

### **On sociology:**

Sociology . . . is a science concerning itself with the interpretive understanding of social action and thereby with a causal explanation of its course and consequences. We shall speak of 'action' insofar as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to his behavior--be it overt or covert, omission or acquiescence. Action is 'social' insofar as its subjective meaning takes account of the behavior of others and is thereby oriented in its course (1921/1968, p.4).

Within the realm of social conduct one finds factual regularities, that is, courses of action which, with a typically identical meaning, are repeated by the actors or simultaneously occur among numerous actors. It is with such types of conduct that sociology is concerned, in contrast to history, which is interested in the causal connections of important, i.e., fateful, single events (1921/1968).

An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct. . . . In its conceptual purity, this mental construct . . . cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality (1903-1917/1949, p. 90).

The primary task of a useful teacher is to teach his students to recognize 'inconvenient' facts--I mean facts that are inconvenient for their party [political] opinions. And for every party opinion there are facts that are extremely inconvenient, for my own opinion no less than for others. I believe the teacher accomplishes more than a mere intellectual task if he compels his audience to accustom itself to the existence of such facts. I would be so immodest as even to apply the expression 'moral achievement,' though perhaps this may sound too grandiose for something that should go without saying (1919/1948, p. 147).

### **On materialism and idealism:**

We have no intention whatever of maintaining such a foolish and doctrinaire thesis as that the spirit of capitalism . . . could only have arisen as the result of certain effects of the Reformation, or even that capitalism as an economic system is a creation of the Reformation. . . . On the contrary, we only wish to ascertain whether and to what extent religious forces have taken part in the qualitative formation and the quantitative expansion of that spirit over the world (1904/1930, p. 91).

In view of the tremendous confusion of interdependent influences between the material basis, the forms of social and political organization, and the ideas current in the time of the Reformation, we can only proceed by investigating whether and at what points certain correlations between forms of religious belief and practical ethics can be worked out (1904/1930, p. 91).

"Not ideas, but material and ideal interests, directly govern men's conduct. Yet very frequently the 'world images' that have been created by 'ideas' have, like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest" (1946/1958, p. 280).

### **On the protestant ethic:**

"A man does not 'by nature' wish to earn more and more money, but simply to live as he is accustomed to live and to earn as much as is necessary for that purpose. Wherever modern capitalism has begun its work of increasing the productivity of human labour by increasing its intensity, it has encountered the immensely stubborn resistance of this leading trait of pre-capitalistic labour" (1904/1930, p. 60).

[For the Calvinist] "The world exists to serve the glorification of God and for that purpose alone. The elected Christian is in the world only to increase this glory of god by fulfilling His commandments to the best of his ability. But God requires social achievement of the Christian because He will that social life shall be organized according to His commandments, in accordance with that purpose" (1904/1930, p. 108).

Waste of time is thus the first and in principle the deadliest of sins. The span of human life is infinitely short and precious to make sure of one's own election. Loss of time through sociability, idle talk, luxury, even more sleep than is necessary for health. . . .is worthy of absolute moral condemnation. . . .[Time] is infinitely valuable because every hour lost is lost to labor for the glory of God. Thus inactive contemplation is also valueless, or even directly reprehensible if it is at the expense of one's daily work. For it is less pleasing to God than the active performance of His will in a calling (1904/1930, pp. 157-158).

The religious valuation of restless, continuous, systematic work in a worldly calling, as the highest means of asceticism, and at the same time the surest and most evident proof of rebirth and genuine faith, must have been the most powerful conceivable lever for the expansion of . . . the spirit of capitalism (1946/1958: p. 172).

### **On capitalism & bureaucracy:**

Capitalism is today an immense cosmos into which the individual is born, and which presents itself to him, at least as an individual, in so far as he is involved in the system of market relationships, to conform to capitalist rules of action (1904/1930, p. 54).

Today, it is primarily the capitalist market economy which demands that the official business of public administration be discharged precisely, unambiguously, continuously, and with as much speed as possible. Normally, the very large modern capitalist enterprises are themselves unequalled models of strict bureaucratic organization. Business management throughout rests on increasing precision, steadiness, and above all, speed of operations (1921/1968, p. 974).

