual consciousness and perception; or the cultural ideals and aesthetic solace before the terrors of human existence, the Greeks added a key dimension to the study of industrial society. Without the ancients, modern social theory makes little sense; without the inspiration of the Hellenes, the halls of modern government and the acquisitive market produce a reified and oppressive society unrestrained by transcendent ethical principles. It was the Greek perspective that provided the classical German and French sociologists with the critical framework by which to explore the deeper structures and power relationships of modern industrial society, as well as to imagine the future possibilities of humanity.

Sociology today is undergoing profound scrutiny and criticisms, and just when its decline and death are being announced as the "decomposition of sociology," a rethinking of its origins has the power to ignite a new understanding and a renewed hope in the sociological perspective. Chapter 1 of this work, "Karl Marx: Athenian Democracy and the Critique of Political Economy," begins with Marx and his turn toward the Greeks. Marx was trained in the classical tradition at the *Gymnasium* of Trier and at the Universities of Bonn and Berlin. At these universities he studied Roman law, Homer, and Greek and Roman mythology; while writing his dissertation he took courses on Isaiah and the Hebrew prophets and Euripides and Greek tragedy. Enamored by the poetry and tragedy of Homer, Aeschylus, and Sophocles; the classical history of Herodotus and Thucydides; and the philosophical debates of Plato and Aristotle; steeped in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century neoclassical humanism of Johann Joachim Winckelmann, Friedrich Schiller, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Friedrich Hölderlin, Heinrich Heine, and G. W. F. Hegel; and widely read in the classical anthropology and historiography of Henry Lewis Morgan, George Grote, Georg Schömann, August Böckh, and Theodor Mommsen, Marx, too, had a strong romantic and aesthetic yearning for simplicity, wholeness, beauty, justice, and happiness.

Marx sought a world more conducive to self-expression and self-determination, a world based on different political and moral ideals than those found in utilitarian capitalism. He sought a moral community justified by worker self-government "of the people and by the people." He used the accumulated experience of the Greeks to question the institutions and values of the Enlightenment and liberalism. He found in them the basis for his rejection of scientific positivism, classical

political economy, and liberal individualism. Standing on the Acropolis, looking out upon the enticing blue sky and blinding white marble of the Parthenon, and surveying the serene and sublime world of the Greeks, he rejected the barbarism of the London market and the alienation of the Manchester factories. Immersed in the spirit and dreams of the Greeks, he renounced the reality of modernity. He sought the satisfaction of human and social needs, not base material wants; the realization of human rationality and self-enlightenment, not technical science and administrative control; public happiness in political and economic participation, not the maximization of self-interest and utilitarian pleasures; and, finally, he sought a reintegration of human life and activity (*praxis*) beyond the monotonous and grinding repetition of the logic and machinery of capital. Aesthetic and spiritual freedom and participatory democracy replaced the authoritarian and repressive liberty of the market; economic freedom from class oppression replaced individualistic free choice and the search for personal gain.

Marx also sought a renewal and broadening of the public arena that transcended the narrow self-interest of the private sphere. Citizenship, participation, moral dignity, and public virtue became the defining cultural values of society in place of greed, aggression, and competition. The Greeks aroused in Marx new hopes and dreams for a free and rational society based on the values of human emancipation, the general welfare, and public good. His basic epistemological, political, and economic categories radically transformed traditional economic theory and methodology: Positivism was rejected by his application of a critical and dialectical science, utilitarianism by his emphasis on public responsibility and economic democracy, liberal morality by social ethics, and materialism by his belief in spiritual growth and aesthetic praxis. The vision of the ancients inspired him to move beyond the limits of liberal capitalism to a new society based upon their classical ideals and romantic principles.

