SCIENCE AS CAPITALIST IDEOLOGY: THE SOCIOLOGY OF MAX WEBER RECONSIDERED

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Abstract

Max Weber's sociology is viewed within the context of the changing socio-economic arrangements of his time. In attempting to develop a value-neutral sociology by creating a superhuman sociologist, Weber in fact creates the persistent capitalistic value-bias of a sociology which reproduces the major characteristics of socio-economic reforms initiated by Bismarck and his immediate successors. This bias makes capitalism interchangeable with bureaucracy, and the crucial "social-political problem" becomes the development of independent political leadership rather than the unequal distribution of profits among socio-economic classes. As with his super scientist, Weber creates as problem-solver a super agent of change, the charismatic political leader, whose charisma becomes routinized to help ensure the continued capitalistic domination which Weber's sociology supports.

Introduction

Max Weber's sociology, in order to be most fully understood, should be viewed within the context of the changing socio-economic arrangements of his time. In Germany, as in the United States, the transition from laissez faire to corporate capitalism contributed to, and was accomplished during, a period (c. 1865-1900) of severe

economic disturbances (Engels 1887-88; Williams 1966).[1] The task of bringing stability to the German economy during the last third of the nineteenth century became in large part the responsibility of one man -- Germany's most charismatic leader prior to Adolph Hitler, Chancellor Otto von Bismarck.[2] This paper argues that the sociology developed by Weber can be linked to the socio-economic reforms initiated by Bismarck and his successors -- reforms which were, like Weber's sociology, favorable to the development of capitalism in its new corporate form.[3]

Bismarck's reforms joined the interests of the more liberal professional and middle classes into which Weber was born and the more conservative upper-class Junkers with the interests of German workers. He promised direct universal vote in the election of parliament and worker security with a government-sponsored insurance program. He also endorsed and protected limited incorporation and trade combinations. The combined effect of these reforms was to provide bureaucratic support for an emerging corporate capitalism made synonymous with allegiance to the Fatherland -- a combination of factors that constitutes the central focus of Weber's scientific sociology.[4]

Ironically, in his attempt to eliminate value bias by creating a superhuman sociologist capable of separating scientist from citizen (political) self, Weber in fact creates the persistent capitalistic value bias that characterizes his sociology. In attempting to neutralize his analysis by maintaining a distinction between the

socio-economic policy of politics and the objective requirements of science, Weber attempts to provide scientific respectability for a sociology harmonious with, and subservient to, the new corporate arrangements of Bismarck's nationalistic capitalism. Specifically, Weber's science serves as an attempt to legitimize capitalism because it makes bureaucracy as a form of social organization equivalent to, and interchangeable with, the existent division of labor produced by modern capitalism (Giddens 1972). Thus, through a process of substitution, bureaucracy rather than capitalism, the development of independent political leadership rather than the fact that one class profits by the labor of another, becomes the central problem of the German socio-economic order (see Cohen 1972 and Wright 1974-75).

Scientist Weber provides citizen Weber with a solution to this problem, the leader with charisma. However, in the final analysis, even this agent of change -- the charismatic political leader -- attempts to provide individualistic opposition to the status quo by working from within bureaucracy/capitalism, cooperating with the privileged social strata in cooling (routinizing) charisma. Weber's faith in the charisma of a super change agent -- the logical extension of, and counterpart to, his super scientist -- is transformed into a faith in prevailing socio-economic arrangements. In brief, the salvation urged by Weber's sociology helps ensure the continuation of capitalistic domination.[5]

Bismarck, the Junkers, and Weber: An Emphasis Upon Administrative Efficiency

Bismarck created governmental policy without bothering to consult the great majority of the governed; he simply made decisions for them. The German tradition had long supported leadership of this type. In his summary of the Germans' "war of liberation" against Napoleon in 1813, A.J.P. Taylor refers to this legacy of executive rule:

> . . . Thus Germany passively endured the war of liberation, just as previously it had endured conquest by the French and before that the balance of the system of Westphalia. The Allies defeated the French, but they could not undo the effects of French rule; and they had to devise a new system for Germany which would serve the interests of Europe, as previously the Napoleonic system had served the interests of France. The people of Germany were not consulted. They could not be consulted. As a political force they did not exist. [Taylor 1945, p. 46]

Fifty years later Bismarck was engaged in developing an increasingly self-serving power with which he could make sure that most Germans still "did not exist" as a political force -- a power that was soon to make him, as Imperial Chancellor, the chief administrator of his "new system for Germany." During Bismarck's rule Weber, born in 1864, was maturing as a liberal intellectual. Weber's father, who came from a financially secure family of textile manufacturers in western Germany, was a successful lawyer and National-liberal parliamentarian; his mother, "a woman of culture and piety whose humanitarian and religious interests were not shared by her husband" (Bendix 1962, p. 1). What Weber's parents did share was their active involvement in attempting

to increase the political influence of a declining liberalism. Their house served, for the first twenty-nine years of Weber's life, as a meeting place for the coalition of prominent politicians and professors from the University of Berlin responsible for developing liberal opinion -- that opinion which was so easily dominated by the autocratic rule of Bismarck.

This domination was made possible by skillful administration of a tariff system that restored the financial security of Prussia's aristocratic landowners, the Junkers. Bismarck's administrative skill permitted him to develop what appeared to be a policy of national unity, while in actuality he was fashioning an economic reality in accordance with his now-famous statement to one of the liberals in 1848: "I am a Junker and mean to benefit by it."[6]

The Junkers were somewhat unique as an aristocratic class of landholders in East Prussia. In contrast with the landowners of western Europe, they were not a leisured class (see Shuster and Bergstraesser 1944, pp. 58-59). As owners of colonial lands they worked their estates themselves, without tenants:

> . . . The Junker estates were never feudal; they were capitalist undertakings, which closely resembled the great capitalist farms of the American prairie -- also the result of a colonial expropriation of the American Indians. The Junkers were hardworking estate managers, thinking of their estates solely in terms of profits and efficiency, neither more nor less than agrarian capitalists. [Taylor 1945, pp. 28-29]

In brief, the Prussian Junkers were "too poor to afford the aristocratic luxury of unbalanced accounts; and they brought to the

affairs of state the same competence as was demanded on their own estates" (Taylor 1945, pp. 60-61). Thus, it is not surprising that the Prussian tariff of 1818, which gave at least moderate protection to the Junkers, marked the beginning of the first tariff system in all of Europe. To return to the description of the Junkers offered by Taylor (1945, p. 61), "it was their application at the office desk which kept them afloat" as Europe's most durable, hereditary governing class.