Bureaucracy develops the more perfectly, the more it is "dehumanized," the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculation. This is appraised as its special virtue by capitalism (1921/1968, p. 973).

The more complicated and specialized modern culture becomes, the more its external supporting apparatus demands the personally detached and strictly objective expert, in lieu of the lord of

older social structures who was moved by personal sympathy and favor, by grace and gratitude, bureaucracy offers the attitudes demanded by the external apparatus of modern culture in the most favorable combinations (1921/1968, p. 975).

No special proof is necessary to show that military discipline is the ideal model for the modern capitalist factory, as it was for the ancient plantation. However, organizational discipline in the factory has a completely rational basis. With the help of suitable methods of measurement, the optimum profitability of the individual worker is calculated like that of any material means of production. On this basis, the American system of “scientific management” triumphantly proceeds with its rational conditioning and training of work performances, thus drawing the ultimate conclusions from the mechanization and discipline of the plant. The psycho-physical apparatus of man is completely adjusted to the demands of the outer world, the tools, the machines—in short, it is functionalized, and the individual is shorn of his natural rhythm as determined by his organism; in line with the demands of the work and procedure, he is attuned to a new rhythm through the functional specialization of muscles and through the creation of an optimal economy of physical effort (1921/1968, p. 1156).

### **On leadership:**

The bureaucratic order merely replaces the belief in the sanctity of traditional norms by compliance with rationally determined rules and by the knowledge that these rules can be superseded by others, if one has the necessary power, and hence are not sacred. But charisma, in its most potent forms, disrupts rational rule as well as tradition altogether and overturns all notions of sanctity. Instead of reverence for customs that are ancient and hence sacred, it enforces the inner subjection to the unprecedented and absolutely unique and therefore Divine. In this purely empirical and value-free sense charisma is indeed the specifically creative revolutionary force of history (1921/1968, p. 1117).

Even the head of a bureaucracy might conceivably be a high official who moves into his position according to general rules. However, it is no accident that this is usually not the case; at the least he is not selected according to the same norms as the officials in the hierarchy below him. Exactly the pure type of bureaucracy, a hierarchy of appointed officials, requires an authority which has not been appointed in the same fashion as the other officials (1921/1968, p. 1123).

For charismatic leadership, too, if it wants to transform itself into a perennial institution, the first basic problem is that of finding a successor to the prophet, hero, teacher or party leader. This problem inescapably channels charisma into the direction of legal regulation and tradition (1921/1968, p. 1123).

### **On formal vs. substantive rationality:**

The term “formal rationality of economic action” will be used to designate the extent of quantitative calculation or accounting which is technically possible and which is actually applied. The “substantive rationality,” on the other hand, is the degree to which the provisioning of given groups of persons (no matter how delimited) with goods is shaped by economically

oriented social action under some criterion (past, present, or potential) of ultimate values, regardless of the nature of these ends (1921/1968, p. 85).

A system of economic activity will be called “formally” rational according to the degree in which the provision for needs, which is essential to every rational economy, is capable of being expressed in numerical, calculable terms, and is so expressed (1921/1968, p. 85).

The concept of “substantive rationality,” on the other hand, is full of ambiguities. It conveys only one element common to all “substantive” analyses: namely, that they do not restrict themselves to note the purely formal and (relatively) unambiguous fact that action is based on “goal-oriented” rational calculation with the technically most adequate available methods, but apply certain criteria of ultimate ends, whether they be ethical, political, utilitarian, hedonistic, feudal, egalitarian, or whatever, and measure the results of economic action, however formally “rational” in the sense of correct calculation they may be, against these scales of “value rationality” or “substantive goal rationality” (1921/1968, pp. 85-86).

### **On rationalization:**

The great historic process in the development of religions, the elimination of magic from the world which had begun with the old Hebrew prophets and, in conjunction with Hellenistic scientific thought, had repudiated all magical means to salvation as superstition and sin, came here to its logical conclusion. The genuine Puritan even rejected all signs of religious ceremony at the grave and buried his nearest and dearest without song or ritual in order that no superstition, no trust in the effects of magical and sacramental forces on salvation, should creep in (1904/1930, p. 105).

