

Main Currents In Sociological Thought Durkheim

In this second volume of *Main Currents of Sociological Thought*, Raymond Aron continues the analysis, begun in the first volume, of the "great doctrines of historical sociology." Aron explores the work of three figures who profoundly shaped sociology as it entered the twentieth century: Emile Durkheim, the great French theorist of consensus, who continued Auguste Comte's quest for a science of society and a scientific validation of morality; Vilfredo Pareto, the Italian "neo-Machiavellian" who mocked traditional morality and humanitarian pretensions and emphasized the oligarchic or elitist character of all societies; and the German sociologist Max Weber, who reflected continuously on the relationship between science and action, filled with deep foreboding about the prospects for human freedom in an age marked by bureaucratization and rationalization. Aron presents rich portraits of these three thinkers, drawing from them what remains of enduring worth, even as he distances himself from Durkheim's project for a science of society, Pareto's exaggerated critique of humanitarianism, and Weber's tragic pessimism. Aron's book is essential for clarifying his profound indebtedness to and crucial divergences from the thought of Max Weber, the sociologist par excellence, in Aron's view. Together with volume 1, which treats the work of Montesquieu, Comte, Marx, and Tocqueville, it forms the definitive survey of the great social thinkers to date. Yet, as Daniel J. Mahoney and Brian C. Anderson explain in their introduction, *Main Currents* is more than a survey; it is above all a challenge to contemporary social science to retain the ambition of an older, philosophically informed sociology to present an interpretation of modern society and to reflect on the meaning of universal history. The *Imperial Republic* based as it is on Raymond Aron's realist philosophy, is involved only indirectly or by implication in the disputes about moralism, revisionism, and even imperialism. Its main aim is to account for the diplomacy of the United States as it was in a special time period. Like all diplomacy, it can be explained only within the system of inter-state relations to which the protagonist belongs. United States diplomacy during the twenty-eight year period of 1945-73 is examined from strategic, political, and moral stand points were in diplomats openly declared their aim, and did they achieve it? Does the result justify accusations either of incompetence or of imperialism? Does not the reaction within the United States to a policy which had been a striking success now induce second thoughts about both the policy and its results? The imperial republic is trying to throw off its burden; once a missionary, it has lost the sense of mission; it is still capitalist, but its spoiled children no longer believe in money; it was puritan, but its cities abound in sex shops; it regards itself as scientific, yet mystical and nudist sects are common. The reader is not asked to endorse Aron's paradoxical interpretations, but to try to discover the reasons for any disagreement he may feel regarding differences in political judgment. People who have acquired the habit of thinking of the contemporary world in Manichaean terms—in terms of the reduction of whole populations to slavery by monsters, or in terms of capitalism, imperialism, or revisionism—may be outraged by a book that is not concerned with grounds for outrage and in which there are neither villains nor heroes; but rather with mixed messages by decent policymakers. At the time of its initial publication *The Times Literary Supplement* called *The Imperial Republic* "an important book" no other author does so much." It remains so!

This is the second of Raymond Aron's classic two-volume survey of the sociological tradition – arguably the definitive work of its kind. Aron explores the work of three figures who profoundly shaped sociology as it entered the twentieth century: Émile Durkheim, who continued Auguste Comte's quest for a science of society and a scientific validation of morality; Vilfredo Pareto, the Italian "neo-Machiavellian" who emphasized the oligarchic or elitist character of all societies; and the German sociologist Max Weber, who reflected critically on the prospects for human freedom in an age marked by bureaucratization and rationalization. Aron presents rich portraits of these three thinkers, drawing out the enduring insights that remain in their work. At the same time he reflects critically on Durkheim's project for a science of society, Pareto's critique of humanitarianism, and Weber's tragic pessimism. Above all the book is remarkable for demonstrating Aron's lifelong indebtedness to and divergence from the thought of Max Weber, the sociologist par excellence, in Aron's view. This Routledge Classics edition includes an introduction by Daniel J. Mahoney and Brian C. Anderson. ? ?

