I. Max Weber

1. Social Context

1. unification

2. political conflict

3. WWI

1. Theoretical Context
   1. Historicism

a. contra positivism

i. no laws of cause and effect

ii. historians not “scientists”

b. historical method: interpretation

i. meaning to individual actors

ii. importance of world view

2. Neo-Kantianism

1. Assumptions
   1. History as explanatum

i. not universal

ii. no laws of social evolution (no stages)

* 1. Social change

i. limit to economic explanations

ii. not progress

iii. dystopia?

3. Faith in Reason

D. Sociological Method

1. interpretation of meaning: verstehen

a. take the role of the other

b. social “horizon” in which action takes place

1. analysis of causal relationships

3. Ideal types

II. Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

A. Subject: cultural factors for the emergence of capitalism

B. Goal: explain rise of capitalism

1. contra Marx

2. western society: unique (causes) preconditions

C. Assumptions:

1. Marx’s explanation not adequate
2. conditions existed in other societies but no capitalism

3. “spirit of capitalism” necessary precondition to capitalism:

a. individual rational pursuit of the accumulation of wealth

b. ethic: “this-worldly” asceticism

i. attitude that seeks profit rationally and systematically

ii. avoidance of pleasure

iii. “time is money”, “be frugal,”

iv. duty: increase wealth ceaselessly

D. Argument

1. Protestantism and rise of Protestant Ethic was the unique historical

condition that explains the “spirit of capitalism”

2. Protestantism created anxiety

a. eliminated the priest as mediator between the individual and god

b. substituted the justification by faith for justification by works

c. introduced idea of predestination

i. salvation for the few

ii. salvation predetermined

d. anxiety: who is saved? And would one know?

e. sign: this worldly success

3. Protestant ethic

a. work: “religious vocation”

b. success: salvation

c. not consumption: “this worldly asceticism”

1. Consequences:

a. spirit of capitalism

b. justification: ruthless pursuit of profit is moral

c. compliant work force: “work ethic”

d. legitimated inequality

III. Weber and Enlightenment

A. Rationalization

1. All aspects of western society becoming more rationalized

a. institutions

b. culture

c. social interactions

2. Def: social organization and experience based on instrumental

Rationality

a. formal rationality

b. most efficient means to achieved desired ends

3. Characteristics

a. efficiency

b. calculability

c. predictability

d. control

4. Social action: instrumental rationality

1. Other types of social action

a. value-rational action

b. affective action

c. traditional action

B. “Ideal type” bureaucracy

1. hierarchical

a. impersonal exercise of authority

b. authority: rational-legal (vs traditional or charismatic)

2. general rules and regulations

3. offices

a. defined by function

b. authority with office

c. limited sphere of competence

4. positions require expertise

5. extensive record keeping

D. Irrationality of Rationality

1. Obvious

a. red tape

b. self-perpetuating

2. Dehumanization

a. eliminates the unique

b. those being processed

c. bureaucrat: small cog. . .prescribed behavior

3. Anti-democratic

a. authoritarian personality

i. obedience

ii. respect for authority

iii. Milgram: obedience and authority

b. eliminates critical thinking/imagination/uniqueness

c. creates passivity

1. Rationalization, Bureaucratization and the Holocaust
   1. efficiency, predictability, calculability, control

b. Wannsee: Fordism

c. deportation to transportation to extermination

IV. McDonaldization of Society

1. George Ritzer: amplification and extension
2. Model of Rationalization
   1. fast food industry
   2. Fordism to food processing

a. Big Macs

b. fries

1. Four characteristics

1. Efficiency

1. Calculability
2. Predictability (standardization)
3. Control: no human technology

D. Wal\*Mart: rationalization of retail