The increasing intellectualization and rationalization does not, therefore, indicate an increased and general knowledge of the conditions under which one lives. It means something else, namely, the knowledge or belief that if one but wished one could learn it at any time. Hence, it means that there are no mysterious incalculable forces that come into play, but rather that one can, in principle, master all things by calculation. This means that the world is disenchanted. One need no longer have recourse to magical means in order to master or implore the spirits, as did the savage, for whom such mysterious powers existed. Technical means and calculations perform the service. This above all is what intellectualization means (1946/1958: p. 139).

We cannot here analyze the far-reaching and general cultural effects that the advance of the rational bureaucratic structure of domination develops quite independently of the areas in which it takes hold. Naturally, bureaucracy promotes a “rationalist” way of life, but the concept of rationalism allows for widely differing contents. Quite generally, one can only say that the bureaucratization of all domination very strongly furthers the development of “rational matter-of-factness” and the personality type of the professional expert. This has far-reaching ramifications, but only one important element can be briefly indicated here: its effect upon the nature of education and personal culture (1921/1968, p. 998).

The decisive difference—and this is important for understanding the meaning of “rationalism”—is not inherent in the creator of ideas or of “works,” or in his inner experience; rather, the difference is rooted in the manner in which the ruled and led experience and internalize these ideas. As we have shown earlier, rationalization proceeds in such a fashion that the broad masses of the led merely accept or adapt themselves to the external, technical resultants which are of practical significance for their interests (as we “learn” the multiplication table and as too many jurists “learn” the techniques of law), whereas the substance of the creator’s ideas remain irrelevant to them. This is meant when we say that rationalization and rational organization revolutionized “from the outside,” whereas charisma, if it has any specific effects at all, manifests its revolutionary power from within, from a central *metanoia* [change] of the followers’ attitudes (1921/1968, pp. 1116-1117).

No special proof is necessary to show that military discipline is the ideal model for the modern capitalist factory, as it was for the ancient plantation. However, organizational discipline in the factory has a completely rational basis. With the help of suitable methods of measurement, the optimum profitability of the individual worker is calculated like that of any material means of production. On this basis, the American system of “scientific management” triumphantly proceeds with its rational conditioning and training of work performances, thus drawing the ultimate conclusions from the mechanization and discipline of the plant. The psycho-physical apparatus of man is completely adjusted to the demands of the outer world, the tools, the machines—in short, it is functionalized, and the individual is shorn of his natural rhythm as determined by his organism; in line with the demands of the work and procedure, he is attuned to a new rhythm through the functional specialization of muscles and through the creation of an optimal economy of physical effort (1921/1968, p. 1156).

This whole process of rationalization in the factory and elsewhere, and especially in the bureaucratic state machine, parallels the centralization of the material implements of organization in the hands of the master. Thus, discipline inexorably takes over ever larger areas as the satisfaction of political and economic needs is increasingly rationalized. This universal phenomenon more and more restricts the importance of charisma and of individually differentiated conduct" (1921/1968, p. 1156).

It seems to me that to-day we are in danger of giving just such applause to mechanization in the sphere of government and politics. For what else have we heard from them? Imagine the consequences of that comprehensive bureaucratization and rationalization which already to-day we see approaching. Already now, throughout private enterprise in wholesale manufacture, as well as in all other economic enterprises run on modern lines, *Rechenhaftigkeit*, rational calculation, is manifest at every stage. By it, the performance of each individual worker is mathematically measured, each man becomes a little cog in the machine, and, aware of this, his one preoccupation is to become a bigger cog (1909/1944, p. 126).

### **On bureaucratization:**

Even though the full development of a money economy is thus not an indispensable precondition for bureaucratization, bureaucracy as a permanent structure is knit to the one presupposition of the availability of continuous revenues to maintain it. Where such income cannot be derived

from private profits, as it is in the bureaucratic organization of modern enterprises, or from land rents, as in the manor, a stable system of taxation is the precondition for the permanent existence of bureaucratic administration (1921/1968, p. 968).

The first basis of bureaucratization has been the quantitative extension of administrative tasks. In politics, the big state and the mass party are the classic field of bureaucratization (1921/1968, p. 969).

