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Special Issue: Patrimonialism, Culture and Religion: A Reexamination of Max Weber

Note from the Editor		Page 3
From Academic Outsider to Sociological Mastermind: The Fashioning of the Sociological "Classic" Max Weber.	- Dirk Kaesler	4
Patrimonialism and Urban Development: A Reexamination of Max Weber's Theories of the City.	-Rangalal Sen	16
Weber's Perspective on the City and Culture: Contemporary Urbanization and Bangladesh.	- A. I. Mahbub Uddin Ahmed	34
Max Weber's Sociology of Islam: A Critique.	- Syed Anwar Husain	48
Protestant Ethic and the Not-So-Sociology of World Religions.	- Nazrul Islam	52

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Note from the Editor

The papers presented in this issue have grown out of a three-day conference on Max Weber titled, "Culture, Patrimonialism and Religion: Revisiting Max Weber," organized by the Goethe Institute at Dhaka from December 7 to 9, 2003. In presenting these papers here it is hoped that the readers will get an exposure to the works done by the Bangladeshi sociologists. Similar conferences have been held in the past but very little of the works have ever reached the international audience due to the lack of publication facilities. So has been the fate of the other scholarly works done by the sociologists from Bangladesh. Sociology has had a long history in Bangladesh but much of the works done have been published only locally with little or no possibility of reaching an international audience. The avowed purpose of the BEJS and the website of the Bangladesh Sociological Society (<http://www.bangladeshsociology.org>) is to offer the Bangladeshi sociologists an opportunity to take their works to the international reader as much as to follow on the tradition of other serious academic journals to publish scholarly works of authors from all over the world in these pages on a regular basis. It is with these objectives that we launch the first issue of the first volume of the **Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology** and seek your support in our endeavours as we also express our gratitude to those who have helped us along our path.

Nazrul Islam

From Academic Outsider to Sociological Mastermind: The Fashioning of the Sociological “Classic” Max Weber.

- Dirk Kaesler *

When the body of the 56 year old Full Professor of *Gesellschaftswissenschaft, Wirtschaftsgeschichte und Nationalökonomie* of the *Staatswirtschaftliche Fakultät* of Munich's *Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität*, Max Weber, was cremated at Munich's *Ostfriedhof* on June 17, 1920, only a small number of family members, friends, colleagues and students attended.

Very few of them would have imagined then that Max Weber would become the German sociologist who would rank as the most important founding figure of a continuous tradition in international sociology of the present day. On that very day in Spring of 1920, only his widow, Marianne Weber, may have been convinced that this was at least the aim to which she herself would devote all her efforts to make the work of her late husband known and important.

Today it goes without saying that Max Weber has been made into an indisputable “classic” of international sociology. No dictionary, no history of sociology and no relevant sociological textbook would fail to make prominent mention of his name and to stress his crucial significance for the development of this discipline. Since this rescue from oblivion, the triumphal march of this early German sociologist continues. For some decades the work of this Wilhelminian scholar has been deemed essential to international sociology. Since the end of “real socialism” and the farewell to its masterminds, Marx, Engels, and Lenin, the interest in Max Weber, who so often had been categorised as the “bourgeois Marx”, seems to have grown even further. Weber's work, which had been interpreted by Marxist scholars and by anti-Marxist interpreters alike as an opposing challenge to Marx' work (Bader, V. et al. 1976; Böckler, St. / Weiß, J. eds. 1987), has been presented as the historical “winner” of what is far more than a merely academic debate.

From a sociologist's point of view it would be more than naive to assume that this development from a marginalized scholar at the beginning of Weimar Germany to the internationally overpowering classic of international sociology of today was the result of the intrinsic value of Weber's writings alone. From a good Weberian perspective in particular we have to ask ourselves which persons were responsible for this gradual fashioning of the sociological classic Max Weber, and what were their “interests” — both “idealistic” and “material” — in so doing? Who were the people without whom today we neither would have access to the published work of this scholar, nor the preconceived knowledge that we are dealing with the ideas of one of the most important sociologists, if not thinkers in general of the 20th century?

A man and his work (almost) condemned to oblivion:

Reception and influence of Max Weber during his lifetime

The present relevance of Max Weber's work evidently contrasts sharply with his national and international reception and impact during his lifetime. If one looks at the early reception of Weber's writings as a whole it shows extreme selectivity. It concentrated almost exclusively on the Protestant ethic writings (1905/1920) and the printed versions of the lectures on *Wissenschaft als Beruf* (1919) and *Politik als Beruf* (1919). After Weber's death in 1920 even Marianne Weber's successful attempts to bring most of the scattered and mostly unfinished texts to the attention of a wider readership with her construction of four collected volumes — *Gesammelte Politische Schriften* (1921), *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre* (1922), *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*

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(1924) and *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Soziologie und Sozialpolitik* (1924) — did not alter much of the basically weak reception and influence of Weber's writings during the period leading up to World War II.

Even Max Weber's so-called "magnum opus", *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, when it was first published in 1922 encountered an echo, which was rather too weak to be worth mentioning. With very few exceptions, it immediately fell prey to a strong influence, which was segmented according to disciplines. The influence of Weber's formulation of a program and a methodology of scientific, interpretative and empirical sociology appears not to have reached out beyond its influence on Werner Sombart, Georg Simmel and, only later, Alfred Schütz. These three scholars, however, were outsiders to the academic and professional institutionalisation of the young university discipline of sociology in Germany in their time (Käsler, D. 1984). The single fact that during the period from 1922 to 1947 less than 2,000 copies of "Economy and Society" were sold, illustrates my argument.

The same findings present themselves if one looks at the quite unimpressive impact Max Weber had made as an academic teacher. The very small group of people who wrote their dissertations under his guidance did not achieve any relevant scholarly importance and none of his very few "pupils" wrote their *Habilitation* under his supervision. Max Weber had no successors in any strict sense: a "Weber school" founded by himself did not exist.

Weber's career as a "Classic" of sociology in Post-war (West) Germany

Immediately after the end of World War II and after the reopening of (West) German universities it was not so much the German sociologists of the Weimar period, such as Ferdinand Tönnies, Max Weber, Werner Sombart or Georg Simmel, who were read in (West) German sociology but rather the "modern" American sociological writers. It was regarded as the task of the time to connect up with mainstream Western sociology, and this formed an important part of the "re-education"-policy to be achieved by the (re) establishment of sociology in (West) Germany.

Very few scholars took Max Weber seriously in those years of the German *Wirtschaftswunder*. With the rare exceptions of Friedrich H. Tenbruck, then University Assistant at Frankfurt University, and Johannes F. Winckelmann, retired vice-president of *Hessische Landeszentralbank*, who lived near Munich as a private scholar and as late as 1963 was made *Honorarprofessor* of Munich University, dominant German academic sociology at that time was more preoccupied with research on other topics. Let me mention as prominent examples research on the (supposedly) vanishing German class structure ("*nivellierte Mittelstandsgesellschaft*") by the powerful Helmut Schelsky (Hamburg, Münster, Dortmund), research on the dynamics of the German family and the empirical reality of German industrial factories by the influential René König (Köln), or research on the "Dialectics of Enlightenment", undertaken by the Frankfurt sociologists, Max Horkheimer und Theodor W. Adorno, after their return to Germany.

It took the 1964 convention of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie* (German Sociological Association) to confront German sociologists with the state of Weber's international reputation. The "Makers" of international sociology gathered in commemoration of their German progenitor: Talcott Parsons (Harvard), Pietro Rossi (Turin), Raymond Aron (Paris), Herbert Marcuse (Boston) and Reinhard Bendix (Berkeley). They all celebrated – not without some critical remarks — the very man who, without any significant contributions by German sociologists, had gradually become universally acknowledged as a major figure of international sociology during the more than forty years since his death. Only by the concerted efforts of these foreign or exiled scholars had the German scholar Max Weber gradually become, together with Marx and Durkheim, one of the pillars of a "Holy Trinity" of international sociology.

Mainly responsible for this development, which transformed this German sociologist who had died shortly after the end of World War I and had almost become forgotten at the beginning of the Fifties into an internationally reputed Master of Sociological Thought, was the Harvard sociologist Talcott Parsons. It was his structural functionalism that had become the internationally dominant theoretical paradigm of sociology from around 1950 until 1965. Parsons, as one of the central figures of this development by his own writings, in particular "The Structure of Social Action" (Parsons, T. 1937), and by his own translations of the "Protestant Ethic" (Weber, Max 1930) and of the first part of "Economy and Society" (Weber, Max 1947) drew this universal attention to Weber and by this created an international involvement with his work.

Regardless of one's position vis-à-vis Parsons' interpretation of Weber it must be stressed that it was Parsons' work which first of all aroused broad international interest in Max Weber. Although Parsons' translations offered enough scope for improvement, so that his interpretation of Weber later necessitated a "de-Parsonization" of Weber (Cohen, J. / Hazelrigg, L. / Pope, W. 1975a; Parsons, T. 1975; Cohen, J. / Hazelrigg, L. / Pope, W. 1975b; Parsons, T. 1976), this in no way detracts from his historical importance in promoting Weber as a sociological classic. Even in Germany, the broader purported "re-discovery" of Weber after World War II was only set in motion by the reception of US-American structural functionalism.

The effect of this belated (re) discovery of Weber's work became immeasurably more influential than earlier attempts by those sociologists who had in their own works, in some cases with great emphasis, tried to utilise Weber's categories and approach and who were convinced that Weber should rank among the more important sociologists. I would like to mention in connection with the period between 1920 and 1945 Karl Mannheim, Siegfried Landshut, Hans Freyer and Alfred Schütz as being — at least with hindsight — of particular importance. They all mentioned Max Weber in their own writings most favourably and tried to enlarge on Weber's perspectives and methodological approach. However, the impact of these authors for the propagation of Max Weber as a classic of sociology was quite limited, — to say the least. Mannheim, Landshut and Schütz were driven out of the German speaking academic system and seem to have stopped propagating Weber in their new environments, and Freyer did not follow up on his admiration of Weber after 1933.

It was only in the course of the (re) discovery of Weber after World War II that interpretations of Weber's life and work became important which had derived directly or indirectly from persons and groups that were — more or less — directly influenced by Max Weber during his lifetime.

These groups involved people connected particularly to the Heidelberg period of Weber's life, such as Marianne Weber, Karl Jaspers, Siegmund Hellmann, Melchior Palyi, Karl Loewenstein, Eduard Baumgarten, Carl Brinkmann, Paul Honigsheim, Alexander von Schelting, Georg (von) Lukács, Helmut Plessner, Ernst Troeltsch, Theodor Heuss, Robert Michels, Hans Gerth, Max Rheinstein, Ephraim Fischhoff, and, with crucial peculiarities, Johannes Winckelmann. — We shall come back to two of them in the third part of this paper.

Through these thinkers, directly or indirectly influenced by Weber himself, and who therefore still stood under the spell of Max Weber "the man", or rather "the myth of Heidelberg", a glorification and stylisation of Max Weber as an "intellectual aristocrat", a "titan", a "demon", a "genius" arose which made a distanced and critical view difficult and hindered an unbiased approach to Weber's work rather than facilitating it. Moreover, the majority of these editors, translators and interpreters were not sociologists. The interest in Weber's universal historical framework frequently distracted the general attention from the sociological content of the work.

Next to this more emotionally tinted reception another discussion arose which became very influential for the post-war reception of Weber in Germany. It was during the Heidelberg sociological convention that the then relatively young Cologne historian Wolfgang J. Mommsen presented the main theses of his dissertation (Mommsen, W.J. 1959), in which he had hinted at a link of ideas between Max Weber's concept of "plebiscitarian leadership democracy" (*plebisitäre Führerdemokratie*) and the ideological development of the Nazi state. And it was in Heidelberg that the then Associate Professor of Philosophy, Jürgen Habermas, also quite young at the time, joined Mommsen's side: "*Wir hier in Deutschland, immer noch auf der Suche nach Alibis*" cannot forget, he exclaimed, that Weber's vision of a „caesaristic leadership" has had disastrous consequences in Weimar Germany: "*Wirkungsgeschichtlich betrachtet, hat das dezisionistische Element in Webers Soziologie den Bann der Ideologie nicht gebrochen, sondern verstärkt.*" (Habermas, J. 1965, S.81).

It took hoary Karl Loewenstein, Max Weber's student during his Munich period, to rise during the *Gedächtnisfeier* of Munich university one month after the Heidelberg convention, to defend his revered teacher against such "audacious historical smearing" by "certain young people" equipped with a "substantial degree of intellectual dishonesty" (Loewenstein, K. 1966, p.142). Without any doubt, this so-called *Ahnherrenschaftsdebatte* (debate over ideological ancestry) has impregnated the history of Weber's reception within German post-war sociology quite measurably.

This brings us to a further characteristic of today's picture of Weber the "classic". While noting the contrast between the relative lack of impact and "failure" of Weber during his lifetime and his eminent international prominence and "classicism" since 1964, it is nevertheless remarkable that his reception today is still characterised by a surprisingly high degree of selectivity. It is still mostly only that

part of his work which was published after 1904, i.e. the famous "Protestant Ethic" and the article on "Objectivity" (1904), which are generally recognised in sociology. The division of Weber's life into distinct periods as lawyer, agrarian historian, political economist, religious expert, cultural historian, sociologist, philosopher, politician, social researcher, academic theoretician etc. denies its demonstrable continuities and consequently makes a comprehensive understanding difficult, even for many so-called Weber-experts.

This problematic pattern of reception is particularly effective in two different ways: (1) Weber's plan for an "interpretative sociology" has been separated from his substantive work, and has been dealt with in isolation and misunderstood as "the" Weberian sociology; and (2) the whole wealth of research material has been detached from Weber's writings on the methodology of the social sciences and the two are not understood as being linked to one another.

Another outcome of this high degree of selectivity is the fragmentation of the entire oeuvre into so-called "instructive pieces". It is doubtless this, which leads us to today's quantitatively most important impression of Weber the sociological "classic". No internationally recognised work in the sociology of bureaucracy, domination, music, religion, the city, or political parties etc. will fail to cite the name of Max Weber as one of the decisive historical precursors of social science. The overwhelming majority of such ritualised obeisance before Weber the "classic", however, has no other function than that of legitimising its own undertaking. Weber the sociological classic serves to establish the identity in both content and methodology of a discipline, of a research intention and of the writer.

The present state of the German reception of Weber

More than 80 years after Weber's death we can clearly state that Weber's work has passed the "test of time". Since 1945 we can see a preoccupation with Weber, which has been gradually growing internationally. This continuing and increasing reference to Weber's works and the equally strengthened concern with him, is not actually a *renaissance*. Weber's reception and influence during his own lifetime was incomparably less strong and "canonical" than in the period after 1945. Weber did not stand at the centre of the sociological discourse of his own age, very much in contrast to his present status. It may even be questioned whether Weber himself would have liked that development that made him and his work a classic of an academic discipline called "sociology"!

The present reception of Weber in Germany has been shaped mainly by two developments: the ongoing production of the collected edition of the *Max-Weber-Gesamtausgabe* (MWG) and the ongoing debate between the disciplines about whom Max Weber "really" belongs to.

After some preparatory talks in the autumn of 1974, a group of main editors of a new and complete edition of Max Weber's writings, letters and lectures was founded in June 1975. The original board consisted of the sociologists Horst Baier (Konstanz) and M. Rainer Lepsius (Heidelberg), the philosopher Hermann Lübbe (Zürich), the historian Wolfgang J. Mommsen (Düsseldorf), the sociologist Wolfgang Schluchter (Heidelberg) and the private scholar Johannes Winkelmann (Rottach-Egern). In May 1981 a first outline of the edition, explaining the general design and the state of preparations of the MWG, was published; a revised version of this prospectus was published in February 1984. It indicates three sections — Writings and Speeches, Letters and Lectures — with 22 volumes for the section "Writings and Speeches" alone! Since Lübbe's withdrawal and Winkelmann's death in November 1985, the remaining editors Baier, Lepsius, Mommsen and Schluchter bear the responsibility for this enormous undertaking, which has been considerably supported by *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*, *Werner-Reimers-Stiftung*, *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften* and the Tübingen publishers, Mohr-Siebeck. With this quite substantial support, and an impressive amount of intellectual and material resources at the *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften* in Munich and the *Arbeitsstellen* of the remaining four editors, 16 volumes have been published to date.

Not least of all with regard to various reactions to this editorial enterprise, another aspect of the present reception of Weber can be illustrated: he still remains an "embattled classic". His work is hotly contested within sociology as well as between disciplines, in particular between sociology and its neighbouring disciplines such as history, philosophy and political science.

Of particular note was the discussion within German history during the "International History Congress" in Stuttgart in 1985, when the importance and potential use of Weberian concepts and findings for present and future historical research were debated and the papers given were later published in a collection (Kocka, J., ed. 1986). Long before this event, though, Weber had been used

as a legitimising figure within the newer German social history in its fight against traditional historical approaches as well as against some more quantitative, systems theory oriented approaches. Even today, Weber quite often serves to defend social history against predominantly narrative methods of presentation adorned by the label of “neo-history”. Weber in this context quite often helps as a model for synthesising great masses of single case studies into a historical panorama of *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* from the perspective of universal history.

Next to this discussion between disciplines about the “right” use of Weber's work and methods, another discourse can be identified: namely, that within and between different national, sociological interpretative communities. As a good representation of this quite vast discussion attention may be drawn to a collection of essays, which has become quite influential for the German debate. It comprises the papers presented at a conference of the “Theory Section” of the German Sociological Society in Kassel in June 1986 (Weiß, J., ed. 1989). In this volume a provisional summary has been attempted of the present state of work on Weber in several areas.

Ever since then there has been a — sometimes quite passionate — fight over the somewhat cryptic question as to who might best administer Weber's heritage. This revolves around the issue of the “correct” disciplinary location of Weber's work as a whole, as well as around some more specific questions such as whether Weber was a tragic, pessimistic Nietzschean (Hennis, W. 1987, pp. 167-191.) or a “Liberal” with high regard for the British model of liberal personal development (Mommson, W. J. 1989). As had already happened in Heidelberg in 1964, the 1986 Kassel conference also turned into a battle for the figurehead claimed by several disciplines within the realm of the social sciences. This battle has been fought among sociologists, historians, philosophers and political scientists over who actually has a legitimate claim to Max Weber, this internationally acclaimed saint of wisdom.

Besides the significance as a totem offering identity to several disciplines and groups of scholars, Weber has gained some political symbolic value for another historical debate in Germany. After the self-dissolution of the “German Democratic Republic”, and with it of the project of a Marxist-Leninist social science in Germany, the image of Max Weber as the prototype of a “bourgeois sociologist”, and by that an almost professional anti-Marxist, collapsed. Starting far back as Georg Lukács' *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft* of 1954 (Lukács, G. 1954; Kaesler, D. 1997), this image that had been reproduced for decades was that of the most important social scientist to have been produced by the German bourgeoisie, but one stigmatised as “anti-Marx” or, at best, as a “negative genius” (Jürgen Kuczynski).

Under the banner of the necessary “appropriation of our whole heritage of learning” (Helmut Steiner), even Marxist-Leninist sociology in East Germany shortly before the self-dissolving of the GDR in 1989 had just begun to cautiously approach the person and work of Max Weber from a position other than hostility. A conference in Erfurt on the occasion of Weber's 125th birthday, a collection of papers on Weber in the then influential *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* (Küttler, W., Richter, St. / Waligora, M., Geßner, W. 1989) and the first publication of the most important texts of Max Weber (Weber, Max 1989) were proof of a change in thinking. Suddenly, the work of Max Weber included “some important suggestions and ways of thinking that may be worthwhile for a Marxist to accept critically.” (Küttler, W. / Hauer, F., 1989, p.6). With the de facto disappearance of Marxist-Leninist sociology in Germany, this freshly developed line of an alternative reception of Weber in Germany also vanished.

Who fashioned the sociological “Classic” Max Weber, what were their driving interests, and which roles did they play?

In this paragraph I intend, first to present a general overview of those individuals who – in my opinion – have to be mentioned as those responsible for the fashioning of the sociological classic Max Weber, and second, to concentrate upon three individuals among them who – in my personal view – have to be seen as absolutely crucial in this endeavour. With reference only to these three central “makers”, I shall make a few remarks about their quite distinct ideas, interests and roles in this undertaking.

From any established sociology of science perspective, not in the least from a Weberian angle, we ask ourselves: Which persons are accountable for the gradual fashioning of the “classic” of sociology, Max Weber? What were their “interests” — “idealistic” and “material” ones – in so doing?

Who were the people without whom we today would not have access to the published work of this German scholar, but also the preconceived knowledge that we are dealing with the work and ideas of one of the most important thinkers of the 20th century, at least for sociology? What kind of roles did these persons play in this concerted effort, not without bitter fights among them?

In order to give you a first, preliminary — and incomplete — answer, I would like to offer an attempt of compiling some sort of “pedigree” of the “makers” of Weber, the sociological mastermind:

[Table: “Die Fabrikation des soziologischen Klassikers Max Weber”]¹

In this “pedigree” you will find forty-five individuals, one woman and forty-four men, without whom, I think, we would not be dealing with the sociological classic, Max Weber, today. As one can see, they come from different national backgrounds, although —of course —with a strong German bias, they belong to a broad spectrum of academic generations, ranging from 1870 to 1944; and they belong to a broad spectrum of disciplines.

Of course, it would be quite tempting — and not totally without some delicate debates — to comment upon the individual contribution of each of these forty-three persons. However — not merely for reasons of limited time — I shall not venture into this controversial task.

Instead, I prefer to concentrate upon those three persons whose most crucial role in the gradual fashioning of the sociological “classic” Max Weber is beyond question: Marianne Weber, Johannes Winckelmann and Talcott Parsons. Without these three individuals, two of whom were not even professional academic scholars, we would not be sitting here, discussing Max Weber, the sociological mastermind.

It is, of course, with **Marianne Weber** that the story of the gradual fashioning of the classic Max Weber must begin: her role could be characterised as that of a **trustee**.

However, she was not only so much caretaker of a heritage that had been left behind. Indeed, it was she who created this heritage in the first place. As has been mentioned, without her producing the four collections, together with the (re) construction of the three volumes of his writings on world religions, and the construction of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, it may be questioned whether the very idea of a Weberian oeuvre would have developed at all. We should never forget that when Max Weber died in June 1920, only two books bearing his name stood on the book-shelves of his contemporaries: his dissertation of 1889 (Weber, Max 1889) and his *Habilitation*-thesis of 1891 (Weber, Max 1891).