After working on his initial research for his dissertation, he finished in 1839 his preliminary outline and dissertation notes on Greek philosophy, entitled *Notebooks on Epicurean Philosophy*, and in 1841 he completed his doctoral dissertation, *Difference between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature*, which examined the post-Aristotelian discussions about physics, science, and materialist philosophies of nature. The dissertation outlined Epicurus' theory of atomic motion, astronomical physics, and theory of meteors, while comparing the mechanistic and deterministic worldview of Democritus to the indeterminism and natural freedom of Epicurus. Marx's sympathies lay with Epicurus, whom he characterized as "the greatest figure of the Greek Enlightenment." Although he focused on the works of Epicurus and Democritus, he also examined an extensive list of other Greek and Roman authors including Aristotle, Diogenes Laertius, Plutarch, Lucretius, Seneca, Eusebius, Cicero, Stobaeus, and Sextus Empiricus. Traditionally these authors have gone unnoticed because they have been relegated to Marx's earliest and less mature writings. But they represent an

important key to unlocking the mysteries and complexities of his later works, especially the *Grundrisse* (1857–58), *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859), and *Capital* (1867).

The dissertation contains a discussion about the purpose of human knowledge and the nature of science that will be carried through in his later methodology and philosophy of social science. Marx approached modernity from a set of values inimical to modern liberal society. He borrowed from Epicurus' critique of natural science and Greek materialism and his integration of science and ethics. He drew upon Aristotle's view of happiness (*eudaimonia*) as political discourse, his defense of the household economy (*oikonomike*) and moral community (*zōon politikon*) against the ravages of commodity exchange and a market economy (*chrematistike*); his articulation of the democratic polity against oligarchy and mass democracy; his analysis of use value and exchange value; his views on the forms of universal and particular justice; and his distinction between political wisdom (*phronesis*) and technical knowledge (*techne*). Ancient Greek and later neoclassical German authors provided Marx with many of the political and social values that appeared in his early and later writings.³

The influence of the ancient Greeks on every aspect of the development of his thinking is evident throughout his life and is contained in his major writings on political theory and economics. It is present in his ideas about the state, economic justice, and democracy, as well as in his epistemological and methodological discussions about the dialectical method, social critique, and critical science. Some have even argued that Marx's later political writings were attempts by him to rewrite Aristotle's *Politics* for the modern age. In *Capital* he developed a variety of methodological forms for the critique of political economy. Two of these approaches relied on Aristotle's treatises on politics, ethics, physics, and metaphysics. The first is an internal and dialectical critique of the commercial and industrial contradictions (logic) and crises of capitalism based on Aristotle's and Hegel's theories of substance (sensible matter and universal form), change (actuality and potentiality), and causality. The second is an ethical critique of the moral and political limits of an exchange economy based on Aristotle's theory of political economy, friendship, and social justice. In its unquenchable search for profits and property, capitalism undermines the possibility of building a society based on the values of community, civic virtue, social responsibility, and the public good. The capitalist social setting makes it impossible for workers to realize their potential, express their individuality, or fulfill their social needs. Marx referred directly to Aristotle's critique of commodity exchange, an extended market, and the unnatural accumulation of property and wealth in order to make his case.

Social justice requires moving beyond natural rights, parliamentary democracy, and political liberalism to new forms of economic democracy, human emancipation, and an expanded view of freedom and self-determination that

have their origins in Aristotle's philosophy. Marx's earliest writings on political democracy in law and the state in *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law* (1843) and his rethinking of the relationship between the state and civil society in "On the Jewish Question" (1843) are compared in chapter 1 to his later writings on workers' control and socialist democracy in the Paris Commune in *The Civil War in France* (1871) and in "Critique of the Gotha Program" (1875). Marx moved beyond the classical political economy of Adam Smith and David Ricardo and the utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill by returning to the political ideals of ancient Greece for inspiration and insight.