Bureaucratization is stimulated more strongly, however, by intensive and qualitative expansion of administrative tasks than by their extensive and quantitative increase. But the direction bureaucratization takes, and the reason that occasion it, can vary widely. In Egypt, the oldest country of bureaucratic state administration, it was the technical necessity of a public regulation of the water economy for the whole country and from the top which created the apparatus of scribes and officials; very early it found its second realm of operation in the extraordinary, militarily organized construction activities. In most cases, as mentioned before, the bureaucratic tendency has been promoted by needs arising from the creation of standing armies, determined by power politics, and from the related development of public finances. But in the modern state, the increasing demands for administration also rest on the increasing complexity of civilization (1921/1968, pp. 971-972).

The growing demands of culture, in turn, are determined, though to a varying extent, by the growing wealth of the most influential strata in the state. To this extent increasing bureaucratization is a function of the increasing possession of consumption goods, and of an increasingly sophisticated technique of fashioning external life—a technique which corresponds to the opportunities provided by such wealth. This reacts upon the standard of living and makes for an increasing subjective indispensability of public, inter-local, and thus bureaucratic, provision for the most varied wants which previously were either unknown or were satisfied locally or by the private economy (1921/1968, p. 972).

Among purely political factors, the increasing demand of a society accustomed to absolute pacification for order and protection (“police”) in all fields exerts an especially persevering influence in the direction of bureaucratization (1921/1968, p. 972).

Other factors operating in the direction of bureaucratization are the manifold tasks of social welfare policies which are either saddled upon the modern state by interest groups or which the state usurps for reasons of power or for ideological motives. Of course, these tasks are to a large extent economically determined (1921/1968, pp. 972-973).

Among essentially technical factors, the specifically modern means of communications enter the picture as pacemakers of bureaucratization. In part, public roads and water-ways, railroads, the telegraph, etc., can only be administered publicly; in part, such administration is technically expedient. In this respect, the contemporary means of communication frequently play a role similar to that of the canals of Mesopotamia and the regulation of the Nile in the ancient Orient.

A certain degree of development of the means of communication in turn is one of the most important prerequisites for the possibility of bureaucratic administration, though it alone is not decisive (1921/1968, p. 973).

The modern Occidental state can be administered the way it actually is only because the state controls the telegraph network and has the mails and railroads at its disposal (1921/1968, p. 973).

The decisive reason for the advance of bureaucratic organization has always been its purely technical superiority over any other form of organization. The fully developed bureaucratic apparatus compares with other organizations exactly as does the machine with the non-mechanical modes of production. Precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs—these are raised to the optimum point in the strictly bureaucratic administration, and especially in its monocratic form (1921/1968, p. 973).

### **On bureaucracy:**

From a purely technical point of view, a bureaucracy is capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency, and is in this sense formally the most rational known means of exercising authority over human beings. It is superior to any other form in precision, in stability, in the stringency of its discipline, and in its reliability. It thus makes possible a particularly high degree of calculability of results for the heads of the organization and for those acting in relation to it. It is finally superior both in intensive efficiency and in the scope of its operations and is formally capable of application to all kinds of administrative tasks (1921/1968, p. 223).

According to experience, the relative optimum for the success and maintenance of a rigorous mechanization of the bureaucratic apparatus is offered by an assured salary connected with the opportunity of a career that is not dependent upon mere accident and arbitrariness (1921/1968, p. 968).

“Equality before the law” and the demand for legal guarantees against arbitrariness demand a formal and rational “objectivity” of administration, as opposed to the personal discretion flowing from the “grace” of the old patrimonial domination (1921/1968, pp. 979-980).

The bureaucratic structure goes hand in hand with the concentration of the material means of management in the hands of the master. This concentration occurs, for instance, in a well-known and typical fashion in the development of big capitalist enterprises, which find their essential characteristics in this process. A corresponding process occurs in public organizations (1921/1968, p. 980).

In this same way as with army organization, the bureaucratization of administration in other spheres goes hand in hand with the concentration of resources (1921/1968, p. 982).

Bureaucratic organization has usually come into power on the basis of leveling of economic and social differences. This leveling has been at least relative, and has concerned the significance of

social and economic differences for the assumption of administrative functions (1921/1968, p. 983).

