

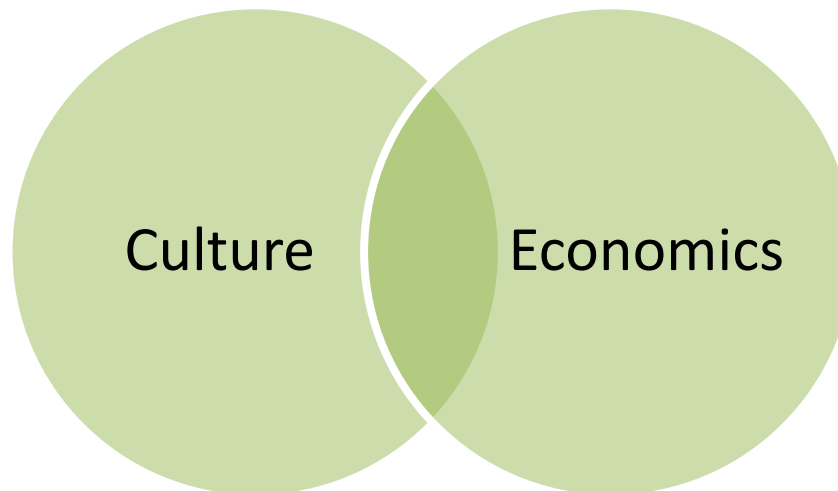
Max Weber



1864-1920

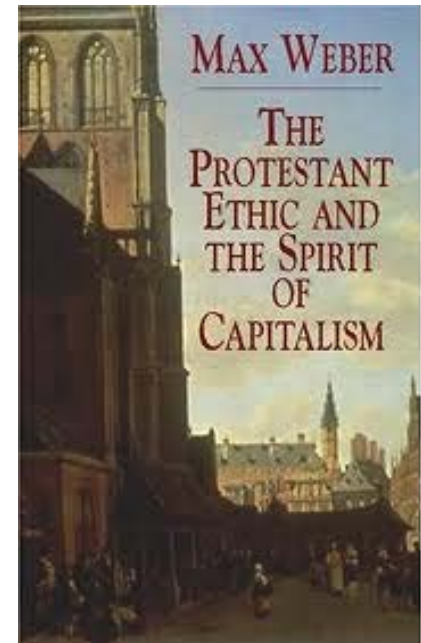
Culture and Economics

- How are **economics** and **culture** (worldviews, values, beliefs) related?
- Like Marx, Weber too focused on structures of capitalism and inequality
- Unlike Marx, Weber focused on the analytical independence and causality of culture/beliefs
- **Implication:** Secular capitalism has religious and cultural origins.



The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

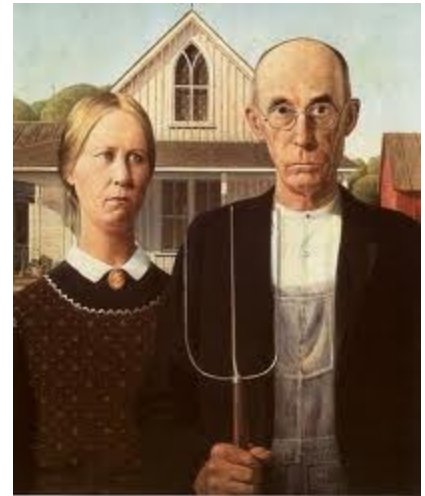
- **Capitalism** is defined by Weber as the pursuit of forever renewed profit by means of *rational* (calculating) capitalistic enterprise.
- **‘Spirit of Capitalism’** = the *calling* to make more money as an end in itself, and to work hard *for its own sake* as a sign of salvation. This is a new *psychological disposition*.





The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

- **The Protestant Ethic** is the '*Spirit of Capitalism*'! The Protestant Ethic (aka Puritan Ethic, Work Ethic) means:
 1. sacrificing and saving for the future and
 2. adopting a ***rational*** (= **calculating**) attitude towards life.
- Spirit of (early) modern capitalism distinguished by **hard work** and **asceticism** (frugality); not by greed or self-indulgence



Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation

- Protestants more likely than Catholics to have business occupations, **WHY?**
- Martin Luther inaugurated (began) the *Protestant Reformation* in 1517, which rejected the hierarchical authority structure and doctrines of the Catholic Church



Martin Luther
(1483-1546)

Calvinism

Tenets of Calvinism:

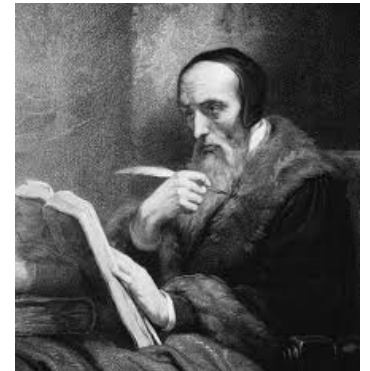
1. the doctrine of **predestination**- the idea that one's salvation is already decided/**pre-ordained** by God;
 2. God's will can not be known or interpreted (e.g. by a priest)
 3. Purpose of this-world activities is to serve God diligently
- To convince others (and themselves) that they were already chosen, Calvinists would work hard and sacrifice for the future because God would only select the industrious...