Chapter 2, "Max Weber: Greek Tragedy and the Rationalization of Society," examines the writings of Weber and his relation to the ancient Greeks and Romans. Like Marx, he, too, was trained in the classical tradition in the *Gymnasium* and in the university. As a teenager he was reading Greek and Hebrew and the historical works of Mommsen, Heinrich von Treitschke, and Leopold von Ranke. By the age of sixteen he had read many of the Greek and Latin classics, including Homer, Herodotus, Virgil, Cicero, Livy, and Sallust.⁴ He entered the University of Heidelberg in 1882 to continue his interests in the classics and took courses with some of the most prominent legal theorists, historians, and economists of the time. Two years later he enrolled in the University of Berlin where he focused on jurisprudence and German law. It is here that he attended the lectures of Mommsen, von Treitschke, Levin Goldschmidt, August Meitzen, and Gustav Schmoller. These lectures ranged from issues in ancient history, economic theory, and Christianity to questions about the relationship between the church and state.

Weber wrote his doctoral dissertation, *On the History of Medieval Trading Companies* (1889), and completed his habilitation, *Roman Agrarian History* (1891), under the strong influence of the writings of the classical economic historian Karl Rodbertus. These two early writings together with his essay "The Social Causes of the Decline of Ancient Civilization" (1896), *The Agrarian Sociology of Ancient Civilizations* (1897), and his later analyses of ancient cities and civilizations in *General Economic History* (1923) and *Economy and Society* (1922) constitute an impressive historical and economic analysis of ancient cultures and societies. His knowledge of ancient history was encyclopedic, and he was able to place his economic history in the context of the major debates within the economic theory of his time. Even in his early writings, Weber was concerned with the relationship between the ancients and moderns and the extent of capitalism and rationalization found in early agrarian civilizations. He was interested in uncovering the earliest forms of ancient capitalism through an analysis of slavery, private property, capitalist ventures, and the commercialization of agriculture. Weber traced the evolution of the Greek city-state from the hoplite cities of the seventh century B.C. to the creation of Athenian democracy with the political and legal reforms of Solon, Cleisthenes, Ephialtes, and Pericles.

Detailing the Athenian response to the rise of a market economy and increased class antagonisms and debt slavery, he outlined the formation of a new political constitution, which rested on the institutions of popular sovereignty—the general Assembly (*Ekklesia*), executive Council (*Boule*), and the jury courts (*Dikasteria*). He also historically chronicled the decline of classical democracy, the rise of medieval cities, and the structural origins of modern commercial and industrial capitalism. Finally, he was attentive to the issue that ultimately held all his writings together, that is, an examination of the economic and social factors that inhibited or encouraged capitalist enterprises—the rationalization of antiquity and modernity.

In Weber's lifetime three prominent sociologists-philosophers, Alois Riehl, Ferdinand Tönnies, and Georg Simmel, wrote important works on the existentialism and *Lebensphilosophie* of Nietzsche and on the pessimism of Arthur Schopenhauer that deeply influenced the development of his thought. It is through Nietzsche that Weber's classical background was broadened to include issues of the celebration and joy of human life in Greek tragedy and the destructive potential of scientific rationalism. And it was through Nietzsche that Greek drama, art, and philosophy had such a profound effect upon his social theory. The long shadow of influence of Nietzsche and the Greeks extends to a wide range of issues: (1) Weber's sociology of religion, theory of *ressentiment*, and ethics of economics (*Wirtschaftsethik*); (2) his theories of knowledge, objectivity, causality, ideal types, and critique of positivism (*Wissenschaftslehre*); (3) his view of scientific rationalism, disenchantment, the death of God, nihilism, and the rationalization of the iron cage (*Wissenschaftskritik*); (4) his theory of moral relativism and historicism; (5) his moral philosophy with its theory of practical reason, moral autonomy, individual self-realization, and critique of Enlightenment utilitarianism and the "last man"; and (6) his cultural pessimism, sociology of political legitimation, critique of liberalism and natural rights tradition, theory of technocratic decisionism, political bureaucracy, and plebiscitary democracy.