Once fully established, bureaucracy is among those social structures which are the hardest to destroy. Bureaucracy is the means of transforming social action into rationally organized action. Therefore, as an instrument of rationally organizing authority relations, bureaucracy was and is a power instrument of the first order for one who controls the bureaucratic apparatus. Under otherwise equal conditions, rationally organized and directed action is superior to every kind of collective behavior and also social action opposing it. Where administration has been completely bureaucratized, the resulting system of domination is practically indestructible (1921/1968, p. 987).

We cannot here analyze the far-reaching and general cultural effects that the advance of the rational bureaucratic structure of domination develops quite independently of the areas in which it takes hold. Naturally, bureaucracy promotes a “rationalist” way of life, but the concept of rationalism allows for widely differing contents. Quite generally, one can only say that the bureaucratization of all domination very strongly furthers the development of “rational matter-of-factness” and the personality type of the professional expert. This has far-reaching ramifications, but only one important element can be briefly indicated here: its effect upon the nature of education and personal culture (1921/1968, p. 998).

The bureaucratic structure is everywhere a late product of historical development. The further back we trace our steps, the more typical is the absence of bureaucracy and of officialdom in general. Since bureaucracy has a “rational” character, with rules, means-ends calculus, and matter-of-factness predominating, its rise and expansion has everywhere had “revolutionary” results, in a special sense still to be discussed, as had the advance of rationalism in general. The march of bureaucracy accordingly destroyed structures of domination which were not rational in this sense of the term (1921/1968, pp. 1002-3).

The bureaucratic order merely replaces the belief in the sanctity of traditional norms by compliance with rationally determined rules and by the knowledge that these rules can be superseded by others, if one has the necessary power, and hence are not sacred. But charisma, in its most potent forms, disrupts rational rule as well as tradition altogether and overturns all notions of sanctity. Instead of reverence for customs that are ancient and hence sacred, it enforces the inner subjection to the unprecedented and absolutely unique and therefore Divine. In this purely empirical and value-free sense charisma is indeed the specifically creative revolutionary force of history (1921/1968, p. 1117).

The principles of office hierarchy and of levels of graded authority mean a firmly ordered system of super- and subordination in which there is a supervision of the lower offices by the higher ones (1946/1958, p. 197)

No machinery in the world functions so precisely as this apparatus of men and, moreover, so cheaply. . . Rational calculation . . . reduces every worker to a cog in this bureaucratic machine and, seeing himself in this light, he will merely ask how to transform himself into a somewhat bigger cog. . . . The passion for bureaucratization drives us to despair (1921/1968: p. IV).

The needs of mass administration make it today completely indispensable. The choice is only between bureaucracy and dilettantism in the field of administration (1921/1968, p. 224).

When those subject to bureaucratic control seek to escape the influence of existing bureaucratic apparatus, this is normally possible only by creating an organization of their own which is equally subject to the process of bureaucratization" (1921/1968, p. 224).

[Socialism] would mean a tremendous increase in the importance of professional bureaucrats (1921/1968, p. 224).

Not summer's bloom lies ahead of us, but rather a polar night of icy darkness and hardness, no matter which group may triumph externally now (1946/1958, p. 128).

To this extent increasing bureaucratization is a function of the increasing possession of goods used for consumption, and of an increasingly sophisticated technique for fashioning external life--a technique which corresponds to the opportunities provided by such wealth (1946/1958, p. 212).

...it is still more horrible to think that the world could one day be filled with nothing but those little cogs, little men clinging to little jobs and striving toward bigger ones--a state of affairs which is to be seen once more, as in the Egyptian records, playing an ever-increasing part in the spirit of our present administrative systems, and especially of its offspring, the students. This passion for bureaucracy...is enough to drive one to despair. It is as if in politics. . . we were to deliberately to become men who need "order" and nothing but order, who become nervous and cowardly if for one moment this order wavers, and helpless if they are torn away from their total incorporation in it. That the world should know no men but these: it is in such an evolution that we are already caught up, and the great question is therefore not how we can promote and hasten it, but what can we oppose to this machinery in order to keep a portion of mankind free from this parceling-out of the soul, from this supreme mastery of the bureaucratic way of life (1909/1944, pp. 127-128).

The state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of force within a given territory (1946/1958, p. 78).