This is the first part of Raymond Aron's landmark two-volume study of the sociological tradition; arguably the definitive work of its kind. More than a work of reconstruction, Aron's study is, at its deepest level, an engagement with the very question of modernity: How did the intellectual currents which emerged in the eighteenth century shape the modern political and philosophical order? With scrupulous fairness, Aron examines the thought and arguments of the major social thinkers to discern how they answered this question. Volume One explores three traditions: the French liberal school of political sociology, represented by Montesquieu and Tocqueville; the Comtean tradition, anticipating Durkheim in its elevation of social unity and consensus; and the Marxists, who posited the struggle between classes and placed their faith in historical necessity. In his customary clear and penetrating prose, Aron argues that each of these schools offers its own theory of the diversity of societies and that each is inspired both by moral convictions and by scientific hypotheses. This Routledge Classics edition includes an introduction by Daniel J. Mahoney and Brian C. Anderson.

This is the first of Raymond Aron's magisterial two-volume treatment of the sociological tradition—perhaps the definitive work of its kind. The second volume treating Durkheim, Pareto, and Weber is scheduled to appear in spring 1998. More than a work of reconstruction, Aron's study is, at its deepest level, an engagement with the question of modernity: What constitutes the essence of the new modern order that, having emerged in the eighteenth century, still forms the categories of our experience, sweeping us along toward an unknown destination? With his usual scrupulous fairness, Aron looks to the major social thinkers to discern how they answered this pressing question. Volume 1 explores three traditions: the French liberal school of political sociology, represented by Montesquieu and Tocqueville; the Comtean tradition, anticipating Durkheim in its deemphasis of the political and its elevation of social unity and consensus; and the Marxists, who posited the struggle between classes and placed their faith in historical necessity. A foreword by the eminent French philosopher Pierre Manent highlights *Main Currents* as a unique contribution to political philosophy as well as the history of sociological thought, while Daniel J. Mahoney and Brian C. Anderson provide an introduction situating *Main Currents* within the corpus of Aron's work as a whole. This work is essential reading for philosophers, historians, sociologists, and political scientists.

Raymond Aron's "In Defense of Decadent Europe" was first conceived at a time of great uncertainty for the Western democracies. The postwar economic boom had been interrupted by "stagflation," while communist and socialist parties in

Italy and France were powerful factors in Europe's political landscape. Aron's book has a threefold purpose: the analysis of the Soviet Russian regime and its Marxist-Leninist theoretical foundation; the detailed empirical comparison between liberal democracies and collectivist regimes of the East; and, above all, the exploration of what might be termed the "problem" of democracy the tendency of democratic regimes to undermine themselves unless checked in their most extreme tendencies. Aron denounces the clash between democracy and the Marxist-Leninist mystification and explains how Marxism leads to Soviet-style ideology. The second part of the book constitutes a defense of liberal Europe. The author makes comparisons in terms of productivity, technical innovation, living standards, scientific progress, and human freedom. But Aron also notes there are important ways in which the West must put her house in order by cultivating authority in the church, in universities, in business, and even in the army. This paradox is conveyed by the title of the book, the juxtaposition of the words "In Defense of and Decadent Europe." In the new introduction, Daniel Mahoney and Brian Anderson discuss the disenchanted conservative liberalism of Raymond Aron that set him apart. Among the topics they cover are: the challenge of ideocracy, the decadence of democracy, and Aron as a civic philosopher. "In Defense of Decadent Europe" combines ideological debate with economic and social analysis. Its thorough examination of Western freedom versus the Eastern communism of the recent past extends well beyond parochial debates into a basic vision of Western societies. The book will be compelling for historians, political scientists, economists, and philosophers.

A little over one hundred years after his birth, and not quite twenty-five years since his death, interest in the French political philosopher and sociologist Raymond Aron (1905-1983) continues to grow. Aron is now widely recognized as one of the most significant intellectual figures of the postwar period, whose wide-ranging reflections played a key part in preserving liberal democracy in Europe and abroad. His sober analyses of modern society, his trenchant critique of ideological politics and every form of totalitarianism, and his philosophical reflections on politics and history have given powerful support to democratic liberalism throughout the western world. Aron's work combines passion and observation, disinterested reflection and love of liberty in a way that is an imitable model for humane and balanced political reflection. In this stimulating collection of essays, inspired by the centennial of Aron's birth, a distinguished group of North American and European scholars—including Pierre Manent, Stanley Hoffmann, Irving Louis Horowitz, Liah Greenfeld, Claude Lefort, and Aurelian Craiutu—examine four key aspects of Aron's thought and work: his educative legacy; his reflections on other philosophers and intellectuals; his distinctive approach to international relations; and the unique character of his own political reflection. The result is a masterful engagement with Aron's intellectual legacy and a thoughtful coming to terms with the political and intellectual substance of the twentieth century.

