EDITION 8

Classical Sociological Theory

GEORGE RITZER // JEFFREY STEPNISKY

Classical Sociological Theory

Eighth Edition

To Mother,

With appreciation and love

GR

To Michelle,

With love

JS

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Classical Sociological Theory

Eighth Edition

George Ritzer
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SAGE

Los Angeles | London | New Delhi
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55 City Road
London, EC1Y 1SP
United Kingdom

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B 1/I 1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area
Mathura Road, New Delhi 110 044
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18 Cross Street #10-10/11/12
China Square Central
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Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Ritzer, George, author. | Stepnisky, Jeffrey, author.

Title: Classical sociological theory / George Ritzer, University of Maryland, Jeffrey Stepnisky, MacEwan University.

Description: Eighth Edition. | Thousand Oaks : SAGE Publications, Inc, 2020. | Revised edition of the authors' Classical sociological theory, [2018] | Includes bibliographical references.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019047208 | ISBN 9781544354828 (paperback) | ISBN 9781544354835 (epub) | ISBN 9781544354842 (epub) | ISBN 9781544354859 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Sociology—History. | Sociology—Methodology—History. | Sociologists—Biography.

Classification: LCC HM435 .R56 2020 | DDC 301.09—dc23

LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2019047208

Acquisitions Editor: Jeff Lasser
Content Development Editor: Tara Slagle
Editorial Assistant: Tiara Beatty
Marketing Manager: Will Walter
Production Editor: Veronica Stapleton Hooper
Copy Editor: Diana Breti
Typesetter: Hurix Digital
Proofreader: Susan Schon
Indexer: Karen Wiley
Cover Designer: Scott Van Atta

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

20 21 22 23 24 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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• Preface •

This is the eighth edition of *Classical Sociological Theory*. The publication of each new edition allows us to reconsider the state of classical sociology theory, as well as consider new work that is being published in this area. This time we found most interesting the relatively large number of books that are reassessing and reintroducing classical sociological theorists. Among the examples since 2016 are new books on Cooley (Ruiz-Junco and Brossard, 2018), Tocqueville (Gordon, 2019), Simmel (Kemple, 2018), Du Bois (A. Morris, 2015), and Mead (Joas and Huebner, 2016). These new writings do not just engage familiar old ideas. They also cast these thinkers in new light and introduce previously underappreciated aspects of their thought. At the same time, scholars are making efforts to expand the classical sociological canon by writing on premodern social theorists like Ibn Khaldun (Alatas, 2017) and social thinkers from outside of Europe and North America (Alatas and Sinha, 2017). This is to say nothing of the ever-expanding literature on Durkheim, Marx, and Weber. We have attempted as best as possible to reflect these developments, as well as others not mentioned above, in this new update to the book.

More specifically, as with all previous editions, this edition includes updated references throughout. The core of each chapter remains unchanged. However, sections of some chapters have been rewritten to provide greater clarity and focus. The most significant changes are in the chapters on Du Bois and Mead. We have also moved from Chapter 1 to Chapter 2, and revised, the section on Developments in Marxian Theory. This is to make room for new materials in Chapter 1. In terms of new content, we have done the following:

- Chapter 1 has several new additions: a stand-alone section on Ibn Khaldun to provide the reader with an example of premodern sociological theory; a section on Harriet Martineau to better contextualize her feminist writings within the history of sociological thought; a section on "non-European" classical theory; and a significantly updated description of the contemporary applications of classical theory.
- Examples of contemporary applications have been updated throughout, though we've given Chapter 15 on Mead (discussing neuropragmatism) and Chapter 16 on Schutz (discussing consciousness and virtual worlds) special attention.
- Lengermann and Niebrugge have thoroughly revised their chapter on the early women sociologists (Chapter 10), including a new section on contemporary applications (focusing on the work of Jane Addams).
- This edition includes new biographies on Ibn Khaldun (Chapter 1) and Hannah Arendt (Chapter 2).

- Finally, continuing a feature that we added in the last edition, we've written five new historical context boxes: Positivism in Brazil (Chapter 4), Voluntary Associations (Chapter 10), the Department Store (Chapter 12), Utopia in Literature and Practice (Chapter 14), and Einstein's Theory of Relativity (Chapter 15).

We appreciate that instructors and students want an edition that adds new material, keeping classical theory fresh and alive, but that does not interfere with the core structure of the book. We hope that we have been able to maintain this balance for this edition. We also hope that instructors and students enjoy reading and studying this book as much as we enjoyed writing it.

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• Acknowledgments •

We want to thank Patricia Madoo Lengermann and Gillian Niebrugge for once again updating Chapter 10 on classical feminist theory. We are also grateful to Craig Lair, who coauthored the original version of the chapter on Schumpeter, and Doug Goodman, who made contributions to earlier editions of this book.

From SAGE we are thankful for the continuing support of Jeff Lasser as well as Tiara Beatty, Veronica Stapleton Hooper, and our copy editor Diana Breti.

Finally, thanks are due to a panel of reviewers whose comments and suggestions helped to make this edition a better book.

SAGE gratefully acknowledges the following reviewers for their kind assistance:

Nathaniel Chapman, Arkansas Tech University

Barry Goetz, Western Michigan University

Eric Mielants, Fairfield University

Erin Sakin, University of California, Merced

Megan Smith, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

• About the Authors •

George Ritzer, distinguished university professor emeritus at the University of Maryland, was named a distinguished scholar-teacher there and received the American Sociological Association's Distinguished Contribution to Teaching Award. He holds an honorary doctorate from La Trobe University and the Robin William Lectureship from the Eastern Sociological Society. He has chaired four sections of the ASA: Theoretical Sociology, Organizations and Occupations, Global and Transnational Sociology, and the History of Sociology. Among his books in theory are *Sociology: A Multiple Paradigm Science* (1975/1980) and *Metatheorizing in Sociology* (1991). In the application of social theory to the social world, his books include *The McDonaldization of Society: Into the Digital Age* (9th ed., 2018), *Enchanting a Disenchanted World* (3rd ed., 2010), and *The Globalization of Nothing* (2nd ed., 2007). His books have been translated into more than twenty languages, with more than a dozen translations of *The McDonaldization of Society* alone. Most of his widely cited work over the last decade—and currently—deals with prosumption.

Jeffrey Stepnisky is associate professor of sociology at MacEwan University in Alberta, Canada, where he teaches classical and contemporary sociological theory. He has published in the area of social theory, especially as it relates to questions of selfhood and intersubjectivity, and most recently atmosphere. This work appears in journals such as *Space and Culture*, *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior,* and *Social Theory & Health*. He coedited *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Major Social Theorists* (2011) and served as the managing editor for *The Encyclopedia of Social Theory* (2005). In addition to this book, he has worked with George Ritzer on the textbooks *Modern Sociological Theory*, *Sociological Theory*, and *Contemporary Sociological Theory and Its Classical Roots*.

PART I

Introduction to Classical Sociological Theory

1

A Historical Sketch of Sociological Theory

The Early Years

Chapter Outline

Introduction
Premodern Sociological Theory
Social Forces in the Development of Sociological Theory
Intellectual Forces and the Rise of Sociological Theory
The Development of French Sociology
The Development of German Sociology
The Origins of British Sociology
The Key Figure in Early Italian Sociology
Non-European Classical Theory
The Contemporary Relevance of Classical Sociological Theory

This book is designed as an introduction to the work of the classical sociological theorists, and we begin with one-sentence statements that get to the essence of the theories to be covered in these pages:

- We are headed to an increasingly centralized world with less individual freedom. (*Alexis de Tocqueville*)
- We are moving in the direction of a world dominated by science. (*Auguste Comte*)
- Societies evolve through competition between their members and with other societies. (*Herbert Spencer*)
- Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the workers by the capitalists. (*Karl Marx*)

- The modern world offers less moral cohesion than did earlier societies. (*Emile Durkheim*)
- The modern world is an iron cage of rational systems from which there is no escape. (*Max Weber*)
- Modern identities and relationships are shaped by the unique experience of city life. (*Georg Simmel*)
- Gender inequality explains most of individual experience, the ills in society, and history. (*Charlotte Perkins Gilman*)
- Race is one of the most important organizing categories of modern societies (*W. E. B. Du Bois*)
- In modern capitalism conspicuous consumption is an important means through which people develop identities and assert their social roles. (*Thorstein Veblen*)
- Capitalism depends on "creative destruction." (*Joseph Schumpeter*)
- Knowledge oftentimes reflects the political perspectives of dominant members of society. (*Karl Mannheim*)
- People's minds and their conceptions of themselves are shaped by their social experiences. (*George Herbert Mead*)
- In their social relationships, people often rely on tried and true "recipes" for how to handle such relationships. (*Alfred Schutz*)
- Society is an integrated system of social structures and functions. (*Talcott Parsons*)

This book is devoted to helping the reader to better understand these theoretical ideas, as well as the larger theories from which they are drawn, within the context of the lifework of the classical theorists.

Introduction

By classical sociological theory we mean theories of great scope and ambition that either were created during sociology's classical age in Europe (roughly the early 1800s through the early 1900s; a period also referred to as modernity) or had their roots in that period and culture (see Figure 1.1). The theories of Tocqueville, Martineau, Comte, Spencer, Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Simmel, and Mannheim were produced during the classical age, largely in France, England, and Germany. The theories of Veblen, Du Bois, Mead, Gilman, Addams, Schutz, and Parsons were largely produced later and mainly in the United States, but they had most of their sources in the classical age and in European intellectual traditions.

The work of these theorists is discussed in this book for two basic reasons. First, in all cases their work was important in its time and played a central role in the development of sociology in general and sociological theory in particular. Second, their ideas continue to be relevant to, and read by, contemporary sociologists, although this is less true of the work of Comte and Spencer (who are of more historical significance) than it is of the others.

