

Weber, Max (1864-1920)

- 1872 doctorate on medieval trading companies
- 1892 study of farm workers for the Verein für Sozialpolitik
- 1893 teaches commercial law at Berlin (2nd thesis: Roman & German Commercial Law)
- 1894 Prof. of Economics, Freiburg (inaugural lecture: "The National State & German Policy" based on his empirical study of farm workers)
- 1895 Prof of Economics, Heidelberg
- 1903 founding of Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft u. Sozialpolitik
- 1904 visits US
- 1904-05 Protestant Ethic & the Spirit of Capitalism
- 1909 founding of the German Association for Sociology; proposed empirical research on how the press was controlled and manipulated the news;
- 1909-11 survey of industrial workers for the Verein
- 1918 special Chair of Sociology created at University of Vienna for Max Weber, but he is not allowed to take his notes out of Germany; returns to Heidelberg; is invited to join the short-lived Munich soviet
- 1919 consultant on the drafting of the Weimar Constitution; Prof of Economics, Munich
joins & then resigns in disgust, German delegation to Versailles

Posthumous publication of collected works (partial list)

- 1922 Gesammelte Aufsätzen zu Religionssoziologie (Soc. Relig)
- 1923 Wirtschaftsgeschichte (General Economic History, ET
F. Knight = lectures at Munich in 1919)
- 1924 Wirtschaft u. Gesellschaft (ET 1968 Economy & Society)

secondary literature

- W.G. Runciman – Critique of Max Weber's Philosophy of Social Science, 1972.
- Fritz Ringer – The Decline of the German Mandarins: the German Academic Community 1890-1933. 1969.
- G. Stammer, ed. – Max Weber and Sociology Today, 1971 (an abridged E.T. of Proceedings of the 1964 centenary meeting on Weber's legacy)
- Mitzman, A. – The Iron Cage, 1969.
- Bendix, R. – Max Weber – an intellectual portrait, 1960.

"as if" ideal types:

- adequate causal explanations: valid within given contexts or sets of contrasts
(comparative method)
- adequate explanations at the level of meaning (Verstehen; meaning, intersubjective)
methodological individualism
culture: how to capture intellectual, motivational, elements in objective way
socially constituted intersubjective worlds
gets away from philos rooted in experience of the ego (Descartes) &
forces an empirical, comparative method
gets away from genetic theories of society which would start with
individual needs and desires: individuals are born into culture

viewing culture as relatively crystallized communication patterns
makes the notion of culture highly dynamic: individuals have
different positions/roles in society, perceptions, interpretations,
interests – out of negotiations/conflicts -> plural soc structure

value relevant & value-neutral social science

selection of problems are not matters of science (value-relevant)

value-neutral social science

search for organizational effects, bases of support/stability, bases of power, legitimation

power: probability that an order given will be obeyed: force, economic, legitimacy

authority: traditional, charismatic, rational

in religion: charismatic figures (prophets; Bismarck; Luther's grace)

can generate change, then is routinized

retreat to magic by the masses

rationalization by the elite

bureaucracy = key problem of Germany, modern world, 2nd industrial revolution (chemicals, steel)

unlike England (lead in the 1st industrial revolution) which could indulge itself

in social theories stressing the autonomy of the individual,

inherent reason as determinant of action

society as a social contract

(free market as guarantor of the interests of all; utilitarianism)

Germany saw itself as backward, as needing to coord social effort through

government policy to catch up; challenge to Manchester classical

economics: historical or institutional economics

PE&SC: goals of Indus capitalism (profit/reinvestment)

differ from mercantile capitalism (status)

Marx: capitalism produces exchange value

Pre-capitalist forms produce use value

Weber in Agrarian Sociology of Ancient Civilizations

Ancient empires tried to organize trade monopolies

not for profit, but as a way of translating local

products for things which could bind retainers:

more concerned with power over people > profit

Bismarck = creator of the bureaucratic state in Germany, & a charismatic figure

problem of routinization: what happens when leader goes

Bismarck made the state too dependent on himself

bureaucracy unable to take policy initiatives

weak legislature

weak working class

(Germans ask Americans: why do you tolerate such corruption in politics?

Americans ask Germans: when we go to a government office, we demand,

you tremble)

general problem of bureaucracy would be even worse for Bolsheviks: so difference

between political and economic decision-makers

comparative analysis

economic base of bureaucracies crucial

patrimonial bureaucracies (pd partly in kind):

problem: discontinuous revenue: crops fail, trade is disrupted;

solutions: tax farms (cycle of rebellions)
giving rights to land (feudal) -> vassals join vs King
(Magna Carta; parlements)

need legitimacy: coercive power is not stable
legitimate domination: person obeying does so because finds the
order given is just, or giver of order = proper authority
empires use ritual forms of legitimation
(Geertz' Negara; Tambiah's World Conqueror, "galactic polities")

psychology (motivations, meaning to individuals)
once there were chivalrous men educated to do everything (fight, poetry,
administration), now men are trained to do 1 thing well
(not that there are no longer renaissance men and women, but
those with technical education tend to be hired in most rational
portions of the bureaucracy: clerks, technicians
elective affinity)

rationalizations: meritocracy
mandarins (based on classics: Chinese, German, British)

PE & SC = 5 arguments

- an argument about the psychological dynamics of anxiety: how to know if among the saved;
 - an argument about social stratification: esp. effective among the petit bourgeoisie
cycles of schisms in the history of Protestant sects
 - an argument about organizational structure: sects are small, voluntary commitment
 - an argument about cultural style: 17th c. nouveau riche were refusing to spend money in the
lavish life styles of nobility
 - an argument about this historically new class as making an important contribution to both
 - the economic system called industrial capitalism
 - more importantly (the cultural) ideology of the work ethic
(parallels Karl Marx's "2 roads to capitalism" in the Grundrisse:
 - craftsmen & small businessmen hoarding savings and being ascetic
so can invest capital (the ideology of the rising dissenting sects
in Britain from which utilitarianism grew
 - old merchant capitalists who began to control production
- Marx also traces the Protestant Ethic to the 17th century in England/Holland &
that it was the ethic for the working class supported and propagandized
by the ruling class (in Weber the North Carolina textile mill
owners who built churches for their laborers)