

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910781905803321
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Titolo	The early origins of the social sciences [[electronic resource] /] / Lynn McDonald
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Montreal, : McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993
ISBN	1-282-85664-2 9786612856648 0-7735-6432-2
Descrizione fisica	ix, 397 p. ; 24 cm
Disciplina	300/.9
Soggetti	Social sciences - History Civilization - History
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [349]-383) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front Matter -- Contents -- Preface -- Methodological Debate in the Social Sciences -- The Ancient Origins of the Social Sciences -- Empiricism and Scepticism Recovered -- The French Enlightenment -- From Moral Philosophy to the Quantum of Happiness -- Sociology – Mainstream, Marxist, and Weberian -- Revisiting the Critiques of Methodology -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	Against these contentions she shows, for example, that women social thinkers have been active in every age since the sixteenth century. McDonald presents these women's work as evidence of the way in which the empirical social sciences have been employed by social reformers, including advocates for the equality of women, to challenge the state and those in authority. She argues as well that Weber's "interpretative sociology" has been misinterpreted, citing his extensive, but usually ignored, quantitative work. Despite the supposed opposition of interpretative and mainstream sociology, McDonald maintains that many of the founders of the discipline explored both. Covering the important eras in the development of the social sciences, she deals with the early Greeks, the seventeenth-century emergence of the scientific method (especially Bacon, Descartes, and Locke), the French Enlightenment, (especially Voltaire, Diderot, Condorcet, and

Germaine de Staël), and British moral philosophy (especially Hume, Smith, and Catharine Macauley). From the nineteenth century she includes figures such as Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Quetelet, Harriet Martineau, Florence Nightingale, J.S. Mill, Harriet Taylor Mill, and Beatrice Webb.
