



## Rethinking the Social through Durkheim, Marx, Weber and Whitehead

Michael Halewood

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### Halewood analyses concepts of the social developed by Durkheim, Marx and Weber, and presents a novel 'philosophy of the social'.

*"This is a deeply insightful analysis of the notion of the social in classical sociological theory. It makes a very significant contribution to the philosophy of the social and demonstrates the continued relevance of the concept."* —Gerard Delanty, University of Sussex

*"Halewood challenges and unsettles our preconceptions through a provocative, forensic examination of the conceptions of the social in the 'founding classics' of sociology. In the process, he skilfully opens up a surprising array of possibilities for rethinking a 'philosophy of the social'."* —Rob Stones, University of Western Sydney

*"This engagingly written book addresses a key issue in contemporary social science: how should 'the social' be conceptualized? Halewood carefully re-interprets key works to generate new insights into the relationship between the animal, the natural and the social."* —Stephen Kemp, University of Edinburgh

According to some social theorists, we are 'at the end of the social'. This book argues that such pronouncements may be premature, as we need to reengage with what sociologists have previously meant by 'the social'. 'Rethinking the Social' is the first book to systematically analyse the different concepts of the social developed by Durkheim, Marx and Weber. It examines how the concept of the social became unproblematic for twentieth-century writers and suggests that debates surrounding this concept remain very much alive. Building on A. N. Whitehead's work, Halewood develops a novel 'philosophy of the social'.

### Contents

Acknowledgements; Abbreviations; 1. Rethinking the Social; 2. Durkheim Approaches the Social; 3. Durkheim's Philosophy of the Social; 4. Marx on the Social and the Societal; 5. Weber's "Sozial" Action; 6. The Early Death of the Problem of the Social; 7. Toward a Philosophy of the Social, Part I: Durkheim, Marx, Weber (and Simmel) Revisited; 8. Toward a Philosophy of the Social, Part II: Whitehead on Sociology, Societies and the Social; Notes; References; Index

### About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

Michael Halewood is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Essex. He is the author of 'A. N. Whitehead and Social Theory: Tracing a Culture of Thought' (Anthem Press).

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