Much of Weber's interpretation and critique of modernity came from Nietzsche's insights into Greek tragedy, physics, and mythology. The Apollonian and Dionysian drives found in Greek tragedy—the dialectic between reason and instincts—pervade the whole of Weber's work. His attack on the limits of Western rationality and his critique of the search for transcendent universals and objective knowledge, loss of substantive reason and the disenchantment of science, reification and truncation of functional rationality, and existential crisis of the meaninglessness of life in Western society are all traceable to Nietzsche and the Greeks. It was the ancient and modern historians, neo-Kantian philosophers, and early German sociologists who provided Weber with the sociological methods that emphasized an interpretive sociology of culture and a historical sociology of institutions in opposition to the approach of the neoclassical economists and positivists.

Chapter 3, “Emile Durkheim: Greek Polis and the Solidarity of the *Conscience Collective*,” outlines the importance of classical Greece in the works of Durkheim, especially regarding his social epistemology, theory of civic morality and education, and forms of collective consciousness in law, religion, and public virtue. The notion of *conscience collective* represents the collective consciousness and shared common values, ideas, and beliefs within society. Entering the Parisian university, the École Normale Supérieure, in 1879, Durkheim continued his work in classical philology and literature. While there he was influenced by two neo-Kantian scholars, Charles Renouvier and Émile Boutroux, from whom he developed a concern for issues of Kantian epistemology, moral philosophy, and social solidarity. Two historians at the university, Gabriel Monod and Fustel de Coulanges, author of *The Ancient City* and *History of Political Institutions in Ancient France*, helped Durkheim with his methodology and broad historical interests. Monod had studied ancient France, while de Coulanges had examined the ancient Greek and Roman city, patriarchal family, and cultic religion.

Durkheim studied philosophy and social science in Germany during the academic year 1885–86. Visiting the universities in Marburg, Leipzig, and Berlin, he, like Weber, came under the influence of the social economists Schmoller, Adolph Wagner, and Albert Schäffle. He was particularly attracted to their criticisms of classical economics, deductive scientific methodology and its abstract reasoning, and theory of liberal individualism. Their attempted integration of science and ethics in their neo-Aristotelian thought, as well as their views on the nature of society and moral relativism, also made an impact on the development of his ideas, especially on the development of his sociology of morals and ethical theory. During this time, he was also influenced by the ethical philosophy of the neo-Kantians and the theory of social customs, group pluralism, and experimental science of Wilhelm Wundt. These would all play a part in the evolution of Durkheim’s own view of scientific rationalism, which tied theoretical to practical reason. Science was to be a moral or practical discipline, which would govern both social practice and ethical ends and would examine the nature of the community, ethical solidarity, and the collective representations of society in its various forms: morality, politics, religion, law, and deviant and abnormal behavior. These objective and external social forms were constructed by means of a dialectic between consciousness and the community.

Durkheim transformed Immanuel Kant’s epistemology and moral philosophy into sociological questions that occupied much of his academic career. That is, he translated and integrated Kant’s critiques of pure and practical reason into an empirical study of social institutions and cultural values—collective ideas and moral imperatives—with the practical goal of building a moral community based upon republican civic virtues. He also borrowed his theories of collective representations, the unrestrained and aimless will, and the cultural pessimism of infinite suffering and perpetual unhappiness, as well as important aspects of his

methodology of critical rationalism, from the Kantian existentialism of Schopenhauer. By methodologically viewing social facts as both objective things and collective representations and by refusing to accept the Cartesian dualism of subject and object and the metaphysics of social realism, he set the stage for a rejection of the Enlightenment view of naturalism and science in his famous works, *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893), *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895), and *Suicide* (1897).⁵