The Junker emphasis on administrative efficiency was the distinguishing characteristic of the professional and intellectual middle classes into which Weber was born. It was these classes that still dominated the relatively small towns of Germany in 1848, the year the German masses revolted against the military monarchies in Vienna and Berlin. These uprisings, the response of the unemployed to Germany's first general economic crisis in winter 1847-48, led to a centralizing of power and the calling of a National Assembly at Frankfort. The work of this assembly revealed and strengthened the administrative tie that permitted the liberal, middle-class professionals to unite with the more conservative, upper-class Junkers to dominate the German masses.

The bonds of this liberal union -- a union to which Weber was later to lend scientific legitimation in his writings on social science methodology and bureaucracy -- were cemented by force. The Frankfort liberals, lawyers and professors, wanted to create a united Germany by consent. However, as the class analysis of Karl

Marx (1851-52, especially p. 71) clearly shows, they were frightened of the "disorder" being created by the revolutionary masses; consequently and paradoxically, the liberals increased their own vulnerability to the decisive power of the armed State by turning away from politics of consent to support the repressive activities of the armed forces as being essential to their cause of national security.[7]

As a commissioned officer, Weber also considered the armed forces essential to this cause. His reliance on persuasion by force was made clear in a speech delivered to the 1907 congress of the Verein fur Sozialpolitik. Speaking of the future of the Social Democratic Party Weber issues this warning:

> . . . If the party seeks political power and yet fails to control the one effective means of power, military power, in order to overthrow the state, its dominance in the community and in public corporations and associations would only show its political impotence more distinctly, and the more it thought to rule simply as a political party and not objectively, the sooner it would be discredited. [Mayer 1955, p. 65][8]

Weber's year of military training in 1883-84 had turned his initial condemnation into objective admiration of the requirements of military discipline. Converted by his training experience to believe that the body works more precisely when all thinking is eliminated, Weber apparently found considerable appeal in this partitioned view of men; taking leave from his university studies, he returned to Strassburg for summer exercises in 1885 and again in '87, and participated in more military maneuvers a year later in Posen (see Gerth and Mills 1946, p. 8). Some twenty-five years

later he was anxious to march at the head of his company in a world war about which he said: "In spite of all," it was " a great and wonderful war" (Gerth and Mills 1946, p. 22). While his health would not permit his participation as a leader of a company, he did serve from August 1914 to the fall of 1915 as a disciplinary and economic officer in charge of operating nine hospitals in the Heidelberg area. With the peace of 1918, Weber called upon "the designated war criminals" among Germany's political leaders to offer their heads to the enemy as compensation for the mistakes they had made in conducting the war. His hope was that this offering would restore prestige to the German officer corps he so dearly loved -- a love clearly shown in this answer to a favorite student's question concerning his post-war political plans: "I have no political plans except to concentrate all my intellectual strength on the one problem, how to get once more for Germany a great general staff" (Mayer 1955, p. 107).

Weber's emphasis on the importance of developing this general staff supported the cause of the liberals, which was also that of the Junkers -- namely, the protection of the capitalistic socio-economic arrangements by which they were profiting. Thus, the Frankfort Assembly's answer to the riots of the unemployed in the cities, and the more widespread general uprisings which followed, was a government without power to change existent socio-economic conditions.

The Central Power legitimized by the Frankfort Assembly,

referred to by Marx (1851-52, p. 56) as "the Parliament of an imaginary country," gave every appearance of having all the qualities of government; however, the Imperial Constitution creating this government was "a mere sheet of paper, with no power to back its provisions" (Marx 1851-52, p. 114):

> . . . as to the legal force of the decrees of the Assembly, that point was never recognized by the larger Governments, nor enforced by the Assembly itself; it therefore remained in suspense. Thus we had the strange spectacle of an Assembly pretending to be the only legal representative of a great and sovereign nation, and yet never possessing either the will or the force to make its claims recognized. . . . Thus the pretended new central authority of Germany left everything as it had found it. [Marx 1851-52, p. 54]

When Bismarck became the central power he, like the Frankfort liberals of 1848, created a hollow government. However, it was a hollowness of a different kind in that it stemmed not from a lack of centralized power, but rather, precisely the opposite condition -- that is, Bismarck's administrative ability to efficiently consolidate and concentrate power which flowed from his own position as Imperial Chancellor.

Bismarck's Socio-Economic Reforms: The Administration of Corporate Economic Unity

The government fashioned by Bismarck provided an illusion of power widely-dispersed. It was based on Bismarck's 1866 proposal to establish a German parliament elected by direct universal vote. The Junkers, perhaps the weakest and most reactionary group in

Germany at that time, were forced to accept this proposal in order that they might appear to be aligned with policy that was both powerful and progressive; thus, they were placed in a "ruling" position by Bismarck while at the same time, they were being made accountable to him. So too were both the professionals and merchants of the middle classes and the working class who endorsed the proposal and accepted Junker rule; the former were promised continued prosperity through the reinforcement of ties that strengthened their bond with the Junkers, while the latter was convinced that the vote would bring social security. "The only loss was Freedom, and that is not an item which appears in a balance sheet or in a list of trade union benefits" (Taylor 1945, p. 108).[9]

Freedom to the liberals of the middle classes became transformed, under Junker rule, from a desire for "liberal government" into a wish for "liberal administration." Thus, the administrative talent of the Prussian General Staff that directed the war of 1870, became, under Bismarck's direction, ever more efficient at achieving liberal demands without relinquishing power. As with the parliamentary proposal of 1866, Bismarck initiated reforms designed to maintain the reality of his autocratic rule by retaining the image or appearance of pluralism. This was accomplished, as the following description makes clear, by encouraging development of the corporate capitalism upon which the liberal-Junker alliance was based.