This is not the right place to go into too much detail about who this woman was and what her interests were in devoting her whole life after Weber’s death to the creation and adoration of her late husband’s work and life. She was convinced of the ultimate success of her endeavours without the slightest doubts: “*Sein Ruhm ist meines Erachtens erst im Beginn seines Aufstiegs. Die Menschen werden erstauen, wenn sie seine Werke (10-12 Bände) mit Händen greifen. Ich lebe für seine irdische Verewigung.*“ (Baumgarten, E. 1964, p. 605). The salvation of the greater part of the unfinished bits and pieces and putting them together so as to present an (almost) finished “work” was the one major contribution of Weber’s widow. Next to this (re) creation of a voluminous scholarly work stands the portrayal of the life of the author of this great work, the portrayal of an outer and inner development of a scholarly mastermind by writing and publishing the *Lebensbild* in 1926 (Weber, Marianne 1926).

Not only are the achievements of Marianne Weber well known, we also know about the problems involved in these two roles, editor of the collected works and portrayer of the *Lebensbild*. The *Max-Weber-Gesamtausgabe* has successfully begun to take care of the many problems relating to her role as editor. As to Marianne Weber’s portrayal of Weber’s life several attempts to supplement hers are under way: the “touch up” of Weber’s life in her great book requires correction and this will be effected (Kaesler, D. 1989; Kaesler, D. 2000).

What Marianne Weber had started immediately after Weber’s death, **Johannes Ferdinand Winckelmann** continued after 1950. His role also could be characterised as that of a trustee, but in his case it was much more the role of a **promoter** of Max Weber’s work and its importance during the Fifties and right into the late Seventies.

¹ See table at the end of the paper.

As Johannes Winckelmann may not be as familiar to some of you as Marianne Weber and Talcott Parsons allow me to say a few more words about him than about the other two. As someone who attended the seminars of Winckelmann during the greater part of his own studies at Munich University (1965-1972), I think I am in the position to judge upon the ideas and interests that motivated this self-declared caretaker and promoter of Max Weber's work. It had been his firm conviction that Weber's work would offer a better understanding of the universal historical development of modernity than any other sociological concept, — in particular any Marxist approach. His sole interest in Max Weber concentrated upon the writings, his interest in the life of Max Weber, in particular in Weber's private life ("*Tantengeschichten*") was close to nil, and his criticism of any such attempts tended to become fierce.

How did this former judge and life-long civil servant — first in various courts of the *Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg* (1927-1938), then in the *Reichswirtschaftsministerium* (1938-1945) and then at the *Hessische Landeszentralbank* (1946-1951) — get so much on the Weber-track that even as early as November 1945 he was able to write of himself: "*Ich betrachte mich als Schüler des weit über Deutschland hinaus bekannten demokratischen Hochschullehrers Professor Dr. Max Weber, dessen wissenschaftliche und politische Lehren ich mir weitgehend zu Eigen machte, da sie meinen eigenen Intentionen und Erfahrungen entsprachen und von weltweiten Gesichtspunkten getragen waren.*"? (Winckelmann, J.F. 1945, pp. 1-2)

According to his own account it was already as a first-year student at Marburg University in the summer of 1919 that he had read the two small brochures of *Wissenschaft als Beruf* and *Politik als Beruf* and through them had found his "way to Weber". His desire to study under Weber in Munich could not be fulfilled, because when he arrived there in *Wintersemester* 1920/21 Weber had already died. This did not stop his eager interest in Weber's work so that already in May 1925 he initiated a correspondence with Marianne Weber about his own editorial suggestions (Borchardt, K. 2000, p. 16), but things had to wait until the end of World War II. As early as 1949 we find his first Weber-publication (Winckelmann, J.F. 1949), then as editor of the second edition of *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre* of April 1951 he had eventually entered the arena of Weber-scholars. By 1985, the year of his death, we were able to reconstruct the enormous achievements of this restless, influential and tricky propagator of Weber's work, who created a whole network of institutions — such as the *Max-Weber-Gesellschaft*, the *Max-Weber-Archiv* (1960-1966), the *Max-Weber-Institut* (1966-1976), and the *Max-Weber-Arbeitsstelle* at the *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften* (since 1978). And the story could — and should — be told of his astonishing success at spinning personal networks that went up as high as the former *Bundespräsident* Theodor Heuss. I shall abstain from this story for today, and — again — mainly because of the restricted time available.

It may be said as some sort of interim balance, however, that Winckelmann's success in terms of the academic level in promoting and propagating the importance of Max Weber as a classic of sociology in post-war (West) Germany altogether was quite limited. Although Winckelmann's editions were on the market with the two volumes of the "Protestant Ethics"-texts becoming best-sellers, as well as his most influential collection of Weber-texts with *Kröner-Verlag* (First edition 1956, 6th edition 1992), with almost 50 000 copies sold, it was not until 1964 that Weber attained a certain degree of importance in academic and even public circles. But Winckelmann fought with growing success with his editions, his institutional letterheads and by creating a complex network of persons and institutions that supported the gradual institutionalisation of research on Max Weber. The beginning of the work on the *Max-Weber-Gesamtausgabe*, with its *Geschäftsstelle* at the *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften* in Munich and the creation of the network of the additional four *Max-Weber-Arbeitsstellen* in many ways marked the climax of his endeavours over the last twenty years of this life, devoted to Max Weber.

To sum up Winckelmann's role and motives in contributing to the fashioning of the sociological classic Weber, one might best quote from a letter by Karl Loewenstein dated June 14, 1963 in which he supported the plan to promote the then private scholar Dr. Winckelmann to *Honorarprofessor* of Munich University. Loewenstein wrote: "*Herr Dr. Winckelmann hat [...] dazu beigetragen, einen der Großen des deutschen Geisteslebens der Nachwelt schlackenfrei zu übermitteln. Nur diejenigen, die sich selbst mit dem monumentalen Werk Webers beschäftigt haben, können ermessen, welche Devotion und auch Selbstentäußerung dazu gehört, sein ganzes Leben in den Dienst des Weber-Bildes zu stellen.*"

When we, eventually, turn to the third major “maker” of the sociological classic Max Weber, **Talcott Parsons**, it is not necessary to say as much about him than about Winckelmann. The role of Parsons and his structural-functionalism for international sociology has been researched in detail. Without this man and his work it is impossible to understand Western sociology during the period from 1940 to 1970. And, as mentioned before, during those thirty years the name of Max Weber and Parsons’ interpretation of Weber’s work, together with his own translations of central Weber-texts into English, became (almost) as important as Parsons himself and his work. In order to describe Parsons’ role in the fashioning of the sociological classic Max Weber we propose to see in him the – most influential – **interpreter** of the sociologist Weber.

What were Parsons’ interests in this? The story of him utilising Weber’s analysis of the origins and effects of capitalism during the first phase of his foundation of his own dealing with capitalism is well known (Jensen, St. 1980, pp. 12-14.), as are his (re) constructive attempts to synthesise the works of Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Vilfredo Pareto and Alfred Marshall, to which he later added a whole set of additional European thinkers such as Freud, Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown, Piaget. Instead of reproducing the familiar account of the theoretical and strategic use Parsons made of Weber, as one of those European thinkers for the foundation of his own action-theory based approach I prefer to turn to his re-import of Weber to Europe, and Germany in particular, and to a story only recently reconstructed by our Heidelberg colleague Uta Gerhardt (Gerhardt, U. 2001, p.338):

„Parsons, together with Reinhard Bendix and Benjamin Nelson, had decided in 1962 – two years prior to the *Soziologentag* – that they wished to contradict the critical view on Weber as it prevailed in the early 1960s in Germany. Parsons together with Bendix and Nelson arranged a meeting with Otto Stammer, then President of the German Sociological Association and convenor elect of the Heidelberg *Soziologentag*, two years in advance of the *Soziologentag*. On the occasion of the Sixth Congress of the International Sociological Association, which took place in Washington in 1962, Bendix, Nelson, and Parsons met Stammer (whom they had invited to Washington by the President of ISA, for the purpose), to guarantee that their contributions were to be placed in prominent positions in the *Soziologentag* programme. They corresponded with each other since 1961, to plan their action that was to counteract the criticism against Weber to be expected at Heidelberg from speakers related to the Frankfurt School.“

Very much in contrast to the *Gedächtnisfeier* of Munich University of June 1964, which — mainly due to the persistent endeavours of Johannes Winckelmann — became virtually an university initiative, the Heidelberg *Soziologentag* appears to have been an event mainly engineered by Parsons, together with Reinhard Bendix and Benjamin Nelson, and only then supported by Heidelberg University and the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie*. So much for the state of Max Weber as a mastermind of German sociology in the Sixties!

I shall end this presentation with these short remarks upon the three most important makers of the sociological classic Max Weber. Marianne Weber the trustee, Johannes Winckelmann the promoter, and Talcott Parsons the interpreter and international propagandist: These three persons in their distinct roles may be held chiefly responsible for that development, which has led to our seeing in Max Weber, whose work stood in the serious danger of descending into oblivion at the time of his premature death, one of the most important thinkers of the 20th century, perhaps quoted more often than Karl Marx these days.

It might be worth noting, though, that if we look at the whole gallery of those people who began this propagating Weber’s work before 1964, many of them were academic “outsiders” for whom upholding Weber’s legacy had become also a matter of personal legitimisation, mostly with very limited success. The almost tragic figures like Eduard Baumgarten, Hans Gerth, Benjamin Nelson and — to a lesser degree — Johannes Winckelmann might proof this suspicion. Could it be, one might ask, that these outsiders themselves felt some sort of *Wahlverwandschaft*, an “elected affinity”, to a man, who for the greater part of his own life had been an outsider and *Querdenker* himself, and whose scholarly career during his own lifetime also was more of a failure than a grand success?

Another concluding thought: From a sociology of science approach it would be rewarding to go through the whole list of those forty-three individuals identified as of prominent importance for the fashioning of the sociological classic Max Weber and regrouping them in an ideal typical way along – at least - two factions. On the one hand those, who saw as the main aim of their dealing with Weber’s work the preservation and cultivation of this work alone. This, of course, started with Marianne Weber

and went along since then, with Winckelmann as someone of particular importance after World War II. From this group of Weber-scholars, on the other hand, one might distinguish those whose main aim was the further development and continuation of Weber's theoretical achievements by integrating it into their own theoretical designs. This strand of Weber-scholarship had, of course, its most prominent and influential representative after World War II in Talcott Parsons, and in our times names like those of Jürgen Habermas, Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens might well be worth while mentioning.

By looking at these two groups, though, one might ask how well communication - and reciprocal appreciation - between them has been developed, and whether one might not state an immanent danger of them drifting apart, and by that leading away from fruitful cooperation?

But - in any case - both these "invisible colleges" of international Weber-scholars - those who care more for the cultivation and historical contextualisation of Weber's work, as well as those who concentrate more upon a theoretical continuation of Weber's work - proof that Max Weber quite rightly may be called "a living classic", and most certainly must not to be sent into the cage of the discipline of sociology alone!

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Die Fabrikation des soziologischen Klassikers Max Weber

1920 – 1945

MARIANNE WEBER (1870-1954)

Melchior Palyi / Karl Loewenstein / Jörg von Kapher / Siegmund Hellmann

Karl Jaspers (1883-1969)

Karl Mannheim (1893-1947)
Siegfried Landshut (1897-1968)
Hans Freyer (1887-1969)
Alfred Schütz (1899-1959)

1945 - 1964

Reinhard Bendix (1916-1991)

Benjamin Nelson (1911-1977)
Hans H. Gerth (1908-1978)
Paul Honigsheim (1885-1963)

Georg von Lukács (1885-1971)

Max Graf zu Solms (1893-1968)
Max Ernst Graf zu Solms (1910-199?)
Friedrich H. Tenbruck (1919-1994)
Eduard Baumgarten (1898-1982)

JOHANNES F. WINCKELMANN (1900-1985)

Der 15. Deutsche Soziologentag in Heidelberg im April 1964

"Max Weber und die Soziologie heute"

TALCOTT PARSONS (1902-1979)

Jürgen Habermas (geb. 1929)

Raymond Aron (1905-1983)

Wolfgang J. Mommsen (geb. 1930)
Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979)

Die Gedächtnisfeier der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München im Juni 1964

Bernhard Pfister (1900-1987)
Johannes Winckelmann

Karl Bosl, Alois Dempf, Karl Engisch, Emerich Francis, Herbert Franke, Karl Loewenstein,
Friedrich Lütge, Hans Maier, Jacob Taubes, [Eric Voegelin, Alfred Müller-Armack]

Die deutsche Weber-Rezeption nach 1964

Johannes Winckelmann
Friedrich H. Tenbruck
Wolfgang J. Mommsen

M. Rainer Lepsius (geb. 1928)
Wolfgang Schluchter (geb. 1938)
Guenther Roth (geb. 1931)

Stefan Breuer (geb. 1948)
Wilhelm Hennis (geb. 1923)
Dirk Kaesler (geb. 1944)
Hubert Treiber (geb. 1942)
Johannes Weiß (geb. 1941)

Jürgen Habermas

Die Herausgeber der MWG seit 1974

Horst Baier (geb. 1933)
M. Rainer Lepsius
Wolfgang J. Mommsen
Wolfgang Schluchter
Johannes Winckelmann (bis 1985)

PATRIMONIALISM AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT: A REEXAMINATION OF MAX WEBER'S THEORIES OF THE CITY

- Rangal Sen *

Introduction

'Culture, Patrimonialism and Religion' might constitute quite appropriately a unique subject matter for revisiting Max Weber. Students of Sociology are fully aware of the fact that Max Weber had dealt with these aspects of human civilization and society often passionately as well as very intelligently. The present paper makes a modest attempt to examine whether there is any relationship between Patrimonialism and urban development. And in this connection, a critical review of Max Weber's theories of the city becomes imperative. Weber presents both 'Patrimonialism' and 'City' as two different forms of domination. While Weber puts Patrimonialism in the category of legitimate domination he considers city as a kind of non-legitimate one. Analyzing relationship between Patrimonialism and urban development Weber's main focus of interest is conspicuously the rise of capitalism since city is primarily characterized as a centre of trade and commerce. He discusses patrimonial monopoly and capitalist privileges from that perspective.

In the preparation of this article I have tried my best to consult Max Weber's four major works, such as *Economy and Society*, 3 vols. (1968)-an English translation of German classic: *Wirtschaft and Gesellschaft* (1913), *The City* (1958), first published in German in 1921, *The Agrarian Sociology of ancient Civilizations* (1976), an English version of German (1909), and *General Economic History* (1927) which is based on a series of lectures in a course Weber gave at Munich University in the winter of 1919-20 just before his death. But although for writing this article necessary facts are being collected from the above mentioned four works it must be admitted that this is heavily relied upon his monumental book: *Economy and Society*, vol 2 (chapters: XII, XIII and XVI). It would not be out of context if I mention here the fact that what is *Capital* (3 vols.) to Karl Marx, *Economy and Society* (3 vols.) is to Max Weber. Moreover, how a happy coincidence is the fact that these two treatises of Marx and Weber are the byproducts of *Grundrisse*. For Marx, it (1857-58) was the *Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, translated with a foreword by Martin Nicolaus (1973), but Weber's work needed extraordinary industry and intellect of as many as ten eminent Sociologists for English translation of whom G. Roth and C. Wittich were the editors. Besides, Marx and Weber have another pertinent parallel so far as their works are concerned. Since Weber's tract *General Economic History* contains an illuminating discussion of feudal and capitalist institutions it is really comparable with Marx's *Pre-capitalist Economic Formations*, translated and edited by Jack Cohen and E. J. Hobsbawm respectively in 1964 with a lengthy introduction by the latter. In fact, both Marx and Weber drew to a great extent on the same tradition of scholarship and thus aimed essentially at showing the developments leading to Capitalism including that of the Urban Community. Yet it cannot be said that their approach is wholly same. When they are equally criticizing the culture of capitalism Weber describes its development in terms of 'rationalization' and Marx in terms of 'alienation' (Lowith 1982:26).

Three intellectual sources shaped Weber's thinking: historicism, hermeneutic, *realpolitik*, i.e. in other words, history as a science of reality, interpretation of texts leading to the development of the 'ideal type'- an important tool of Weber's method, and his concept of '*verstehen*' i.e. understanding,

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and power politics. Weber's ideas of rethinking and structure were developed into a general method of the cultural sciences by Wilhelm Dilthey. What is important is that Weber used Dilthey's ideas to integrate all the varied aspects of cultural life- not the least of his aims being 'to break the Marxist Schema' (Weber 1976:14-20). It must be emphasized here that Weber's historicism separates him from the many other German scholars of different tendencies.

A glance at a survey of German constitutional theory, for example, shows that as early as 1820 Von Haller distinguished three basic types of states: Patrimonial, military, and theocratic; and in 1859 Von Mohl described six types: Patriarchal, Patrimonial, theocratic, classical, legal, and despotic. Weber being a graduate of the Berlin Law faculty, was undoubtedly familiar with these writings and, in fact, used some of the terms mentioned above in his own works. Furthermore, one of the classic typologies of all time, Tonnies' distinction between '*Gemeinschaft*' and '*Gesellschaft*' (in English: 'Community' and 'Society'), which was propounded as early as 1887 was also known to Weber (1864-1920). In 1853 August Von Rochau developed the concept of '*Realpolitik*'. After 1860 this tendency was strengthened by a new set of ideas deriving from Darwinism which surprisingly influenced both Marx and Weber (Weber 1976: 20-22). Thus we can say that Weber's concepts of 'Patrimonialism' as a form of state and 'City' as a type of autonomous urban community had their intellectual antecedents. Moreover, Weber conceives 'City' as a kind of economy- the idea which he had borrowed from Karl Bucher who in 1893 had published a general outline of economic history, *The Rise of the National Economy*. His thesis was that Antiquity was always dominated by 'house economy', in which production, exchange, and consumption all occurred within great households. The next higher stage of economic organization, city economy, did not appear until mediaeval times, and only in the modern age did the highest form of economic organization, the national economy, emerge (Weber 1976:26-27). The corresponding types of society or social structure of the above-mentioned three economies, according to both Weber and Marx, may be termed as ancient, feudal and capitalist respectively.

Features of Patrimonialism

Let me now embark upon the discussion of the problem under review on the basis of above premise. According to Max Weber, Patrimonialism is distinguished from Patriarchalism. The roots of patriarchal domination grew out of the master's authority over his household. Patrimonial domination is a special case of patriarchal domination. But under bureaucratic domination the norms are established rationally. Bureaucratic domination and power has legitimate authority, whereas under patriarchal domination legitimacy of the master's order is guaranteed by personal subjection. As early as in Babylonian times freemen entered into a "work contract" by selling themselves into slavery, which was considered by Weber as a precursor of "adoption". Two basic elements of patriarchal authority are piety toward tradition and toward the master. However, our present purpose is to examine that form of domination which developed on the basis of the *oikos* and therefore of differentiated patriarchal power: patrimonial domination. (Weber 1968: 1006-11). Patrimonial conditions have had an extraordinary impact as the basis of political structures. As we witness, Egypt almost appears as a single effective *oikos* patrimonially ruled by the pharaoh. The Egyptian administration always contained characteristics of the *oikos* economy. The ancient Inca state of Latin America under the 'Asiatic Mode of Production', according to Marx, was based on forced labour. Yet, we shall actually speak of a Patrimonial state when the prince exercises his political power over his subjects which is not discretionary. The majority of all "great states" of the East had fairly strong patrimonial character until and even after the beginning of the modern times. In all ancient, Asian and medieval large-scale states which are dependent upon a natural economy (i.e. house economy) the ruler is typically maintained in such a manner that the demands for food, clothing, armour and other needs are apportioned in kind. A communal economy (*Gemein-Wirtschaft*) which relies on payment and delivery in kind is the primary form of satisfying the necessities of patrimonial political structures. But there were economic differences: the Persian royal household was a heavy burden for the city in which the king resided, whereas the Greek

Hellenistic royal household which was based on money economy was a source of income for the city. With the development of trade and of money economy the patrimonial ruler may satisfy his economic needs no longer through his *oikos* but through profit-oriented monopolism. This happened on a vast scale in Egypt, where even the Pharaoh of the early period of natural economy carried on trade for his own account; in the Ptolemaic period and even more so under Roman rule a great many diverse monopolies and different forms of tax replaced the old liturgical methods (Weber 1968: 1013-14).

However, the sources of power under both patrimonial and non-patrimonial states were the armies. These troops may consist of: 1) Patrimonial slaves, retainers living on allowances, or *Coloni*. Egyptian Pharaohs and Mesopotamian Kings, as well as powerful private lords in Antiquity (for example, the Roman nobility) and in the Middle Ages (*seniores*), employed their *coloni* as personal troops; in the orient serfs branded with the lord's property mark were also used. Therefore, the patrimonial prince regularly sought to base his power over political subjects on troops specifically raised for this purpose. This military force may be made up: 2) of slaves who are actually alienated from agricultural production. Indeed, after the final dissolution in 833 A.D. of the Arabian, tribally organized theocratic levy, the Caliphate and most oriental products of its disintegration relied for centuries on armies of purchased slaves. The use of Turkish slaves by the Abbasids and of purchased slave soldiers in Egypt turned out very differently. The feudalization of the economy was facilitated when troops were assigned the tax yield of land, and eventually land was transferred to them as service holdings which made them landowners. 3) The Ottoman rulers, who until the 14th century were really supported only by the Anatolian levies, restored for the first time in 1330 to the famous conscription of boys into army. 4) The use of mercenaries in early Antiquity who are primarily paid in kind, but the real incentive was always given in precious metals. The prince therefore had to have monetary revenues for the mercenaries, which were raised either by trading or by producing goods for the market. In both cases, a money economy had to exist. In the oriental as well as the occidental states since the beginning of modern times we observe a peculiar phenomenon: The opportunities for the military monarchy of a despot backed by mercenaries increase significantly with the advance of money economy. In the orient the military monarchy has ever remained the typical national form of domination, and in the occident the *signori* of the Italian cities. 5) The Patrimonial ruler may also rely on persons who have been *granted -landlots*, just like manorial peasants, but instead of economic services they need render only military ones. The monarchical troops in the ancient orient were partly recruited in this manner, such as the "warrior caste" of Egypt and the Mesopotamian fief-warriors. 6) For the solidarity of interests that developed between the ruler and his "soldiers" (literally, "hired men") a sufficiently strong system of selecting the troops became necessary, which is, of course, without tribal heterogeneity. Wherever the patrimonial ruler did not recruit his army from tribal aliens or pariah castes (as in the case of India) but from subjects, he adhered to fairly some definite social criteria. To this extent the patrimonial ruler regularly based his military power upon the property-less, non-privileged and rural masses. Thus he disarmed his potential competitors for domination. The feudal army of the Middle Ages just as the Spartan army of hoplites are such examples. Both armies were founded on the economic necessity of the peasants and a military technology which suited the military training of a dominant stratum. But the army of the patrimonial prince is based upon the fact that the propertied strata were generally the trading and craft bourgeoisie of ancient and medieval cities. Hence the development of patrimonialism and of military monarchy is not only a consequence of purely political circumstances, as in the Roman empire-but also very often a result of economic changes. The patrimonial ruler customarily draws the economically and socially privileged strata over to his side. Finally, there is a decisive economic condition for the degree to which the royal army is "patrimonial", which means, a purely personal army of the prince. In the Roman empire this phenomenon was the consequence of the militarism of the *Severans* and under Oriental Sultanism it was a regular feature. The result was the sudden collapse of a patrimonial regime and equally sudden rise of a new one, which led to great political instability (Weber 1968: 1015-20).