In 1887 Durkheim accepted a position at the Faculty of Letters at the University of Bordeaux, where he taught for fifteen years. He offered courses in social science and pedagogy, on Aristotle's *Politics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*, as well as on Auguste Comte, Thomas Hobbes, and Kant. He thought that Plato and Aristotle made the first attempts at sociology.⁶ Influenced by the writings of the classical Greeks, he would develop his political philosophy from a conservative emphasis on liberal republicanism and the social order to a critical socialism with its dreams of social justice and economic democracy. Durkheim offered lecture courses on the history of educational theories, sociology, and socialism from antiquity to the nineteenth century. His primary doctoral dissertation, *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893), was preceded by a subsidiary doctoral thesis, entitled *Montesquieu's Contribution to the Rise of Social Science* (1892). Written in Latin, it examined the importance of Baron de Montesquieu's writings, especially *The Spirit of Laws*, to the foundations of social science and sociology. The work was dedicated to his teacher and mentor, Fustel de Coulanges. Comparing the two early writings, we see a close connection between his sociological analysis of the pathological division of labor and anomie in industrial society, with the breakdown of communal integration and organic solidarity, and his reading of Montesquieu and classical Greece. In the academic year 1901–2, Durkheim offered a course on the history of sociological thought, which featured Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract*. He viewed Montesquieu and Rousseau as forerunners of sociology and as having laid the principles and foundations for social science. Both were heavily indebted to Aristotle and Greek political philosophy for their key ideas about the primacy of a dynamic and organic community, which Durkheim integrated into his epistemological and social theory.

Durkheim borrowed from Montesquieu's view of society and social change, division of labor, and theory of social solidarity and law, along with the methodologically important social typology of the classical republic, monarchy, despotism, and democracy and his use of the comparative method. He relied on Rousseau's ideas of human nature, the general will, freedom, and the collective well-being of the political community, concepts that were attractive to Durkheim in the formation of his theory of collective consciousness. He also took notice of Rousseau's views on democracy as a moral institution based on citizenship, equality, political obligation, and public reflection and deliberation. Through Montesquieu and Rousseau, Durkheim transformed classical ethics

and the ancient political philosophies of Plato and Aristotle into the central principles of his sociological study of social solidarity, system differentiation and integration, and dysfunctional social pathologies. Their search for social justice, human happiness, and social order became the basis for his own historical and empirical research into the origins, organization, and functions of social institutions and norms.

Durkheim's concern with the moral and psychological anomie and *dérèglement* (madness and suffering) of industrial society and its resulting social disequilibrium was expressed in his analysis of the division of labor, suicide, family, law, public morality, and the ethical foundation of work in occupational groups, guilds, and the modern state. It has been remarked that Durkheim's social theory is but a modern reformulation of ancient natural law.⁷ Steven Lukes writes, "The novelty of Durkheim's approach lay in his recasting of the old, seemingly timeless and a priori problems of ethics, political theory, and jurisprudence. . . . His arguments incorporate the central features characterizing much of traditional social and political theory, from Aristotle and Plato to his fellow nineteenth-century liberals, J. S. Mill and T. H. Green."⁸ Durkheim's later writings and lectures focused more and more on Aristotelian themes of pedagogy, moral education, civic virtue, and social justice, especially in *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* (1950). Reacting to the destructive effects of modernization and to the disintegration of public values and social solidarity, Durkheim turned to a moral sociology whose goals were the healing and education of a new humanity concerned with political participation, craft organizations, and the common good. In 1902 he left Bordeaux to accept a position at the Sorbonne, where he eventually received a chair in the Science of Education and Sociology and continued to develop his social theories until his death in 1917.

In chapter 4, "Awakening Classical Dreams: Synthesis of Ancient Justice and Modern Social Science," we examine the implications of the research findings of chapters 1–3. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the romantic longing for the ancient Greeks was manifested in the poetry and aesthetics of Winckelmann, Schiller, and Goethe; later it was incorporated into the social philosophy and critical theory of Hegel and Nietzsche; and, finally, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the sociology of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim. Though very different from each other, these sociologists shared a common ground, a critical reaction to modernity, in their political, economic, anthropological, epistemological, and methodological works. All were trained in classical Greek political science. Although expressed in various ways and to differing degrees, by returning to the dreams of the ancients, they developed a critique of the Enlightenment and classical liberalism; held nostalgic views of the moral community and its cultural values and social goals; were critical of the reification and social pathologies of industrial society in their theories of alienation and exploitation, rationalization and the iron cage, and organic solidarity and anomie; rejected the precepts of *lais-*