> The Bismarckian order of 1871 had a simple pattern: Junker Prussia and middle-class Germany, the coalition which sprang from the

> victories of 1866 . . . Between 1867 and 1879 the German liberals achieved every liberal demand except power: and in Germany the demand for power had never bulked large in the liberal programme. Never have liberal reforms been crowded into so short a period. . . . Germany was given at a stroke uniform legal procedure, uniform coinage, uniformity of administration; all restrictions on freedom of enterprise and freedom of movement were removed, limited companies and trade combinations allowed. It is not surprising that in face of such a revolution the liberals did not challenge Bismarck's possession of power: he was carrying out their programme far more rapidly than they could ever execute it themselves. [Taylor 1945, pp. 122-123]

Endorsing limited incorporation and trade combinations, Bismarck tied his own position of power and the security of the liberals' middle-class status position ever more closely to the development of capitalism in its new corporate form. Thus, the end of the free trade era -- heralded by the 1873 financial panic which marked the beginning of severe depression in Germany and the rest of Europe, and in the United States as well -- was met by Bismarck's policy favoring development of the Kartells that fixed prices and regulated production during the 1880s. While the liberals received governmental support for industrial consolidation, the new capitalism required Bismarck -- somewhat against his will, because it was a step towards the Greater Germany he was resisting [10] --to further stabilize emerging socio-economic arrangements by implementing a policy that would protect the Junker position. The moderate tariff of 1879, and the much higher tariffs of the 1880s, lessened the possibility that the newly-built railways of Russia and the American continent could provide enough cheap grain to destroy German agriculture. In brief,

it was a policy that not only made secure the Junker position, but it also created allegiance to Bismarck on the part of small farmers in East Prussia; they, much more than the Junker managers of large estates, needed protection.

This protection, the method by which Bismarck retained and strengthened his control over the liberals, Junkers, and small farmers, was soon extended to the working class -- the wage laborers. In exchange for their liberty -- their freedom to oppose Bismarck -- between 1883 and 1889 he established for German workers a compulsory insurance program against sickness, accident, and old age. This program of social security was yet another indication of Bismarck's administrative genius; not only did he manage to organize worker security at no expense to the state -- it was subsidized for the state by employers and the workers themselves -- but he also used the good will engendered by the program to collaborate with his rivals and eventual successors, the Social Democrats (see Roth 1963, especially pp. 212-248).

Bismarck's Administrative Legacy: The Bethmann Conscience and Weber's Sociology

The new chancellor of 1890, General Leo von Caprivi, carried on the Bismarck tradition by giving emphasis to efficient organization and administration. While Caprivi's integrity was incorruptible, he was also politically inexperienced. His government, often ignoring the fact that power remained centralized in relatively few hands,

was barely able to avert several potential economic crises -- the Army Law renewal of 1893 is probably the most well-known example -- by administering at least temporary unity among the various socio-economic classes. Caprivi's successors, Prince Chlodwig Hohenlohe and then Prince Bernhard von Bülow, placed even more emphasis upon, and were considerably less discreet about, creating economic unity. Bülow's Germany of 1900 was searching for "World Policy" that would provide an outlet for the overproduction of a rapidly maturing industrial capitalism; and the chief accomplishment of Bülow's administration was that his Minister of Finance, Johannes von Miquel -- a frequent guest in Weber's parents' house -- quite simply was able to buy, with the high tariff of 1902, the support of the Prussian Junkers for the Reich.[11]

Bülow's successor in 1909, Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, was, even more markedly than Bismarck and his other predecessors, an administrator. The descendent of a Frankfort family that had for generations supplied the state with bureaucrats, Bethmann became a civil servant who exemplified the "objective" bureaucrat-statesman that Weber's sociology idealized. Thus, while Bethmann has been described by Taylor (1945, p. 160) as "cultured, sympathetic, honest, he ran over with good intentions," it was his administration that most truly fulfilled Bismarck's "blood and iron" promise of 1862 by leading Germany into World War One and military rule.

> . . . All he lacked was any sense of power; and so it came about that this 'great gentleman' became, through his very irresponsibility,

> responsible for the Agadir crisis, for the military violence at Saverne, for the violation of Belgian neutrality, for the deportation of conquered peoples, and for the campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare -- crimes a good deal beyond Bismarck's record, all extremely distasteful to Bethmann, but all shouldered by his inexhaustible civil servant's conscience. It was useless, one might say dishonest, for him to have a high character: his sin was to belong to a class which had failed in its historic task and had become the blind instrument of Power which it could not itself master. Bismarck had said in 1867: 'Let us put Germany into the saddle. She will ride'; but in reality he had been the rider and Germany the horse. Now Bethmann threw the reins on the horse's back. [Taylor 1945, p. 160]

The Bethmann conscience that helped shape Max Weber's Germany is precisely what Weber advocates and encourages as he develops his sociology. The violence that resulted from Bethmann's attempt to be value neutral is herein viewed as nothing more nor less than Weber's attempt to transfer the supposed objectivity of his science to bureaucracy. The result was a scientific equation that attempted to link the social organization of bureaucracy with the socio-economic arrangements of a nationalistic corporate capitalism -- to make capitalism as value-neutral as Weber believed bureaucracy was. Such objectivity was, among other things, to form the core of the kind of education Weber thought necessary to reconstruct war-torn Germany. In a 1918 letter addressed to a Frankfort colleague he writes: " 'Objectivity' (Sachlichkeit) as sole means to achieve pureness and the feeling of shame against the disgusting exhibitionism of those who are morally broken down --only this will provide us with a firm attitude . . . " (see Mayer 1955, p. 65). For Weber, this objective

attitude was fostered by the supposedly value-neutral social organization of bureaucracy and he celebrated, patterning his science after, the increasing efficiency with which modern government from Bismarck to Bethmann was able to exclude "love, hatred, and every purely personal . . . feeling from the execution of official tasks" (see Bendix 1962, p. 483).[12]

Weber's Objectivity: Scientific Schizophrenia

In his essay on " 'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy" Weber argues that "it can never be the task of an empirical science to provide binding norms and ideals from which directives for immediate practical activity can be derived." [Weber (1904) 1949, p. 52] [13] "Existential knowledge" is to be distinguished from "normative knowledge" -- what "is" must be separated from what "should be." [Weber (1904) 1949, p. 51] For Weber, scientific analysis cannot directly evaluate the appropriateness of a given goal or end, but only the appropriateness of the means for achieving that end. [See Weber (1904) 1949, pp. 52-54]

In order to maintain this view that social science ("the analysis of facts") cannot directly address questions of social policy ("statement of ideals") Weber introduces a scientific rationality that permits the sociologist to detach, at least partially, science from its cultural context. Thus, Weber's sociologist is allowed to consider, and be influenced by, cultural surroundings only in the initial stages of research and only on the condition that motives and

values remain "scientifically oriented."