Yet, as a rule, the patrimonial ruler is linked with the ruled through a consensual community which also exists apart from his independent military force and which is rooted in the belief that the powers of the ruler are legitimate in so far as they are traditional. They are called "political subjects" legitimately ruled by a patrimonial prince. The bearing of arms also obliges the political subjects to follow the princes' call to arms. Thus in the case of the rebellious German peasants of the 16th century the traditional possession of arms was still important. The battles in the Hundred Years' War were fought not only by knights but very prominently also by the English yeomanry, and a great many patrimonial forces were intermediate between a patrimonial army proper and a levy. The patrimonial satisfaction of the public wants has its distinctive features, which also occur, in the other forms of domination. The liturgical meeting of the ruler's Politico-economic needs is most highly developed in the patrimonial state in the orient. Sometimes it has been assumed that even the Indian castes were at least in part of liturgical origin, but there is no sufficient basis for this opinion. It is also very doubtful to what extent the use of the early medieval guilds for military and political purposes was a really important factor in the widespread development of the guild system. In the Indian case the primary influence must definitely be ascribed to magic-religious and status differences; in that of the guilds voluntary association played the major role. Accordingly, liturgical methods of meeting public needs prevailed particularly in the orient, but with less consistency these methods were also applied in the occident (Weber 1968: 1020-23).

Patrimonial officialdom may develop bureaucratic features with increasing functional division and rationalization. But the genuinely patrimonial office differs sociologically from the bureaucratic one the more distinctly, the more purely each type has been articulated. The patrimonial office lacks above all the bureaucratic separation of the "private" and the "public" sphere which is an essential element of the concept of the "civil society". It is interesting to note that it was Plato who first introduced the notion of the "public" as distinct from the "private". Thus we can find Weber's idea of "civil society" in the above manner. But under patrimonialism political administration is treated as a purely personal affair of the ruler, and political power is considered part of his personal property, which can be exploited by means of contributions and fees. The distribution of these sources of income provides a strong incentive for the gradual delimitation of administrative jurisdictions, which was at first almost non-existent in the political sphere of the patrimonial state. To protect their fees the English lawyers, for example, insisted upon the appointment of judges exclusively from their midst and upon admission to their own ranks exclusively of apprentices trained in law offices. In contrast to other countries, the university graduates trained in Roman law were thus excluded. Consequently for the sake of fees the secular courts fought with the ecclesiastic ones. Thus wherever the administration of a large political realm is patrimonial, every attempt at identifying "Jurisdictions" is lost in a maze of official titles whose meaning seems to change quite arbitrarily; witness Assyria even during the period of its greatest expansion. The conflict between tradition and the legal rights of patrimonial rulers is everywhere irreconcilable wherever they overlap. However, all patrimonial service regulations are ultimately nothing but purely subjective rights and privileges of individuals deriving from the ruler's grant or favour. It lacks the objective norms of the bureaucratic state (Weber 1968: 1028-31).

The maintenance in the ruler's household was managed by the granting of benefices or fiefs to patrimonial officials who had their own household. The important institution of benefice implies a definite "right to the office", which has had the most diverse forms. At first, the benefice was, as in Egypt, Assyria and China, an allowance in kind from the depots and granaries of the ruler (King or God), as a rule for life. Later these allowances became alienable and were negotiable even in fractions (for example, for single days of each month); thus they were something like forerunners, at the stage of natural economy, of modern government bonds. We shall call this type benefices in kind. The second type is the fee benefice: the assignment of certain fees which the ruler or his representative can expect for official acts. It is really based on revenues of a relatively extra-patrimonial origin. In the classical Antiquity this kind of benefice was subject to purely commercial transactions. A large part of those priestly positions which had the character of an "office" (and not of a free profession) were publicly sold in the ancient Greek city-states. It is not known to what

extent the trading of benefices was practiced in Egypt and other ancient civilizations of the orient. Finally, the benefice could also take the form of a landed benefice assigning office or service land (for example, jagir-land especially in Mughal India.) for the incumbents' own use. This approximates the fief and gives the benefice-holder greater autonomy from the lord. It was clear, however, that in the case of a secular official who had a family the separation immediately resulted in a drive for hereditary instead of merely lifelong appropriation of the benefice. The appropriation of the benefices took place particularly in the early period of the modern patrimonial-bureaucratic state. This process occurred everywhere, most strongly in France and to a lesser extent in England. In this way the benefice became a patrimonial possession of the leaseholder or purchaser with the most diverse arrangements, including hereditability and alienability. It should be noted here that it was only on August 4, 1789 the French Revolution eradicated office appropriation. By and large the Christian clergy in the Middle Ages was maintained through endowment with land or fee benefices. Originally the church had been supported by the offerings of the community. This was the normal state of affairs in the old church of the cities, which were then the bearers of Christianity. At this stage, the church was a patriarchally modified bureaucracy. But in the occident the urban character of religion eventually disappeared and Christianity spread into the countryside, which was still dominated by natural economy. This actually happened also in the case of Islam which originated as an urban Cult in the city of Mecca and then expanded to peripheral tribal or rural areas of the Arab countries. So far as Christianity is concerned, some of the clergymen gave up their urban residence, especially in northern Europe. Many of the churches were secularly owned, either by the peasant community or the manorial lord and thereby the clergymen frequently became the latter's dependents. Basically the bishops could not prevent the prebendalization of clerical positions. Thus the development of the church hierarchy turned toward decentralization and appropriation of patronage by the secular rulers. This phenomenon marked an important phase in the establishment of the urban bureaucracy, since the subsequent separation of church and state abolished the clerical system of allegiance. Thus the benefice became one of the basic issues in the cultural conflict between church and secular state power of the 14th and 15th century. For throughout the Middle Ages the clerical benefice was the constant resource serving the purpose of "high culture". Especially in the later Middle Ages, up to the reformation (1529) and counter-Reformation, the benefice developed into the material foundation of that class which was then the bearer of "high culture". By endowing the universities with the disposal over benefices the clerical authority made possible the rise of that medieval stratum of intellectuals who were engaged in the scientific work in the cities. The secularization of modern times specially in western Europe fixed this prebendal character even more when the economic maintenance of the church and of its officials was transferred to the state exchequer. Only the modern struggles between secular states and the church, and especially the separation of church and state, provided the clerical authority with the opportunity to abolish the "right to the office". Similar developments were widespread all over the world. We have already mentioned quite significant beginnings in classical Antiquity. But in ancient China the office benefice was not appropriated, and therefore it never became legally marketable. However, just as in the occident the obtainment of a benefice is the goal of education and earning academic degrees in China including all other ancient civilizations of the orient. The benefice of the Islamic *ulemas*, that means, of the status group of examined aspirants for the offices of the *kadi* (Judge), *mufti* (Islamic Jurists) and *Imam* (Islamic practitioners), was often granted only for a short time, not exceeding one and a half year. (Weber 1968: 1032-37).

In a patrimonial state every prebendal decentralization of the administration, every jurisdictional delimitation caused by the distribution of sources of fee incomes among competitors, and even more so every appropriation of benefices signifies not rationalization but typification. Thus the patrimonial state as a whole may tend more toward the stereotyped or more toward the arbitrary pattern. The former can be more frequently found in the occident, the latter to a large extent in the orient. In the course of this typification the old court officials became purely representative dignitaries and benefice-holding *sinecurists*. The more appropriation takes place, the less does the patrimonial state operate either according to the concept of jurisdiction or to that of the "agency" in the contemporary sense. The separation of public and private matters, of public and private

property and powers was carried through more or less only in the arbitrary type of patrimonialism; the separation disappeared with increasing prebendalization and appropriation. In the later periods of oriental history, especially under the Islam, the separation of the office of the military commander (*amir*) from that of the tax collector and tax farmer (*amil*), as found during the Mughal rule in India, became a firm principle of all strong governments. It has been pointed out correctly that nearly every case of a permanent merger of these two jurisdictions, that means, the fusion of the military and economic power of an administrative district in the hands of one person (for example, generally noticed in the bordering districts of present Bangladesh during the Mughal rule), soon tended to encourage the disengagement of local administrator from the central authority (Weber 1968: 1038-44).

The first consistent patrimonial-bureaucratic administration known to us existed in ancient Egypt. Originally it was solely staffed with royal clients-servants attached to the Pharaoh's court. Later, however, officials also had to be recruited from the outside, from the ranks of the only class technically suited, the scribes, who thereby entered into patrimonial dependency. It is interesting to note here that almost a similar phenomenon might be observed in the rise of Hindu *Kayastha* sub-caste as a class or status group of scribes during the pre-Mughal Muslim rule in Bengal, who received immense favour from their patrons. Islam especially in Bengal utilized castes of scribes in opposition to the Brahmins. This phase of Indian administrative history led to the development of various prebends en masse. Above all, it led to the emergence of a stratum of landlords, which developed out of tax farming and military prebendalization. Max Weber maintains that feudal relations were also to be found in India, but they were not decisive for the formation either of a nobility or landlordism. In India, as in the orient generally, a characteristic *seignior* developed rather out of tax farming and the military and fiscal prebends of a far more bureaucratic state. The oriental *seignior* therefore remained in essence, a "prebend" and did not become a "fief"; not feudalization, but prebendalization of the patrimonial state occurred. Similarly, the vascillation of social structure and political organization created a fluid situation. When the tendency toward feudalization was ascendant the king, as usual, made use of old distinguished secular or priestly nobles; when the tendency toward patrimonialism was ascendant the appointed lower class aspirants to positions of political power. Patrimonialism broke the old monopoly of offices by the knighthood. It corresponds to the nature of patrimonial states everywhere and particularly to the oriental patriarchalism. As a rule, political authority is a preponderant advantage in the competition for social rank. This is particularly true of the great caste of scribes as, for example, the purely bureaucratic *kayastha* in Bengal where the *Sena* dynasty has been organized in patrimonial bureaucratic fashion (Weber 1958: 69-75).

As early as the old kingdom of Egypt the entire people was pressed into a hierarchy of clientage. This development was propelled by the overriding importance of systematic centralized river-regulation and of the construction projects during the long season in which the absence of agricultural work permitted drafting on an unprecedented scale. The state was based on compulsory labour. The Pharaoh maintained his *oikos* through his own enterprises and trade monopolies, the domestic production of unfree craft labour, the agricultural output of the *coloni*, and contributions. There was a rudimentary market economy. However, an intermediate period of feudalism existed in the Middle Kingdom of Egypt where there were no castes in the specific sense of the word. The army was also patrimonial, and this was decisive for power position of the Pharaohs. The geographic conditions, especially the comfortable river road and the objective necessity of uniform river regulation, preserved territorial unity of ancient Egypt. The ancient Chinese empire constituted an essentially different type. Here too the power of patrimonial officialdom was based on river regulation, particularly canal construction-but primarily for transportation. In addition, the patrimonial bureaucracy benefited from the even more complete absence of a landed nobility than was the case in Egypt. Although, in practice, some impure vocations were hereditary, otherwise there is not a trace of a caste system or of other status or hereditary privileges. In the main, patrimonial officialdom was confronted only by the sibs as autochthonous power, aside from merchant and craft guilds. Besides, the Chinese imperial regime

introduced something new: for the first time in history there appear official qualifying examinations and official certificates of conduct. Nevertheless, Chinese officialdom did not develop into a modern bureaucracy. The specifically modern concept of the functional association and of specialized officialdom would have run counter to everything characteristically Chinese and to all the status trends of Chinese officialdom. The Confucian maxim that a refined man was not a tool—the ethical ideal of universal personal self-perfection, so radically opposed to the occidental notion of a specific vocation—stood in the way of professional schooling and specialized competencies. Just as patrimonialism has its genesis in the piety of the children of the house toward the patriarch's authority, so Confucianism bases the subordination of the officials to the ruler. In central and East Europe filial piety plays as the foundation of all political virtues in strictly patriarchal Lutherism, but Confucianism elaborated this complex of ideas much more consistently. This development in Chinese patrimonialism was of course aided by the lack of a landowning seigneurial stratum (Weber 1968: 1044-50).

The dependency of the “governors” of most oriental and Asian empires was in practice always unstable because of their dual positions. The religious unity of the caliphate did not prevent the disintegration of the purely secular Sultanate, a creation of the slave-generals, into sub-empires. Partly for that reason hereditary division never became customary in the Islamic orient. It also did not exist in the ancient orient; the imperative unity of a state-controlled irrigation economy was probably the major technical reason for preserving the principle of indivisibility, which, however, most likely had its historical origin in the initial character of kingship as the rulership of a town. For in contrast to rural territorial domination, the rulership of a town is technically not at all divisible, or only under great difficulties. At any rate, the absence of hereditary division in the oriental patrimonial monarchies had religious and administrative and, in particular, technical and military reasons (Weber 1968: 1051-54). The continuous struggle of the central power with the various centrifugal local powers creates a specific problem for patrimonialism. In contrast to China and to Egypt this happened in the ancient and medieval patrimonial “states” of the Near East and most prominently in the occident since the Roman Empire. To some extent for the Near Eastern state, and as a rule for the Hellenistic and the Imperial Roman state, the specific means of creating a local administrative apparatus was the founding of a city. We also find a similar phenomenon in China. We shall later deal with the meanings which the foundation of cities had in these various cases: there were indeed great differences. Generally speaking, the economic limits in time and space of city foundation in the Roman Empire also became the boundary lines for the traditional structure of ancient culture. (Weber 1968: 1051-55)

The unstable unity of the Persian Empire for two centuries was made possible through disarmament and theocratic rule, as in the cases of the Jews and of Egypt. Moreover, strong national differences and collisions of interest of local notables were exploited. In the Babylonian and Persian Empire we find at least traces of those typical clashes between local notables and central powers which later became one of the most important determinants of western medieval development. The local landlords demand especially immunity: exemption from interference on the part of the ruler's administrative officials on their own land. Privileges of immunity which satisfy such claims in varying degrees can be found in Egypt as early as the 3rd millennium where they were granted to temples and officials; in the Babylonian empire they were also granted to private landowners. These pretensions lead to the exemption of the *Latifundia* from the communal associations-village communes and often also cities-set up by the patrimonial ruler as the bearers of rights and duties. The monarchy of late Antiquity, especially of Byzantium, likewise had to make concessions to regional interests. Even military recruitment became increasingly regional from the 4th century on. The urban administration and the manorial administration put all purely local affairs into the hands of the local notables. But these strata were after all controlled by the late Roman and Byzantine central power. This was completely lacking in the occident. (Weber 1968:1056-57).

The struggle between the patrimonial prince and the natural tendencies of the local patrimonial interests had the most diverse consequences. The prince had primarily a fiscal and military interest

while the local patrimonial lords wanted to represent the peasants in all dealings with the prince. In England this situation resulted in the emergence of the *justices of the peace*, an institution whose characteristic features were shaped during the great wars with France. Interestingly enough, we also encounter unemployment problem and rising of food prices, which was due to the expansion of the money economy. The characteristic fusion of the rural and urban rentier strata in the type of the gentleman (compare *Hindu Bhadrak* category of Bengal) was greatly facilitated by their common ties to the office of the justices of the peace. Administration by justices of the peace practically reduced all local administrative bodies outside the cities almost to insignificance. It should be pointed out here that already before the penetration of Puritanism in England the increasing fusion of the landed class with specifically bourgeois, urban rentier and active business strata took place. Similar situation became observable in the fusion of nobility and *popolo grasso* in Italy. But the modern type of gentleman developed out of the older one only under the influence of Puritanism (compare the founding of the *Brahma Samaj* in 1828 at Calcutta on the basis of the monotheistic creed of *Brahmoism* as propagated by Raja Rammohun Roy of Bengal who is regarded as the architect of modern India). Administration by unrecompensed justices of the peace who were educated laymen was technically no longer feasible under the conditions of the modern city life (Weber 1968: 1058-64).

The structure of feudal relationships can be contrasted with the wide range of discretion and the related instability of power positions under pure patrimonialism. Occidental feudalism is a marginal case of patrimonialism that tends toward stereotyped and fixed relationships between lord and vassal. We can now classify "feudal" relationships in the broad sense of the word as follows: 1) "Liturgic" feudalism: soldiers provided with land, frontier guards, peasants with specific military duties; 2) "Patrimonial" feudalism, a) "manorial": levies of *coloni* (for example, Roman nobility and Egyptian Pharaoh) : b) "Servile" : slaves (for instance, ancient Babylonian and Egyptian armies and Arabian private army in the Middle Ages); c) "Gentile" : hereditary clients as private soldiers (Roman nobility); 3) "Free" feudalism, a) "Vassalic", characterized by personal fealty with out the grant of manorial rights (Japanese *Samurai*); b) "Prebendal": without personal fealty, but with the grant of manorial rights and tax revenues (Middle East, including the Turkish fiefs); c) "Feudatory" : personal fealty and fief combined (occident); d) "Urban": characterized by communal association of warriors, based on manorial land allotted to the individual (the typical Hellenic *Polis* of the Spartan type). Of the above-mentioned three major forms of feudalism including their respective ramifications, according to Max Weber, "free" feudalism that existed only in the occident is the "ideal type" of feudalism, which did not develop in the orient where, according to Karl Marx, the "Asiatic Mode of Production" had to evolve. Under fully developed feudalism there was a "hierarchy" in two respects: first, the Seigneurial rights derived from the supreme ruler as the source of power, which were transferable as full fiefs; Second, there was a social rank-order according to the level of subinfeudation as found especially in Bengal land system after the introduction of the Permanent Settlement Act of 1793 by Cornwallis. (Weber 1968:1070-79).

There was a transition from feudalism to bureaucracy through the *Polity of Estates* (Standestaat) in the occident. Feudalism in estate-type patrimonialism, a marginal case that contrasts with patriarchal patrimonialism. Patrimonial or feudal polities also influenced the general cultural development, particularly in the field of education. There was a connection between education and domination. Typically, certain artistic creations (in literature, music and visual arts) become a means of self-glorification and establish and preserve the nimbus of the dominant stratum vis-à-vis the ruled. Thus "refinement" is added first to the purely military-gymnastic training, resulting into a complex type of "cultivation" which is diametrically opposite to specialized education in a bureaucratic regime. Wherever domination is prebendally organized, education tends to be intellectualist-literary, which is intrinsically related to the bureaucratic ideal of transmitting specialized knowledge, particularly prevalent in ancient China. According to Max Weber, patrimonialism is compatible with household and market economy, petty-bourgeois and manorial agriculture, absence and presence of capitalist economy. The well-known Marxist statement that the hand-mill requires feudalism just as the steam-mill necessitates capitalism is at most correct in

its second part, and then only partially. The hand-mill has lived through all conceivable economic structures and political "superstructures". Besides, there was an impact of trade on the development of patrimonialism. The royal trade monopoly can be found all over the world. The location of most of the oldest large patrimonial polities is closely connected with the function of trade in the cities. The subsequent development toward the monopolization of "ground-rent" is very often codetermined by trade gains. The situation is usually not different with regard to the monopolistic land control of the aristocracy in maritime states: debt-serfs are an important part of agricultural labour in Hellenic Antiquity and probably also in the ancient orient. They till the soil for the urban patriciate for a share in the crops. Direct and indirect trade gains provide the urban patriciate with the means for accumulating land and people. In a natural economy even the moderate possession of precious metals was extraordinarily important for the rise and the power position of a state. It is true that trade typically created the "municipal feudalism" of a seigneurial patriciate, especially in the Mediterranean area. However, in Japan and India as well as in the occident and in the Islamic orient, feudalization was closely related to the slow progress, and often to the decline, of the market economy. The "financier" is already known in the period of Hammurabi and the formation of trade capital is feasible under almost all conditions of domination, especially under patrimonialism. But it is different from industrial capitalism. Here the characteristic features of patrimonial capitalism emerged-and the bureaucracy of "Enlightened Despotism" was still as patrimonial as was the basic conception of the "state" on which it rested. The feudal order has a different effect upon the economy than does patrimonialism, which in part furthers and in part deflects modern capitalism. The patrimonial state offers the whole realm of the ruler's discretion as a hunting ground for accumulating wealth. Patrimonialism gives free rein to the enrichment of the ruler himself, the court officials, favourites, governors, mandarins, tax collectors, influence peddlers, and the big merchants and financiers who function as tax-farmers, purveyors and creditors. Patriarchal patrimonialism is much more tolerant than feudalism toward social mobility and the acquisition of wealth. Diverse circumstances determine the extent to which patrimonialism tends toward more monopolies of its own, and therefore toward hostility to private capitalism. The two most important factors are political: 1) The very structure of patrimonial domination; 2) The privileges of private capital in patrimonial states. Politically privileged capitalism flourished in classical Antiquity, as long as several city-states competed for supremacy and survival; in China, too, it seems to have developed in the corresponding past. It thrived during the age of mercantilism in the occident, when the modern states engaged themselves in political competition. (Weber1968;1085-1103).