John Calvin
(1509-1564)

Calvinism and ‘the calling’ to work really, really, hard...

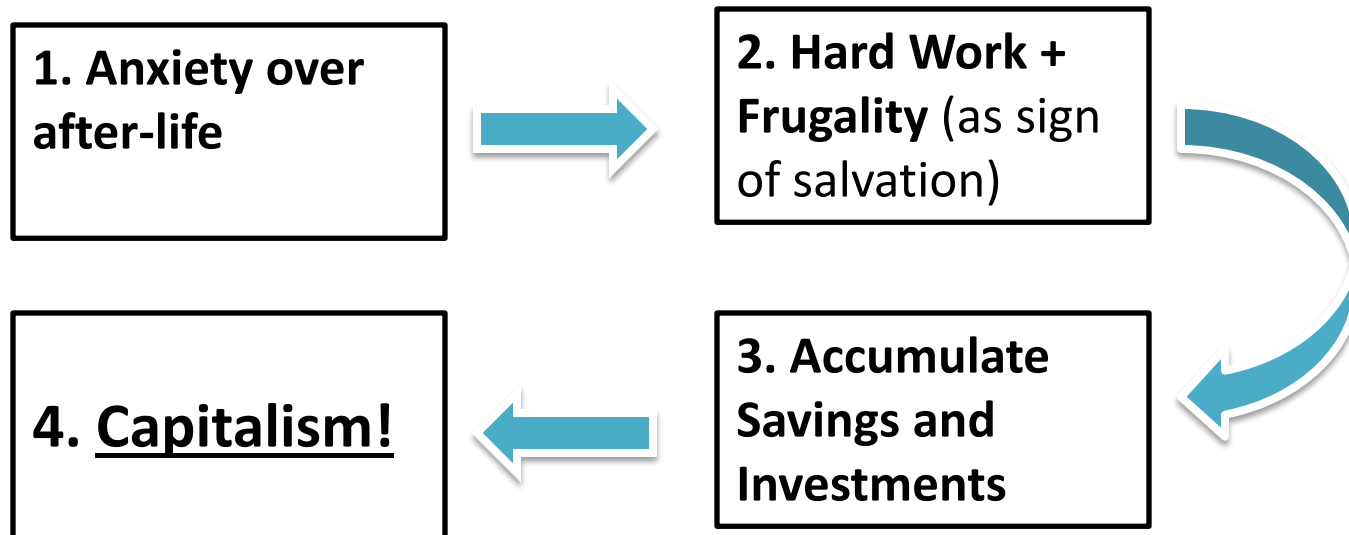
- What should the individual God-fearing believer do?
- Idea of ***the calling***: Labor in a calling/a vocation; dedicated this-worldly activity to glorify God.
- Success in this world is a sign of salvation in the next world!
- The Calvinist took it as his duty to demonstrate proof of his salvation.
- This was accomplished through rational, methodical **self-control, self-discipline**.
Avoid spontaneous enjoyment; avoid anything that would distract from work
- “Every hour lost is lost to labor for the glory of God”



John Calvin
(1509-1564)

How Calvinism Created Capitalism

- Hard work, combined with asceticism, produces money/profit accumulation
- Expansion of capitalism is an unintended consequence of Calvinists' religious beliefs and their rationalization of those beliefs



Sociology and 'Social Action'

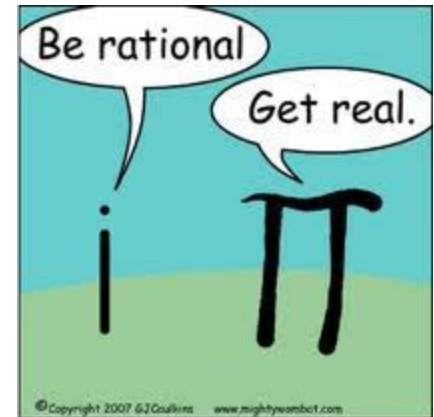
- **Social action:** action that is meaningfully oriented toward the behavior of others.
- **Sociology** as the study of subjectively meaningful action
 - *Verstehen* = 'understanding'



Rationality and Social Action

Two Ideal-types of social action:

- ✓ **Rational** means 'efficient'; adopting the most efficient *means* to achieve a given *end*: **MONEY**. (*Gesellschaft*)
- ✓ **Non-rational** (*not irrational!*) means **non-calculating** behavior, including habits, traditions, and anything you do for its own sake (e.g. for the fun of it, or because it constitutes a *way of life* for you).