> . . . in social sciences the stimulus to the posing of scientific problems is in actuality always given by practical "questions." Hence the very recognition of the existence of a scientific problem coincides, personally, with the possession of scientifically oriented motives and values. . . [Weber (1904) 1949, p. 61]

As research progresses, this cultural influence that initially helps to determine the scientific problem can be, in Weber's view, carefully controlled by the social scientist. Capable of distinguishing between "scientifically oriented" values and "normative standards," Weber's sociologist uses scientific wisdom to separate empirical from normative self -- the objective-scientist self leaves questions concerning social policy to be answered by sentimental-citizen self:

> . . . it should be constantly made clear to the readers (and -- again we say it -- above all to one's self!) exactly at which point the scientific investigator becomes silent and the evaluating and acting person begins to speak. In other words, it should be made explicit just where the arguments are addressed to the analytical understanding and where to the sentiments . . . [Weber (1904) 1949, p. 60]

In this manner Weber reasons a scientific schizophrenia that permits the sociologist to develop a value-relevant understanding of social reality without making value judgments. [see Weber (1904) 1949, pp. 55-56] The result is a sociology that is shaped by Weber's efforts to be value neutral -- to separate his scientific from his political (citizen) self. This separation can be viewed as an important heuristic device aiding Weber in exploring and explaining the rationality of his scientific methodology. This separation can also be viewed as

being largely responsible for prohibiting Weber from sufficiently exploring and explaining the logic of the way in which value judgments influence the practice of social scientists. In failing to attend to this matter of value rationality Weber is unable to adequately understand either the content of, or be clear about when he is moving between, the two selves and their respective worlds which he creates. Ironically, then, it is precisely the movement between these two worlds, a separation Weber made with the intention of eliminating bias, which accounts for the persistent value bias that characterizes his sociology -- namely, his scientific support of capitalism.[14]

Schizophrenic Objectivity and Weber's Capitalism = Bureaucracy Equation

The science that allows Weber to distinguish between and separate means from end, fact from value, objective knowledge from emotional action as he moves between his scientist and citizen worlds also facilitates a separation of the economic from the political. This dichotomy permits Weber in defining power--"the possibility of imposing one's will upon the behavior of other persons" (see Rheinstein and Shils 1954, p. 323) -- to make a further distinction between voluntary agreement and authoritative imposition. [Weber (1925) 1947, pp. 148-149] It is this split which in turn forms the basis for Weber's distinction between interest groups, the primary focus of his economic sociology, and types of authority,

the major concern of his political sociology. [See Weber (1925) 1947][15] The result of this bifurcation of reality is that Weber obscures the interrelationships between the agreements of interest groups and the imposition of authorities; as Jean Cohen (1972, p. 65) and more recently, Erik Olin Wright (1974-75, pp. 94-95) have argued, domination becomes the "authoritarian power of command" as Weber locates power not in economic relations of class, but in the political relations of bureaucracy.

For Weber, the primary characteristic of bureaucratic social organization is the rationalized specialization of tasks, the development of a hierarchy of authority. As Anthony Giddens (1972) points out, this characteristic is also the most important, the most essential, feature of Weber's rational capitalism -- an economic system he defines as being "identical with the pursuit of profit, and forever renewed profit, by means of continuous, rational . . . enterprise." [Weber (1904-05) 1958, p. 17][16] Weber argues -- to follow the Giddens thesis -- that the labor of administrative officials is like the labor of the workers whom they administer (control), "expropriated" from the means of production by the bureaucratic form of social organization. This separation of administrative staff from the material means of administrative organization allows Weber to equate managers with workers; similarly, it also serves to equate bureaucracy with, and to legitimate, the existent division of labor produced by modern capitalism. (See Giddens 1972, pp. 34-36) [17]

Much of Weber's work, in addition to his writing on bureaucracy,

is concerned with the development of capitalism in Germany. His doctoral dissertation of 1889 examined the various legal principles by which medieval trading companies were allowed to combine in order to minimize the risk of private enterprise. Subsequently, he studied the Junker estates of East Prussia and worker-motivation in his grandfather's linen factory in Westphalia. His several speeches to the congresses of the Verein fur Sozialpolitik in 1905, 1907, 1909 and 1911, touched upon such topics as cartels and the State, economic communal enterprises, the growth of bureaucracy, and the problems of productivity and psychology of the working classes. In none of this work does Weber ever seem to fundamentally question the sanctity of capitalism.[18] However, he is careful to promote a particular kind of capitalism.

Accordingly, in his 1909 speech Weber decries the addiction to order produced by "the unquestioning idolization of bureaucracy." He argues that this "predilection for bureaucracy" is "a purely moral sentiment." Therefore, he urges that this "belief in the unshakability of the undoubtedly high moral standard of German officialdom" be replaced with a more objective system. Although this system would be based upon "the expansion of private capital, coupled with a purely business officialdom which is more easily exposed to corruption," it would help Germany increase her 'power value', "the ultimate value," among the nations of the world. [Weber (1909) in Mayer 1955, pp. 125-131][19] Ten years later, amidst the post-war clamor for socio-economic arrangements that

were more socialistic, Weber again offers an "objective" defense of an "objective" capitalism:

> We have truly no reason to love the lords of heavy industry. Indeed, it is one of the main tasks of democracy to break their destructive political influence. However, economically their leadership is not only indispensable, but becomes more so than ever now, when our whole economy and all its industrial enterprises will have to be organized anew. The Communist Manifesto quite correctly emphasized the economically (not the politically) revolutionary character of the work of the bourgeois-capitalist entrepreneur. No trade union, least of all a state-socialist official, can carry out these functions for us. We must simply make use of them, in their right place: hold out to them their necessary premium -- profits -- without, however, allowing this to go to their heads. Only in this way - today! -- is the advance of socialism possible. [Giddens 1972, pp. 24-25]

Once again, Weber's scientific schizophrenia permits him to posit a fragmented world -- a world in which the development of a science that is objective links Weber's sociology to a capitalism built upon the objectivity of bureaucracy. The value neutrality that supposedly results, in fact, creates the value bias of his impotent sociology. It is a sociology that can be nothing else but a legitimation of prevailing socio-economic arrangements -- the arrangements of a German capitalism that Weber himself referred to as "the fate of our time" (see Loewith 1970, p. 119). Thus, in perceptively criticizing those who mistake state-controlled cartellization (monopolization) of profit and wage interests for the ideal of a "democratic" or "socialist" future, Weber proceeds to characterize a viable alternative moving in the direction of

this ideal, the organization of consumer interests, as a "pipe dream." [Weber (1918) 1968, p. 1454] For Weber, then, the development of a workable socialism must wait upon the capitalism of a refined state bureaucracy.