This book does not deal with all sociological theory but rather with classical theory. However, to better understand the ideas of the classical theorists to be discussed in depth throughout this book, we begin with two chapters that offer an overview of the entire history of sociological theory. Chapter 1 deals with the early years of sociological theory, and Chapter 2 brings that history up to the present day and to the most recent developments in sociological theory. Taken together, these two chapters offer the context within which the work of the classical theorists is to be understood. The two introductory chapters are animated by the belief that it is important to understand not only the historical sources of classical theories but also their later impact. More generally, the reader should have a broad sense of sociological theory before turning to a detailed discussion of the classical theorists. The remainder of this book (Chapters 3 through 17) deals with the ideas of the major classical theorists. Thus, the ideas of the major classical theorists will be discussed twice. They will be introduced very briefly in either the first or second chapter in their historical context, and they will be discussed in great depth in the chapter devoted to each of the theorists.

Why focus on these theorists and not the innumerable others whose names and ideas will arise in the course of these first two chapters? The simplest answer to this question is that space limitations make it impossible to deal with all classical theorists. Beyond that, many theorists are not given full-chapter treatment because their theories do not belong to, or have centrally important roots in, the classical age. Furthermore, to be discussed in depth, theories must meet a series of other criteria. That is, to be included, theories must have a *wide range* of application (J. Turner and Boyns, 2001), must deal with *centrally important social issues*, and must stand up well under the *test of time* (i.e., they must continue to be read and to be influential).[1] Thus, a number of theorists who are briefly discussed in this chapter (e.g., Louis de Bonald) will not be discussed in detail later because their ideas do not meet one or more of the criteria previously listed, especially the fact that their theories have not stood the test of time.

Some of the theorists who we discuss at greater length later in the book were not part of the sociological canon in the past. The word *canon* refers to the set of theories that a discipline considers foundational to its field of study. For example, since about the middle of the twentieth century, Marx, Durkheim, and Weber have been considered the foundational theorists in sociology. Female theorists, like Harriet Martineau and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, or theorists of color, like African American W. E. B. Du Bois, were well regarded and widely read social analysts and theorists during their lifetimes. Yet, because of their gender and race they were not, until recently, regarded as founders of the field of sociology. These feminist theorists and Du Bois are included later in the book, not only because they cover themes of great importance to the development of modern societies (e.g., gender and race), but because they place these themes in the context of broader ideas about the nature of society and social life.

Our focus, then, is on the important classical theoretical work of sociologists, including theorists who have, in the past, been excluded from the sociological canon. It also includes work by those who are often associated with other fields (e.g., Karl Marx and his association with the field of economics) that has come

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[1] These three criteria constitute our definition of (classical) sociological theory. Such a definition stands in contrast to the formal, "scientific" definitions (Jasso, 2001) that are often used in theory texts of this type. One scientific definition of theory is a set of interrelated propositions that allows for the systematization of knowledge, explanation, and prediction of social life and the generation of new research hypotheses (Faia, 1986). Although such a definition has a number of attractions, it simply does not fit many of the idea systems to be discussed in this book. In other words, most classical (and contemporary) theories fall short on one or more of the formal components of theory, but they are nonetheless considered theories by most sociologists.

FIGURE 1.1 ● Sociological Theory: The Early Years

	Social and Political Forces	Intellectual Forces	France	Germany	Italy	Great Britain	United States
1700s	Development of French and English Colonialism Industrial Revolution and Emergence of Capitalism American Revolution (1765–1783) French Revolution (1789–1799)	Enlightenment and Conservative Reaction to Enlightenment German Idealism Political Economy	Montesquieu (1689–1755) Rousseau (1712–1778) de Maistre (1753–1821) de Bonald (1754–1840) Saint-Simon (1760–1825)	Kant (1724–1804) Hegel (1770–1831)		Smith (1723–1790) Ricardo (1772–1823)	
1800s	Rise of Socialism Revolutions of 1848 (Sicily, France, Germany, Italy, Austrian Empire) Paris Commune (1871) Dreyfus Affair (1894–1906)	Evolutionary Theory Emergence of Social Sciences and Sociology	Comte (1798–1857) Tocqueville (1805–1859) Durkheim (1858–1917)	Feuerbach (1804–1872) Marx (1818–1883) Dilthey (1833–1911) Nietzsche (1844–1900) Freud (1856–1939) Simmel (1858–1918) Max Weber (1864–1920) Marianne Weber (1870–1954)	Pareto (1848–1923)	Martineau (1802–1876) Spencer (1820–1903) Darwin (1809–1882)	Veblen (1857–1929) Gilman (1860–1935) Addams (1860–1935) Cooper (1858–1964) Wells-Barnett (1862–1931) Du Bois (1868–1963) Mead (1863–1931)
1900s	Rise of Feminism World War I (1914–1918) Henry Ford's Model T (1908)	Feminist Theory Western Marxism Structural Functionalism		Lukacs (1885–1971)	Gramsci (1902–1937)		Schumpeter (1883–1950) Parsons (1902–1979)

to be defined as important in sociology. To put it succinctly, this is a book about the "big ideas" in the history of sociology; ideas that deal with major social issues and are far-reaching in their scope.

Premodern Sociological Theory

This book treats classical sociological theory as a modern phenomenon. The term *modernity* refers to the social, economic, and political developments that unfolded, largely in Europe and North America, from the eighteenth to mid-twentieth century. Sociological theory emerged as a set of ideas that tried to explain and understand the social forces that developed during this modern period. That said, even though the bulk of sociological theory emerges with modernity, some scholars have found sociological ideas in classical/ancient Greek and Roman and medieval writing. For example, in his history of sociology, Alan Sica (2012) discusses the ideas of Chinese philosopher Confucius (551–479 BCE), Greek historian Thucydides (460–400 BCE), Italian philosophers Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) and Giambattista Vico (1668–1755), and French philosopher Montesquieu (1689–1755). Though not as singularly focused on sociological phenomena as the later *sociological* theorists, these premodern thinkers discussed various aspects of social organization, especially as they applied to the societies in which they lived.

In recent years, the fourteenth-century Muslim scholar Abdel Rahman Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) has attracted particular attention as a precursor of modern sociology. Khaldun is interesting, and therefore worth spending some time with at the beginning of this chapter, for two reasons. First, he is largely regarded as having developed the first systematic approach to the study of "social organization." He sought to develop a "science of human society" *('ilm al-ijtima'al-insani*, Alatas, 2017:18). Khaldun even anticipates ideas found in the theories developed by classical sociologists (e.g., Durkheim's social solidarity and division of labor; Marx's labor theory of value). Second, Khaldun presents a sociological theory that reflects the social world in which he lived—fourteenth-century Andalusia (southern Spain), North Africa, and Egypt. In particular, Khaldun analyzed the forms of social organization that emerged out of the relationship between tribal, largely nomadic, desert societies (e.g., the Bedouin of North Africa) and urban, or sedentary, society as found in cities like Tunis, Granada, Marrakesh, and Cairo. Classical European theories typically focus on urban life (studying work in factories, revolutions in city streets, organizational structures in office buildings, relations in family homes), sometimes on rural life, but they rarely consider the relationship between the two. Khaldun, then, gives us an insight into what a classical sociological theory looks like when it takes as its starting point the analysis of a society very different from the European and North American societies familiar to Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Gilman, Veblen, Du Bois, and others.

Khaldun's most important work, and the one in which he introduces his ideas about social organization, is the *Muqaddimah*. The *Muqaddimah* is the introductory section to a larger history of North Africa and the Middle East. In the *Muqaddimah,* Khaldun distinguishes himself from previous Arab historians by seeking the "inner meaning of history" (Ibn Khaldun, 1967/2015:5). This "involves speculation and attempt to get at the truth, subtle explanation of the causes and origins of existing things, and deep knowledge of the how and why of events" (5). For Khaldun, history writing is not merely a "surface" description of events (Alatas, 2017:18) but an inquiry into what sociologists would now call society's underlying structures. This interest in underlying structures led Khaldun to assert numerous axioms (self-evident truths) about the nature of humans and society and to describe the forms of social organization that guided historical development. For example, Khaldun insisted that "society is necessary" (Alatas, 2013:53) as it helped humans to "mediate conflict and obtain sufficient food" (Dale, 2015:166).

Drawing on ideas originally developed by the Greek philosopher Aristotle (Alatas, 2017; Dale, 2015) Khaldun argued that different societies had different natures, or essences. These essences were influenced by the natural environment, determined the organization of the society, and determined the way the society developed. Khaldun identified two such societies: desert, nomadic, tribal society, and urban, sedentary society. Nomadic societies had a relatively simple social organization, were based in strong kinship ties, and gave rise to brave fighters. Even though Khaldun was a scholar whose livelihood depended on sedentary society, he seemed to regard tribal society as the superior and more admirable social form. Tribal society existed prior to sedentary society and provided the social bond out of which more complex social organization grew.

Sedentary societies were based in urban centers. In comparison to the tribal society, the sedentary society had a more complex division of labor. In his review of the different kinds of occupations found in sedentary society, Khaldun lists "glassblowers, goldsmiths, perfumers, cooks, coppersmiths, weavers of *tiraz* brocade cloth, owners of public baths, teachers of all kinds, and book producers" (Dale, 2015:231). This craftwork provided a wider range of luxury items and therefore generated greater economic wealth than tribal societies. In character, though, those who lived in sedentary societies were weaker than those who lived in the desert. Here, a crucial Khaldunian concept, one most often cited by contemporary sociologists, is *'asibayya*. Sometimes this word is interpreted as "group feeling" (Ibn Khaldun, 1967/2015), other times as "social solidarity" (Alatas, 2017; Dale, 2015) or "social cohesion" (Alatas, 2013:56). In either case, it refers to the bond that holds social groups together and ultimately gives a community and the individuals within it, especially its leader, strength. *'Asibayya* is strongest in desert communities and weakest in sedentary societies. It is built up through kinship ties, but especially through the development of those ties in the shared, practical activities demanded by desert life. Though it is often described as a phenomenon unto itself, Khaldun says that *'asibayya* can be strengthened, its bonding effect multiplied, through cultural phenomena like religion, in particular the Islamic religion of Khaldun's world.