Rationality and Social Action

- **Rational Action**

- 1. Instrumental rational action:** calculating strategic action
 - Driven by a rational assessment of the costs and benefits of selecting particular courses of action
- 2. Value rational action:** commitment to a particular value (e.g., commitment to God, family, the poor, country etc.), motivates deliberate, methodical rational action in the service of that value
 - Pursue actions consistent with values irrespective of their costs the value-commitment



Social Research and Ideal-Types

- **Ideal-types** are conceptual analytical devices which accentuate characteristics or behavior we would expect to find in looking at a *social phenomenon in its “pure” form*
- Aids in comparative analysis
 - Examples: comparing the ideal typical Protestant to the ideal typical Buddhist...



Power, Authority, Domination

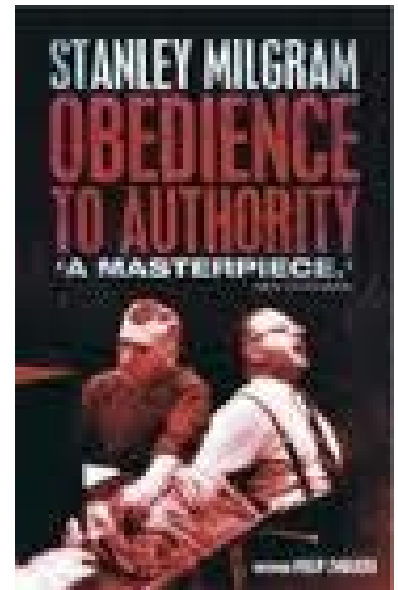
- **Power definitions:**

- i) ‘the **probability** that an actor ... will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests’
- ii) ‘the **chance** of a man or a number of men to realize their own will even **against the resistance** of others...’
- iii) ‘Power means every chance within a social relationship to assert one’s will even against opposition” (in Habermas).



Power, Authority, Domination

- **Authority/Domination:** Probability that commands will be obeyed/complied with.
- **“Without exception every sphere of social action is profoundly influenced by structures of domination” (28)**
 - German *Herrschaft*, (‘domination’) also translated as “imperative control” (Parsons), and also “rule”.
- **Domination (authority) is always only one side of a command-obedience *relationship***



Ideal types of authority

Modern society:

- Rational, legal authority based on impersonal, rationally established rules and laws
- Example: **Bureaucracy**: formal, impersonal form of organization; a rational, efficient way of accomplishing tasks in a modern, complex society.



Traditional society:

- Non-rational authority based on habits, emotions, sanctity of tradition, etc.

Characteristics of Bureaucracy

- Impersonal criteria in social relations; obligations of office
- Hierarchy of offices/divisions/personnel
- Division of labor, specific competencies
- Contractual relationships; open recruitment
- Technical qualifications; certified expertise; merit; appointed not elected
- Fixed salaries/benefits



Charismatic Authority

- Non-rational type of authority
- Can co-exist alongside legal rational, and traditional authority
- **Charisma** resides in the individual; persona grace/charm
- The charismatic individual persuades people to do things—has authority over them
- **Charismatic community**: Unified by members' shared emotional attachment to the charismatic leader
- Charismatic authority is temporary; resides in the individual (not in bureaucratic office/occupation)

Charismatic Authority

- *Charismatic leaders* use personal authority to generate mass followings that challenge the traditional order.
- The charisma dies with the individual's death/scandal etc.



Mussolini and Hitler are (negative) examples of charismatic leaders

Social Stratification



- The processes determining individuals' and groups' objective location in the system of social classes
- Weber, unlike Marx, sees multiple sources/gradients of inequality/stratification
 - **Class** is based on Economic resources, Individuals who have similar life chances as a result of property, income, and labor market opportunity.
 - **Status** is based on Social status, prestige, honor, life-style.
 - **Political power**

Modernity and Values

- Core dilemma of modern society: Tension among conflicting values; which values to pursue?
- Scientific knowledge/progress cannot answer the core questions:
 - What shall we do? How shall we live?
 - Science, including sociology are **value-neutral**; sociologists study society with passion and objectivity; attentive to “**inconvenient facts**”