Among the most important objects of government monopolies is coinage, which was controlled by the patrimonial rulers primarily for purely fiscal purposes. In the Antiquity as well as in the Middle Ages the demand for rational coinage emanated in the cities, and thus urban development in the occidental sense, specially the rise of independent crafts and indigenous retail trade, not wholesale trade, was reflected in the rationalization of coinage. The structure of domination affected the general habits of the peoples more by virtue of the ethos which it established than through the creation of the technical means of commerce. Loyalty and personal fealty are also at the root of many plebeian forms of patrimonial or liturgical feudalism (slave armies, soldiers settled as cleruchs, peasants or frontier guards, and especially levies of clients and *coloni*). On the other hand, status honour counts for much in the army of "urban feudalism". These features were generally characteristic of the early Hellenic armies of *hoplites*. But the personal relationship of fealty was absent. In the age of the Crusades (1095-1291) prebendal feudalism of the orient sustained a sense of Kinghtly status, but on the whole it remained patriarchal rulership in character. The combination of honour and fealty was only known in occidental feudalism and Japanese "vassalic" feudalism. Both have in common with Hellenic urban feudalism a special status education which aims at the inculcation of ethos based on status honour. (Weber 1968: 1103-1105).

Stages of Urban Development

There are two sociological propositions pertaining to the idea of civilization. These are: 'civilization is an agricultural phenomenon'; 'civilization is an urban phenomenon'. Both are equally correct and relevant for comprehension of the concept of city since it is generally considered as the centre of civilization. These statements actually refer to the nature and growth of human civilization. Max Weber himself probably poses this question from that perspective when he appears to maintain that the two ancient civilizations of the occident are "coastal" (i.e. classical Antiquity of Greece and Rome) while the four ancient civilizations of the orient are "riverine" (i.e. Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, and India). The former are located on the coasts of the Mediterranean sea whereas the latter's corresponding locations are the valleys of the great rivers of the Nile, the Euphrates and the Tigris, the Huang Ho and the Indus. The development of the coastal civilizations of the west is mainly attributed to the relatively quicker introduction of commerce and trade. On the other hand, prosperity of the river-valley civilizations of the East is primarily facilitated by the easier beginning of agriculture in the fertile land of the river-valleys. But the cities everywhere emerged as the locus of civilization in the ancient period of world history. (Weber 1976: 40).

It is generally assumed that there are certain stages of organization which were recapitulated by all the peoples in Antiquity from the Seine to the Euphrates among whom urban centres came into being. These stages are: 1) First, Walls existed to provide defence against attack, and it was within these walls that cities later arose, but at this stage household and village continued to be the centres of economic life. Clan, cult and military associations still provided for security and shaped political and religious institutions. 2) Next there appeared a form of settlement with more urban characteristics-the fortress whose head was a king, elevated above his subjects by possession of land, slaves, herds and treasure. Two factors were generally necessary for establishment of a fortress kingdom: a) fruitful land, able to support rent payments; b) profit from commerce. It means that agriculture and commerce are the two economic bases of the rise of cities or, in other words, civilization. 3) The next stage is represented by the aristocratic city-states founded among the Mediterranean peoples in Antiquity. Aristocratic clans controlled a citadel. This stage too was reached only where two factors were present: a) rich land, to sustain rental payments; b) proximity to a coast, to permit profits from commerce. It was at this time that the feudal nobility of the old fortress kingdom emancipated itself from royal authority and constituted itself as an autonomous, urban community, in which rank was determined by military criteria and rule was exercised either by a king who was no more than first among equals or else-and this usually developed with time-by elected magistrates. In any case, however, these cities were not administered by bureaucracies, a fact of decisive importance. It should be noted here that the urban character of these communities distinguished the development of antiquity from the analogous development of feudalism in the medieval European continent, although in Italy early medieval institutions were somewhat similar. However, the aristocratic city was in fact a league of great 'clans'. In this form of society labour-power was the debt-slave, for the aristocracy was at first a class of moneylenders and then became a class of landowners living on rents. The fact that moneylenders usually became landowners – a phenomenon of which is still prevalent in predominantly agrarian Bangladesh. Even in her urban areas this is not altogether absent. 4) Sometimes the fortress kingdom developed in a different direction stated above. When the king gained sufficient economic resources to support his army and retinue, a situation compelled him to create a bureaucracy entirely subordinate to himself and organized on hierarchical principles. The city then became no more than the royal capital where his residence and court were located. But often the capital had no autonomy as in Egypt, whereas Babylon enjoyed a degree of unpolitical local autonomy. The decisive factor here was the manner in which the needs of the royal household were met-that is, whether through forced labour services or through 'taxes'. One can therefore say that the system would tend towards one or another of two types: a regime based on forced labour or one relied on tribute. Generally the former developed out of the latter, and in turn it was transformed by a process of rationalization', as Max Weber means, into the tax- and- liturgy state (Weber 1976:69-72).

Commerce played a crucial role in the urban development of types 2 and 3, but there were of course many variations of these 'pure' types. The type 2 always appeared only when the chief

monopolized foreign trade or at least was able to tax it. Accumulation of hoards went hand in hand with the economic subjection of the peasantry. Whether further development tended towards types 3 (aristocratic *polis*) or 4 (bureaucratic city kingdom) evidently dependent upon the interaction of a complex of factors, some of them geographic, others purely historical. In either case, however, the economic burdens laid upon the populace to satisfy the needs of the government were in inverse proportion to the development of private domestic trade. But as soon as either regime (type 3 or 4) could depend mainly on taxes it then took a natural attitude towards transfers of land. There were also limitations connected with estate tenure (in the aristocratic *polis*) or military obligations (in the monarchical city). Then under bureaucratic monarchy (type 4) the ruler could rely upon 'his own' army as well as a bureaucratic fiscal system-leading to granting full freedom of trade in land. The aristocratic families favoured this so far as peasant property was concerned for their position depended in part on the practice of usury. On the other hand, despotic rulers had good reason to oppose the development of autonomous patrimonial lordships. In fact, type 4 was the bureaucratic city kingdom or bureaucratic river kingdom; in it the army and bureaucracy 'belonged' to the ruler, while his subjects owed him labour services and tribute. As the state's needs were met in increasingly rationalized manner a new form of state appeared, namely 5) The authoritarian liturgical state, in which the state's necessities were met by a carefully contrived system of duties divided into following three categories: a) labour services rendered directly to the court and state; b) monopolies based upon labour services and upon coercive laws of different forms; and c) taxes, paid mainly in money or by delivery of goods of money value, but accompanied by a punitive system so often typical of oriental despots. This type of state did not put limits on commerce, unless its fiscal interests were threatened. Rather it fostered commerce by direct action whenever this meant increased revenue. 'Enlightened despotism' of this sort generally developed in the ancient Near East directly out of the more archaic forms of the bureaucratic city kingdom. On the other hand, the third type (aristocratic *polis*) led to a great variety of transitional forms, among them 6) The hoplite *polis* of Mediterranean lands, in which the domination of the clans over the city and of the city over rural areas was legally abolished. Participation in city's military institutions was relatively democratized, and with it full citizenship became entirely dependent on ownership of land. A self-equipped citizen army emerged, from which 7) the democratic citizen *polis* was established. Here army service and citizenship rights were no longer dependent on landownership. This tendency especially existed in the coastal cities of ancient Greece where all citizens could become eligible for office without regard to property qualification. But this situation could never become dominant even in the most radical period of the Athenian democracy. In the hoplite *polis* (type 6) the core of the army was recruited from the free citizen Yeomanry. The legislative programmes of hoplite *polis* were intended to stabilize the social order by the amelioration of class conflict between creditors (aristocrats) and debtors (peasants). Along with this went other efforts to reduce distinctions within the citizen body and to promote a 'civil economy'. Nevertheless, the interests of the wealthy and of the urban classes prevailed. By the time of the transition to type 7 all land had become entirely or almost fully transferable. (Weber 1976: 72-75).

However, in the Roman Empire, the final phase of classical Antiquity, the centres of culture and population (the latter being of military significance) shifted inland in the west away from the coasts. This meant fundamental changes in the 'base' and the 'superstructure', in Marxian sense, of the ancient society, which mark the transition to west European feudalism. The analysis of urban development just presented above depends upon the use of various 'types': peasant community, aristocratic *polis*, bureaucratic city kingdom, hoplite *polis*, citizen *polis*, liturgical monarchy. Needless to say, these types, according to Max Weber, seldom existed in complete isolation. They are 'pure types', concepts to be used in classifying individual states. More than an 'approximation' cannot be expected since actual state structure in the most important phases of history are too complex to be comprehended by so simple a classification as the one used here. Indeed, one historically important type has not been mentioned: the military peasant community constituted as a hoplite band. Examples of this type in Antiquity are numerous, but, to Max Weber, these are always secondary; that is, they appear in connection with the partial adoption of urban institutions, as among the ancient Hebrews. Finally, we can say that on the basis of historical sources known to us

that the 'river-valley' civilization of Mesopotamia which recently came under severe attack launched by the USA-UK axis, had passed through several thousand years of urban development, and Egypt-another 'river-valley' civilization, had a similar long history of semi-urban development. They are, in fact, liturgical monarchies. But when we first learn anything reliable about the 'coastal' civilization of Rome it has already gone through the phase of the citizen *polis*. For the Greek-the other 'coastal' civilization, on the other hand, we have much more fairly dependable evidences tracing back to the aristocratic *polis* or even to the stage of fortress kingdom. Thus because of this basic aspect of our knowledge of Antiquity, we must be able to combine individual characteristics from various conceptual 'types' in order to describe the history of urban development of a particular country in concrete terms. (Weber 1976: 77-78).

Besides, there is another historical factor which creates particular problem to the application of above-mentioned classification concerning urban development. That is the manifest or latent struggle between theocratic and secular-political forces, for often this conflict introduced military institutions from more than one of the above 'types'. Originally, there must have been a union of political and religious authority everywhere, but with the development of theology and an educated priesthood functional specialization became inevitable. Power remained in the hands of the priests, partly because of their wealth from temple lands and income, partly because the people looked to them for salvation from punishment for sacrilege, and partly because they were originally the only men of learning at that time. From this followed two important results: 1) Priests generally enjoyed a monopoly of legal knowledge permitting them to occupy a position of unassailable dominance; 2) Priests monopolized all education, particularly in the bureaucratic monarchies, where training was essential for employment in the administration. Throughout the Near East the Priesthood strove to gain control of education; we see this tendency clearly in the Egyptian New Empire, where the priests displaced secular officials and secular education.

Hence, certain conflicts are characteristic of early Antiquity: temple priesthood versus military nobility and royal authority in bureaucratic monarchies, commoners versus the monopoly of legal knowledge enjoyed by noble priests in aristocratic states. All sorts of alliances occurred. These conflicts influenced social and economic developments, especially in the cities during the periods of general secularization or restoration. There were important differences in this respect between Near Eastern and Western societies. (Weber 1976:78-79).

Theories of the City

The stages of urban development as determined by Max Weber actually incorporate both types and theories of the city. Louis Wirth, a well-known urban sociologist of America in his classic article entitled: "Urbanism as a way of life" refers to two important sources for the articulation of the theories of the city. The first one is written by Max Weber, and the second is prepared by Robert E. Park. Any way, we are not going to deal with latter's work since here we are mainly concerned with the former. Interestingly enough, Don Martindale who is one of the two translators and editors of Max Weber's *The City* (1921/1958) begins his prefatory remarks on the theory of the city with the following statement of Louis Wirth:

The closest approximations to a systematic theory of urbanism that we have are to be found in a penetrating essay, "Die Stadt", by Max Weber, and a memorable paper by Robert E. Park on "The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment." (Wirth 1938:8).

It should be noted that the English version of Max Weber's "Die Stadt" is "The City", wherein he exclusively engaged himself with the formulation of the theories of the city. According to Louis Wirth, the above-mentioned excellent contributions are far from constituting an ordered and coherent framework of the theories of the city. Even then we can comfortably confess the fact that

Weber's theories of the city are basically socio-historical while Park's theory is purely ecological. The preface of Martindale is divided into six parts, which may be sub-divided into two: first being concerned with the development of the theories of the city in America and Europe from the socio-psychological and ecological perspectives; the second being especially a critical treatment of Max Weber's relevance for European and American urban theories. Since the beginnings of a theory of the city in Europe among which the study of Max Weber stands out as of great importance his theoretical relevance to the question may be well ascertained by way of a review of the stages of the theoretical development of the concept of the city in America. Location and moral consequences are the two phenomena that are connected with the general categories of a theory of the city. As far as we know Charles H. Cooley's *The Theory of Transportation*, first published by the American Economic Association probably in the late years of the nineteenth century tries to account for the location of the cities. A more general theory of the same type is represented by Adna F. Weber's *The Growth of Cities in the Nineteenth Century* (1899). While Cooley clearly concentrates his attention to transportation problems Adna Weber divides the causes of urban growth into two categories: primary economic factor and secondary causes of socio-political nature.

However, in dealing with Max Weber's theories of the city one can find Adna Weber's listing of political causes of city growth more useful and closer. According to Adna Weber, political causes of city growth include: 1) legislation promoting freedom of trade; 2) legislation permitting freedom of migration; 3) centralized administration; 4) free forms of land tenure politically protected in the city. Social causes of city growth were found in the advantages the city offered for 1) education; 2) recreation; 3) a higher standard of living; 4) the attraction of intellectual associations; 5) habituation to an urban environment; and 6) diffusion of knowledge of the values of city life (Weber 1921/1958:16-17). In the notes on a socio-psychological theory of the city Martindale refers to the urban development in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia where there was a clear concern of fathers for their children to receive education so that they could take up "white collar" jobs of scribes in the imperial bureaucracy. Pressure and social ascent by way of an urban occupation are quite ancient, which are still perceived in modern times even in a developing country like Bangladesh. Basically in Babylonia the high value was attached to urban types of socio-political opportunities. In ancient China the preference for the urban roles is shown by the devotion, patience, and hard work the individual was willing to undergo in preparation for the civil service examinations. In classical Greece and Rome similar attitudes and evidences of civic pride were prevalent. One should recognize the fact that the development of a peculiar urban outlook related to urban occupations and the city environment is as old as the city itself (Weber 1921/1958: 31).

Urbanism as a way of life, Wirth suggests, may be empirically approached from three interrelated perspectives: as a physical structure with a population base, technology and ecological order; as a system of social organization with a structure and series of institutions; as a set of attitudes, ideas and constellation of personalities. Thus it is clear that in the hands of Louis Wirth we find an intelligent combination of both Max Weber's socio-historical theory of the city and Park's ecological approach toward urban growth. As a student of sociology we know that social life everywhere exists as a structure of interaction, not simply a structure of stone, steel, cement etc (Weber 1921/1958: 40,29). In the European developments in the urban theory we can come across an institutional factor in the rise of a city that was put forward by Fustel de Coulanges in his book: *The Ancient City* (1956). According to him, the critical institution of the city is to be a religion. The original nucleus of pre-urban society was considered to be the family finding its point of integration in the hearth, its religious symbol, and worship of the father as its priest. The union of several families could establish the hearth of the Phratry.

The tribe, like the family and the phratry, was established as an independent body, since it had a special worship from which the stranger was excluded. Once formed, no new family could be admitted to it. Just as several phratries were united in a tribe, several tribes might associate together, on condition that the religion of each should be respected. The day on which this alliance took place the city existed. (Coulanges 1956:126-27).

Thus, ancient city was a religious community, but definitely without religious fundamentalism of modern times. It means that urban (civil) society is essentially a secular organization. G. Glotz in his *The Greek City* (1930) greatly advanced Coulanges' conception of city. Like Coulanges he (Glotz) treated the family as the basic structure from which both state power (compare Max Weber's conception in this regard) and individualism could emerge. According to Glotz, three stages in Greek city life could be gleaned—each with its characteristic institutional structure: the family, the city and the individual each in its turn predominant.

The history of Greek institutions thus falls into three periods: in the first, the city is composed of families which jealously guard their ancient right and subordinate all their members to the common good; in the second, the city subordinates the families to itself by calling to its aid emancipated individuals; in the third, individualism runs riot, destroys the city and necessitates the formation of larger states (Glotz 1930: 4-5).

This represents a clear improvement upon Coulanges, in that it conceives of the possibility of a more complex inter-institutional development forming the city possible of varied types. The family dominated or patrician city is obviously visualized. A third institutional factor was brought into central focus as determinative for the rise of the city by the students of Comparative Jurisprudence. Henry Sumner Maine, for example, in one of the great pioneering works (*Ancient Law*, 1894) of social science argued that comparative jurisprudence proves that the original condition of the human society was one of domination by the patriarchal family. From England to India in ancient times, he (as English Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University from 1863-67) believed, society was organized in patriarchal families under dominance of the eldest parent with dominion extending even to life and death over his children. At this stage kinship was the only organization for political functions. For all more complex social forms, Maine maintained that a transformation of the legal order isolating the individual from his 'status' in the family, freeing him for the flexible entry into multiple 'contractual' relations. As Maine put it "The movement of the progressive societies has hitherto been a movement from status to contract". (Maine 1894:170). It should be noted that contractual relations can fully develop only under capitalism with which Max Weber was so much concerned. The City, in Maine's analysis as that of Weber is a legal structure based on contract and territory rather than kinship and family. The effect of this analysis was to shift the attention of urban theory to the evolution of the law. This was really the beginning for further developments of a whole series of legal or semi-legal phenomena for the growth of the city. These includes the following elements: 1) legal charters of the city; 2) special civic courts and law; and 3) Roman legal notion of a municipal corporation (Weber 1921/1958: 47-48).

The attempt to explain the city in terms of the economic institutions was made by Marx and Pirenne. Especially Pirenne in his *Medieval Cities* (1946) focused on two factors necessary to constitute a city. These are the existence of middle class population (i.e. bourgeoisie) and an organization for community action. Historically the municipal system of Rome was identified by constitutional law. For Pirenne, cities like fortress, like centers of pilgrimage, and even as weekly market places were not real cities. These towns were actually fortresses and clerical establishments. However, according to him, they played an important role in the history of cities as "stepping stones". Round about their walls cities were to take shape after the "economic renaissance". (Pirenne 1946: 76). The actual cities took form as a byproduct of the activities of merchant caravans which settled outside the walls and in crisis could use them for defence.

Under the influence of trade the old Roman cities took on new life and were repopulated, or mercantile groups formed round about the military burgs and established themselves along the sea coasts, on river banks, at confluences, at the junction points of the natural routes of

communication. Each of them constituted a market which exercised an attraction proportionate to its importance ... (Pirenne 1946: 102).

The pertinent point for Pirenne was the emergence of a new class of merchants who were in conflict with the countryside and who fought for new laws ensuring their private property including a distinct organization for their own community activities. Thus, for Pirenne the city is the community of the merchants which Max Weber also maintains.

In the context of the development of the European urban theory both Simmel and Weber recognized the need for a more comprehensive concept of urbanism. Simmel sought to solve the problem of the city by way of formalism which has its best expression in his seminal essay "*Die Grosstädte und das Geistesleben*", published in Dresden:1903 (English version: "The Big Cities and the Mental Life"). Weber was familiar with Simmel's formulation and he started his study with the observation that the city is often considered as a densely settled area of crowded dwellings developing into a colony in which personal acquaintance among the inhabitants is absent. That is, anonymity must prevail in city life. Weber also had taken into account the role of cultural factors for the constitution of cities. Max Weber's theoretical point of view may well be described as a form of social behaviourism. The idea of "social relation" for Weber was a kind of conceptual tool by which one can comprehend the pattern of inter-human actions. His concept of 'social relation' pertaining to the institutions of state, family, religion and law, forms a complex "system" or "structure of relations". According to Weber, all types of European urban theory belong to the "institutional" theories of the city, but they are different from each other. Weber addresses the problem of cities in terms of social action while Simmel sees it in terms of form and content of social interaction. As Weber himself put it:

The city ... has always contained elements from the most varied social situations. Office candidates qualified by examinations and mandarins rub shoulders with illiterates despised as rabble and practitioners of the (few) unclean occupations in East Asia. Many kinds of castes carry on their activities beside one another in India. Blood relatives organized in clans appear together with landless artisans in the Near East. In Antiquity free men, bondsmen, and slaves emerged alongside noble landlords, their court officials and servants. And in the early medieval city ministerial officials and mercenaries, priests and monks encounter one another in the city. (Weber 1921/1958: 52).

Weber's above statement is essentially sociological in the sense that he not only identifies social groups that existed in both oriental and occidental civilizations but also his delineation of social structure or, in other words, social stratification gives us an idea of urban social system from evolutionary standpoint. According to Weber, in the city all classes of people meet and mingle, often without knowing one another. Slums may be separated from well-situated residences by a few hundred yards while there is physical proximity to each other they may be miles apart in points of view. Here we can refer to the recent urban development of Dhaka city. Weber recognized the absence of psychological homogeneity such that the intelligentsia, middle class, political reformers, stand-patters, and go-getters, in Munroe's phrases (see W.B. Munroe, *The Government of American Cities*, 1926), all pull apart to such an extent that city dwellers can only think effectively in their own groups. With Simmel, Weber was able to recognize that in the city every occupation-including beggary and prostitution- tends to become a profession. Weber successively identified one type of concept of the city after another- the economic, the relation of the city to agriculture, the political- administrative concept of the city, the fortress and garrison concepts of the city, the concept of the city as fusion of fortress and market, and the social and legal concept of the city, the city as a confederacy, the city as a body of militarily competent citizens. This might suggest the fact that Weber's attempt to the theory construction of the city was eclectic. His theoretical procedure was never mechanical in the sense that conceptual elements are not actually unrelated. For

example, in reviewing the economic concept of the city Weber carefully isolated the distinguishing property of the city in the conduct of life on the basis of non-agricultural activities. In terms of the dominant economic features of their life a typology of cities may be meaningfully made. Thus one can differentiate producers' cities from consumers' cities, commercial from industrial cities, capital and satellite cities with many sub-types. (Weber 1921/1958: 52-53).