The concept of *'asibayya* also underpins Khaldun's cyclical theory of history. Many modern social theories offer linear, progressive explanations of social change (societies are developing toward a better state), but Khaldun saw history, at least the history of his world, as moving in ever-repeating circles. In his theory of four generations, Khaldun argues that societies grow and then collapse across four generations. The cycle begins with the nomadic tribes that possess the strongest *'asibayya*. Strong group feeling translates into strong leaders and strong military strength. This enables nomadic tribes to claim political power and, in turn, center their power in cities. At this point, the tribal society begins the process of becoming a sedentary society. Over four generations, the descendants of the original tribal leaders, now a royal authority, engage in the increasingly luxurious lifestyles demanded by city life. Most important, these leaders lose contact with the *'asibayya* that gave earlier generations advantage over city dwellers. By roughly the fourth generation, the royal authority no longer has the power and support to defend itself against the insurgent tribal groups that are

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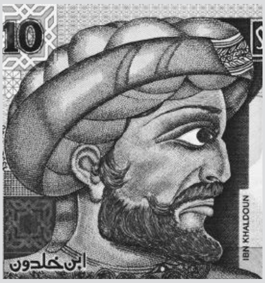
A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH



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Abdel Rahman Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) was a North African scholar who, many now argue, developed the first social scientific methods and theories. These were described in his book the *Muqaddimah*. Khaldun lived in a time when Muslim North African civilization (the Maghreb and Ifriqiya) was in decline. It had peaked in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries under the leadership of the Almohad dynasty, and afterward descended into ongoing, cyclical battles between tribal groups for political power (Irwin, 2018), some of which Khaldun experienced firsthand. In Khaldun's teenage years, North Africa was struck by the Black Death, a plague that claimed up to one-third of the population, including Khaldun's parents. These experiences shaped Khaldun. Despite an active and clearly productive life, his writing, both Irwin (2018) and Dale (2015) say, is characterized by pessimism and melancholy. He had "a sense of regret at the loss of what he imagined to be a kind of ancient or original and vital Arab essence" (Dale, 2015:21).

Khaldun was born in Tunis, North Africa on May 27, 1332 (Alatas, 2011, 2014; Faghirzadeh, 1982). In his early years, Khaldun was taught philosophy, math, logic, and religion by his father and the mathematician Al-Abili. Throughout his life in the many cities in which he lived (Tunis, Fez, Granada, Bougie, Cairo), he developed friendships with and learned from other great scholars of the time. Khaldun worked at royal courts across North Africa in positions that varied from administrator to diplomat to courtier to teacher. He also studied Maliki religious law, a particularly conservative version of Islamic jurisprudence. Along with his background in Greco-Arab philosophy, Khaldun's expertise in religious law influenced his approach to scholarship, the writing of history, and the vision of the *Muqaddimah*. Though in the *Muqaddimah* Khaldun relied on logic, reason, and empirical observation to analyze social organization, ultimately his goal was to describe "how God worked in the world through social process" (Irwin, 2018:40).

As with many scholars of the time, Khaldun's connection to court royalty got him into trouble. Scholars, like Khaldun, were valued for their literary and administrative abilities, but also as status symbols for North African rulers. As leaders came and went, the position of scholars in royal courts came and went. Many spent time in prison or exile. Sometimes scholars were directly involved in political maneuverings to help advance their own positions. Khaldun was no exception. For example, in 1358, while in Fez, Khaldun supported a plot to restore a former ally, Abu 'Abd Allah, to power in Bougie, Algeria. When the plot failed, Khaldun spent nearly two years in prison (Irwin, 2018:30). When, in 1365, Abu 'Abd Allah finally achieved power, Khaldun served as his chief minister (Dale, 2015: 137). Yet, one year later, Abu 'Abd Allah died and Khaldun was forced into exile in the Algerian desert. During this exile, Khaldun wrote the *Muqaddimah*. For four years, Khaldun worked from a castle that was "perched on a cliff that was difficult to access. From it he could look down on a fertile plain where cereal crops were grown" (Irwin, 2018:40).

Khaldun spent the last part of his life in Cairo, Egypt (a huge cultural center) where he was appointed by the Sultan Burqaq as professor of jurisprudence at Qamhiyya and Zahirayya madrasas. This period of his life was also eventful. Sadly, in 1384, as his wife and daughters traveled from Tunis to Cairo, they were lost at sea (along with Khaldun's library). In 1401, Khaldun joined a political delegation at Damascus to negotiate with the invading army of Turco-Mongol leader Amir Timur (i.e., Tamerlane). Timur, who had a great respect for historians, welcomed Khaldun to his royal pavilion, even though he stood with the opposing force (Irwin, 2018). Forever the scholar, Khaldun spent several weeks learning firsthand from Timur about nomadic politics and leadership. Khaldun spent the last year of his life cycling through positions as Maliki judge in Cairo. He died in 1406.

animated by much stronger *'asibayya*. Though, in his historical studies, Khaldun found exceptions to this rule (royalty in wealthy cities like Cairo were able to extend their rule by hiring tribal groups to defend them), by and large he found the pattern repeated again and again in North Africa.

Despite the significance of Khaldun's ideas, it is only in the 1800s that we begin to find thinkers who can be clearly identified as sociologists. These are the classical sociological thinkers we shall be interested in for much of this book (Camic, 1997; for a debate about what makes theory classical, see R. Collins, 1997b; Connell, 1997). We begin by examining the main social and intellectual forces that shaped their ideas.

Social Forces in the Development of Sociological Theory

As should be evident from the above discussion, intellectual fields are profoundly shaped by their social settings. This is particularly true of sociology, which not only is derived from that setting but takes the social setting as its basic subject matter. Khaldun developed a cyclical theory of social change because he lived in a world suffused with the tension between desert and urban life. So, too, the European and North American theories that we focus on in this book grew out of the social conditions in which the theorists who developed them lived. In particular, the social conditions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were of the utmost significance in the development of the discipline of sociology and its accompanying theories. We describe these social conditions in this section. We also will take the occasion to begin introducing the major figures in the history of sociological theory.

Political Revolutions

The long series of political revolutions ushered in by the French Revolution in 1789 and carrying over through the nineteenth century was the most immediate factor in the rise of modern sociological theorizing. The impact of these revolutions on many societies was enormous, and many positive changes resulted. However, what attracted the attention of many early theorists (especially Tocqueville) was not the positive consequences but the negative effects of such changes. These writers were particularly disturbed by the resulting chaos and disorder, especially in France. They were united in a desire to restore order to society. Some of the more extreme thinkers of this period literally wanted a return to the peaceful and relatively orderly days of the European Middle Ages. The more sophisticated thinkers recognized that social change had made such a return impossible. Thus, they sought instead to find new bases of order in societies that had been overturned by the political revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This interest in the issue of social order was one of the major concerns of classical sociological theorists, especially Comte, Durkheim, and Parsons.

The Industrial Revolution and the Rise of Capitalism

At least as important as political revolution in the shaping of sociological theory was the Industrial Revolution, which swept through many Western societies, mainly in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Industrial Revolution was not a single event but many interrelated developments that culminated in the transformation of the Western world from a largely agricultural system to an overwhelmingly industrial one. Large numbers of people left farms and agricultural work for the industrial occupations offered in the burgeoning factories. The factories themselves were transformed by a long series of technological improvements. Large economic bureaucracies arose to provide the many services needed by industry and the emerging capitalist economic system. In this economy, the ideal was a free marketplace in which the many products of an industrial system could be exchanged. Within this system, a few profited greatly while the majority worked long hours for low wages. A reaction against the industrial system and against capitalism in general followed and led to the labor movement as well as to various radical movements aimed at overthrowing the capitalist system.

The Industrial Revolution, capitalism, and the reaction against them all involved an enormous upheaval in Western society—an upheaval that affected sociologists greatly. Five major figures in the early history of sociological theory—Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, Georg Simmel, and Thorstein Veblen—were preoccupied, as were many other thinkers, with these changes and the problems they created for society as a whole. They spent their lives studying these problems, and in many cases they endeavored to develop programs that would help solve them.

Colonialism

A key force in the development of modern, capitalist societies was colonialism, which "refers to the direct political control of a society and its people by a foreign ruling state" (Go, 2007:602). In some cases, colonialism led to "colonization," when foreign nations established permanent settlements in a colonial possession (602). An example is the North American colonies, which became the nations of the United States and Canada. Colonialism emerged in the fifteenth century when Portugal established trading colonies in Asia, and Spain violently plundered South America. This was followed by a period of colonial expansion by the Netherlands in the seventeenth century and France and England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (MacQueen, 2007).

In addition to being a political relationship, colonialism also had economic, social, and cultural aspects (Go, 2007). Colonies were a source of wealth for European nations. In *Capital*, Karl Marx argued that the development of capitalism was fueled by the "primitive accumulation" of gold and silver in the colonies (1867/1967:351). Moreover, once the Industrial Revolution was further advanced, colonies became stable sources of raw materials, such as the cotton used in textile manufacture. These materials were farmed on plantations by African slaves who had been brought to the Caribbean and North America to support colonial development. Colonialism also shaped European identity. Modern racism developed as European nations attempted to legitimize their domination of African and indigenous populations. Scientific theories, such as Social Darwinism, proposed hierarchies of racial superiority, and Europeans contrasted their civilized societies to the so-called uncivilized, savage, and barbaric societies of colonized peoples.

The Rise of Socialism

Changes aimed at coping with the excesses of the industrial system and capitalism can be combined under the heading "socialism" (Beilharz, 2005d). Although some sociologists favored socialism as a solution to industrial problems, most were personally and intellectually opposed to it. On the one side, Karl Marx was an active supporter of the overthrow of the capitalist system and its replacement by a socialist system. Although Marx did not develop a theory of socialism per se, he spent a great deal of time criticizing various aspects of capitalist society. In addition, he engaged in a variety of political activities that he hoped would help bring about the rise of socialist societies.

However, Marx was atypical in the early years of sociological theory. Most of the early theorists, such as Weber and Durkheim, were opposed to socialism (at least as it was envisioned by Marx). Although they recognized the problems within capitalist society, they sought social reform within capitalism rather than the social revolution argued for by Marx. They feared socialism (as did Tocqueville) more than they did capitalism. This fear played a far greater role in shaping sociological theory than did Marx's support of the socialist alternative to capitalism. In fact, as we will see, in many cases sociological theory developed in reaction *against* Marxian and, more generally, socialist theory.