Thinking Politically brings together a series of remarkable interviews with Raymond Arn that form a political history of our time. Ranging over an entire lifetime, from his youthful experience with the rise of Nazi totalitarianism in Berlin to the dénouement of the cold war. Aron mediates on the threats to liberty and reason in the bloody twentieth century. Originally published as *The Committed Observer*, this volume provides one of the fullest accounts available of the dramatic events of the "short century," which began with the pistol shot in Sarajevo in 1914 and ended with the collapse of the ideological monsters whose deadly nature Aron had ruthlessly exposed for a half-century. In addition to the interviews published in the original edition. *Thinking Politically* incorporates three interviews never before published in book form. This supplemental material clarifies Aron's role as a voice of prudential reason in an unreasonable age and allows unparalleled access to the principal influences on Aron's thought. The volume concludes with "Democratic States and Totalitarian States," an address by Aron to the French Philosophical Society as well as the accompanying debate with Jacques Maritain, Victor Basch, and other intellectuals. *Thinking Politically* serves as an ideal gateway into Aron's reflections, and offers a superb single-volume introduction to the major events and conflicts of the twentieth century. It will be a welcome addition to the libraries of political theorists, historians, sociologists, philosophers, and citizens wishing to understand the political and intellectual currents of the age.

Giddens's analysis of the writings of Marx, Durkheim and Weber has become the classic text for any student seeking to understand the three thinkers who established the basic framework of contemporary sociology. The first three sections of the book, based on close textual examination of the original sources, contain separate treatments of each writer. The author demonstrates the internal coherence of their respective contributions to social theory. The concluding section discusses the principal ways in which Marx can be compared with the other two authors, and discusses misconceptions of some conventional views on the subject.

This innovative new reader on contemporary sociological theory has a Canadian emphasis. This volume unites 21 influential European and American social theorists with 13 Canadian thinkers and writers to offer a strong Canadian interpretation of international theoretical currents spanning almost 80 years. Ideally designed for undergraduate courses as an introduction to modern sociological theory, the first section masterfully introduces the major theoretical offerings of the 20th century: structural functionalism, symbolic interaction, and feminist analysis. It also profiles themes of class conflict and the state; and modernism, culture, and change. The second section is devoted to critical themes for the 21st century. This includes postmodernity and its critics; society, subjects, and the self; globalization and global consciousness; and postcolonialism, diaspora, citizenship, and identity. Unique features of the book are its provocative presentation of 21st-century themes, and the inclusion of many of today's most influential social thinkers, such as Edward Said, Stuart Hall, Jurgen Habermas, Ulrich Beck, Jean Baudrillard, and Pierre Bourdieu. The Canadian content includes readings from key Canadian scholars and social critics, such as Dorothy Smith, Naomi Klein, Mariana Valverde, Leo Panitch, John Porter, Charles Taylor, David Lyon, and Will Kymlicka. This book will be an essential text for modern sociological theory courses offered in sociology departments across Canada.

This volume offers an incisive overview of central issues and controversies in political thought and analysis. It includes major discussions of the idea of the modern state, contemporary theories of the state, problems of power and

legitimation, new forms of democratic ideal, citizenship and social movements, the direction of public policy and the fate of sovereignty in the modern global system. While analysing these topics, the author critically assesses the thought of many of those who have contributed decisively to political discussion. Among those whose works are discussed are classic figures such as Hobbes, Locke, Mill and Marx, as well as contemporary writers such as Habermas, Offe and Giddens. *Political Theory and the Modern State* is an ideal resource for students seeking an introduction to modern politics and political sociology. It is also an original statement about the many competing perspectives in political thought today.

Raymond Aron's 1955 masterpiece *The Opium of the Intellectuals*, is one of the great works of twentieth-century political reflection. Aron shows how noble ideas can slide into the tyranny of "secular religion" and emphasizes how political thought has the profound responsibility of telling the truth about social and political reality—in all its mundane imperfections and tragic complexities. Aron explodes the three "myths" of radical thought: the Left, the Revolution, and the Proletariat. Each of these ideas, Aron shows, are ideological, mystifying rather than illuminating. He also provides a fascinating sociology of intellectual life and a powerful critique of historical determinism in the classically restrained prose for which he is justly famous. For this new edition, prepared by Daniel J. Mahoney and Brian C. Anderson as part of Transaction's ongoing "Aron Project," political scientist Harvey Mansfield provides a luminous introduction that underscores the permanent relevance of Aron's work. The new edition also includes as an appendix "Fanaticism, Prudence, and Faith," a remarkable essay that Aron wrote to defend *Opium* from its critics and to explain further his view of the proper role of political thinking. The book will be of interest to all students of political theory, history, and sociology.