In Weber's sociology, capitalism becomes equated with, interchangeable with, bureaucracy. Through a process of substitution the central problem of the German socio-economic order becomes bureaucracy, rather than capitalism; the problem is no longer economic, the fact that one class profits by the labor of another, but political -- that is to say, bureaucratic. People do not dominate (control) one another; instead, hierarchical offices (bureaucratic roles) dominate each other (see Cohen 1972; Giddens 1972, p. 36). People "alienate" each other not because of the way in which interaction is affected by their relationship to the means of production, but because of their "objective" relationship to bureaucratic hierarchies. Thus, Weber focuses considerable attention on what he referred to as "the leadership problem" (see Wright 1974-75, pp. 96-97).[20]

Bureaucratic Social Change: The Routinization of Charismatic Leadership

Weber was early aware that it was the political leaders elected by the people, and not the people or masses themselves, who safeguard capitalism, and the economic leaders "necessary premium -- profits --", against "the dictatorship of the official."[21] The Bismarck regime had left Germany with a strongly centralized

bureaucracy unable, in Weber's view, to provide the independent political leadership to carry out the "tasks of the nation" (Giddens 1972, p. 35). [22] Thus, in his 1895 inaugural lecture (Antrittsrede) as professor of economics at the University of Freiburg, he speaks of the necessity for developing the political leadership of the economically prosperous bourgeoisie -- leadership which would, without becoming despotic, "place the political power-interests of the nation above all other considerations" (see Giddens 1972, p. 17).

> The threatening thing in our situation . . . is that the bourgeois classes, as the bearers of the power-interests of the nation, seem to wilt away, while there are no signs that the workers are beginning to show the maturity to replace them. The danger does not . . . lie with the masses. It is not a question of the economic position of the ruled, but rather the political qualification of the ruling and ascending classes which is the ultimate issue in the social-political problem. [Giddens 1972, pp. 17-18]

Scientist Weber provides citizen Weber with a solution to this problem, the leader with charisma. This extraordinary individual, like Weber's superhuman sociologist, is able to put his fragmented world back together again, protecting both the wilting bourgeoisie and the immature workers from the political dangers of bureaucracy/capitalism. That these dangers, in Weber's view, have little or nothing to do with class differences, the economic relationship between the rulers and the ruled, logically anticipates his particular kind of "voluntarism." In brief, it is a freedom of action that becomes rationally reserved for the super individual, the charismatic leader, whose personal magnetism "preaches, creates,

or demands new obligations" [Weber (1925) 1947, p. 361] of bureaucracy/capitalism.

For Weber, charismatic domination is, at least initially, the very opposite of bureaucratic domination. "Pure" charisma is antithetical to all ordered economy. "It is the very force that disregards economy . . . where its 'pure' type is at work, it is the very opposite of the institutionally permanent" (Gerth and Mills 1946, p. 248). However, it is precisely this instability of charismatic authority which according to Weber permits it to be fitted into the reality of socio-economic relations:

> . . . Genuine charisma rests upon the legitimation of personal heroism or personal revelation. Yet precisely this quality of charisma as an extraordinary, supernatural, divine power transforms it, after its routinization, into a suitable source for the legitimate acquisition of sovereign power by the successors of the charismatic hero. Routinized charisma thus continues to work in favor of all those whose power and possession is guaranteed by that sovereign power, and who thus depend upon the continued existence of such power. [Gerth and Mills 1946, p. 262]

Charisma, then, becomes routinized to answer the "need of social strata, privileged through existing political, social, and economic orders, to have their social and economic positions 'legitimized'" (see Gerth and Mills 1946, p. 262). In the final analysis, even Weber's super individual, the charismatic leader, must eventually cooperate in tailoring (routinizing) "irrational" and "revolutionary" passions to fit the bureaucracy (the capitalism) of prevailing socio-economic arrangements. Weber writes: "The routinization of charisma, in quite essential respects, is identical with adjustment to the conditions of the economy, that is, to the continuously

effective routines of workaday life. In this, the economy leads and is not led" (see Gerth and Mills 1946, p. 54).[23]

Weber's antidote for this deadening effect of bureaucracy/ capitalism, is, as both Cohen (1972) and Wright (1974-75) point out, individualistic opposition -- an opposition which is to be based upon acceptance of the prevailing normative definitions of the existent socio-economic system. Even Weber's chosen agent of change, the charismatic political leader, has no other alternative but to work from within bureaucracy/capitalism, cooperating with the privileged social strata in cooling charisma. The passions which initiate change are to be carefully monitored (routinized) to fall considerably short of that "carnival we decorate with the proud name of 'revolution'." [Weber (1919) 1946, p. 115] For Weber, the point is not to alter the bureaucracy/capitalism that allows some individuals to dominate at the expense of others; rather, "the point is to salvage the soul against the impersonal, calculating formal rationality of domination" (Cohen 1972, p. 82).