Feminism

In one sense there has always been a feminist perspective. Whenever and wherever women are subordinated—and they have been subordinated almost always and everywhere—they recognize and protest that situation in some form (G. Lerner, 1993). Although precursors can be traced to the 1630s, high points of feminist activity and writing occurred in the liberationist moments of modern Western history: a first flurry of productivity in the 1780s and 1790s with the debates surrounding the American and French revolutions; a far more organized, focused effort in the 1850s as part of the mobilization against slavery and for political rights for the middle class; and the massive mobilization for women's suffrage and for industrial and civic reform legislation in the early twentieth century, especially the Progressive Era in the United States.

All of this had an impact on the development of sociology, in particular on the work of a number of women in or associated with the field—Harriet Martineau (Vetter, 2008), Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, Anna Julia Cooper, Ida Wells-Barnett, Marianne Weber, and Beatrice Potter Webb, to name just a few. But, over time, their creations were pushed to the periphery of the profession, annexed or discounted or written out of sociology's public record by the men who were organizing sociology as a professional power base. Feminist concerns filtered into sociology only on the margins, in the work of marginal male theorists or of the increasingly marginalized female theorists. The men who assumed centrality in the profession—from Spencer through Weber and Durkheim—made basically conservative responses to the feminist arguments going on around them, making issues of gender an inconsequential topic to which they responded conventionally rather than critically in what they identified and publicly promoted as sociology. They responded in this way even as women were writing a significant body of sociological theory. The history of this gender politics in the profession, which is also part of the history of male response to feminist claims, is only now being written (e.g., see Deegan, 1988; Fitzpatrick, 1990; L. Gordon, 1994; Lengermann and Niebrugge-Brantley, 1998; R. Rosenberg, 1982).

Urbanization

Partly as a result of the Industrial Revolution, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries large numbers of people were uprooted from their rural homes and moved to urban settings. This massive migration was caused, in large part, by the jobs created by the industrial system in the urban areas. But it presented many difficulties for those people who had to adjust to urban life. In addition, the expansion of the cities produced a seemingly endless list of urban problems, including overcrowding, pollution, noise, and traffic. The nature of urban life and its problems attracted the attention of many early sociologists, especially Max Weber and Georg Simmel. In fact, the first major school of American sociology, the Chicago school, was in large part defined by its concern for the city and its interest in using Chicago as a laboratory in which to study urbanization and its problems.

Religious Change

Social changes brought on by political revolutions, the Industrial Revolution, and urbanization had a profound effect on religiosity. Many early sociologists came from religious backgrounds and were actively, and in some cases professionally, involved in religion (Hinkle and Hinkle, 1954). They brought to sociology the same objectives as they had in their religious lives. They wanted to improve people's lives (Vidich and Lyman, 1985). For some (such as Comte), sociology was transformed into a religion. For others, their sociological theories bore an unmistakable religious imprint. Durkheim wrote one of his major works on religion. Morality played a key role not only in Durkheim's sociology but also in the work of Talcott Parsons. A large portion of Weber's work also was devoted to the religions of the world. Marx, too, had an interest in religiosity, but his orientation was far more critical. Spencer discussed religion ("ecclesiastical institutions") as a significant component of society.

The Growth of Science

As sociological theory was being developed, there was an increasing emphasis on science, not only in colleges and universities but in society as a whole. The technological products of science were permeating every sector of life, and science was acquiring enormous prestige. Those associated with the most successful sciences (physics, biology, and chemistry) were accorded honored places in society. Sociologists (especially Comte, Durkheim, Spencer, Mead, and Schutz) from the beginning were preoccupied with science, and many wanted to model sociology after the successful physical and biological sciences. However, a debate soon developed between those who wholeheartedly accepted the scientific model and those (such as Weber) who thought that distinctive characteristics of social life made a wholesale adoption of a scientific model difficult and unwise (Lepenies, 1988). The issue of the relationship between sociology and science is debated to this day, although even a glance at the major journals in the field, at least in the United States, indicates the predominance of those who favor sociology as a science.

Intellectual Forces and the Rise of Sociological Theory

Although social factors are important, the primary focus of this chapter is the intellectual forces that played a central role in shaping sociological theory. In the real world, of course, intellectual factors cannot be separated from social forces. For example, in the discussion of the Enlightenment that follows, we will find that movement was intimately related to, and in many cases provided the intellectual basis for, the social changes discussed earlier in this chapter.

The many intellectual forces that shaped the development of social theories are discussed within the national context in which their influence was primarily felt (D. Levine, 1995b; Rundell, 2001). We begin with the Enlightenment and its influences on the development of sociological theory in France.

The Enlightenment

It is the view of many observers that the Enlightenment constitutes a critical development in terms of the later evolution of sociology (Hawthorn, 1976; Hughes, Martin, and Sharrock, 1995; Nisbet, 1967; Zeitlin, 1996). The Enlightenment was a period of remarkable intellectual development and change in philosophical thought.[2] A number of long-standing ideas and beliefs—many of which related to social life—were overthrown and replaced during the Enlightenment. The most prominent thinkers associated with the Enlightenment were the French philosophers Charles Montesquieu (1689–1755) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) (B. Singer, 2005a, 2005b). The influence of the Enlightenment on sociological theory, however, was more indirect and negative than it was direct and positive. As Irving Zeitlin put it, "Early sociology developed as a reaction to the Enlightenment" (1996:10).

The thinkers associated with the Enlightenment were influenced, above all, by two intellectual currents: seventeenth-century philosophy and science.

Seventeenth-century philosophy was associated with the work of thinkers such as René Descartes, Thomas Hobbes, and John Locke. The emphasis was on producing grand, general, and very abstract systems of ideas that made rational sense. The later thinkers associated with the Enlightenment did not reject the idea that systems of ideas should be general and should make rational sense, but they did make greater efforts to derive their ideas from the real world and to test them there. In other words, they wanted to combine empirical research with reason (Seidman, 1983:36–37). The model for this was science, especially Newtonian physics. At this point, we see the emergence of the application of the scientific method to social issues. Not only did Enlightenment thinkers want their ideas to be, at least in part, derived from the real world, they also wanted them to be useful to the social world, especially in the critical analysis of that world.

Overall, the Enlightenment was characterized by the belief that people could comprehend and control the universe by means of reason and empirical research. The view was that because the physical world was dominated by natural laws, it was likely that the social world was, too. Thus, it was up to the philosopher, using reason and research, to discover these social laws. After they understood how the social world worked, the Enlightenment thinkers had a practical goal: the creation of a "better," more rational world.

With an emphasis on reason, the Enlightenment philosophers were inclined to reject beliefs in traditional authority. When these thinkers examined traditional values and institutions, they often found them to be irrational—that is, contrary to human nature and inhibitive of human growth and development. The mission of the practical and change-oriented philosophers of the Enlightenment was to overcome these irrational systems. The theorists who were most directly and positively influenced by Enlightenment thinking were Alexis de Tocqueville and Karl Marx, although the latter formed his early theoretical ideas in Germany.

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[2] This section is based on the work of Irving Zeitlin (1996). Although Zeitlin's analysis is presented here for its coherence, it has a number of limitations: there are better analyses of the Enlightenment, there are many other factors involved in shaping the development of sociology, and Zeitlin tends to overstate his case in places (e.g., on the impact of Marx). But on the whole, Zeitlin provides us with a useful starting point, given our objectives in this chapter.

The Conservative Reaction to the Enlightenment

On the surface, we might think that French classical sociological theory, like Marx's theory, was directly and positively influenced by the Enlightenment. French sociology became rational, empirical, scientific, and change oriented, but not before it was also shaped by a set of ideas that developed in reaction to the Enlightenment. In Steven Seidman's view, "The ideology of the counter-Enlightenment represented a virtual inversion of Enlightenment liberalism. In place of modernist premises, we can detect in the Enlightenment critics a strong anti-modernist sentiment" (1983:51). As we will see, sociology in general, and French sociology in particular, has from the beginning been an uncomfortable mix of Enlightenment and counter-Enlightenment ideas.

The most extreme form of opposition to Enlightenment ideas was French Catholic counterrevolutionary philosophy (Reedy, 1994), as represented by the ideas of Louis de Bonald (1754–1840) (Bradley, 2005a) and Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821) (Bradley, 2005b). These men were reacting against not only the Enlightenment but also the French Revolution, which they saw partly as a product of the kind of thinking characteristic of the Enlightenment. De Bonald, for example, was disturbed by the revolutionary changes and yearned for a return to the peace and harmony of the Middle Ages. In this view, God was the source of society; therefore, reason, which was so important to the Enlightenment philosophers, was seen as inferior to traditional religious beliefs. Furthermore, it was believed that because God had created society, people should not tamper with it and should not try to change a holy creation. By extension, de Bonald opposed anything that undermined such traditional institutions as patriarchy, the monogamous family, the monarchy, and the Catholic Church.

Although de Bonald represented a rather extreme form of the conservative reaction, his work constitutes a useful introduction to its general premises. The conservatives turned away from what they considered the "naive" rationalism of the Enlightenment. They not only recognized the irrational aspects of social life but also assigned them positive value. Thus, they regarded such phenomena as tradition, imagination, emotionalism, and religion as useful and necessary components of social life. In that they disliked upheaval and sought to retain the existing order, they deplored developments such as the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, which they saw as disruptive forces. The conservatives tended to emphasize social order, an emphasis that became one of the central themes of the work of several sociological theorists.

The Development of French Sociology

We turn now to the actual founding of sociology as a distinctive discipline—specifically, to the work of four French thinkers: Alexis de Tocqueville, Claude Henri Saint-Simon, Auguste Comte, and, especially, Emile Durkheim.

Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859)

We begin with Alexis de Tocqueville even though he was born after both Saint-Simon and Comte. We do so because he and his work were such pure products of the Enlightenment discussed earlier (he was strongly and directly influenced by Montesquieu [B. Singer, 2004], especially his *The Spirit of the Laws* [1748]) and because his work was not part of the clear line of development in French social theory from Saint-Simon and Comte to the crucially important Durkheim. Tocqueville has long been seen as a political scientist, not a sociologist, and many have not perceived the existence of a social theory in his work (e.g., Seidman, 1983:306). However, not only is there a social theory in his work, but it is one that deserves a much more significant place in the history of social theory.

Tocqueville is best known for the legendary and highly influential *Democracy in America* (1835–1840/1969), especially the first volume that deals, in a very laudatory way, with the early American democratic system and that came to be seen as an early contribution to the development of "political science." However, in the later volumes of that work, as well as in later works, Tocqueville clearly developed a broad social theory that deserves a place in the canon of social theory.

Three interrelated issues lie at the heart of Tocqueville's theory. As a product of the Enlightenment, he was first and foremost a great supporter of, and advocate for, *freedom*. He was much more critical of *equality*, which he saw as tending to produce mediocrity in comparison to better political and cultural products produced by the aristocrats (he was, himself, an aristocrat) of a prior, less egalitarian era. More important, equality is also linked to what most concerned him, and that is the growth of *centralization*, especially in the government, and the threat centralized government poses to freedom. In his view, it was the inequality of the prior age, the power of the aristocrats, which acted to keep government centralization in check. However, with the demise of aristocrats and the rise of greater equality, there were no groups capable of countering the ever-present tendency toward centralization. The mass of largely equal people were too "servile" to oppose this trend. Furthermore, Tocqueville linked equality to "individualism" (an important concept he claimed to "invent" and for which he is credited), and the resulting individualists were far less interested in the well-being of the larger "community" than the aristocrats who preceded them.

It is for this reason that Tocqueville was critical of democracy and especially socialism. Democracy's commitment to freedom is ultimately threatened by its parallel commitment to equality and its tendency toward centralized government. Of course, from Tocqueville's point of view, the situation would be far worse in socialism because its far greater commitment to equality, and the much greater likelihood of government centralization, poses more of a threat to freedom. The latter view is quite prescient given what transpired in the Soviet Union and other societies that operated, at least in name, under the banner of socialism.

Thus, the strength of Tocqueville's theory lies in the interrelated ideas of freedom, equality, and, especially, centralization. His "grand narrative" on the increasing control of central governments anticipated other theories, including Weber's work on bureaucracy and the more contemporary work of Michel Foucault on "governmentality" and its gradual spread, increasing subtlety, and propensity to invade even the "soul" of the people controlled by it.

Claude Henri Saint-Simon (1760–1825)

Saint-Simon was older than Auguste Comte; in fact, Comte, in his early years, served as Saint-Simon's secretary and disciple. There is a very strong similarity between the ideas of these two thinkers, yet a bitter debate developed between them that led to their eventual split (Pickering, 1993; Thompson, 1975).

The most interesting aspect of Saint-Simon was his significance to the development of *both* conservative (like Comte's) and radical Marxian theory. On the conservative side, Saint-Simon wanted to preserve society as it was, but he did not seek a return to life as it had been in the Middle Ages, as did de Bonald and de Maistre. In addition, he was a *positivist* (Durkheim, 1928/1962:142), which meant that he believed that the study of social phenomena should employ the same scientific techniques as those used in the natural sciences. On the radical side, Saint-Simon saw the need for socialist reforms, especially the centralized planning of the economic system. But Saint-Simon did not go nearly as far as Marx did later. Although he, like Marx, saw the capitalists superseding the feudal nobility, he felt it inconceivable that the working class would come to replace the capitalists. Many of Saint-Simon's ideas are found in Comte's work, but Comte developed them in a more systematic fashion (Pickering, 1997).

Auguste Comte (1798–1857)

Comte (see Chapter 4) was the first to use the term *sociology* (Pickering, 2011; J. Turner, 2001).[3] He had an enormous influence on later sociological theorists (especially Herbert Spencer and Emile Durkheim). And he believed that the study of sociology should be scientific, just as many classical theorists did and most contemporary sociologists do (Lenzer, 1975).

Comte was greatly disturbed by the anarchy that pervaded French society and was critical of those thinkers who had spawned both the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. He developed his scientific view, *positivism*, or *positive philosophy*, to combat what he considered to be the negative and destructive philosophy of the Enlightenment. Comte was in line with, and influenced by, the French counterrevolutionary Catholics (especially de Bonald and de Maistre). However, his work can be set apart from theirs on at least two grounds. First, he did not think it possible to return to the Middle Ages; advances in science and industry made that impossible. Second, he developed a much more sophisticated theoretical system than his predecessors, one that was adequate to shape a good portion of early sociology.

Comte developed *social physics*, or what in 1839 he called *sociology* (Pickering, 2011). The use of the term *social physics* made it clear that Comte sought to model sociology after the "hard sciences." This new science, which in his view would ultimately become the dominant science, was to be concerned with social statics (existing social structures) and social dynamics (social change). Although both involved the search for laws of social life, he felt that social dynamics was more important than social statics. This focus on change reflected his interest in social reform, particularly reform of the ills created by the French Revolution and the Enlightenment. Comte did not urge revolutionary change because he felt the natural evolution of society would make things better. Reforms were needed only to assist the process a bit.

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[3] Although he recognized that Comte created the label "sociology," Björn Eriksson (1993) challenged the idea that Comte is the progenitor of modern, scientific sociology. Rather, Eriksson considered people such as Adam Smith, and more generally the Scottish Moralists, as the true source of modern sociology. See also Lisa Hill (1996) on the importance of Adam Ferguson and Edna Ullmann-Margalit (1997) on Ferguson and Adam Smith (see also Rundell, 2001).

This leads us to the cornerstone of Comte's approach: his evolutionary theory, or the *law of the three stages*. The theory proposes that there are three intellectual stages through which the world has gone throughout its history. According to Comte, not only does the world go through this process, but groups, societies, sciences, individuals, and even minds go through the same three stages. The *theological* stage is the first, and it characterized the world prior to 1300. During this period, the major idea system emphasized the belief that supernatural powers and religious figures, modeled after humankind, are at the root of everything. In particular, the social and physical world is seen as produced by God. The second stage is the *metaphysical* stage, which occurred roughly between 1300 and 1800. This era was characterized by the belief that abstract forces like "nature," rather than personalized gods, explain virtually everything. Finally, in 1800 the world entered the *positivistic* stage, characterized by belief in science. People now tended to give up the search for absolute causes (God or nature) and concentrated instead on observation of the social and physical worlds in the search for the laws governing them.

It is clear that in his theory of the world, Comte focused on intellectual factors. Indeed, he argued that intellectual disorder is the cause of social disorder. The disorder stemmed from earlier idea systems (theological and metaphysical) that continued to exist in the positivistic (scientific) age. Only when positivism gained total control would social upheavals cease. Because this was an evolutionary process, there was no need to foment social upheaval and revolution. Positivism would come, although perhaps not as quickly as some would like. Here Comte's social reformism and his sociology coincide. Sociology could expedite the arrival of positivism and hence bring order to the social world. Above all, Comte did not want to seem to be espousing revolution. There was, in his view, enough disorder in the world. In any case, from Comte's point of view, it was intellectual change that was needed, so there was little reason for social and political revolution.

We have already encountered several of Comte's positions that were to be of great significance to the development of classical sociology—his basic conservatism, reformism, and scientism and his evolutionary view of the world. Several other aspects of his work deserve mention because they also were to play a major role in the development of sociological theory. For example, his sociology does not focus on the individual but rather takes as its basic unit of analysis larger entities such as the family. He also urged that we look at both social structure and social change. Of great importance to later sociological theory, especially the work of Spencer and Parsons, is Comte's stress on the systematic character of society—the links among and between the various components of society. He also accorded great importance to the role of consensus in society. He saw little merit in the idea that society is characterized by inevitable conflict between workers and capitalists. In addition, Comte emphasized the need to engage in abstract theorizing and to go out and do sociological research. He urged that sociologists use observation, experimentation, and comparative historical analysis. Finally, Comte believed that sociology ultimately would become the dominant scientific force in the world because of its distinctive ability to interpret social laws and to develop reforms aimed at patching up problems within the system.

Comte was in the forefront of the development of positivistic sociology (Bryant, 1985; Halfpenny, 1982). To Jonathan Turner (1985a:24), Comte's positivism emphasized that "the social universe is amenable to the development of abstract laws that can be tested through the careful collection of data," and "these abstract laws will denote the basic and generic properties of the social universe and they will specify their 'natural relations.'" As we will see, a number of classical theorists (especially Spencer and Durkheim) shared Comte's interest in the discovery of the laws of social life. Even though Comte lacked a solid academic base on which to build a school of Comtian sociological theory, he nevertheless laid a basis for the development of a significant stream of sociological theory. But his long-term significance is dwarfed by that of his successor in French sociology and the inheritor of a number of its ideas, Emile Durkheim. (For a debate over the canonization of Durkheim, as well as other classical theorists discussed in this chapter, see Mouzelis, 1997; Parker, 1997.)

Emile Durkheim (1858–1917)

Durkheim's relation to the Enlightenment was much more ambiguous than Comte's. He has been seen as an inheritor of the Enlightenment tradition because of his emphasis on science and social reformism. However, Durkheim also has been seen as the inheritor of the conservative tradition, especially as it was manifested in Comte's work. But whereas Comte had remained outside of academia as had Tocqueville, Durkheim developed an increasingly solid academic base as his career progressed. Durkheim legitimized sociology in France, and his work ultimately became a dominant force in the development of sociology in general and of sociological theory in particular (Milbrandt and Pearce, 2011; Rawls, 2007).

Durkheim was politically liberal, but he took a more conservative position intellectually. Like Comte and the Catholic counterrevolutionaries, Durkheim feared and hated social disorder. His work was informed by the disorders produced by the general social changes discussed earlier in this chapter, as well as by others (such as industrial strikes, disruption of the ruling class, church-state discord, the rise of political anti-Semitism) more specific to the France of Durkheim's time (Karady, 1983). In fact, most of his work was devoted to the study of social order. His view was that social disorders are not a necessary part of the modern world and could be reduced by social reforms. Whereas Marx saw the problems of the modern world as inherent in society, Durkheim (along with most other classical theorists) did not. As a result, Marx's ideas on the need for social revolution stood in sharp contrast to the reformism of Durkheim and the others. As classical sociological theory developed, it was the Durkheimian interest on order and reform that came to dominate, while the Marxian position was eclipsed.