However, the novelty of Max Weber's sociological theory construction concerning the city lies in the fact that he singularly suggests the theory of the urban community in terms of social actions, social relations, social institutions, and community. According to him, "An urban 'community' in the full meaning of the word appears only in the occident. Exceptions occasionally were to be found in the Near East ... but only in rudiments. To constitute a full urban community the settlement had to represent a relative predominance of trade-commercial relations with the settlement as a whole displaying the following features: 1) a fortification, 2) a market, 3) a court of its own and at least partially autonomous law; 4) a related form of association, and 5) at least partial autonomy and autocephaly ... an administration by authorities in the election of whom the burghers participated." (Weber 1921/1958: 54-55). Weber's general approach was to take into consideration the concept of the city in terms of the evidence from world history. On this basis he conceived the concept of the urban community. Any community including an urban community, is not an unstructured congeries of activities but a distinct and limited pattern of human life. It represents a whole system of life forces brought into some kind of equilibrium. As a peculiar system of forces the urban community could not have emerged everywhere in the world. Weber argues rather convincingly that it did not appear in Asia and only fragmentarily in the Near East (in Mesopotamia) for the very reason that the city was a centre of state administration. Here the problem of the relation between patrimonialism and urban development comes to the fore. Weber's argument on this point are also relevant today for some capital cities such as Washington, London and Paris (why not Dhaka of Bangladesh and Delhi of India), precisely because they are centres of national government, lack some of the political autonomy of the normal city. They are prevented from becoming full urban communities. Does it mean that political autonomy of the normal city will only exist in the centres of trade and commerce? This is again a confined concept of the city. Probably, Max Weber himself admits this fact as he maintains that the establishment of the "city", in the occidental sense, was restricted in Asia, partly through sib power which continued unbroken, partly through caste alienation. According to him, the interests of Asiatic intellectuality lay primarily in directions other than the political. In the river-valley civilizations of the East politics and administration represented only their (political intellectuals such as the Confucians) prebendary subsistences; in practice these were usually conducted through subaltern social groups. (Weber 1958: 338).

Max Weber's conceptualization and categorization of the city in terms of non-legitimate domination naturally incorporate his notion of citizenship, which also contains three distinct characteristics, namely economic, political, social or cultural. First, citizen may include certain social categories or classes, which have some specific economic interest. As thus defined the class citizen is not unitary; there are greater citizens and lesser citizens; entrepreneurs and hand-workers belong to the class. Second, in the political sense, citizenship signifies membership in the state, with its connotation as the holder of certain political rights. Finally, by citizens in the class sense, we understand those strata which are drawn together, in contrast with the bureaucracy or the proletariat and others outside their circle, as "persons of property and culture", entrepreneurs, recipients of funded incomes, and in general, all persons of academic culture, a certain class standard of living, and a certain social prestige. The third character of citizenship is mainly a mixed one. That is, wealth and institutionalized education can endow an individual with the mark of citizenship. In fact, Weber's concept of citizenship refers to three dimensions of social stratification: class (economic), status (social or cultural), power or party (political). But his identification of first and third elements is not clearly distinguished, rather blurred. To him, first type of citizenship (economic) is typical of western civilization where cities mainly developed as centres of trade and commerce. The citizenship in political sense has its forerunners in Antiquity and in the medieval city. It should be noted here that the slaves of ancient Greece and Rome were not definitely citizens

even if they very much lived within the politically autonomous city-states. Max Weber categorically did not mention the status of slaves in terms of his own notion of citizenship. However, according to him, the notion of citizens of the state is unknown to the world of Islam and to India and China. Similarly, the concept of citizen as the men of property and culture is specifically modern and it is western concept, like that of the bourgeoisie. It implies that the concept of citizenship has its different oriental connotation. The city created the party and the demagogue. The city alone brought forth the phenomena of the history of art. It has also produced science in the modern sense. The city culture of the Babylonians stands in an analogous relation to the foundation of astronomy. (Weber 1961: 233-34). Weber's concept of citizenship practically runs parallel to those of patrimonial state and city as two divergent forms of domination. Finally, it may be said that his concept of citizenship does not fit well if we consider all adult people of a country in modern times as eligible for exercising their voting rights to elect their representatives to the democratic parliament.

Conclusion

On the basis of our above analysis of the problem under present review we can say somewhat accurately that Max Weber's theory of the city leads us to an interesting conclusion. We can accept phenomenal increase and aggregation of modern populations in the occidental cities as a concomitant of the industrial revolution. This is not true in case of most of the oriental cities because here industrialization has not yet preceded urbanization. In the developing countries of the world the heavy concentration of population in towns and cities as noticed in recent times is not so much due to industrial development, but mainly on account of the attraction of urban opportunities and facilities that are being offered for better incomes and better livelihood. What we can observe here is 'deruralization' in the name of urbanization from western point of view. Max Weber himself also admitted the fact that the physical aggregation should not be confused with the growth of the city in a sociological sense. According to him, urban community has everywhere lost its military entity. Moreover, it lost its legal and political autonomy in many areas of the world. At present, within the city itself large number of residents pursue inter-local interests-as representatives of the national government, as agents in business and industries of national and international rather than of civic scope. Thus the modern city is gradually losing its external and formal structure. Internally it is in a stage of decline while the new community represented by the nation grows everywhere at its cost. Weber had thus pronounced a pessimistic tone that the age of the city has come to an end. (Weber 1921/1958: 62). His comment about the future of the city will certainly continue to be under constant critical scrutiny. Because with the speedy growth of human civilization which is experiencing profound impact of modern science and technology under globalization a far more new elements are likely to be increasingly incorporated in the existing structure of urban life more or less in all countries of the world irrespective of their differential political, economic and cultural milieu.

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Weber's Perspective on the City and Culture, Contemporary Urbanization and Bangladesh

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Introduction

Max Weber's (1922) theory of city owes much to earlier work of Tönnies (1887) and Simmel (1903). He takes a structural perspective on city. He studies city from all aspects of social structure, economic, political, religious and legal institutions. Thus cities are treated in terms of their relations to other cities, to other parts of their society, as integral parts of the social and political order. Thus Weber's theory of city is close to systematic theory of urbanism (Mumford, 1961:606; Wirth, 1938:8).ⁱ

Weber developed his theory of city as a critique of metropolis. To Weber, like his predecessors Marx, Tönnies and Simmel, metropolis is the paradigm of an inhuman, debasing social environment.ⁱⁱ Mass urbanization nullified opportunities for political participation, which was one of the crucial characteristics of the city.

The main objective of this paper is to explore Weber's ideas on the city and culture as evolved in his writings and to situate those within the context of contemporary urbanization, especially Bangladesh. The main argument of this paper is that Weber's theory of city is the theory of the origin of capitalism. He relates city, culture, authority, religion and rationalization as symbiotic, and are geared to the development of capitalism in the west. Thus, his theory of city and city culture is multi-dimensional and poses the problem of coherence and contemporary relevance for both the Western and the Eastern societies. Especially, the Weberian framework can hardly explain the contemporary Third World urbanization, including Bangladesh.

Part-I: Weber's Perspective on the City

Definition of City

Weber's most important ideas on city and city culture are found in his essay "*The City*" (1922), which was based on the materials he developed since 1889 and was written between 1911 and 1913.ⁱⁱⁱ He commences by examining the existing definitions of the city including Simmel's. He rejects Simmel's concept of city in terms of size in unequivocal terms.^{iv} Instead, he argues: "Size alone, certainly, cannot be decisive" (Weber, 1922:1213). Weber gives a cumulative definition of the city in his ideal-type construct (Mellor, 1977:193). His ideal city is the medieval guild city, which combined economic enterprise and religious activity as well as private and public life. Therefore, community life progressively deteriorates with the development of capitalism. Weber constructs an ideal-type of city, which exhibits the following features:

- where authority had rested on a rational rather than on a charismatic or traditional basis;
- where the law was enforced on an universalistic basis rather than on a personal basis;
- where grouping existed on the basis of class rather than family and clan;
- where citizens were governed by trade groups rather than by religious groups; and
- where city's strength derived from an economic base rather than a military base.

Next, he develops three perspectives on city, sociological, economic and political, administrative and legal.

(a) Sociological perspective: From the sociological perspective, "anonymity" is the defining criterion of city. "Sociologically speaking, this would mean: the city is a settlement of closely spaced dwellings which form a colony so extensive that the reciprocal personal acquaintance of the inhabitants, elsewhere characteristic of the neighbourhood, is lacking" (Weber, 1922:1212).

(b) Economic perspective: To Weber, “market center” is central to his economic definition. He develops economic typology of city: consumer city versus producer city, industry city versus merchant city and admits that actual cities represent mixed types and are classified by their predominant economic components (Weber, 1922:1215-17).

If we were to attempt a definition in purely economic terms, the city would be a settlement whose inhabitants live primarily from commerce and the trades rather than from agriculture. ... Accordingly, we shall speak of a “city” in the economic sense of the word only if the local population satisfies an economically significant part of its everyday requirements in the local market, and if a significant part of the products bought there were acquired or produced specifically for sale on the market by the local population or that of the immediate hinterland. A city, then, is always a market center (Weber, 1922:1213).

(c) Political, administrative and legal perspective: From economic definitions he turns to the political and administrative conceptions of the city as a **corporate body** with a given territory, having military control. Weber regards the seigneurial castle and castle-seated princes as a universal phenomenon in Antiquity and in the middle Ages. This is a unique Western phenomenon. “That cities have not existed outside the occident in the sense of a political community is a fact calling for explanation” (Weber, 1923:235-36).

As an explanation for the civic political unity in the West, Weber dismisses (a) economic reason, (b) specific Germanic spirit, (c) feudal or political grants of the middle ages, and (d) march to India by Alexander the Great. To him, the main elucidation lies in the revolutionary character of the western political units, in the formation of fraternity or *conjuratio*.

The first example in the middle ages is the revolutionary movement in 726 which led to the succession of Italy from the Byzantine rule and which centered in Venice. ... Previous to that time the *dux* (later doge) Venice had been appointed by the emperor, although on the other hand, there were certain families whose members were constantly to a predominant extent appointed military tribunes or district commandants. From then on the choice of the tribunes and of the *dux* was in the hands of persons liable to military service, that is those who were in a position to serve as knights. Thus the movement was started. It requires 400 years longer before in 1143 the name *Commune Venetiarum* turns up (Weber, 1923:236).

Characteristics of the Commune

The defining characteristics of the commune was the oath of brotherhood involving (a) common ritualistic meal, (b) ritualistic union, (c) burial of dead on the acropolis, and (d) dwellings in the city (Weber, 1923:237). In these cities, the burghers participated in the military duties. The city community must have five characteristics.

To develop into a city-commune, a settlement had to be of the non-agricultural-commercial type, at least to a relative extent, and to be equipped with the following features: 1. a fortification; 2. a market; 3. its own court of law and, at least in part, autonomous law; 4. an associational structure (*Verbandscharakter*) and, connected therewith, and 5. at least partial autonomy and autocephaly, which includes administration by authorities in whose appointment the burghers could in some form participate (Weber, 1922:1226).

Such a city commune (*Gemeinde*) appeared as a distinct “bourgeois estate” (*Bürgertum*) and was only known in the West (Weber, 1922:1226).

But ordinarily, there existed no association which could represent the commune of burghers as such. The very concept of an urban burgher and, in particular, a specific status qualification of the burgher was completely lacking. It can be found neither in China or in Japan or India, and only in abortive beginnings in the Near East (Weber, 1922:1228-29).

In his juridical analysis, Weber stresses the character of urban landownership and legal status of persons in the Occidental city. The absence of private property in the East may be one of the fundamental factors in the non-appearance of ideal-type city. The significance of private property in the development of the medieval city can hardly be overemphasized.

The Occidental city thus was already in Antiquity, just like in Russia, a place where the ascent from bondage to freedom by means of monetary acquisition was possible. This is even more true for the medieval city, and especially for the medieval inland city. In contrast to all known urban development elsewhere, the burghers of the Occidental city engaged in status-conscious policies directed toward this goal (Weber, 1922:1238).

... the decisive common quality of the ancient Occidental and the typical medieval city lies in the institutionalized association, endowed with special characteristic organs, of people who as "burghers" are subject to a *special law* exclusively applicable to them and who thus form a legally autonomous status group (Weber, 1922:1240).

The existence of 'burgher rights' was crucial in the formation of 'fraternal association.' The Medieval city was a 'cultic association' constituted by the oath of brotherhood by the burghers.

The medieval city, after all, was still a cultic association. The city church, the city saint, participation of the burgher in the Lord's Supper, the official celebrations of the church holy days—all these are obvious features of the medieval city (Weber, 1922:1247).

The Occidental city—and especially the medieval city, ... was not only economically a seat of trade and the crafts, politically in the normal case a fortress and perhaps a garrison, administratively a court district, but beyond all this also a sworn confraternity (Weber, 1922:1248).

Critical conditions for the existence of an Urban Community

Weber sets two conditions for the existence of an urban community. They are:

- (a) political and military autonomy: opportunities for an autonomous administration by authorities in the election of whom citizens participated;
- (b) ability to defend this new democracy against feudal lord, opposing cities, and the peasantry.

The city is a free association in which the individual participates in his personal right. The new political community, with its democratic forms of association, depended on the presence of a new class—the urban bourgeoisie. "...the characteristic of the city in the political definition was the appearance of a distinct 'bourgeois' estate" (Weber, 1922:1226). Thus the city is dominated by the bourgeoisie whose class interest is preserved by the secular, rational, individualist, market-oriented community formations of the medieval cities.

Economic independence of individual households resulted in the emergence of the new class of merchants and craftsmen. The development of free labour and identity of interests in defending new association against feudal lord led to the emergence of city as a community.

In his discussion of the emergence of the Western cities Weber focuses on the process of the development of rational-legal institutions occurring at cities that enabled the individual to be free from traditional groups, and develop his individuality. For the first time,

... the burgher joined the citizenry as an individual, and as an individual he swore the oath of citizenship. His personal membership in the local association of the city guaranteed his legal status as a burgher, not his tribe or sib (Weber, 1922:1246).

All safely founded information about Asian and Oriental settlements which had the economic characteristics of "cities" seems to indicate that normally only the clan associations, and sometimes also the occupational associations, were the vehicles of organized action (*Verbandshandeln*), but never the collective of urban citizens as such (Weber, 1922:1233).

Usurpation and City Commune

Weber identifies the process of the formation of the corporation of burghers as the formal-legal and their authorities as legitimately constituted. However, revolutionary usurpation of rights also occurs in most important cases.

In a formal legal sense the corporation of the burghers and its authorities had their "legitimate" origin in (real or fictitious) privileges granted by the political and at times by the manorial powers. It is true that to some extent the actual process

corresponded to this formal pattern. But quite often, and especially in the most important cases, the real origin is to be found in what is from the formal legal point of view a revolutionary usurpation of rights (Weber, 1922:1250).

There are two types of usurpation, (a) spontaneous and (b) derived. Generally, a combination of both types is found to occur.

We can distinguish a “spontaneous” and a “derived” formation of medieval city associations. In the “spontaneous” case, the commune was the result of a political association of the burghers in spite of, or in defiance of the “legitimate” powers or more correctly, of a series of such acts. Formal recognition by the legitimate authorities came only later, if at all. A “derived” burgher association was formed through a contracted or legislated grant of more or less limited rights to autonomy and autocephaly, issued by the city founder or his successors; it is found frequently in the case of new foundations as a grant to the settlers and their descendants (Weber, 1922:1250).

The “spontaneous” usurpation through an act of rational association, a sworn confraternization (*Eidverbrüderung: coniuratio*) of the burghers, is found especially in the bigger and older cities, such as Genoa or Cologne. As a rule, however, a combination of events of both kinds occurred (Weber, 1922:1250).

There are four main goals of the *coniurationes*: (i) unification of the local landowners for (a) protection, (b) defense, (c) peaceable settlement of internal disputes, and (d) securing of administration of justice; (ii) monopolization of economic opportunities of the city; (iii) delimitation of the obligations owed to the city lord as far as taxation is concerned; and (iv) organization of wars of the communes. The mass of the burghers within the city is forced to join the sworn confraternization.

... But there were further goals. One was the monopolization of the economic opportunities offered by the city: only the members of the sworn association were to be permitted to share in the commerce of the city. In Genoa, for example, membership was a prerequisite for permission to invest capital in overseas trade in *commenda* partnerships. (Weber, 1922:1252)

Such temporary *coniurationes* became permanent political associations and their members were treated as urban citizens, who were subject to a special and autonomous law. “The ‘bourgeois law’ was, rather, a status right of the members of sworn fellowship of burghers; one was subject to it by virtue of membership in a status group which comprised the full citizens and their dependent clients “(Weber, 1922:1254).

There was the presence of nobility with family charisma-- the patrician domination, a patriciate—in the patrician city. The domination by the old patrician families was broken as a result of the triumph of the *demos*, the *plebs*, the *populo*, the *liveries* and the craft guilds. The Italian *populo* at the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th century, were the sworn confraternity of the craft guilds and financed the struggles against the domination of the patricians.

The Italian *popolo* was not only an economic category, but also a political one. It was a separate political community within the urban commune with its own officials, its own finances, and its own military organization. In the truest sense of the word it was a “state within the state”—the first deliberately nonlegitimate and revolutionary political association. ... The association of *popolo*, which confronted these knightly families, rested on the confraternization of the occupational associations (*arti* or *paratici*). The separate political community created by these associations was in the earliest cases ... officially known by such names as *societas*, *credenza*, *mercadanza*, *comunanza*, or simply as *popolo* (Weber, 1922:1302)

Thus *popolo* initiated brutal and fierce conflict against the nobility and its success, especially by the lower guilds, brought an element of democracy into the city councils (Weber, 1922:1306). There flourished illegitimate rulers like city *tyrannis* and *signoria*. The Italian *signoria* was “the first political power in Western Europe which based its regime on a rational administration with (increasingly) appointed officials (Weber, 1922:1318) and whenever chances were available, it entered into the circle of legitimate powers.

Non-development of City Commune in the Orient

There are two reasons for the non-development of *coniuratio* in the orient.

(a) The peculiar character of the organization for defense: In the orient, the military organization was not based on the principle of self-equipment as in the occident. State had the military monopoly. This overdeveloped oriental state was due to irrigation culture (Weber, 1923:237). The water question conditioned the (a) existence of the bureaucracy, (b) the compulsory service of the dependent classes, and (c) the dependence of subject classes upon the functioning of the bureaucracy of the king.

The occidental city is in its beginnings first of all a defense group, an organization of those economically competent to bear arms, to equip and train themselves. Whether the military organization is based on the principle of self-equipment or on that of equipment by a military overlord who furnishes horses, arms and provisions, is a distinction quite as fundamental for social history as is the question whether the means of economic production are the property of the worker or of a capitalistic entrepreneur. Everywhere outside the west the development of the city was prevented by the fact that the army of the prince is older than the city (Weber, 1923:237)

In India the castes were not in a position to form ritualistic communities and hence a city, because they were ceremonially alien to one another. ...

(b) Ideas and institutions connected with magic: This is reflected in the monopolization of communion with the gods by priests. In the West, there was an extensive freedom of the priesthood; the rites were performed by the city officials and the treasures of gods and priests were owned by the polis; and the priestly offices were filled by auction as there were no magical barriers. Weber identifies three factors that destroyed magic in the West. They are: (a) prophecy among the Jews: the prophetic tradition destroyed magic within the confines of Judaism; (b) Pentecostal miracle: the ceremonial adoption into the spirit of Christ; and (c) the day in Antioch: it was the day when Paul espoused fellowship with the uncircumcised. These led to the destruction of magical barriers in the west.

The magical barriers between clans, tribes and peoples, which were still known in the ancient polis to a considerable degree, were thus set aside and the establishment of the occidental city was made possible (Weber, 1923:238).

When Christianity became the religion of these people who had been so profoundly shaken in all their traditions, it finally destroyed whatever religious significance these clan ties retained; perhaps, indeed, it was precisely the weakness or absence of such magical and taboo barriers which made the conversion possible (Weber, 1922:1244).

However, Judaism was none the less of notable significance for modern rational capitalism, insofar as it transmitted to Christianity the latter's hostility to magic. ... Probably this hostility arose through the circumstance that what the Israelites found in Canaan was the magic of the agricultural god Baal, while Jahveh was a god of volcanoes, earthquakes, and pestilences. The hostility between the two priesthoods and the victory of the priests of Jahveh discredited the fertility magic of the priests of Baal and stigmatized it with a character of decadence and godlessness. Since Judaism made Christianity possible and gave it the character of a religion essentially free from magic, it rendered an important service from the point of view of economic history (Weber, 1923:264-65).

Next, Weber surveys the lack of communal features in the Orient, especially in a patrician city like Mecca (Weber, 1922:1226-34). He compares Christianity with Islam and reasons why Islam failed to destroy magical barriers.

The often very significant role played by the parish community in the administrative organization of medieval cities is only one of many symptoms pointing to this quality of the Christian religion which, in dissolving clan ties, importantly shaped the medieval city. Islam, by contrast, never really overcame the divisiveness of Arab tribal and clan ties, as is shown by the history of internal conflicts of the early caliphate; in its early period it remained the religion of a conquering of tribes and clans (Weber, 1922:1244).

Weber also speaks of the relationship between Indian caste, Chinese geomancy and the development of capitalism vis-à-vis the city. "Obviously, capitalism could not develop in an economic group thus bound hand and foot by magical belief" (Weber, 1923:265).

Hierarchy of Factors in the Development of the Medieval City:

Käsler (1988) constructs a hierarchy of six factors in the writings of Weber, which he finds related to the development of the medieval city. They are:

1. Political autonomy, in some cases independent foreign policy, independent military.

2. Autonomous law creation by the cities and by the (old) guilds and the (later) crafts.
3. Own judicial and administrative agencies (autocephaly).
4. Power of taxation over its burghers who were free from taxation and other charges by outside powers.
5. The right to hold markets, autonomous trade and craft regulation and monopolistic powers of exclusion.
6. Specific attitude to non-citizen strata, which resulted from the contrast to the specifically non-urban political and feudal- manorial structures.

Relationships between City and Culture

Implied in the writing of Weber was the notion that God was born and buried in the city. Weber sets forth two-way relationships between city and culture. In general terms, culture, as espoused in the protestant ethic, contributed in the development of capitalist spirit and capitalism as such. And since it was in the city that protestant values were nurtured, it became a crucial variable in the emergence of capitalism in the West. City contributed in the development of culture in five specific ways, it produced (a) party and demagogue, (b) art, (c) science, especially mathematics and astronomy, (d) religious institutions like Judaism and Christianity, and (e) theological thought.

The contribution of the city in the whole field of culture is extensive. The city created the party and demagogue. ... The city and it alone has brought forth the phenomena of the history of art. Hellenic and Gothic art, in contrast with Mycænean and Roman, are city art. So also the city produced science in the modern sense. In the city civilization of the Greeks the discipline out of which scientific thinking developed, namely mathematics, was given the form under which it continuously developed down to modern times. The city culture of the Babylonians stands in an analogous relation to the foundation of astronomy. Furthermore, the city is the basis of specific religious institutions. Not only was Judaism, in contrast with the religion of Israel, a thoroughly urban construction—a peasant could not conform with the ritual of the law—but early Christianity is also a city phenomenon; the larger the city the greater was the percentage of Christians, and the case of Puritanism and Pietism was also the same. That a peasant could function as a member of a religious group is a strictly modern phenomenon. Finally, the city alone produced theological thought, and on the other hand again, it alone harbored thought untrammelled by priestcraft. The phenomenon of Plato, with its question of how to make men useful citizens as the dominant problem of his thought, is unthinkable outside the environment of a city (Weber, 1923:234).