Super Leaders, Superman Sociologists,[24] and Weber's Ideal Type as Stereotype

The salvation urged by Weber's sociology helps ensure the continuation of bureaucratic/capitalistic domination. Both Weber's "mild-mannered daily reporter," the superman sociologist, and his charismatic leader can , like Clark Kent, "leap tall buildings at a single bound" -- providing the appearance of transcending reality, while actually preserving it. Weber's faith in the charisma of a

super agent of change -- the logical extension of, and counterpart to, his super scientist -- is transformed into a faith in prevailing socio-economic arrangements. Thus, while his charismatic leader and sociologist alike are able to momentarily transcend their cultural surroundings -- the former at the outset, prior to the routinization of charisma, and the latter nearer the completion of value-relevant, but not value-biased, scientific work -- they resign themselves to cultural influences at that point in their work most crucial to the maintenance of the established socio-economic system. In brief, the charismatic leader's personal magnetism creates a passion that, in falling short of revolution, becomes locked into (routinized by) the prevailing socio-economic system. Similarly, the superman sociologist's objectivity creates a science in which his problem-producing reality becomes locked into the "phone booth" [25] of Weber's imagination -- a science that leaves him incapable of emerging to observe how his sociology is changed by, but unable to change, existent socio-economic arrangements.

Weber's phone booth is the ideal type. It is this methodological technique that permits the transformation of citizen Weber's empirical reality into the "mental constructs" of scientist Weber. He describes the ideal type as a research procedure in both negative and positive terms.

It is not ideal in the sense of advocating something which ought to be. Neither is it average in either the sense of a mediation or a summary of all traits common to a given phenomenon. It is not a

proposition about reality which can be empirically verified as reality's "true" essence. Thus, the ideal type is neither a hypothesis, nor can it be construed as an end in itself.

Rather, the ideal type is a technique, a means for constructing and testing hypotheses in order to facilitate comparisons of various aspects of the empirical world. According to Weber:

> . . . An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct (Gedankenbild). In its conceptual purity, this mental construct (Gedankenbild) cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality. It is a utopia . . . [Weber (1904) 1949, p. 90]

However, while the ideal type is never actually found in reality, it must be "objectively possible." [Weber (1904) 1949, p. 80] Logical soundness, then, is the basis upon which such a type is to be accepted as a reliable tool for use in research designed to check its validity.

Emphasis on logic to construct abstractions which neither are fully realized in, nor are accurately representative of, the material world is often characteristic of another type, the stereotype. Both the ideal type and the stereotype involve exaggerating certain key features, while ignoring certain other features, of a phenomenon for the purpose of organizing observation into categories. It is usually argued by Weber's many current disciples that such a comparison is unfair, not legitimate. The ideal type, they contend,

is a "scientific" tool used to guard against the tendency to stereotype -- to type emotionally, using both preconceived beliefs and varied empirical data gathered from biased sources to emphasize negative characteristics. [Weber (1904) 1949, especially pp. 90-91] Such reasoning is, however, extremely weak protest, as it fails to dismiss the fact that both types can be formulated so as to meet Weber's primary criteria of abstractness and logical soundness leading to objective possibility. The result of typing in both instances is often a "picture in the mind -- a preconceived (i.e., not based on experience) standardized, group-shared idea" which has been oversimplified (Hoult 1974, p. 319).[26] The phenomenon examined is logically cleansed of its contradictions -- made into "a pure abstraction of the understanding" (see Mueller 1959). The world becomes a matter of competing interpretations -- definitions of the situation -- with the appellation "scientific" used to distinguish among various typologies, withholding credibility from some and lending it to others.

In sum, in constructing his sociology, Weber carefully overlooks the primary fact concerning this competition: namely, that both the ideal type of the scientist and the stereotype of the citizen are, like all other abstractions, given a fixed form in the reality of everyday living by the powerful -- usually at the expense of the less powerful. Weber's inability to see that it is the powerful's desire to replace symbols (definitions of the situation) no longer effective in dominating the less powerful which constitutes

the new knowledge necessitating the construction of fresh ideal types, is scientific blindness attributable to the "objectivity" of his sociology. This objectivity, residing in the sociologist's scientific and not citizen self, is supposed to produce a science that is value neutral; instead, it encourages develcpment of a body of knowledge that is subjective and biased -- a sociology that permits Weber to live in both his worlds without adequately understanding either one. It is a sociology that, like the ideal type which provides its basic insights, confuses appearances with the actualities of the social world it attempts to describe and analyze. Thus, bureaucracy appears to be equatable with capitalism, manager with worker, people with offices, power with politics, political leadership with change. Such confusion is characteristic of a science most concerned with preserving rather than changing the reality of prevailing socio-economic arrangements; a science that enlists the superhuman qualities of charismatic leaders and scientific sociologists to create a sociology which supports that which is, as opposed to that which might be.

Conclusion and Present-Day Implications

The sociology of Max Weber, above all else, is a science oriented towards preserving the rapidly maturing German capitalism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His justification of existing socio-economic arrangements was accomplished "objectively." For Weber, the socio-economic arrangements of German capitalism at the turn of the century were not only "the fate" of his time, but also the facts. "The Truth is the Truth," spoke Weber from his deathbed in Munich --

his last attempt to support the objective sociology which could alone give credence to these final words.

Since that June day in 1920 the many and varied implications of Weber's objective science have been explored by his disciples and critics alike. There is one major implication which continues to be of primary importance: The "executive privilege" that has welded nationalistic passions to the developing multi-national economic system from Bismarck to Bethmann to Pierre Eliott Trudeau, Richard M. Nixon and Gerald R. Ford, can be more readily extended to bureaucratic sociologists if scientific work is thought to exist in a realm of reason set apart from a sphere of sentiment.

For modern social scientists this apparently objective sociology capable of separating values from facts, the political economy from science, has been most appealing. It becomes even more appealing when combined with Weber's bureaucracy-equals-capitalism analysis which gives considerable impetus to a trend he bemoaned -- namely, the increasingly narrow range of choices open to most individuals as capitalism matures. Such analysis makes it easier for modern sociologists to take a "factual" view of the dominant socio-economic arrangements of their day that is in harmony with Weber's description of German capitalism in 1900 as "the fate of our time." In developing this view, they may be able to gain a measure of security for themselves by reproducing the curious paradox which makes it appear that Weber's sociology mourns the decline and replacement of the cultivated and well-rounded individual by the technician, while it actually

encourages a role of growing importance for the specialized expert -- a professional.