Social Facts

Durkheim developed a distinctive conception of the subject matter of sociology and then tested it in an empirical study. In *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895/1982), Durkheim argued that it is the special task of sociology to study what he called *social facts*. He conceived of social facts as forces (Takla and Pape, 1985) and structures that are external to, and coercive of, the individual. The study of these large-scale structures and forces—for example, institutionalized law and shared moral beliefs—and their impact on people became the concern of many later sociological theorists (e.g., Parsons). In *Suicide* (1897/1951), Durkheim reasoned that if he could link an individual behavior such as suicide to social causes (social facts), he would have made a persuasive case for the importance of the discipline of sociology. His basic argument was that it was the nature of and changes in social facts that led to differences in suicide rates. For example, a war or an economic depression would create a collective mood of depression that would, in turn, lead to increases in suicide rates.

In *The Rules of Sociological Method*, Durkheim differentiated between two types of social facts—material and nonmaterial. Although he dealt with both in the course of his work, his main focus was on *nonmaterial social facts* (e.g., culture, social institutions) rather than *material social facts* (e.g., bureaucracy, law). This concern for nonmaterial social facts was already clear in his earliest major work, *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893/1964). His focus there was a comparative analysis of what held society together in the primitive and modern cases. He concluded that earlier societies were held together primarily by nonmaterial social facts, specifically, a strongly held common morality, or what he called a strong *collective conscience*. However, because of the complexities of modern society, there had been a decline in the strength of the collective conscience. The primary bond in the modern world was an intricate division of labor, which tied people to others in dependency relationships. However, Durkheim believed that the modern division of labor brought with it several "pathologies"; it was, in other words, an inadequate method of holding society together. Given his conservative sociology, Durkheim did not feel that revolution was needed to solve these problems. Rather, he suggested a variety of reforms that could "patch up" the modern system and keep it functioning. Although he recognized that there was no going back to the age when a powerful collective conscience predominated, he did think that the common morality could be strengthened in modern society and that people thereby could cope better with the pathologies that they were experiencing.

Religion

In Durkheim's later work, nonmaterial social facts occupied an even more central position. In fact, he came to focus on perhaps the ultimate form of a nonmaterial social fact—religion—in his last major work, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912/1965). Durkheim examined primitive society to find the roots of religion. He believed that he would be better able to find those roots in the comparative simplicity of primitive society than in the complexity of the modern world. What he found, he felt, was that the source of religion was society itself. Society comes to define certain things as religious and others as profane. Specifically, in the case he studied, the clan was the source of a primitive kind of religion, totemism, in which things such as plants and animals are deified. Totemism, in turn, was seen as a specific type of nonmaterial social fact, a form of the collective conscience. In the end, Durkheim came to argue that society and religion (or, more generally, the collective conscience) were one and the same. Religion was the way society expressed itself in the form of a nonmaterial social fact. In a sense, then, Durkheim came to deify society and its major products. Clearly, in deifying society, Durkheim took a highly conservative stance: One would not want to overturn a deity or its societal source.

These books and other important works helped carve out a distinctive domain for sociology in the academic world of turn-of-the-century France, and they earned Durkheim the leading position in that growing field. In 1898, Durkheim set up a scholarly journal devoted to sociology, *L'Année sociologique* (Besnard, 1983). It became a powerful force in the development and spread of sociological ideas. Durkheim was intent on fostering the growth of sociology, and he used his journal as a focal point for the development of a group of disciples. They later would extend his ideas and carry them to many other locales and into the study of other aspects of the social world (e.g., sociology of law and sociology of the city) (Besnard, 1983). By 1910, Durkheim had established a strong center of sociology in France, and the academic institutionalization of sociology was well under way in that nation (Heilbron, 1995).

The Development of German Sociology

Whereas the early history of French sociology is a fairly coherent story of the progression from the Enlightenment and the French Revolution to the conservative reaction and to the increasingly important sociological ideas of Tocqueville, Saint-Simon, Comte, and Durkheim, German sociology was fragmented from the beginning. A split developed between Marx (and his supporters), who remained on the edge of sociology, and the early giants of mainstream German sociology, Max Weber and Georg Simmel.[4] However, although Marxian theory itself was deemed unacceptable, its ideas found their way in a variety of positive and negative ways into mainstream German sociology.

The Roots and Nature of the Theories of Karl Marx (1818–1883)

The dominant intellectual influence on Karl Marx was the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831).

Hegel

According to Terence Ball (1991:125), "it is difficult for us to appreciate the degree to which Hegel dominated German thought in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. It was largely within the framework of his philosophy that educated Germans—including the young Marx—discussed history, politics and culture." Marx's education at the University of Berlin was shaped by Hegel's ideas as well as by the split that developed among Hegel's followers after his death. The "Old Hegelians" continued to subscribe to the master's ideas, whereas the "Young Hegelians," although still working in the Hegelian tradition, were critical of many facets of his philosophical system.

Two concepts represent the essence of Hegel's philosophy: the dialectic and idealism (Beamish, 2007; Hegel, 1807/1967, 1821/1967). The *dialectic* is both a way of thinking and an image of the world. On the one hand, it is a way of thinking that stresses the importance of processes, relations, dynamics, conflicts, and contradictions—a dynamic rather than a static way of thinking about the world. On the other hand, it is a view that the world is made up not of static structures but of processes, relationships, dynamics, conflicts, and contradictions. Although the dialectic generally is associated with Hegel, it certainly predates him in philosophy. Marx, trained in the Hegelian tradition, accepted the significance of the dialectic. However, he was critical of some aspects of the way Hegel used it. For example, Hegel tended to apply the dialectic only to ideas, whereas Marx felt that it applied as well to more material aspects of life—for example, the economy.

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[4] For an argument against this and the view of continuity between Marxian and mainstream sociology, see Seidman (1983).

Hegel is also associated with the philosophy of *idealism* (Kleiner, 2005), which emphasizes the importance of the mind and mental products rather than the material world. It is the social definition of the physical and material worlds that matters most, not those worlds themselves. In its extreme form, idealism asserts that *only* the mind and psychological constructs exist. Some idealists believed that their mental processes would remain the same even if the physical and social worlds no longer existed. Idealists emphasize not only mental processes but also the ideas produced by these processes. Hegel paid a great deal of attention to the development of such ideas, especially to what he referred to as the "spirit" of society.

In fact, Hegel offered a kind of evolutionary theory of the world in idealistic terms. At first, people were endowed only with the ability to acquire a sensory understanding of the world around them. They could understand things like the sight, smell, and feel of the social and physical world. Later, people developed the ability to be conscious of, to understand, themselves. With self-knowledge and self-understanding, people began to understand that they could become more than they were. In terms of Hegel's dialectical approach, a contradiction developed between what people were and what they felt they could be. The resolution of this contradiction lay in the development of an individual's awareness of his or her place in the larger spirit of society. Individuals come to realize that their ultimate fulfillment lies in the development and the expansion of the spirit of society as a whole. Thus, individuals in Hegel's scheme evolve from an understanding of things to an understanding of self to an understanding of their place in the larger scheme of things.

Hegel, then, offered a general theory of the evolution of the world. It is a subjective theory in which change is held to occur at the level of consciousness. However, that change occurs largely beyond the control of actors. Actors are reduced to little more than vessels swept along by the inevitable evolution of consciousness.

Feuerbach

Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872) was an important bridge between Hegel and Marx. As a Young Hegelian, Feuerbach was critical of Hegel for, among other things, his excessive emphasis on consciousness and the spirit of society. Feuerbach's adoption of a materialist philosophy led him to argue that what was needed was to move from Hegel's subjective idealism to a focus not on ideas but on the material reality of real human beings. In his critique of Hegel, Feuerbach focused on religion. To Feuerbach, God is simply a projection by people of their human essence onto an impersonal force. People set God over and above themselves, with the result that they become alienated from God and project a series of positive characteristics onto God (that He is perfect, almighty, and holy), while they reduce themselves to being imperfect, powerless, and sinful. Feuerbach argued that this kind of religion must be overcome and that its defeat could be aided by a materialist philosophy in which people (not religion) became their own highest object, ends in themselves. Real people, not abstract ideas like religion, are deified by a materialist philosophy.

Marx, Hegel, and Feuerbach

Marx was simultaneously influenced by and critical of both Hegel and Feuerbach (Staples, 2007). Marx, following Feuerbach, was critical of Hegel's adherence to an idealist philosophy. Marx took this position not only because of his adoption of a materialist orientation but also because of his interest in practical activities. Social facts such as wealth and the state are treated by Hegel as ideas rather than as real, material entities. Even when he examined a seemingly material process such as labor, Hegel was looking only at abstract mental labor. This is very different from Marx's interest in the labor of real, sentient people. Thus, Hegel was looking at the wrong issues as far as Marx was concerned. In addition, Marx felt that Hegel's idealism led to a very conservative political orientation. To Hegel, the process of evolution was occurring beyond the control of people and their activities. Because people seemed to be moving toward greater consciousness of the world as it could be, there seemed no need for any revolutionary change; the process was already moving in the "desired" direction.

Marx took a very different position, arguing that the problems of modern life can be traced to real, material sources (e.g., the structures of capitalism) and that the solutions, therefore, can be found only in the overturning of those structures by the collective action of large numbers of people (Marx and Engels, 1845/1956:254). Whereas Hegel "stood the world on its head" (i.e., focused on consciousness, not the real, material world), Marx firmly embedded his dialectic in a material base.