Thus, city culture, which ultimately led to the emergence of secularism, was essential to the development of city. The reason why Oriental cities were markedly different from the Occidental ones to the extent that they would not be called “cities,” lies in the absence of the development of such a city culture. Hence, the culture of the burghers became synonymous with the culture of the bourgeoisie, which became one of the causal agents of urban development in the West.

Part-II: Weber and Contemporary Urban Development

Contemporary Urban Development

The urban transition is labelled as a “profound human transformation,” or as a second transformation, which is “comparable to the domestication of plants and animals ten thousand years ago that made a sedentary life possible” (Gugler, 1997:xv). The twentieth century is seen as the “century of the urban transition” as half the world’s population will live in urban areas by the end of the century (Gugler, 1997:xv). One of the most striking features of contemporary urbanization is the predominance of the Third World, where two-thirds of the world’s urban population live. The magnitude of this transformation of the ‘South’ is also “without precedent in human history” (Gugler, 1997:xv). This type of urbanization has become one of the forms of urbanism called “Third World entrepôt” (Giddens, 1989: 569).

There are number of characteristics of contemporary world urbanization. The United Nations (2002) has identified 20 major key features of world urbanization. Of them, the most important ones are:

1. The world's urban population reached 2.9 billion in 2000 and is expected to rise to 5 billion by 2030. Whereas 30 per cent of the world population lived in urban areas in 1950, the proportion of urban dwellers rose to 47 per cent by 2000 and is projected to attain 60 per cent by 2030.
2. Virtually all the population growth expected at the world level during 2000-2030 will be concentrated in urban areas. During that period the urban population is expected to increase by 2.1 billion persons, nearly as much as will be added to the world population, 2.2 billion.
3. Almost all of the population increase expected during 2000-2030 will be absorbed by the urban areas of the less developed regions whose population will likely rise from approximately 2 billion in 2000 to just under 4 billion in 2030.
4. Rural-urban migration and the transformation of rural settlements into cities are important determinants of the high population growth expected in urban areas of the less developed regions over the next thirty years.
5. There are marked differences in the level and pace of urbanization among the major areas constituting the less developed regions of the world. Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole is highly urbanized, with 75 per cent of its population living in urban settlements in 2000, a proportion higher than that of Europe. Moreover, this proportion is twice as high as the one estimated for Africa or Asia.
6. Despite their high levels of urbanization, the combined number of urban dwellers in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern America and Oceania (1.2 billion) is smaller than the number in Asia (1.4 billion), one of the least urbanized major areas of the world in 2000. Furthermore, by 2030, Asia and Africa will each have higher numbers of urban dwellers than any other major area of the world, and Asia will account for 54 per cent of the urban population of the world, up from 48 per cent in 2000.
7. Most of these large cities are located in developing countries. With 26.5 million inhabitants, Tokyo is the most populous urban agglomeration in the world in 2001, followed by São Paulo (18.3), Mexico City (18.3), New York (16.8) and Mumbai (16.5). By 2015, Tokyo will remain the largest urban agglomeration with 27.2 million inhabitants, followed by Dhaka, Mumbai, São Paulo, Delhi and Mexico City, all of which are expected to have more than 20 million inhabitants.
8. Thus, Dhaka in Bangladesh grew at an average annual rate of 7.0 per cent during 1975-2000 and Delhi in India increased at a rate of 4.1 per cent annually over the same period. But they are exceptional cases. Among the 17 mega-cities as identified in 2001, just 5 grew at rates above 3 per cent per year and 8 experienced moderate or low growth (below 2 per cent per year). In the future, just four of today's mega-cities will exhibit growth rates of 3 per cent or more (Dhaka, Delhi, Jakarta and Karachi).

Third World Urbanization

The urbanization process in the Third World is multi-faceted and is characterized by various features: (a) primacy and overurbanization (Richardson, 1984: 134-35; London, 1980, 1985), (b) protracted poverty, (c) rural-urban migration, (d) informal labour market featured by widespread unemployment and underemployment (Sethuraman, 1981:188-200), (e) "misallocation of labour" (Gugler, 1988:78), (f) inadequate urban housing and services, (g) populist pressure on governance, (h) changing nature of class conflict between rural classes and urban classes (Lipton, 1977) and (i) low life chances like high infant mortality rates, low life expectancy, limited access to health care, low levels of literacy and limited years of schooling, and insufficient diet (Gugler and Flanagan, 1976). The nature of misallocation of labour is aptly described by Gugler:

Much misemployment focuses on getting crumbs from the table of the rich. The member of the local elite or middle-class, the foreign technical advisor, or the tourist who is begged for a morsel, or made to maintain a company of sycophants, or has his wallet snatched away. The relationship is vividly portrayed in three activities: the army of domestics that cleans and beautifies the environment of the privileged; the prostitutes who submit to the demands of those able to pay, and who in the bargain become outcasts; and the scavengers who subsist on what the more affluent have discarded, and who literally live on the crumbs from the rich man's table (Gugler, 1988:78).

The Third World states, by their "urban bias" in the economic development of the nations, has unwittingly created the antagonism between urban and rural classes. Thereby ensuing series of political protests and picketing along with traffic jam, which have become a regular feature of the Third World cities.

The most important conflict in the poor countries of the world today is not between labour and capital. Nor is it between foreign and national interests. It is between the rural classes and the urban classes. The rural sector contains most of the poverty, and most of the low-cost sources of potential [national economic] advance; but the urban sector contains most of the articulateness, organization, and power. ... Resource allocations, within the city and the village as well as between them, reflect urban priorities rather than equity or efficiency (Lipton, 1977: 40, 45).

Explanations of Contemporary Urban Development

The contemporary urban theory has moved far away from a Weberian position and advocates a theory of "created environment," which is related to major patterns of political and economic change. Thus, Harvey (1973, 1982, 1985) views urbanism as one aspect of the created environment through restructuring of space brought about by the spread of industrial capitalism.

Capitalist society must of necessity create a physical landscape—a mass of humanity constructed physical resources – in its own image, broadly appropriate to the purposes of production and reproduction. But I shall also argue that this process of creating space is full of contradictions and tensions and that the class relations in capitalist society inevitably spawn strong cross-currents of conflict (Harvey, 1985: 3)

Likewise, Castells (1977, 1983) sees city as an integral process of collective consumption, which in turn are an inherent aspect of industrial capitalism. Therefore, class conflict between capital and labour is replaced by the class conflict between landlord and tenant.

Wallerstein's (1974) world-system paradigm stresses the dependency argument and links the urban development with the common economic system of the First World and Third World. Therefore, urban primacy of the Third World could be understood by the process of restructuring, export of industrial operations by the "core" nations to poor "peripheral" nations. Thus, the Third World urbanization is the result of the process of "deindustrialization" of the advanced capitalist nations.

Thus, these positions are far removed from the Weberian perspective on the city. They raise the limitation of the Weberian perspective in explaining the nature, form and causes of colonial and post-colonial urbanization of the colonized and colonizing nations. However, given the United Nations' (2002) findings that in near future, Dhaka in Bangladesh would be the second largest city in the world and that Bangladesh's rate of urbanization would be the highest in the world, it is important that we extend our analysis to Bangladesh.

Part-III: Weber and Bangladesh Urban Development

State, Class and Urban Development in Bangladesh

The urban development of Bangladesh can be divided into three phases, pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial. The urban development during the pre-colonial phase was related to the political history of the country, especially to the evolution of state. It was the despotic nature of the hydraulic state and the monopolization of the means of violence by it that prevented the development of urban community in the Western sense of the term.

The social weakness of the indigenous merchants was also a deterrent factor in the establishment of urban autocephaly in Bangladesh. The magical barriers of the Hindu caste and the Muslim clan prevented the fraternization of the Pala, Sena, Afghan and Mughul trade guilds. As a result, urban development became apolitical. It remained an adjunct of fortress.

Though hardly any authentic literature is available on the urban development of Bangladesh, the rudimentary observations by the Indologists are more or less applicable in the case of Bangladesh. Thus it is observed that most cities in Bangladesh could be classified as producer city/consumer city.

Doubtless most of the Indian towns grew out of the villages, or originally clusters of villages, but the most famous of all grew out of camps. ... Nearly all the movable capital of the Empire or kingdom was at once swept away to its temporary centre, which became the exclusive seat of skilled manufacture and decorative art. Every man who claimed to belong to the higher class of artificers took his loom or tools and followed in the train of the king (Maine, 1872:214).

During the Mughal period, Dhaka was the provincial capital of Bengal and it flourished at the expense of Pandua, the former capital during the Afghan regime. Artisans like goldsmiths, conch-shell makers and spice traders migrated to Dhaka from Pandua and settled here (Karim, 1956:62). Similarly, when the capital was transferred to Murshidabad from Dhaka, the latter was reduced to a glorified village and the former became one of the largest cities of that time (Ahmed, 1948). "Murshidabad ... is as extensive, populous, and rich as the city of London, with this difference that there were individuals in the first possessing infinitely greater property than in the last city" (Clive, 1756-59:ccii). Thus Dhaka, Pandua and Murshidabad were princely cities. Their fate was tied to the fate of the prince.

The example of India shows how much these official towns were bound with the prince—to the point of absurdity. Political difficulties, even the prince's whim, uprooted and transplanted the capitals several times. ... As soon as its prince abandoned it the town was jeopardized, deteriorated and occasionally died (Braudel, 1973:414).

However, the development of the *conjuratio* was lacking, though a rudimentary tendency was found in Murshidabad. The trading houses of Murshidabad were more or less fraternized and they were conscious of their class interest too. As a result, patronized by the English East India Company, the nascent bourgeoisie, under the leadership of Fateh Chand (Jagat Seth), united the merchants of all religions and race to fight for their burgher's rights against the feudal tyrant Siraj-ud-dollah. The defeat of Siraj at the battle of Plassey was the most glorified event in the annals of urban history of Bengal as it freed the urban centres of the feudal clutches and exploitation. The possibility of the development of institution like *popolo* and usurpation of power, either by spontaneous or derivative formation, was annihilated by the British annexation of Bengal. A new era of colonization, Westernization and sponsored urbanization began.

The urbanization that began to take its roots in Bengal during the colonial and post-colonial period exhibited a different pattern. The most distinguishing feature was its dependency on the colonial industrial/administrative manoeuvre. A new phenomenon of metropolitanization began at the expense of city. The city lost its indigenous community character as mentioned by Weber. Since Weber never explained metropolitanization, the relevance of Weber to account for the recent urban development of Bangladesh appears remote.

Trend of Urbanization in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is still an agrarian society though nearly one quarter of the population lives in the urban areas. Table-1, which gives the trend of urban growth in Bangladesh for last one century, shows a very slow and retarded urban growth for Bangladesh. The large number of urban population since 1981 is due to the definitional change of urban area in those censuses. The high urban growth rate from 1974 through 2001 was due to the extended definition of urban area in 1981. Though the urban population has increased from 2.4 per cent in 1901 to 23.1 per cent in 2001, the exponential growth rate indicates much slower growth for the said period, from 1.4 during 1901-11, it increased to 3.2 during 1991-2001. The overall trend is curvilinear,

unstable and periodically fluctuating. It reflects both global and internal dynamism as well as statistical manipulation by the politicized administration of a peripheral state.

Table-1 Urbanization in Bangladesh, 1901-2001

Census year	Total population	Urban population	Percent urban	Variation	Exponential growth rate
1901	28,928,000	702,035	2.43	-	-
1911	31,555,000	807,024	2.56	14.95	1.39
1921	33,254,000	878,480	2.64	8.85	0.85
1931	35,604,000	1,073,489	3.02	22.20	2.00
1941	41,997,000	1,537,244	3.66	43.20	3.59
1951	42,063,000	1,819,773	4.33	18.38	1.69
1961	50,840,000	2,640,726	5.19	45.11	3.72
1974	71,479,000	6,273,602	8.78	137.57	6.66
1981	87,120,000	13,228,163	15.18	110.85	10.66
1991	106,314,000	20,872,204	19.63	57.79	4.56
2001	123,851,120	28,605,200	23.10	37.05	3.15

Source: Government of Bangladesh, Population Census-2001: National Report (Provisional).
(Dhaka: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2003):T-5.1:28

Table-2 shows that the urban hierarchy changes over time, the win-loss game of city ranking is indicative of unstable economic growth and lack of urban policy. The urban expansion has occurred only in terms of population size, devoid of urban facilities, let alone urbanism. Data from 1901 indicates how colonial economic interest led to the rise and fall of urban centres like Comilla, Brahmanbaria, Sirajganj, Pabna, Jamalpur and Madaripur throughout the century. It is interesting to note that four cities, Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Barisal, have never changed their rank throughout the century. This is indicative of regional primacy.

Table-2 Ranking of Cities in Bangladesh, 1991-2001

City	2001	1991	1901	Rank difference 2001-1991	Rank difference 2001-1901
Dhaka	1	1	1	0	0
Chittagong	2	2	2	0	0
Khulna	3	3	-	0	-
Rajshahi	4	4	4	0	0
Sylhet	5	-	-	-	-
Rangpur	6	5	-	1	-
Barisal	7	7	7	0	0
Mymensingh	8	6	-	2	-
Jessore	9	8	-	1	-
C.Nawabganj	10	10	-	0	-
Comilla	-	9	6	-	-
Sirajganj	-	-	3	-	-

Brahmanbaria	-	-	5		-
Pabna	-	-	8		-
Jamalpur	-	-	9		-
Madaripur	-	-	10		-

Source: Government of Bangladesh, Population Census-2001: National Report (Provisional).
(Dhaka: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2003):T-5.3 and T-5.4:32-33

Table-3 clearly demonstrates a retarded trend towards primacy within among urban hierarchies in Bangladesh. Usually, primate cities in a given country range as much as thirty times greater in population than the same country's next largest city (Gottdiener, 1994:255). In the case of Bangladesh, Dhaka's population is 3 times greater than the next largest city, Chittagong. Similarly, Chittagong's population is 2.5 times greater than the next largest city, Khulna. Whereas Khulna's population is around 2 times greater than the next largest city, Rajshahi.

Table-3 Trend of Urban Primacy in Bangladesh, 1991-2001

City	2001			City	1991		
	Population	Per cent	Rank variation		Population	Per cent	Rank variation
Dhaka	10,712,206	61.21	-	Dhaka	6,844,131	58.52	-
Chittagong	3,385,800	19.35	-68.39	Chittagong	2,348,428	20.08	-65.69
Khulna	1,340,826	7.66	-60.40	Khulna	1,001,825	8.57	-57.34
Rajshahi	700,140	4.00	-47.78	Rajshahi	544,649	4.66	-45.63
Sylhet	320,280	1.83	-54.25	Rangpur	191,398	1.64	-64.86
Rangpur	251,840	1.44	-21.37	Mymensingh	188,713	1.61	-1.40
Barisal	224,660	1.28	-10.79	Barisal	170,232	1.46	-9.79
Mymensingh	209,660	1.20	-6.68	Jessore	139,710	1.19	-17.93
Jessore	192,240	1.10	-8.31	Comilla	135,313	1.16	-3.15
C.Nawabganj	163,400	0.93	-15.00	C.Nawabganj	130,577	1.12	-3.50
Total:	17,501,052	100.00		Total:	11,694,976	100.00	

Source: Estimate by the author

Given that, Bangladesh's urban experience does not fit the pattern of the Third World urbanization either. In terms of primacy, the pattern is more similar to the developed countries rather than the Third World. However, in some ways, it is possible to use Weberian typology and theory to account for the urban development of medieval Bangladesh. But it cannot explain the contemporary urban development in Bangladesh.

Conclusion

Apparently Weber did not reach a conclusion for the entire investigation, with the result that he effected no systematic contrast (Käsler, 1988:47). He essentially sees city, especially the medieval city, which is an ideal-type construct, as an agent of social change from feudalism to capitalism.

Yet, neither modern capitalism nor the "state" as we know it developed on the basis of the ancient city, whereas the medieval city, though not the only significant antecedent developmental stage and certainly not itself the carrier of these developments, is inseparably linked as one of the crucial factors with the rise of both phenomena (Weber, 1922:1323).

Thus he locates city and city culture as parallel to his theory of religion in relation to capitalism. Both are linked to the process of demystification and rationalization. “Weber’s study of the city is as central to his investigation of the development of capitalism as his work on religion” (Mellor, 1977:191). In one sense, it is the city which harboured Protestantism and the ascetic culture of early capitalism. “The new form of capitalist social association developed in the medieval city. The urban forms of social association – law courts, the guilds, churches and municipal administration — adopted rationalistic standards of conduct and gave birth to capitalist enterprise” (Weber, 1922:1323). Thus city was also a catalyst to social change. “Urbanization under specific economic and political circumstances was a necessary linkage in the chain of conditions leading to capitalism” (Mellor, 1977:191).

Like ideal-type capitalism, this ideal-type city is found at a watershed, the transition from the feudal order to the capitalist society of Western Europe. “The medieval city therefore foreshadowed not only the social and cultural structure of the Western cities, but also their political character, i.e. the dominance of an elite, the rationality of organization which in itself renders null individual participation, and the apathy of the citizenry confronted with a community power structure with only residual autonomy” (Mellor, 1977:194). In this sense, one can label Weber, like Marx, as eurocentric.

Weber’s theory of city has obscure contemporary relevance as the content is remote and the argument is elusive (Mellor, 1977:189). By focusing on comparative study of the medieval and the ancient cities, “He thus sought to avoid the problem of theoretical obsolescence by purposively selecting an already antiquated urban arrangement, discounting the superficially urban industrial and bureaucratic centres of his own time as regressive. If it had suited his purpose to describe the contemporaneous, expanding industrial metropolis, the generalizations he might have proposed would nevertheless have become outdated” (Flanagan, 1993:1-2).

But given his depth of analysis, a comparative study of urban development in the East and the West as well as in the Antiquity and the middle ages, can be undertaken. “Unsatisfactory and limiting as is Weber’s approach, it is still possible to argue that it tells us more about the nature and derivation of urbanism than do the statements of either Simmel or Wirth” (Mellor, 1977:194). But the irony is, like his God, his ideal type capitalism and city are dead as well.

Notes

¹ “In the rich literature on the city we look in vain for a theory of urbanism presenting in a systematic fashion the available knowledge concerning the city as a social entity. ... But despite the multiplication of research and textbooks on the city, we do not as yet have a comprehensive body of competent hypotheses, which may be derived from a set of postulates implicitly contained in a sociological definition of the city, and from our general sociological knowledge, which may be substantiated through empirical research. ... The closest approximations to a systematic theory of urbanism that we have are to be found in a penetrating essay, “Die Stadt,” by Max Weber, ...” (Wirth, 1938:8).

¹ Influenced by Weber, one of the proponents of the Chicago School, Wirth made a sweeping condemnation of capitalist urbanization (Wirth, 1926; 1956; 1964).

¹ The essay was published posthumously by Marianne Weber in 1921 in the *Archiv* and in 1922 edition of *Economy and Society* which she oversaw. After the fourth edition in 1956, edited by Johannes Winckelmann, the text can still be found in *Economy and Society*, but now under the title ‘Non-legitimate domination (typology of cities)’. Käsler (1988:42) considers the essay unfinished.

¹ Simmel and Weber were responding to the need for a more comprehensive theory of urbanism. Simmel’s theory was couched in terms of neo-Kantian formalism, whereas Weber’s theoretical point of view was a form of social behaviorism (Martindale, 1958:50-51)

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Max Weber's Sociology of Islam A Critique

Syed Anwar Husain*

Sociology is a rich, stimulating, innovative, and even fast-expanding discipline with multidimensional empirical ramifications. But in the field of religion its contributions still appear inadequate and leave a great deal to be desired; and this is so even with the path breaking leads by Marx (1867), Weber (1904) and Durkheim (1912). But the overall state of the discipline is poorer when it comes to the specific question of Islam. Even as late as 1974, therefore, the British Sociologist Bryan S. Turner¹ was found lamenting as well as fuming: "... sociologists are either not interested in Islam or have nothing to contribute to Islamic scholarship" (Turner, 1974: 1-2). Even when they did focus on Islam, western sociologists were often inconsistent and misleading. This is true of no less a sociologist than Max Weber. But Max Weber is not alone in being inconsistent. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) points out inadequacies and preconceived tunnel visions that mark the vast majority of western scholarly output when it comes to the question of non-western cultures in general, and Islam and Muslims in particular. Max Weber, in particular, was not interested in Islam as a religion as such; his focus was on the Islam that was antithetical to capitalism.

Max Weber did not produce full-blown research outputs on Islam; and his notes on Islam seem to be a sort of sociological companion for his analysis of the 'Protestant Ethic'. He left his work on Islam incomplete.

Nevertheless, Islam appears to be intrinsically important to his total endeavour vis-à-vis the sociology of religion. Whatever study he made of Islam drew entirely upon the research of Carl Heinrich Becker who had himself emphasized the differences between European and Muslim feudalism (Turner, 1974: 16).

The present exercise is concerned with understanding and analysing the Weberian construct of Islam and critiquing the same. Divided into three main sections the opening one draws attention to the basic postulates of Weber. The second section seeks to offer a critical appreciation. The third section situates the Weberian construct of Islam vis-à-vis contemporary Islam. This is, however, not a full discussion of all that Weber had to say on Islam; its thrust is on Islam and capitalism interrelationship.

Main Postulates of Weberian Islam

In Max Weber's view the character of a society's religion and religious institutions is historically one of the most important factors in determining its political outlook, in particular whether it develops a liberal tradition or not (Beetham, 1974: 185-86). In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930) he extends the same argument into the economic realm by suggesting a causal nexus between the 'Protestant Ethic', especially of the Calvinistic variant, and rational capitalism. In Weber's view asceticism is a necessary and sufficient condition of rational capitalism, but asceticism has to be placed alongside a number of variables. These variables are identified by him in his *General Economic History* "as characteristics and pre-requisites of capitalistic enterprise the following: appropriation of the physical means of production by the entrepreneur, freedom of the market, rational technology, rational law, free labour and finally the commercialization of economic life" (cited in Turner, 1974: 12). It is argued that, given these necessary conditions, a rational thesis – worldly ascetic ethic is crucial in the emergence of modern capitalism. To test this thesis Weber went about an experimental cross-cultural comparison of civilizations to discover whether these factors were present and whether a causally dominant ethic was absent. From this exercise he emerged with the finding that, in India, China and the Islamic lands of the Middle East many of the prerequisites of capitalism were absent. In the specific case of Islam the focus was on the political military and economic nature of Islamic society as a patrimonial form of domination with prebendal feudalism as its core. In attitudinal terms Islam appeared to Weber in a purely hedonistic spirit, especially towards women, luxuries and property.¹ Consequently, he reached the ineluctable conclusion that Islam represented a polar opposite to Puritanism.