In sum, the most potentially dangerous suggestion implied by Weber's legacy to present-day social scientists involves the possibility of their continued emphasis upon, and the consequent growth in importance of, objective sociology as the focal point of the professionalism which guides their scientific practice. Dangerous, because it is a professionalism that encourages Weber's social scientists to see themselves as members of interest groups of a particular kind -- interest groups which they view as being somewhat autonomous from other groups in a society supposedly made more pluralistic ("democratic") by their presence. With objective training in a specific discipline, social scientists in the Weberian mold claim the capability to stand apart from and control the passions that sway the masses. Like Weber, their "constellations of interest" give way to both charismatic leaders and superhuman sociologists who transcend the ordinary by pacifying passion in a professional manner. These educated and relatively autonomous professionals know the truth as Weber saw it. Also, their sociologies continue to develop arguments reiterating the most fundamental paradox characteristic of his science: The objectivity that is supposed to preserve the pluralism of choice among conflicting values, results instead in a value-partisanship -- a partisanship that further strengthens the dominating position of a wealthy and privileged elite engaged in fashioning a capitalism that is increasingly one-dimensional.

Notes

1. The riots of unemployed Germans and the nearly continual depression suffered by the Americans from 1873 to 1898 called into question the central assumptions of laissez faire capitalism. The transition to corporate capitalism questioned the harmony between self-interests and the interests of the larger society, the "natural law" of supply and demand as automatic balance, and the state's role of non-interference with this natural law. As the state moved from its role of referee to that of regulator of economic activity, it repeatedly intervened to extend the limits of the marketplace and further concentrate industrial wealth in the holdings of a relatively few corporate capitalists. This process proceeded somewhat more rapidly in the United States than in Germany. Even so, the concentration of available German capital in banks, to take an important indicator of corporate development, was occurring at the same time (the last quarter of the nineteenth century), if not a little earlier, in Germany than it was in the United States. By 1900 both countries were characterized by comparatively well-developed corporate economies. Mann (1968, especially pp. 200-203) provides more details concerning the growth of corporate socio-economic arrangements in Germany, and Williams (1966) does the same for the United States.

2. The adjective charismatic is used here to indicate the fact that "specifically exceptional qualities," to borrow from Weber's own definition of charisma, of Bismarck's personality had important effects on the German masses. Its use is not meant to suggest, however, that Bismarck (or Hitler) derived the power with which he ruled by personal magnetism alone. On the contrary, the governmental administration Bismarck created is a near-perfect example of social organization designed to routinize charisma by legitimating power within the confines of bureaucratic routine.

3. With reference to the American economy, this link between socio-economic reforms which marked the transformation from laissez faire to corporate capitalism and the origins of a scientific sociology has been traced by Smith (1965; 1970). With reference to the socio-economic reform of the German economy in relation to political leadership and the development of a scientific sociology, it should be noted that Weber at times spoke against Bismarck. [Weber (1918) 1968, pp. 1385-1392; Gerth and Mills 1946, pp. 31-33; Bendix 1962, pp. 443-444] However, the fact that Weber sometimes denounced Bismarck for his intolerance of independent-minded political leaders and his reliance upon advisors who were nothing more than docile and obedient servants of governmental bureaucracy, does not alter and should not overshadow the equally important, if not more important, fact that Weber's sociology was a powerful reinforcement for -- essentially an imitation of -- Bismarck's

bureaucratic administration. Bendix (1962, p. 451) includes a brief note to the effect that Weber exempted Bismarck from his "wholesale indictment" of monarchical and bureaucratic absolutism.

4. This combination of factors constituting the central focus of Weber's sociology was not new among German intellectuals. Weber's notion of an "objective" science dates back at least to Kant and Hegel, as well as being clearly evident in the beliefs and actions of Johann Fichte. Professor Fichte of the University of Berlin was an outspoken advocate of German nationalism -- believing that the superiority of the German people made it imperative that the Germans not only govern themselves, but also the French and all the other peoples of Europe as well. Fichte's nationalism was strongly supported by his conceptions of the nature of science and of the university setting within which it was taught. Nearly 100 years before Weber wrote about separating reason from emotion, Fichte, evidently fearing that the outbreak of war in 1813 might bring emotional bias into his classroom, dramatically cancelled his lectures and retired to his study "until the liberation of the fatherland" (see Taylor 1945, pp. 44-45).

5. The general point emphasized here has been well-made by Blackburn (1969). He, like myself, emphasizes the interconnections between prevailing socio-economic arrangements and bureaucratic fatalism, charismatic leadership, and social change. The present paper attempts to elaborate these interconnections by offering a more detailed examination of Weber's value-neutral methodology, the fundamental scientific base upon which Weber's sociology rests.

6. For an excellent elaboration of the way in which Bismarck attempted to create economic reality that would be in accord with this statement, see Engels (1887-88, especially pp. 89-108). Despite Bismarck's close identification with the Junkers, many biographers suggest that he was not raised as one (see, for example, Taylor 1955, especially pp. 13-14).

7. Some scholars claim that Friederich Engels and not Marx was primarily responsible for writing the series of New York Tribune articles bearing the title Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution. However, whether one chooses to cite Engels as does Leonard Krieger, and link Revolution and Counter-Revolution with Engels' earlier work, The Peasant War in Germany, in order to demonstrate that they are continuous sections of a single theme, or whether one cites Marx as is done here, is of little matter. The important point is the Marx-Engels emphasis on analysis which focuses upon the composition and interactions of the different socio-economic classes before and after the Revolution of 1848 in Germany (see Marx 1851-52, especially pp. 4-11, 13, 30-31, 37, 39,

41, 43, 46-47, 51-52, infra.).

It should be noted here that historian Taylor (1945, p. 77) makes an attempt to disclaim class as a motivating factor in liberal activities during this period; however, this disclaimer does not alter either the essential correctness of the Marx-Engels analysis, or the fact that these liberals, as professionals, were a part of the emerging middle classes.

8. Military power is Mayer's emphasis, objectively is mine. Earlier Weber had supported the naval program of Secretary of State for the Imperial Navy, admiral von Tirpitz. As Mann (1968) points out, Weber "surrendered as much to the cult of power as the imperial admiral" and most other Germans by urging the development of sea power as an essential part of world politics designed to protect the German economy. Weber writes:

> Only complete political dishonesty and naive optimism can fail to recognize that, after a period of peaceful competition, the inevitable urge of all nations with bourgeois societies to expand their trade must now once more lead to a situation in which power alone will have a decisive influence on the extent to which individual nations will share in the economic control of the world, and thus determine the economic prospects of their peoples and of their workers in particular. [see Mann 1968, p. 262]

9. For another historian's view concerning the conservative and reactionary policy developed by Bismarck, see Eyck (1948, especially pp. 15-18).