Marx applauded Feuerbach's critique of Hegel on a number of counts (e.g., its materialism and its rejection of the abstractness of Hegel's theory), but he was far from fully satisfied with Feuerbach's position (Thomson, 1994). For one thing, Feuerbach focused on the religious world, whereas Marx believed that it was the entire social world, and the economy in particular, that had to be analyzed. Although Marx accepted Feuerbach's materialism, he felt that Feuerbach had gone too far in focusing one-sidedly, nondialectically, on the material world. Feuerbach failed to include the most important of Hegel's contributions, the dialectic, in his materialist orientation, particularly the relationship between people and the material world. Finally, Marx argued that Feuerbach, like most philosophers, failed to emphasize *praxis*—practical activity—in particular, revolutionary activity (Wortmann, 2007). As Marx put it, "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it" (cited in Tucker, 1970:109).

Marx extracted what he considered to be the two most important elements from these two thinkers—Hegel's dialectic and Feuerbach's materialism—and fused them into his own distinctive orientation, *dialectical materialism,*[5] which focuses on dialectical relationships within the material world.

Political Economy

Marx's materialism and his consequent focus on the economic sector led him rather naturally to the work of a group of *political economists* (e.g., Adam Smith and David Ricardo [Howard and King, 2005]). Marx was very attracted to a number of their positions. He lauded their basic premise that labor was the source of all wealth. This ultimately led Marx to his *labor theory of value*, in which he argued that the profit of the capitalist was based on the exploitation of the laborer. Capitalists performed the rather simple trick of paying the workers less than they deserved, because they received less pay than the value of what they actually produced in a work period. This surplus value, which was retained and reinvested by the capitalist, was the basis of the entire capitalist system. The capitalist system grew by continually increasing the level of exploitation of the workers (and therefore the amount of surplus value) and investing the profits for the expansion of the system.

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[5] First used by Joseph Dietzgen in 1857, the term *dialectical materialism* was made central by Georgi Plekhanov in 1891. Although he practiced dialectical materialism, Marx himself never used the term (Beamish, 2007).

Marx also was affected by the political economists' depiction of the horrors of the capitalist system and the exploitation of the workers. However, whereas they depicted the evils of capitalism, Marx criticized the political economists for seeing these evils as inevitable components of capitalism. Marx deplored their general acceptance of capitalism and the way they urged people to work for economic success within it. He also was critical of the political economists for failing to see the inherent conflict between capitalists and laborers and for denying the need for a radical change in the economic order. Such conservative economics was hard for Marx to accept, given his commitment to a radical change from capitalism to socialism.

Marx and Sociology

Marx was not a sociologist and did not consider himself one. Although his work is too broad to be encompassed by the term *sociology,* there is a sociological theory to be found in Marx's work. From the beginning, there were those who were heavily influenced by Marx, and there has been a continuous strand of Marxian sociology, primarily in Europe. But for the majority of early sociologists, his work was a negative force, something against which to shape their sociology. Until very recently, sociological theory, especially in America, has been characterized by either hostility to or ignorance of Marxian theory. This has, as we will see in Chapter 2, changed dramatically, but the negative reaction to Marx's work was a major force in the shaping of much of sociological theory (Gurney, 1981).

The basic reason for this rejection of Marx was ideological. Many of the early sociological theorists were inheritors of the conservative reaction to the disruptions of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Marx's radical ideas and the radical social changes he foretold and sought to bring to life were clearly feared and hated by such thinkers. Marx was dismissed as an ideologist. It was argued that he was not a serious sociological theorist. However, ideology per se could not have been the real reason for the rejection of Marx because the work of Comte, Durkheim, and other conservative thinkers also was heavily ideological. It was the nature of the ideology, not the existence of ideology as such, that put off many sociological theorists. They were ready and eager to buy conservative ideology wrapped in a cloak of sociological theory but not the radical ideology offered by Marx and his followers.

There were, of course, other reasons why Marx was not accepted by many early theorists. He seemed to be more an economist than a sociologist. Although the early sociologists would certainly admit the importance of the economy, they would also argue that it was only one of a number of components of social life.

Another reason for the early rejection of Marx was the nature of his interests. Whereas the early sociologists were reacting to the disorder created by the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and later the Industrial Revolution, Marx was not upset by these disorders—nor by disorder in general. Rather, what interested and concerned Marx most was the oppressiveness of the capitalist system that was emerging out of the Industrial Revolution. Marx wanted to develop a theory that explained this oppressiveness and that would help overthrow that system. Marx's interest was in revolution, which stood in contrast to the conservative concern for reform and orderly change.

Another difference worth noting is the difference in philosophical roots between Marxian and conservative sociological theory. Most of the conservative theorists were heavily influenced by the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Among other things, this led them to think in linear, cause-and-effect terms. In contrast, Marx was most heavily influenced, as we have seen, by Hegel, who thought in dialectical rather than cause-and-effect terms. Among other things, the dialectic attunes us to the ongoing reciprocal effects of social forces.

Marx's Theory

To oversimplify enormously (see Chapter 6 for a much more detailed discussion), Marx offered a theory of capitalist society based on his image of the basic nature of human beings. Marx believed that people are basically productive; that is, in order to survive, people need to work in, and with, nature. In so doing, they produce the food, clothing, tools, shelter, and other necessities that permit them to live. Their productivity is a perfectly natural way by which they express basic creative impulses. Furthermore, these impulses are expressed in concert with other people; in other words, people are inherently social. They need to work together to produce what they need to survive.

Throughout history, this natural process has been subverted, at first by the mean conditions of primitive society and later by a variety of structural arrangements erected by societies in the course of history. In various ways, these structures interfered with the natural productive process. However, it is in capitalist society that this breakdown is most acute; the breakdown in the natural productive process reaches its culmination in capitalism.

Basically, capitalism is a structure (or, more accurately, a series of structures) that erects barriers between an individual and the production process, the products of that process, and other people; ultimately, it even divides the individual himself or herself. This is the basic meaning of the concept of *alienation:* It is the breakdown of the natural interconnection among people and between people and what they produce. Alienation occurs because capitalism has evolved into a two-class system in which a few capitalists own the production process, the products, and the labor time of those who work for them. Instead of naturally producing for themselves, people produce unnaturally in capitalist society for a small group of capitalists. Intellectually, Marx was very concerned with the structures of capitalism and their oppressive impact on actors. Politically, he was led to an interest in emancipating people from the oppressive structures of capitalism.

Marx actually spent very little time dreaming about what a utopian socialist state would look like (Lovell, 1992). He was more concerned with helping to bring about the demise of capitalism. He believed that the contradictions and conflicts within capitalism would lead dialectically to its ultimate collapse, but he did not think that the process was inevitable. People had to act at the appropriate times and in the appropriate ways for socialism to come into being. The capitalists had great resources at their disposal to forestall the coming of socialism, but they could be overcome by the concerted action of a class-conscious proletariat. What would the proletariat create in the process? What is socialism?

Most basically, it is a society in which, for the first time, people could approach Marx's ideal image of productivity. With the aid of modern technology, people could interact harmoniously with nature and with other people to create what they needed to survive. To put it another way, in socialist society, people would no longer be alienated.

The Roots and Nature of the Theories of Max Weber (1864–1920) and Georg Simmel (1858–1918)

Although Marx and his followers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries remained outside mainstream German sociology, to a considerable extent early German sociology can be seen as developing in opposition to Marxian theory.

Weber and Marx

Albert Salomon (1945:596), for example, claimed that a large part of the theory of the early giant of German sociology, Max Weber, developed "in a long and intense debate with the ghost of Marx." This is probably an exaggeration, but in many ways Marxian theory did play a negative role in Weberian theory. In other ways, however, Weber was working within the Marxian tradition, trying to "round out" Marx's theory. Also, there were many inputs into Weberian theory other than Marxian theory (Burger, 1976). We can clarify a good deal about the sources of German sociology by outlining each of these views of the relationship between Marx and Weber (Antonio and Glassman, 1985; Schroeter, 1985). Bear in mind that Weber was not intimately familiar with Marx's work (much of it was not published until after Weber's death) and that Weber was reacting more to the work of the Marxists than to Marx's work itself (Antonio, 1985:29; B. Turner, 1981:19–20).

Weber *did* tend to view Marx and the Marxists of his day as economic determinists who offered single-cause theories of social life. That is, Marxian theory was seen as tracing all historical developments to economic bases and viewing all contemporaneous structures as erected on an economic base. Although this is not true of Marx's own theory (as we will see in Chapter 6), it was the position of many later Marxists.

One of the examples of economic determinism that seemed to rankle Weber most was the view that ideas are simply the reflections of material (especially economic) interests, that material interests determine ideology. From this point of view, Weber was supposed to have "turned Marx on his head" (much as Marx had inverted Hegel). Instead of focusing on economic factors and their effect on ideas, Weber devoted much of his attention to ideas and their effect on the economy. Rather than seeing ideas as simple reflections of economic factors, Weber saw them as fairly autonomous forces capable of profoundly affecting the economic world. Weber certainly devoted a lot of attention to ideas, particularly systems of religious ideas, and he was especially concerned with the impact of religious ideas on the economy. In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904–1905/1958), he was concerned with Protestantism, mainly as a system of ideas, and its impact on the rise of another system of ideas, the "spirit of capitalism," and ultimately on a capitalist economic system. Weber had a similar interest in other world religions, looking at how their nature might have obstructed the development of capitalism in their respective societies. A second view of Weber's relationship to Marx, as mentioned earlier, is that he did not so much oppose Marx as try to round out Marx's theoretical perspective. Here Weber is seen as working more within the Marxian tradition than in opposition to it. His work on religion, interpreted from this point of view, was simply an effort to show that not only do material factors affect ideas, but ideas themselves affect material structures.

A good example of the view that Weber was engaged in a process of rounding out Marxian theory is in the area of stratification theory. In this work on stratification, Marx focused on social *class*, the economic dimension of stratification. Although Weber accepted the importance of this factor, he argued that other dimensions of stratification were also important. He argued that the notion of social stratification should be extended to include stratification on the basis of prestige (*status*) and *political power*. The inclusion of these other dimensions does not constitute a refutation of Marx but is simply an extension of his ideas.

