

three reasons. First, Weber and Troeltsch are almost universally regarded as the founders of the sociology of religion. Second, Weber's *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* is the classic work on the influence of religious factors on economic thinking. Third, Troeltsch's writings contain some of the most insightful discussions of the problems that religion has for modernity. While many people will be quite satisfied with the considerable amount of empirical evidence that P. offers, some of us might wish he that he would have devoted more attention to the historical context of the problems regarding religious thinking in the modern age.

Not all of the chapters will be of interest to everyone, but as a whole the book probably will be. The book may not be persuasive, but it is provocative and illuminating. Anyone interested in the differing ways in which socioeconomic factors can, and often do, influence religion should certainly consider reading this book.

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“Religion” in der Soziologie Max Webers. By Hartmann Tyrell. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014. Pp. liv + 357. €74.

This book is a collection of twelve essays which Hartmann Tyrell published between 1990 and 2009 and they are ostensibly devoted to Max Weber's notion of religion in his sociology. Yet, this is somewhat misleading because they are not just about Weber and his sociology of religion. The first five essays are primarily on religion whereas the final seven are largely devoted to values. The essays are mostly on Weber but many incorporate discussions of other thinkers, including Friedrich Schleiermacher, Georg Simmel, Ernst Troeltsch, and especially, Friedrich Nietzsche. The reader who expects the book to focus solely on Weber might be disappointed, but that would be rather unfortunate because each of these essays is quite illuminating.

The most enlightening essays are found in the first parts. In “Einführende Bemerkungen zu Max Webers ‘Die Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen’” T. reminds us that what we regard as Weber's books on the sociology of religion were originally separate essays and that they were not fully revised. He also reminds us that Weber oversaw the printing of just the first volume of the series and that he was never able to write the final two projected volumes. Thus, we do not have the complete series as Weber intended and what we do have are mostly sketches.

The most informative essay is also the longest—“Das ‘Religiöse’ in Max Webers Religionssoziologie.” It is more than fifty pages and is devoted to explicating what Weber meant by “religious.” Unlike many commentators, T. discusses Weber's belief that the proper answer to the question “What is religion?” is that religion is not abstract, but practical, that it is not one, but many, and that they are not primarily concerned with the afterlife, but with the here and now. Religion (and the “religious”) is, therefore, a powerful living force.

T. discusses Weber's notion of the "disenchantment of the world" in "Potenz und Depotenziierung der Religion" but rather than concentrating on the process of rationalization, he focuses on the importance of miracles, magic, and music. T. traces Weber's history of the human need to believe in these powers from ancient Judaism to the beginnings of modern capitalism. Because commentators often concentrate on the process of rationalization, T.'s focus on the irrationality of religion is most welcome.

"Worum geht es in der Protestantischen Ethik" is also both revealing and perplexing. T. correctly points out how Weber thought modern capitalism was unusual and that the conditions which made it possible were rare. Like many Weber scholars, T. looks specifically at the ascetic, but unlike most, he notes Troeltsch's influence on Weber. What is perplexing is that T. believes that Nietzsche was also a major influence on Weber's development of the Protestant ethic thesis; while Weber invokes Nietzsche's spirit towards the end of the essay, it seems inappropriate to incorporate Weber's later comments on Nietzsche's conception of "Resentment." It also seems odd to insist that the "Protestant ethic" is a "social-economic study" when it is a theological-cultural one. What makes T.'s claims puzzling is that he is keenly aware of how crucially important religion was in Weber's thinking.

Nietzsche figures prominently in "Pessimismus—Eine Begriffsgeschichtliche Notiz" but here his presence appears relevant and even necessary. T. notes that it was Schopenhauer who introduced the notion of pessimism but that Nietzsche ended up rejecting the sense of resignation in favor of a new "pessimism of strength." Simmel and Weber built upon Nietzsche's notion, but Weber adopted that of Jakob Burckhardt, and thereby conjoined Grecian heroism with the sense of "intellectual honesty." While this essay is highly informative, it does not seem to fit with the dual themes of the book.

There is also a fifty-page introduction and, while it does not deal directly with Weber's notion of religion, it does offer a number of important clarifications about how and why Weber developed his general sociology and his sociology of religion.

T.'s portrait reveals Weber as an individual who rejected the easy and optimistic answers of both religion and science. As much as Weber is famous for his notion of the "disenchantment of the world," he was also very much interested in the irrationality of religion. Weber may not have been religious, but he understood better than most the role that religion plays in determining values. For Weber, there can be no simple solutions because there are always conflicts about values. Instead of seeking solace in religion or even in science, Weber extols intellectual honesty and embraces heroic pessimism. While these may seem at odds with religion, T. makes it clear that by understanding Weber's personal values, one gains a better insight into Weber's conception of religion. For all those readers who are interested in Max Weber's conceptions of religion and the crucial role it plays in his sociology, this book should warrant serious consideration.

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