A description of the Weberian construct of Islam may be attempted from two broad perspectives: Islamic ethic; and patrimonialism of later Islam.

II

Islamic Ethic

Weber shows that rational law, autonomous cities, an independent burgher class and political stability were totally absent in Islam. But, as it is, he does not seem to link the absence of capitalism in Islam to the nonexistence of the prerequisites identified by him. On the contrary, he lists at least two factors responsible for preventing Islam from evolving naturally. The monotheistic Islam of Makkah failed to develop into an ascetic this-worldly religion because its main carrier was a warrior group. The content of the religious message was transformed into a set of values compatible with the mundane needs of this warrior group. The spiritual element of Islam as a belief system with emphasis on salvation was transformed into the secular quest for mundane gains. The result was that Islam became a religion of accommodation rather than of transformation. Second, the original message of monotheism was subjected to change under the impact of Sufism which catered for the emotional and orgiastic needs of the masses. In consequence, Islam was pulled in two opposite directions by these two groups. The warrior group pulled Islam in the direction of a militaristic ethic; and the Sufis in that of mystical flight. Both the directions of Islam, representing, as it were, a bifurcated Islamic ethic failed to produce, as Weber will have us believe, the prerequisites congruent with the rise of rational capitalism.

III

Patrimonialism of Later Islam

The second perspective of the Weberian construct of Islam is gained by observing the emphasis put on the political and economic structure of such later dynasties as the Abbasid, Mamluk and Ottoman, and this structure falls under Weber's general consideration of patrimonial bureaucracies. This type of financial and political structure depended on the conquest of new lands, which were then exploited to maintain central bureaucracy. The political structure hinged on a complex balance of social forces represented by the Sultan, the military, the ulama and the mass. Frequent dynastic coups rendered political balance precarious, but surprisingly the basic structure of society was left intact. The central political contradiction of the political structure of 'Sultanism' in Weber's view was the sultan's total dependence on the military, which all too frequently proved unreliable. The sultan used to hold on the power and retain his monopoly of power by curbing the growth of autonomous institutions and groups within the patrimonial society. On the other hand, potentially independent social groups were co-opted or assimilated into the military. The lawyers, the ulama generally, the merchants, they were all state officials and emerged out of the imperial household. Thus a society structured and organised as such failed to develop the autonomous institutions, which Weber saw in Europe facilitating the growth of capitalism.

Weber also noted that this political structure failed to develop a rational and formal law because the ideal sacred law was subservient to the state and to political expediency. Similarly, city in Islamic society never developed beyond a military camp and a place of government business. This city also did not provide an environment suitable for the development of independent burghers and merchants. On the whole, the political system stressed such values as imitation and rejection of innovation. Thus it was not attitude or ethic of Islam that militated against the creation of prerequisites for capitalism; the inhibiting factor was the political position of the merchant class vis-à-vis the dominant military-bureaucratic classes in Islamic societies (Zubaida, 1972: P. 324).

IV

Weberian Islam: A Critique

The first point for critiquing the Weberian construct of Islam is that he did not make any real attempt to show the intermeshing between these two perspectives. The Islamic ethic is constructed from a study of seventh-century Islam in Makkah and Madina. The analysis of patrimonialism was linked with the emergence of a military bureaucracy under the Umayyads and its perfection under the Ottomans. One plausible explanation for the failure to connect these two individually strong perspectives is that, as Turner suggests, "... Weber thought that a religion was indelibly stamped by its early history, particularly by its original carriers" (Turner, 1914: 176). But evidentially this is a fallacy. All religions of the world underwent changes as carrier and time changed.

Second, the construct of Islamic ethic is factually wrong on two counts. In the first place, for reasons of his perfunctory approach Weber glossed over urban and commercial aspects of the early as well as later Islamic society. As Professor Montgomery Watt has shown Islam emerged in an essentially commercial and urban

environment of Makkah and flourished in the oasis settlement of Madina (Watt, 1962). Much of the theological basis of the teachings of Islam is taken up with the problems of commercialism and the very terminology of the Quran is rich with commercial concepts. Most Islamicists would agree with G. E. Von Grunebaum's judgment that the prophet's "piety is entirely tailored to urban life" (Grunebaum, 1970:33). An overview of Islamic economy suggests at least three objectives: respect for private property, promotion of a free market of exchange of goods and services, and minimizing the rich-poor gap. There appears to be three strategies for progressively achieving these objectives. First, Islam emphasizes the work ethic, dedication to one's calling and enjoying the fruits of one's labour. Like Weber's 'Protestant ethic' (1904) Islam calls for hard work in order to earn a living and take care of one's family, rather than forsaking the world or surviving on handouts, donations and charity. But unlike the Protestant ethic, Islam does not necessarily take material success in this world as a sign of God's approval of what one is doing. Moreover, much as Islam emphasizes hard work, it is averse to materialism, opportunistic profiteering and seemingly unending pursuit of wealth and an obsession with this – worldly pleasures. As is called upon in the Quran, "Ye prefer the life of this world" (87:16). Second, while favouring acquisition of property and free market economy Islam prohibits the process of 'making a fast buck' or excessive accumulation such as gambling, hoarding and dealing in interest. Islamic banks deal in profit and loss sharing rather than interest, something thought to be quite feasible (Andersen et. al., 1990), and in which there is an growing interest among Muslim and non-Muslim economists alike. Third, inasmuch as sources of excessive accumulation of wealth are denied by Quranic prohibition, dispersion of wealth is facilitated by Islamic folkways (such as voluntary acts of charity, generosity and hospitality), as well as through explicit Quranic commandments of inheritance (4:7, 11) and the poor tax or *jakat* (Benthal, 2002: 149-166; and Ilyas Ba-Yunus, 2002: 101-102). Thus juxtaposed against relevant facts of Islamic economic life it appears that the Islamic society clearly fulfilled at least one of the Weberian prerequisites, that is, "commercialization of economic life".

In the second place, Weber's argument that the warrior ethic had a negative transformative impact on the character of Islam is minimally tenable, and at the same time, factually an exaggeration. In fact, the warrior group was one of the segments of the converts to Islam; and, as H. A. R. Gibb identifies and distinguishes three such social groups in terms of their commitment of Islam (Gibb, 1962:5). The first is the genuine converts who accepted totally the spirit of Islam and who demonstrated pure duty to the Prophet. The second group comprised the merchants of Makkah for whom Islam did not curtail their economic freedom; and they showed commitment to the utilitarian objectives of Islam. The third group was represented by the bedouin warriors whose adherence to Islam was brought about either by the promise of booty or by military threat.

The second aspect of the Weberian construct of Islam is, as Professor Turner points out, open to criticism on a number of grounds (Turner, 1974:173). Weber failed to make allowance for the persistent conflict between the pious and their rulers. There was also deep resentment between the legal scholars and law officials. Weber was also unable to recognize the social solidarity of Islamic cities, which focussed on the law schools and criminal groups.

But such criticisms on matters of detail aside the core of the Weberian thesis that patrimonialism stunted the development of Islam along capitalist lines holds an unassailable ground, and which is also attested by contemporary research.

V

Is Weberian Sociology of Islam Relevant in the Contemporary Context?

The essence of Weberian sociology is to suggest a linkage between modern economy and its associated beliefs and culture. The modern economy is a process that is claimed to be 'rational'. It is orderly, cost-effective, much given to the division of labour and the use of a free market. This process is run and managed by people who are work-oriented, disciplined and not given to economic ally irrelevant pursuits. If these are indeed what a modern economy demands, then Islam in its true sense along with its modernised version (Husain, 2003) would, as Ernest Gellner rightly suggests, "be custom-made for the needs of the hour" (Gellner, 1992:21-22). But in the Muslim countries the ground-reality is otherwise. The economics of these countries are not catastrophic, but they are not satisfactory either. Moreover, there is also the distorting effect of oil wealth in the oil-rich Muslim countries. Given the intrinsic qualities of Islam this reality is some kind of a puzzle. Though long endowed with resources, commercial bourgeoisie and significant urbanization the

Muslim world has so far failed to engender industrialism. But available evidence indicates that at least some of the better-off Muslim countries are capable of running modernizing economy, reasonably permeated by appropriate technology.

But this has not happened, and there is little sign of happening either. To answer this puzzle the Weberian construct of Islam may not be of any assistance. A more comprehensive paradigm is needed for the purpose. Throughout the twentieth century both Islam and the Muslim world have undergone changes of many types with spill over impact on society, economy and polity of Muslims. Consequently, the Muslim world as it appears today is set off the one that Weber studied. But kept to its time and space specificities the Weberian construct has cogent reasons to hold ground insofar as patrimonialism is concerned.

Concluding Observations

This short discussion shows that Weberian sociology of Islam has five outstanding parameters. First, Weber's argument is not in terms of 'the religion of individuals'. Religion in Weberian construct is the determining factor, for society polity and economy. Second, it reflects all the ideological prejudices of the nineteenth century, and earlier. Third, there are factual problems in Weber's emphasis on the warrior group in Islam. Fourth, by ignoring the Quaranic and other Muslim accounts of early Islam Weber in effect ignored some basic principles of his own sociological approach. Fifth, on the whole, the Weberian thesis of Patrimonialism stands to empiric reason, albeit in the specific time and space context.

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Protestant Ethic and the Not-So-Sociology of World Religions

- Nazrul Islam*

Probably the most talked about sociologist, definitely the most influential of them all, Max Weber, is known for many great works. He is known most for his analysis of the Protestant ethic, as for his theory of action, for his political sociology, sociology of music and his sociology of religion. But his lifetime work seems to be in the area of what has come to be known as the “world religions”. He undertook the colossal project of making sense of the major religions of the world but left it incomplete as his life was, unfortunately, shortened. Yet, what he achieved in that short life is the envy of most scholars, definitely of all sociologists. Like most sociologists I have unbounded appreciation for the amount he achieved but unlike most sociologists I fail to see much sociology in his work, particularly in his study of the world religions. In this paper I shall focus on his seminal work on the Protestant ethic and the other world religions and try to show why these are *not so sociological*.

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (2003a) seems to have launched Weber into a life long quest for unraveling the secret that religions held in terms of their hitherto unheard of influence on economics. For much of history and for most religions economics or the mundane pursuit of life is beyond the sphere of godly virtues. Poverty and asceticism are the most virtuous quality for the faithful and the key to unending happiness in the world beyond. However, that certain amount of economics was mixed with religion, especially for the priestly class, has been known for millennia and is attested by the huge amount of gold and jewelry stashed away in the temples from antiquity to the present day all over the world. Thus religion has often been a “good business”, but never so good as it has been for the Protestants. Or so Weber would have us believe.

The Protestants by the very virtues of asceticism seems to have unlocked the secrets of capitalist enterprise and have made it good in the modern world. Indeed, no other people, nor religion, succeeded in bringing forth capitalism of the “modern” variety, whatever that might mean. And it were the Protestants again who single handedly rationalized the world and paved the way for the growth and development of science and technology, art and music, politics and administration and what not, all most all things good and rid the world of all things bad such as the traditional, the magical, the mystical and all forms of the irrational and so on. Sounds preposterous? But that’s exactly what Weber tried to show in this book and in the rest of his “sociology of world religions”.

A few years ago *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (PE) was voted one of ten most significant books in sociology (of the twentieth century) by members of the International Sociological Association and listed among the New York Public Library’s *Books of the Century (1895–1995)* (Lutz Kaelber 2002). Since the English translation appeared in 1930, PE has been a must reading for generations of sociologists. So it is never easy to pick a quarrel with Weber and find faults with PE. Yet, this is where Weber is most vulnerable and most of the criticisms that have ever been launched against him have PE as the starting point. I too shall begin with PE and move over to the other studies of world religions and try to show why logically and methodologically these are not so good sociologies, if sociologies at all.

The content of the book, I am sure, is quite well known and I need not go into any greater detail than to summarize the gist of the presentation in about a couple of paragraphs, definitely not an easy task. What Weber seeks to show in this book is how a religious ethic can influence an

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economic system or at least give rise to an attitude that can influence the economy, that “superstructure” can be more powerful than the economic base of Marx’s claim. He goes about this first by identifying what he likes to call, in want of a better term, the “spirit of capitalism”, which corresponds to a rational attitude towards life but more simply put it is an ethical direction for the conduct of whole life. It can be summed up as a) the devotion to amassing wealth beyond the personal needs of the individual; b) the commitment to unrelieved toil and work coupled with self denial; and c) the avoidance of the use of wealth for the purpose of personal enjoyment (Morrison 1998). To demonstrate the working of this ethic he uses Benjamin Franklin’s advice to young Americans on how to become rich. Weber suggests that “ what is here preached is not simply a means of making one’s way in the world, but a peculiar ethic. The infraction of its rules is treated not as foolishness but as forgetfulness of duty” (PE 2003a, Ch. 2).

This “peculiar ethic” cannot be found anywhere else in the world but only in the West and he believes that the origins of this ethic can be located in the lives of the Puritans who follow the teachings of Calvin. Calvinist doctrines of “predestination” and of the “elect” is argued by Weber to instill in the individual a sense of self denial as the individual’s fate is predetermined and is never sure of salvation or to be among the elect. These lead the Protestant to an intense asceticism which was to be pursued as an end in itself and secondly to toil and hard work, which become associated with a method of eliminating doubt about being an elect. (Morrison 1998). The concept of asceticism and hard work transform into a sense of duty and obligation in the day-to-day work situation and thus, for the Protestants, the idea of a “Calling” connects worldly activity, asceticism and religious justification to action. The idea of calling, inherited from Catholicism, where it referred to a “life task” of serving God in a vocation through ethical devotion, turns into one of worldly duties. This Weber claimed separated the two ethical domains, the worldly and the otherworldly and one could be called to worldly commercial pursuits and give everyday worldly activity a religious significance. This, to point out the obvious, is the link between Protestant ethic and the “spirit of Capitalism”.

This is, perhaps, the worst summarization of the seminal work but will serve the purpose here. What can be pointed out without much ado is that this connection has not been accepted by many, particularly when it is claimed that other religions/societies failed to produce such an ethic and generate capitalism or even the rationalism originating in the ethic of his claim. Beginning with Tawny, who claimed as early as in 1926, that capitalism existed before reformation, many have criticized the numerous lapses in Weber’s formulation, including some who have found the Weber thesis to be wrong in every respect (Noble 2000). I shall not dwell on these much as many an excellent critique of Weber is available. One good summary of a representative sample is provided by Sandra Pierotti (2003), who quotes various authors showing that capitalism has existed in North Europe and in Italy (Amintore Fanfani, an economic historian) before Reformation, that Weber misinterpreted the idea of “calling” (Mac Kinnon) and even the Franklin example of the “spirit of capitalism” (Dickson and McLachlan) and that the part of Protestant ethic chosen by Weber to illustrate his point not only fails to support his thesis *but actually undermines it*. There are also evidences that Protestant leaders in fact taught the opposite of the Weber thesis, like Calvin condemned unlawful gains, and the amassing of wealth etc. The Huguenots and Dutch Reformers also preached against various aspects of capitalism. Also that the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Churches stressed the same precepts in the 16th and 17th centuries and that there seems to be no essential difference between the doctrine of the Catholics and the Puritans on the concept of calling (Robertson). Fanfani (quoted by Pierotti) argues that the creation of new mentality was not the work of Protestantism or any religion, it was the manifestation the general revolution after the Renaissance and Reformation in which the individual liberated itself from the bonds of the middle ages. Pierotti (2003), therefore, concludes that

“There is no doubt that capitalism in various forms existed in Europe prior to the Reformation. The Italian merchants and the Dutch clothiers operated under a rational economic system. Double-entry bookkeeping was invented in Italy and adopted by other merchants throughout Europe. I think it is obvious that several factors were at work in Europe during the long sixteenth century, which led to the growth and dominance of capitalism”.

Such criticisms of Weber's thesis are not my focus and I shall leave these with just two comments. My first problem is with the very concept of capitalism. Much of the confusion regarding the protestant ethic/capitalism thesis arises from the fact that Weber uses the term capitalism without any periodization. When did this capitalism begin? Even to settle the question of whether it began in England, Holland or Italy or when it began in New England we need a date. If Franklin was still advising the young men in the middle of 18th century then it must have started later than that date in New England, assuming that "ethic" is followed by "spirit" which is followed by capitalism. Weber, however, notes that "in the country of Benjamin Franklin's birth (Massachusetts), the spirit of capitalism (in the sense we have attached to it) was present before the capitalistic order" and refers to a date as early as 1632 (PE, Ch. 2). If so, then why did it require Franklin to reformulate the "spirit" one hundred years later. Couldn't the "spirit" have caught on in one hundred years? Weber also refers to the spirit even in the mid 19th century; did capitalism follow after that date? Weber has a very clear definition of the concept of "capitalism" one can also locate the preconditions of the same in his works (Zetterburg 1993) but he never sets a date and this lack of a date or a period when we may locate capitalism fails him completely and gives rise to all kinds of confusions, including throwing his comparisons of world religions to the winds.

Second, I take a look at the Ben Franklin example of the "spirit of capitalism" as this is at the root of the Weberian capitalism and the sociology of world religions. Weber in Chapter 2 of the PE quotes Franklin from two sources with the titles *Necessary Hints to those that would be Rich* (published in 1736) and *Advice to a Young Tradesman* (published in 1748). What I fail to see is that if the "spirit of capitalism" originated from or was contained within the Protestant ethic then why should Franklin have to make these explicit in the form of an advice to the young men. The young men should have been overflowing with the "spirit" since childhood in a Protestant family. Dickson and McLachlan (quoted by Pierotti), thus, conclude that Franklin's writings are in fact proof *against* the existence of such a spirit (my italics). All Franklin was doing was offering prudent advice and not insisting on any moral imperative.

It is also interesting to note the reaction to such advice from among the German public as quoted by Weber himself. After citing the precepts from Franklin, "the true representations of the capitalist spirit", Weber notes that Ferdinand Kürnberger "satirizes" this spirit "in his clever and malicious *Picture of American Culture*" (PE, Ch.2). A few paragraphs later Weber painfully notes "the impression of many Germans that the virtues professed by Americanism are pure hypocrisy seems to have been confirmed by this striking case" (of utilitarianism in Franklin). Moreover, he himself calls the "spirit of capitalism" as a "peculiar ethic" in several places. If the "spirit of capitalism" was the obvious product of Protestant ethic than why should the Germans, who were equally devout Protestants, react in the manner quoted by Weber and why should Weber find the ethic "peculiar"? These merely go to show the lack of logical consistency and methodological rigor as they point to the shaky grounds on which the theory was built. Dickson and McLachlan (quoted by Pierotti 2003) also concludes that such misuse of Franklin suggests a "rather cavalier attitude towards evidence, particularly as the writings of Franklin are the *only 'evidence'* that he presents" to support the "spirit of capitalism" thesis. With the thesis gone, the tenuous link between Protestant ethic and capitalism is also gone.

II

The negative criticisms following its publication in 1904 irritated Weber so much that he set his mind to the general study of the relation between religion and economy (Kaesler 1988). What he needed to do at this stage was to offer confirmation of the logical connections he had drawn between Protestant ethic and capitalism. One option for him was to show that the same happened in other societies as well. He argued that verification is often very difficult to achieve, even in cases of mass

phenomena, which can be statistically described. For the rest there “remains only the possibility of comparing the largest number of historical or contemporary processes, which while otherwise similar, differ in the one decisive point of their relation to the peculiar motive or factor the role of which is being investigated. *This is the fundamental task of comparative sociology*” (Weber 1964). Therefore, all he had to do was to demonstrate that in other cultures/societies where Protestantism did not flourish, capitalism also did not flourish.

Unfortunately this did not turn out to be as simple as that for the simple reason that Weber could not grow out of his love affair with the Protestant ethic. Weber, in the process, worked out excellent sociological generalizations regarding religion (Weber 2003c) but his studies of world religions ended up simply as studies of deviation from an ideal type each unique in its own ways, without offering much opportunities for generalizations.

But, first let's look at what he tried to achieve in his PE. In simple terms of logic his argument is that Protestant ethic (X) creates the spirit of capitalism (W), which leads to the growth of capitalism (Y).

$$X \longrightarrow W \longrightarrow Y \quad (1)$$

Since W is the necessary out come of X and a sufficient precondition of Y, we can omit W and write the following:

$$X \longrightarrow Y \quad (2)$$

Although it might appear so in the PE, this does not happen in isolation and various other social structural factors (p.q.r.s.t.) are also present. Thus we can have the following model:

$$(p.q.r.s.t.) + X \longrightarrow Y \quad (3)$$

or

$$(p.q.r.s.t.) + X = Y \quad (4)$$

Weber could establish the causal connection between X and Y by demonstrating that absence of X also meant the absence of Y. That may have been the motive behind taking up the studies of the world religions. Unfortunately other religions represented other societies so that p.q.r.s.t. became a.b.c.d.e. or f.g.h.i.j.etc. Moreover, Weber went to great lengths to show that these other societies were very different from the West.

Thus, where he ought to have showed that:

$$(p.q.r.s.t.) - X \neq Y \quad (5)$$

He ended up showing that:

$$((a.b.c.d.e.) - X \neq Y \quad (6)$$

Where a.b.c.d.and e are the structural factors of other societies and \neq means not equal to. The structural factors are all different from the structural factors of the West. So that in reality what Weber ends up saying is that other societies did not have anything like the protestant ethic in their religion, *also that they did not have the same structural conditions as the West*, as a result they did not produce capitalism!