Both of the preceding views accept the importance of Marxian theory for Weber. There are elements of truth in both positions; at some points Weber was working in opposition to Marx, whereas at other points he was extending Marx's ideas. However, a third view of this issue may best characterize the relationship between Marx and Weber. In this view, Marx is seen simply as only one of many influences on Weber's thought.

Other Influences on Weber

We can identify a number of sources of Weberian theory, including German historians, philosophers, economists, and political theorists. Among those who influenced Weber, the philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) stands out above all the others. But we must not overlook the impact of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) (Antonio, 2001)—especially his emphasis on the hero—on Weber's work on the need for individuals to stand up to the impact of bureaucracies and other structures of modern society.

The influence of Immanuel Kant on Weber, and on German sociology in general, shows that German sociology and Marxism grew from different philosophical roots. As we have seen, it was Hegel, not Kant, who was the important philosophical influence on Marxian theory. Whereas Hegel's philosophy led Marx and the Marxists to look for relations, conflicts, and contradictions, Kantian philosophy led at least some German sociologists to take a more static perspective. To Kant, the world was a buzzing confusion of events that could never be known directly. The world could be known only through thought processes that filter, select, and categorize these events. The content of the real world was differentiated by Kant from the forms through which that content can be comprehended. The emphasis on these forms gave the work of those sociologists within the Kantian tradition a more static quality than that of the Marxists within the Hegelian tradition.

Weber's Theory

Whereas Karl Marx offered basically a theory of capitalism, Weber's work was fundamentally a theory of the process of rationalization (Brubaker, 1984; Kalberg, 1980, 1990, 1994). Weber was interested in the general issue of why institutions in the Western world had grown progressively more rational while powerful barriers seemed to prevent a similar development in the rest of the world.

Although rationality is used in many ways in Weber's work, what interests us here is a process involving formal rationality, one of four types identified by Stephen Kalberg (1980, 1990, 1994; see also Brubaker, 1984; D. Levine, 1981a). Formal rationality involves, as was usually the case with Weber, a concern for the actor making choices of means and ends. However, in this case, that choice is made in reference to universally applied rules, regulations, and laws. These, in turn, are derived from various large-scale structures, especially bureaucracies and the economy. Weber developed his theories in the context of a large number of comparative historical studies of the West, China, India, and many other regions of the world. In those studies, he sought to delineate the factors that helped bring about or impede the development of rationalization.

Weber saw the bureaucracy (and the historical process of bureaucratization) as the classic example of rationalization, but rationalization is perhaps best illustrated today by the fast-food restaurant (Ritzer, 2015). The fast-food restaurant is a formally rational system in which people (both workers and customers) are led to seek the most rational means to ends. The drive-through window, for example, is a rational means by which workers can dispense and customers can obtain food quickly and efficiently. Speed and efficiency are dictated by the fast-food restaurants and the rules and regulations by which they operate.

Weber embedded his discussion of the process of bureaucratization in a broader discussion of the political institution. He differentiated among three types of authority systems—traditional, charismatic, and rational-legal. Only in the modern Western world can a rational-legal authority system develop, and only within that system does one find the full-scale development of the modern bureaucracy. The rest of the world remains dominated by traditional or charismatic authority systems, which generally impede the development of a rational-legal authority system and modern bureaucracies. Briefly, traditional authority stems from a long-lasting system of beliefs. An example would be a leader who comes to power because his or her family or clan has always provided the group's leadership. A charismatic leader derives his or her authority from extraordinary abilities or characteristics or, more likely, simply from the belief on the part of followers that the leader has such traits. Although these two types of authority are of historical importance, Weber believed that the trend in the West, and ultimately in the rest of the world, is toward systems of rational-legal authority (Bunzel, 2007). In such systems, authority is derived from rules legally and rationally enacted. Thus, the president of the United States derives his authority ultimately from the laws of society. The evolution of rational-legal authority, with its accompanying bureaucracies, is only one part of Weber's general argument on the rationalization of the Western world.

Weber also did detailed and sophisticated analyses of the rationalization of such phenomena as religion, law, the city, and even music. But we can illustrate Weber's mode of thinking with one other example—the rationalization of the economic institution. This discussion is couched in Weber's broader analysis of the relationship between religion and capitalism. In a wide-ranging historical study, Weber sought to understand why a rational economic system (capitalism) had developed in the West and why it had failed to develop in the rest of the world. Weber accorded a central role to religion in this process. At one level, he was engaged in a dialogue with the Marxists in an effort to show that, contrary to what many Marxists of the day believed, religion was not merely an epiphenomenon. Instead, it had played a key role in the rise of capitalism in the West and in its failure to develop elsewhere in the world. Weber argued that it was a distinctively rational religious system (Calvinism) that played the central role in the rise of capitalism in the West. In contrast, in the other parts of the world that he studied, Weber found more irrational religious systems (e.g., Confucianism, Taoism, Hinduism), which helped inhibit the development of a rational economic system. However, in the end, one gets the feeling that these religions provided only temporary barriers, for the economic systems—indeed, the entire social structure—of these societies ultimately would become rationalized.

Although rationalization lies at the heart of Weberian theory, it is far from all there is to the theory. But this is not the place to go into that rich body of material. Instead, let us return to the development of sociological theory. A key issue in that development is: Why did Weber's theory prove more attractive to later sociological theorists than Marxian theory?

The Acceptance of Weber's Theory

One reason is that Weber proved to be more acceptable politically. Instead of espousing Marxian radicalism, Weber was more of a liberal on some issues and a conservative on others (e.g., the role of the state). Although he was a severe critic of many aspects of modern capitalist society and came to many of the same critical conclusions as did Marx, he was not one to propose radical solutions to problems (Heins, 1993). In fact, he felt that the radical reforms offered by many Marxists and other socialists would do more harm than good.

Later sociological theorists, especially Americans, saw their society under attack by Marxian theory. Largely conservative in orientation, they cast about for theoretical alternatives to Marxism. One of those who proved attractive was Max Weber. (Durkheim and Vilfredo Pareto were others.) After all, rationalization affected not only capitalist but also socialist societies. Indeed, from Weber's point of view, rationalization constituted an even greater problem in socialist than in capitalist societies.

Also in Weber's favor was the form in which he presented his judgments. He spent most of his life doing detailed historical studies, and his political conclusions were often made within the context of his research. Thus, they usually sounded very scientific and academic. Marx, although he did much serious research, also wrote a good deal of explicitly polemical material. Even his more academic work is laced with acid political judgments. For example, in *Capital* (1867/1967), he described capitalists as "vampires" and "werewolves." Weber's more academic style helped make him more acceptable to later sociologists.

Another reason for the greater acceptability of Weber was that he operated in a philosophical tradition that also helped shape the work of later sociologists. That is, Weber operated in the Kantian tradition, which meant, as we have seen, that he tended to think in cause-and-effect terms. This kind of thinking was more acceptable to later sociologists, who were largely unfamiliar and uncomfortable with the dialectical logic that informed Marx's work.

Finally, Weber appeared to offer a much more rounded approach to the social world than did Marx. Whereas Marx appeared to be almost totally preoccupied with the economy, Weber was interested in a wide range of social phenomena. This diversity of focus seemed to give later sociologists more to work with than the apparently more single-minded concerns of Marx.

Weber produced most of his major works in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Early in his career Weber was identified more as a historian who was concerned with sociological issues, but in the early 1900s his focus grew more and more sociological. Indeed, he became the dominant sociologist of his time in Germany. In 1910, he founded (with, among others, Georg Simmel, whom we discuss next) the German Sociological Society (Glatzer, 1998). His home in Heidelberg was an intellectual center not only for sociologists but for scholars from many fields. Although his work was broadly influential in Germany, it was to become even more influential in the United States, especially after Talcott Parsons introduced Weber's ideas (and those of other European theorists, especially Durkheim) to a large American audience. Although Marx's ideas did not have a significant positive effect on American sociological theorists until the 1960s, Weber was already highly influential by the late 1930s.

Simmel's Theory

Georg Simmel was Weber's contemporary and a cofounder of the German Sociological Society. Simmel was a somewhat atypical sociological theorist (Frisby, 1981; D. Levine, Carter, and Gorman, 1976a, 1976b). For one thing, he had an immediate and profound effect on the development of American sociological theory, whereas Marx and Weber were largely ignored for a number of years. Simmel's work helped shape the development of one of the early centers of American sociology—the University of Chicago—and its major theory, symbolic interactionism (Jaworski, 1995, 1997). The Chicago school and symbolic interactionism, as we will see, came to dominate American sociology in the 1920s and early 1930s (Bulmer, 1984). Simmel's ideas were influential at Chicago mainly because the dominant figures in the early years of Chicago, Albion Small and Robert Park, had been exposed to Simmel's theories in Berlin in the late 1800s. Park attended Simmel's lectures in 1899 and 1900, and Small carried on an extensive correspondence with Simmel during the 1890s. They were instrumental in bringing Simmel's ideas to students and faculty at Chicago, in translating some of his work, and in bringing it to the attention of a large-scale American audience (Frisby, 1984:29).

Another atypical aspect of Simmel's work is his "level" of analysis, or at least that level for which he became best known in America. Whereas Weber and Marx were preoccupied with large-scale issues such as the rationalization of society and a capitalist economy, Simmel was best known for his work on smaller-scale issues, especially individual action and interaction. He became famous early for his thinking, derived from Kantian philosophy, on *forms* of interaction (e.g., conflict) and *types* of interactants (e.g., the stranger). Basically, Simmel saw that understanding interaction among people was one of the major tasks of sociology. However, it was impossible to study the massive number of interactions in social life without some conceptual tools. This is where forms of interaction and types of interactants came in. Simmel felt that he could isolate a limited number of forms of interaction that could be found in a large number of social settings. Thus equipped, one could analyze and understand these different interaction settings. The development of a limited number of types of interactants could be similarly useful in explaining interaction settings. This work had a profound effect on symbolic interactionism, which, as the name suggests, was focally concerned with interaction. One of the ironies, however, is that Simmel also was concerned with large-scale issues similar to those that obsessed Marx and Weber. However, this work was much less influential than his work on interaction, although there are contemporary signs of a growing interest in the large-scale aspects of Simmel's sociology.