10. This was the paradoxical irony of the Bismarck administration: That in order to protect his own power, Bismarck was continually forced to support a policy of unification which moved the nation ever closer to the Greater Germany he did not desire.

11. Bülow's "World Policy" had been developing for some years under his predecessors. Caprivi, especially, was very active in foreign affairs (see Mann 1968, pp. 255-256). For more details on the way in which Bülow directed Germany's international relations see Mann (1968, pp. 265-270, especially pp. 266 and 268).

12. Evidently, Weber had no small measure of success in training many of his closest friends and relatives to exclude such sentiment. Thus, writing his wife-to-be, Marianne, Weber cautions: "We must not tolerate within us vague and mystical attitudes. If feelings run high, you must tame them, to steer your life soberly" (Mayer 1955, p. 37). Later, Marianne, in a biography of her

husband, would write in the third person (speaking of herself as "she" and of her husband and herself as "they"); in short, "the indestructible barriers against yielding to passions" (even such "passion" as writing in the first person when speaking about oneself), which Marianne notes that Weber's mother had developed in him, are also readily observable in Marianne herself (see Green 1974, pp. 119-120).

13. It should be made clear at the outset of this discussion and analysis that I appreciate the breadth, and realize the several lasting contributions of Weber's work. Accordingly, only a small portion of his work has been scrutinized, focusing in particular on Weber's conceptions of objectivity and bureaucracy, in order to show the way in which his writings on scientific method and social organization have made a lasting impact upon present-day sociology. Further, the criticism of Weber's notion of "objectivity" presented herein is not meant to undermine or destroy the idea that science as logical method can be of value in comparing several arguments, one to another, in order to attempt a determination of the validity of each. The judgment implied in this determination is recognition of the reality that some arguments make a stronger case then others. The stronger arguments constitute better interpretations of the material world because, to borrow a phrase from C. Wright Mills, they are closer to "the run of fact." This fact is interpreted by human beings who, rather than possessing as individuals two independent selves, are whole persons whose beings are shaped by a value configuration that results from the intersection of historical influences, the milieu of present social structure, and individual biography. It is within this framework that some arguments and analyses can be considered to be more "objective" than others. For elaboration of this conception of objectivity, the relationship between fact and value, see Mills (1961, pp. 76-79, 129-131, and 178).

14. This is not to argue that Weber was not acting in "good faith" by emphasizing this separation; he was well aware of the abuse of power and privilege that results when prejudice predominates fact as the major determinant of policy decisions. It is to argue that in moving between his separate worlds Weber developed a science, the logic of which could do little other than to offer support for prevailing socio-economic arrangements. It is to argue against the view that the development of sociology by Weber which supported and/or paralleled capitalist interests is in the main attributable to accident.

15. The attempt by Bendix (1962, p. 289) to apologize for Weber's inability to adequately relate his analytical abstractions to the material world cannot make Weber's fragmented conception of reality whole.

16. For further elaboration see Weber (1904-05, p. 19 and Chapter II, "The Spirit of Capitalism," especially pp. 62-69). Also, see Gerth and Mills (1946, "Social Structures and Types of Capitalism," pp. 65-69); and Weber (1925, "The Principal Modes of Capitalistic Orientation of Profit Making, " pp. 278-280).

17. A fuller appreciation of the way in which Weber's understanding of the close relationship between bureaucracy and capitalism helped to unite them in his sociology may be gained from further examination of his own writings. [see Weber (1918) 1968, pp. 1381-1469, especially pp. 1393-1395]

18. Weber [(1918) 1968, pp. 1423-1424] gives further and later evidence of his consistency in protecting capitalistic socio-economic arrangements. For a complete list of Weber's several speeches to the Verein fur Sozialpolitik see Mayer (1955, p. 67).

19. See Green (1974) for an excellent study showing the ways in which this split between the moral sentiment of ethics and the objectivity of science affected Weber's most intimate relationships. When it comes to drawing out the connections between Weber's science and his daily round of activities, the Green analysis is superior to any I have read.

20. This focus upon leadership has been carried from Weber's work into the present-day by those modern sociologists who develop a pluralistic view of the structure of authority. Among the pluralists listed by Gillam (1971, pp. 191-198), the "veto group" theory of Riesman (1950) and the "dispersed inequalities" thesis of Dahl (1961) are two of the most well-known arguments traceable to Weber's concern with leadership. In contrast, the legacy left by Marx with his "ruling class" model of the structure of power is exemplified today in the "power elite"thesis of Mills (1956) and the "governing class" argument of Domhoff (1967; 1970).

21. Both Giddens (1972, pp. 17-19) and Mayer (1955, pp. 44, 94-96) provide short, but excellent, reviews of Weber's thinking on the relationship between bureaucracy and democracy. For a more lengthy treatment of similar high quality which compares Weber's analysis of this relationship to that of V.I. Lenin, see Wright (1974-75).

22. Weber's emphasis upon leadership has been accurately summarized as follows: "It was Weber as much as anyone who made imperialism a respectable political cause in Germany" (Green 1974, p. 155, also see pp. 149-150, 153).

23. Weber thought that "of all those powers that lessen the importance of individual action, the most irresistible is rational discipline" (see Gerth and Mills 1946, p. 253). For Weber, it is

clear that even the charismatic leader must, at some point, submit to the dictates of rationality. Thus, Weber was able to create and practice a science that could routinize the charisma of a Bismarck, supporting he and his successors by separating doctrine from the person who advocates it. He attempted to do this in his own life even when the person involved, Otto Gross, was openly loved by Weber's lover, Else von Richthofen, and lived a style of life disapproved of by Weber (see Green 1974, especially pp. 56, 129).

24. The term "Superman" should be thought of in a generic sense, for its use is not intended to exclude women. Superhuman activities are not limited to the male sex alone, as comic book readers and television viewers who follow the super feats of "Wonder Woman" are well aware.

25. For those readers who are unfamiliar with Superman comics, radio and television programs, public phone booths, as well as restrooms were locations often used by Clark Kent for his transformation from "mild-mannered daily reporter" into Superman.

26. It should be pointed out that the material quoted here is only part of a more complete definition which seems to support Weber's notion of the ideal type.

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