Weber often conceded the possibility of these societies having a kind of capitalism but they always turned out to be something different from the “modern capitalism”. Thus these societies, although unable to generate modern capitalism did generate various other kinds of capitalisms like adventurous capitalism, usurious capitalism, speculative capitalism etc. (Y_1, Y_2, Y_3, Y_n) so that his arguments may be read like the followings:

$$\begin{aligned} (a.b.c.d.e.) - X &= Y_1 \\ (f.g.h.i.j.) - X &= Y_2 \\ (m.n.o.p.) - X &= Y_n \end{aligned} \quad (7)$$

Thus, as may be seen easily, equations (6) or (7) does not prove his Protestantism / capitalism thesis (2 and 4) in any way. The only way to prove the thesis was (eq. 5), which he could not attempt for the simple reason that *both the growth of capitalism and the conditions (with or without Protestantism) leading to it in the West were actual historical cases and unique to the West.*

Given these, **could the following be ever possible?**

$$(a.b.c.d.e.) +/- X = Y ? \quad (8)$$

Could China or India plus/minus Protestant ethic ever have brought about the growth of modern capitalisms? Like it or not this remains the tacit expectation is in Weber's studies of the world religions. Capitalism occurred once in history and in the West alone, in all other cases it was grafted, *so that equation (8) is an impossibility.*

I, therefore, fail to see the purpose of his studies of world religions in relation to the growth of modern capitalism. However, to go into some details on the above let us delve a little further in his studies of the world religions.

III

It is common knowledge that Weber probably wanted to study all major religions of the world under the heading of world religions, in which he included Confucianism, Taoism, Hinduism, Buddhism, ancient Judaism and perhaps medieval Catholicism and Islam. Let me point out at the outset that I do not understand why these religions are called world religions. As far as Confucianism and Taoism are concerned they are strictly Chinese and until modern times remained within the boundaries of China. The same is also true of Hinduism. If it is the sheer number of the Chinese who follow Confucianism or Taoism or the Indians who follow Hinduism that makes them world religions, then it would be difficult to use the term for ancient Judaism, which never had a very large following and was restricted to a small portion of the Middle East. Weber treats Buddhism in *The Religion of India* (Weber 1967) but says categorically that Buddhism became a “world religion”, *outside of India!* But where? In China? But he does not deal with Buddhism as a “world religion” in *The Religion of China* (1968) either. Therefore, to begin with, a “sociology of world religions” is a misnomer.

These religions have often been called salvation religions but salvation in the Western sense is also missing from the Chinese religions. Indeed, although Confucianism and Taoism are often termed as religions they are basically a set of rituals and some ethical precepts for going about in the day-to-day world. The rituals are organized in order to pacify the spirits, ghosts and demons and are fully magical in nature. Although there is certain amount of philosophy and even mysticism in them these would hardly qualify as religions like Christianity. Indeed, the title of the English translation as *The Religion of China* is not even correct. Hans Gerth, who, after the communist take over in China, probably felt uncomfortable with the "isms" in the original title of "Confucianism and Taoism" and decided on the misleading title for this publication in 1951 (Yang 1968). In fact, if one wants to examine the religions of China one would have to deal with a confusing array of philosophies, magic, rituals, schools of thought in an endless variety of succession over a period of more than 2500 years of recorded history, indeed a veritable mess.

Why Weber chose only two of these "religions" is also not clear, let alone being methodologically sound. Confucianism was the "religion" of the ruling elite and Taoism the "heterodox" popular religion. Taoism was so intertwined with Buddhism that it was difficult during different phases of history to separate the two. However, all of these so called religions, even Buddhism, as it developed in China, were practiced by the elites, namely the Confucian priests, scholars and rulers, when in public. They did so mainly to distance themselves from the masses. Other than that through all periods in history and for all classes of people "religion" was a curious mixture of ancestor worship, sacrifices to spirits of objects and places, belief in ghosts, exorcism, divination and spirit medium. (*Encyclopedia of Philosophy*). These were based in the family or clan and localized in the villages and associated with festivals and funerals. Popular or not, these practices in China would hardly qualify as religions even in the broad Durkheimian sense of having a clear distinction between the sacred and the profane. There was a very strong sense of "right" and "wrong" in Confucianism and the "magician's" conception of "clean" and "unclean" in Taoism but nothing like the idea of the sacred or the profane of other religions. There was, even in Weber's admission, no conception of the evil and piety was merely equated with honour in subordination to parents, teachers, superiors in the official hierarchy and the ruler (Kaesler 1988).

One could go on endlessly to point out the numerous flaws in Weber's reading of the religions in China, even if confined to only Confucianism and Taoism. I shall however stop here with the conclusion as reached by Weber himself that there was no idea of the sacred, salvation, prophet or even god while heaven was often equated with nature by the Taoists. So where is the religion? And what religious ethic are we talking about? Indeed, it is difficult to see what Weber was looking for. Was he really expecting Protestantism among all these, mostly magic even by his own admission? He seemed to be looking for the Protestant ethic without Protestantism, even in the millennium before Christ. He was definitely looking for some sort of religious ethic that could give rise to the "spirit of capitalism" in China, *but seemed to be sure of not finding it*. It often appears to me that he was almost looking for the proverbial black cat in a dark room. But what is more astonishing is that *he found it* and called it "rationalization", and from then on became obsessed with it.

The idea of rationalization occurs in the earlier edition (1904-5) of the PE but is never the central focus as is the case in the later edition of (1919-20), by which time he was convinced of the importance of the concept. Beginning with his study of China (1910) and later of India (1916-17), rationalization replaces the "spirit of capitalism" as the connecting thread between religion and capitalism. Thus religion, Protestantism in this case, gives rise to rationalization and the formation of modern capitalism becomes one aspect of the process of rationalization of the whole world. Also religion itself becomes a means for attaining rationalization, by getting rid of magic from all walks of life. While on the other hand, the whole process of rationalization is seen as demystifying religion or getting rid of all magical aspect from religion itself. Thus while there is magical beliefs on the one end of the scale of rationality, being totally irrational, at the other end is the epitome of rationalization, itself a rationalized religion, Protestantism.

Therefore, in the garden of eternal magic, that was China, very little capitalism could ever be expected. Indeed, Weber makes it abundantly clear in almost every page that whatever happened in China, it could never lead to capitalism. Much of the volumes on China and on India are full of such assertions. In fact the two books read like a laundry list of how China and India are different from the West, even though they had almost everything like the West and could have brought about modern capitalism (?). But Alas! They did not have the kind of rationalization in their cultures and religion that the West had. And more interestingly, he has a valid argument, almost sickening by the end of the books, to show why each of these differences existed.

Although India and China are in sharp contrast to each other they are seen by Weber as having the same kind of lacking compared with the West, albeit placed somewhat differently. Thus they both had cities but not like the West; the cities in China were not walled like the West and did not have armies to defend these like in the West. There were guilds in India but not like the West, in India they were caste dominated. There were merchants in China but not a bourgeoisie. In India there were the bourgeoisie but not like in the West. India had the Jains, who had an ethic comparable to that of the Puritans but domination of the caste system failed them or India could have had a rational capitalism eons ago! So on and so forth. While the most important item missing in these societies was rationalization like the West, in economy, in science, technology, art and most importantly in religion.

Similarly the “whys” are also very interesting, if not entertaining. For example China could not develop capitalism because of centuries of peace, which gave rise to a pacific attitude, particularly among the literati, the elites of the society. Peace, centuries of it, which by any reasonable argument should be commendable and definitely preferable in any society, in the hands of Weber become almost shameful. “What a shame, because they had centuries of peace, the Chinese could not develop capitalism!”

So I shall stop here by pointing to a few obvious mistakes in *The Religion of India*, with which I am more familiar. First, here again the original title was changed from *Hinduism and Buddhism*, which now appear only in the sub-title, thus giving a false impression of including all religions, so that one may expect a chapter on Islam which was the religion of the rulers and a sizable percentage of the population for over six hundred years before the English took over and continues to be the second largest religious faith in demographic terms. The problem here like in the China book, is the expanse of time. Much of Weber's data are taken from the 1901 and some from the 1911 census, yet he works with more than 2500 years of history often oblivious of the time frame. For example he talks about the “anti-urban Bengal”, without referring to the period. The fact is that while he was writing Bengal had the largest of the Indian cities and one of the largest in the world, Calcutta (Kolkata). He refers to “several hundred years of English domination”, which in reality, even while he was writing, had hardly been fifty or sixty years in most parts of British India. He also talks about centralized government covering the whole of India for most of its history, which, without being cautious, can be termed as completely wrong. The *whole* of the Indian sub-continent was *never* under any centralized government. Closest would probably be during the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's rule. The British had a maximum possession of about two thirds of India. The rest were the quasi-independent “princely states”. Such mistakes abound in the volume, perhaps it is about the same in case of China, but I refrain from commenting on that for my lack of acquaintance with its history and geography.

In any case the more interesting part of the works on India and China are located in the last chapter of the India volume. Where much of what is said in the two volumes are summarized under the heading of “The General Character of Asiatic Religion”. Defining the religions as purely magical in character Weber seeks to establish the differences with the Occident and shows where they lack in rationality. In terms of economics with which he was mostly concerned, he concludes that this “most highly anti-rational world of universal magic also affected everyday economics. *There is no way from it to rational inner-worldly life conduct*”. There were “spells against enemies, erotic or economic competition, spells designed to win legal cases, ... spells for securing wealth, for the success of undertaking. These could be achieved through “compulsive magic” or through “gifts” to

the functional god or demon. Obviously enough, a “*rational, practical ethic and life methodology did not emerge from this magical garden*”. These however did not mean that the Asians were not interested in wealth. On the contrary, Weber thinks that the “unrestricted lust for gain of the Asiatics ... is notoriously unequalled in the rest of the world”. It is pursued through every possible means, “including magic”, but lacks “in precisely that which was decisive for the economics of the Occident ... e.g. the ‘inner-worldly asceticism’ of *Protestantism* in the West.” The “*Asiatic religions could not supply the presuppositions of inner-worldly asceticism*” (italics mine). With these lines, Weber effectively sealed the fate of the Asiatic societies from developing either capitalism or the required religious ethic. So that, at the end of the two volumes, we are back to square one. No Protestantism, no capitalism.

However, as noted above, Weber needed some fortification for the Protestant ethic itself and found it in the concept of rationalization. He now needed to show the relation between the two more emphatically. To do this he took up the study of the ancient Judaism in which, he argued, lay the roots of Protestant rationality. *Ancient Judaism* (Weber 1952) does not form an integral part of the study of the world religions in the sense that in this work Weber does not seek to bring about the marriage between “Judaic” ethic and capitalism. Perhaps, he did not want to push back his expectation of so far back into history, although 2500 years seemed fair enough for both China and India. He did the next best thing; to push back the origin of rationalism into the very beginning of Western civilization. It is a curious fact that, Israel, Syria, and even Mesopotamia are considered by Weber as belonging to the West, and not a part of Asia, because they form a part of the Biblical realms! For Weber, the elimination of magic can mainly be ascribed to the worldview of the Judaic religiosity. Ancient Judaism was the starting point of the process of ‘disenchantment’, which distinguishes the West from all others. It is the elimination of magic and the establishment of a rational path to salvation, which played the decisive role in the rise of Western rationalization (see Schroeder 1992). Through a curious process of growth, which for a while faltered under Catholicism in the middle ages, rationalism got firmly anchored in the West through Protestantism. Protestantism became its final abode and all ended happily for Weber.

IV

In these rather sketchy summarizations all I tried to do was to show that what ever may have been the context of his study of the world religions, Weber always got back to his main focus, if not the theme, of his work to show the unique relation between capitalism and Protestantism. This notion of the unique is not simply because of historical reasons, Weberian methodology dictated it so. The relation between Protestantism and capitalism has been treated by Weber as an *ideal typical* situation and was used as a yardstick to study other religions, to see how the latter deviated from the ideal type.

In the *Economy and Society* Weber presented his “sociology” of religion, where he defined his task as “to study the conditions and effects of a particular type of social action”. Under these very general conditions he set to study religion covering pretty much the same issues that he dealt with in his study of the world religions. He covered a whole range of subjects including the origin of religion, magic, priests, prophets, salvation, taboo and so on, most of what would be covered under any sociology of religion. In the *Economy and Society* the aim was “overwhelmingly” one of “*systematization and generalization*” (Kaesler 1988)

In the “Introduction” to his “Sociology of World Religions” (Weber 2003b) he similarly attempted some very generalized definitions of the same topics. But the aims of the two studies were very different as becomes clear after a few paragraphs of such definitions. Here he wants to consider each of the world religions separately and argues that “in no respect can one simply integrate

various world religions into a chain of types” He argues that “all the great religions are *historical individualities* of a highly complex nature” and even if taken all together they can only exhaust a few possible combinations that could be formed on the numerous individual factors in such historical combinations. Thus, they, do not constitute a “systematic ‘typology’ of religion”. However, they “are ‘typological’ in the sense that they consider what is *typically important* in the historical realizations of the religious ethics” and all “other aspects will be neglected.” Therefore, “these presentations *do not claim to offer a well-rounded picture of world religions.*” (Italics mine) Let me quote at length what he wants to achieve from the studies of world religions:

“Those features peculiar to the individual religions, in contrast to other religions, but which at the same time are important for our interest, must be brought out strongly. A presentation that disregards these special accents of importance would often have to tone down the special features in which we are interested. Such a balanced presentation would almost always have to add other features and occasionally would have to give greater emphasis to the fact that, of course, all qualitative contrasts in reality, in the last resort, can somehow be comprehended as purely quantitative differences in the combinations of single factors. However, it would be extremely unfruitful to emphasize and repeat here what goes without saying.

What “goes without saying” is that this is the same methodology that he had set forth earlier in 1904 in the essay on “‘Objectivity’ in Social Science” in *The Methodology of the Social Sciences* (Weber 1949), in which concrete individual phenomena are built into ideal types. Let me quote:

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, occasionally absent *concrete individual* phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a *unified construct* (*Gedankenbild*). (p 90)

When we compare the two quotes it becomes abundantly clear that Weber was seeking to construct an ideal type of the world religions and their relations with economics

The features of religions that are important for economic ethics shall interest us primarily from a definite point of view: we shall be interested in the way in which they are related to economic rationalism. More precisely, we mean the economic rationalism of the type which, since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, has come to dominate the Occident as part of the particular rationalization of civic life, and which has become familiar in this part of the world.

Such ideal types offers the researcher with a tool with which a real situation or action can be compared. The other religions were thus to be compared with the economic rationalism that came to dominate the Occident from the 16th and 17th centuries, obviously through Protestantism. As was noted above that was *all* he attempted to do with the religions of China and India (as well as Islam, which I did not deal with here).

Therefore, we have two different methodologies followed for two different of studies of religion by the same person. In one the attempt is made to systematize and generalize while in the other the unique and concrete individual cases are treated as typical and compared with others. The two methodologies followed by Weber were worked out at two different points in his career. And in my opinion represents two different, fields of study, if not independent disciplines.

That Weber’s work lacks consistency and even a unifying theme is well known (Morrison). He seemed not only to have worked with different topics and subjects, he actually developed different methodologies for these. John Rex (1971) argued that there were at least four methodologies based on the four different influences on him over a period of thirty years of academic work. These included the ones by Rickert, by Dilthey, by positivism and by Simmel. Rex thought that the influence of Simmel was most decisive. Others have seen the influence of Dilthey or Rickert or even of positivism as decisive. For example Tonnies (1974) quotes Troeltsch as saying that “Weber nearly out-positivists positivism” in his essay on “Science as a Vocation”. I do not wish to go into details of all the influences on Weber or focus on other methodologies. I shall merely refer to the methodologies worked out in *The Methodology of the Social Sciences* and in the *Economy and Society*.

I feel that these two methodologies are the most important for us here because they were worked out for two different disciplines. In the first methodology (worked out in 1904) the influence of Rickert is very obvious and Weber seeks to distinguish the social sciences from the natural sciences. He makes it absolutely clear that generalization and use of abstract concepts is the province of the natural sciences while the social sciences seek to build causal explanations by focusing on the cultural significance of historical phenomena. Weber notes that the “type of social sciences he was interested in was “an *empirical science of concrete reality*”. The aim was “the understanding of characteristic uniqueness of the reality” that is to “understand on the one hand the relation and cultural significance of individual events in their contemporary manifestation and on the other of their being historically *so* and not *otherwise*.”(Weber 1949 p. 72) Weber further argues that the focus of attention on reality under the guidance of values and the selection and ordering of phenomena in the light of their cultural significance *is entirely different from the analysis of reality in terms of laws and general concepts.* (italics mine). And further on he says that “neither of these two types of analysis of reality has any necessary logical relationship with the other.” And that it would be “most disastrous” not to think of these as “distinct in *principle*”(p. 77). I have argued elsewhere that this methodology belongs to the realm of historical studies (Islam 1988). The study of the world religions done by Weber followed this method of looking at their cultural significance and treating each as separate individual, indeed, unique cases.

The other methodology is the one, worked out later around 1910, when Weber began his work on the *Economy and Society*. In the very first chapter of the book Weber tries to define the basic concepts of sociology and, according to Parsons, the methodology of sociology. I do not wish to go into details here either but shall point out a few striking differences between the *methodology of the social sciences* (often called the cultural sciences or historical sciences) and *the methodology of sociology*. In the later methodology, Weber likes to argue that “it is customary to designate various sociological generalizations as...‘laws’. (Weber 1964 p 107). And again, “It has continually been assumed as obvious that the science of sociology seeks to formulate type concepts (he calls these pure types and not ideal types as in the earlier essay) and generalized uniformities.” (see also Islam 1988) This, he claims, “distinguishes it (sociology) from history, which is oriented to *causal analysis and explanations of individual actions, structures and personalities possessing cultural significance* (italics mine). He further adds that like in the other generalizing sciences the concepts in sociology are also *abstract*.

Therefore, it is clear that Weber is not dealing with the same kind of discipline or that, at the very least, the fields of the studies are different. The “Sociology of religion”, worked out on the basis of systemization and generalization is sociological by his definitions. But the study of the world religions with the focus on building ideal types and looking at the concrete individual cases and not offering generalizations is not in the realm of sociology at all. *They are not sociologies, definitely not so sociological, as those presented in the Sociology of Religion.*

Please note that Weber was not even a sociologist when he began his work on the Protestant ethic, and as Mommsen (1974) notes that it was not until 1913 that Weber eventually established himself as a sociologist. Also note that Weber was never comfortable with his rendition of sociology. Immediately after the introduction of the word “sociology” in the *Economy and Society*, he adds parenthetically “in the sense in which this *highly ambiguous word* is used here” (italics mine). He was also aware that his version of sociology may not be acceptable to others so that a few pages down he says that “there is no intention of attempting to impose on any one else” his version of sociology. (It was Talcot Parsons and his band of American sociologists who did that.) In any case, here I am not questioning his sociology, which has come to be accepted as legitimate, but what I argue is that *given his own definitions of the subject matter and the methodology, the study of world religions cannot be sociologies.*

Hence, to conclude, the studies of the world religions beginning with the Protestant ethic as the ideal typical case are not sociologies, even by his own definitions, although Weber likes to treat them as such. His obsession with Protestantism and later with the uniqueness of the West and its rationality betrays him. He could have built general theories, which he shows as possible in his

other study of religion and even in the short introduction he wrote to the study of world religions. Topics such as salvation, prophecy, intellectuals, the class differences among the followers of different religions, popular religions, were all excellent ideas that he throws in in his study of the world religions. But unfortunately because of his methodology, which dictates a comparison with an ideal typical situation, he is forced to treat all other religions as *deviations* from that ideal type. For example, intellectuals become the major factors of the Asiatic religions and one could have seen if it applies to Protestantism or Catholicism in a similar manner and build a generalization regarding that but the way in which Weber deals with this the intellectuals become a barrier in the promotion of Protestant like ethic, they become deviant cases. Indeed, the opposite may have been a better theory, that Protestantism is a deviation from the general trends of religions !

Weber's obsession with Protestantism and the biases colouring his studies have been amply demonstrated by Turner (1974) in his study of Weber and Islam. In fact Weber's study of Islam shows very clearly his bias against the Orient as a whole, many aspects of which have been treated by others. Indeed, even now some continue to refer to this bias as "genteel racism"(Yoshie 2003). But let me finish here with what else Weber could have done.

In going through his methodological studies an alternative way of dealing with causal analysis can be found. At about the time of the publication of the PE, Weber also published his work on *The Methodology of the Social Sciences* (1949 [1904]), in which, in response to Eduard Meyer, he had worked out a way of proving causation where a what "would have been" if such an event did not take place kind of experimentation could lead to a confirmation of the causal sequence was explored. He picks up this technique again in the *Economy and Society*, where he argues that "often unfortunately there is available only the dangerous and uncertain procedure of the "imaginary experiment" which consists in thinking away "certain elements of a chain of motivation and working out the course of action which would then ensue, thus arriving at a causal judgment" (Weber 1964 p. 97). Recently I read a collection of essays where " what might have been" if Columbus did not discover America was explored (Benford and Greenberg 1992). The volume turned out to be quite exciting with the Chinese discovering America and establishing an empire there or the Native Americans developing a high technological culture and defending their shores with fighter jets were seen as among the possible outcomes. Weber may have undertaken such an exercise to see what if Protestantism did not flourish or even if Calvin were not born. Fortunately for us Weber did not delve into such an enterprise as the above noted volume on America minus Columbus is aptly listed in the genera called "science fiction" and not science. But, perhaps, they would have been more sociological by his own methodology.

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Notes

ⁱ "In the rich literature on the city we look in vain for a theory of urbanism presenting in a systematic fashion the available knowledge concerning the city as a social entity. ... But despite the multiplication of research and textbooks on the city, we do not as yet have a comprehensive body of competent hypotheses, which may be derived from a set of postulates implicitly contained in a sociological definition of the city, and from our general sociological knowledge, which may be substantiated through empirical research. ... The closest approximations to a systematic theory of urbanism that we have are to be found in a penetrating essay, "Die Stadt," by Max Weber, ..." (Wirth, 1938:8).

ⁱⁱ Influenced by Weber, one of the proponents of the Chicago School, Wirth made a sweeping condemnation of capitalist urbanization (Wirth, 1926; 1956; 1964).

ⁱⁱⁱ The essay was published posthumously by Marianne Weber in 1921 in the *Archiv* and in 1922 edition of *Economy and Society* which she oversaw. After the fourth edition in 1956, edited by Johannes Winckelmann, the text can still be found in *Economy and Society*, but now under the title 'Non-legitimate domination (typology of cities)'. Käsler (1988:42) considers the essay unfinished.

^{iv} Simmel and Weber were responding to the need for a more comprehensive theory of urbanism. Simmel's theory was couched in terms of neo-Kantian formalism, whereas Weber's theoretical point of view was a form of social behaviorism (Martindale, 1958:50-51)

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