The history of sociology overwhelmingly focuses on 'the winners' from the classical 'canon' - Marx, Durkheim, and Weber - to today's most celebrated sociologists. This book strikingly demonstrates that restricting sociology in this way impoverishes it as a form of historically reflexive knowledge and obscures the processes and struggles of sociology's own making as a form of disciplinary knowledge. *Sociological Amnesia* focuses on singular contributions to sociology that were once considered central to the discipline but are today largely neglected. Chapters explore the work of illustrious predecessors such as Raymond Aron, Erich Fromm and G.D.H. Cole as well as examining exceptional cases of reputational revival as in the case of Norbert Elias or Gabriel Tarde. Through understanding the obstacles of recognition faced by female sociologists like Viola Klein and Olive Schreiner, and public intellectuals like Cornelius Castoriadis, the volume considers the reasons why certain kinds of sociology are hailed as central to the discipline, whilst others are forgotten. In so doing, the collection offers fresh insights into not only the work of individual sociologists, but also into the discipline of sociology itself - its trajectories, forgotten promises, and dead ends.

Currents of Thought in African Sociology and the Global Community focuses on research findings further enriched in the realm of the emergent, indigenous African sociology within a global context. An authentic guide, it has potential to expose readers to the intricacy of research in its various ramifications. Its uniqueness consists in casting, in an explanatory framework, what each of the subdisciplines of sociology is all about, while simultaneously discussing the theoretical and methodological orientations in which the accompanying research findings are situated. The transition of sociology in Africa, inextricably tied in with global dimension, is its major theme. And discussion questions/exercises and essays at the end of each chapter constitute a stimulating teaching tool. Its theoretical coverage straddles a wide variety of paradigms - from structural-functional theory and conflict theory to symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, dramaturgy, exchange theory, etc. The book will be of use in courses in sociology, anthropology, research methods, global human issues, African and African-American studies, Third World societies, and criminal justice. Besides, it constitutes an experiential celebration of deivory-towerism, emphasizing the involvement of the academic citadel with the community.

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"How to rethink social theory in our digital times"--

On Tyranny is Leo Strauss's classic reading of Xenophon's dialogue, *Hiero or Tyrannicus*, in which the tyrant Hiero and the poet Simonides discuss the advantages and disadvantages of exercising tyranny. This edition includes a translation of the dialogue, a critique of the commentary by the French philosopher Alexandre Kojève, Strauss's restatement of his position in light of Kojève's comments, and finally, the complete Strauss-Kojève correspondence. "Through [Strauss's] interpretation Xenophon appears to us as no longer the somewhat dull and flat author we know, but as a brilliant and subtle writer, an original and profound thinker. What is more, in interpreting this forgotten dialogue, Strauss lays bare great moral and political problems that are still ours." —Alexandre Kojève, *Critique* "On Tyranny is a complex and stimulating book with its 'parallel dialogue' made all the more striking since both participants take such unusual, highly provocative positions, and so force readers to face substantial problems in what are often wholly unfamiliar, even shocking ways." —Robert Pippin, *History and Theory* "Every political scientist who tries to disentangle himself from the contemporary confusion over the problems of tyranny will be much indebted to this study and inevitably use it as a starting point." —Eric Voegelin, *The Review of Politics* Leo Strauss (1899-1973) was the Robert Maynard Hutchins Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago.

This is the first part of Raymond Aron's landmark two-volume study of the sociological tradition—arguably the definitive work of its kind. More than a work of reconstruction, Aron's study is, at its deepest level, an engagement with the very question of modernity: how did the intellectual currents which emerged in the eighteenth century shape the modern political and philosophical order? With scrupulous fairness, Aron examines the thoughts and arguments of the major social thinkers to discern how they answered this question. Volume One explores three traditions: the French liberal school of political sociology, represented by Montesquieu and Tocqueville; the Comtean tradition, anticipating Durkheim in its elevation of social unity and consensus; and the Marxists, who posited the struggle between classes and placed their faith in historical necessity. In his customary clear and penetrating prose, Aron argues that each of these schools offers its own theory of the diversity of societies and that "each is inspired both by moral convictions and by scientific hypotheses." This Routledge Classics edition includes an introduction by Daniel J. Mahoney and Brian C. Anderson.

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