When fully developed, bureaucracy stands . . . under the principle of *sine ira ac studio* (without scorn and bias). Its specific nature which is welcomed by capitalism develops the more perfectly the more bureaucracy is 'dehumanized,' the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational and emotional elements which escape calculation. This is the specific nature of bureaucracy and it is appraised as its special virtue (1946/1958, pp. 215-16).

The decisive reason for the advance of bureaucratic organization has always been its purely technical superiority over any other kind of organization. The fully developed bureaucratic mechanism compares with other organizations exactly as does the machine with the nonmechanical modes of organization (1946/1958, p. 214).

Precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs--these are raised to the optimum point in the strictly bureaucratic organization (1946/1958, p. 214).

The apparatus (bureaucracy), with its peculiar impersonal character. . . is easily made to work for anybody who knows how to gain control over it. A rationally ordered system of officials continues to function smoothly after the enemy has occupied the area: he merely needs to change the top officials (1946/1958, p. 229).

### **On democracy:**

Bureaucracy inevitably accompanies modern mass democracy, in contrast to the democratic self-government of small homogeneous units. This results from its characteristic principle: the abstract regularity of the exercise of authority, which is a result of the demand for “equality before the law” in the personal and functional sense—hence, of the horror of “privilege,” and the principled rejection of doing business “from case to case” (1921/1968, p. 983).

The progress of bureaucratization within the state administration itself is a phenomenon paralleling the development of democracy, as is quite obvious in France, North America, and now in England. Of course, one must always remember that the term “democratization” can be misleading. The demos itself, in the sense of a shapeless mass, never “governs” larger associations, but rather is governed. What changes is only the way in which the executive leaders are selected and the measure of influence which the demos, or better, which social circles from its midst are able to exert upon the content and direction of administrative activities by means of “public opinion.” “Democratization,” in the sense intended, does not necessarily mean an increasingly active share of the subjects in government. This may be a result of democratization, but it is not necessarily the case” (1921/1968, pp. 984-985).

The democratization of society in its totality, and in the modern sense of the term, whether actual or perhaps merely formal, is an especially favorable basis of bureaucratization, but by no means the only possible one. After all, bureaucracy has merely the [limited] striving to level those powers that stand in its way in those concrete areas that, in the individual case, it seeks to occupy (1921/1968, pp. 990-991).

We must remember the fact which we have encountered several times and which we shall have to discuss repeatedly: that “democracy” as such is opposed to the “rule” of bureaucracy, in spite and perhaps because of its unavoidable yet unintended promotion of bureaucratization (1921/1968, p. 991).

The power position of a fully developed bureaucracy is always great, under normal conditions overtowering. The political “master” always finds himself, vis-à-vis the trained official, in the position of a dilettante facing the expert (1921/1968, p. 991).

### **On war:**

The bureaucratically led army of the Pharaohs, the army of the later period of the Roman republic and of the Principate, and, above all, the army of the modern military state are characterized by the fact that their equipment and provisions are supplied from the magazines of the lord. This is in contrast to the levies of agricultural tribes, the armed citizenry of ancient cities, the militias of early medieval cities, and all feudal armies; for these, the self-equipment and the self-provisioning of those obliged to fight was normal (1921/1968, pp. 980-981).

War in our time is a war of machines, and this makes centralized provisioning technically necessary, just as the dominance of the machine in industry promotes the concentration of the means of production and management (1921/1968, p. 981).

Historically, the bureaucratization of the army has everywhere occurred along with the shifting of army service from the shoulders of the propertied to those of the propertyless (1921/1968, p. 981).

The bureaucratization of organized warfare may be carried through in the form of private capitalist enterprises, just like any other business. Indeed, the procurement of armies and their administration by private capitalists has been the rule in mercenary armies, especially those of the Occident up to the turn of the eighteenth century (1921/1968, pp. 981-982).

### **On social evolution:**

To this day there has never existed a bureaucracy which could compare with that of Egypt. This is known to everyone who knows the social history of ancient times; and it is equally apparent that to-day we are proceeding towards an evolution which resembles that system in every detail, except that it is built on other foundations, on technically more perfect, more rationalized, and therefore much more mechanized foundations. The problem which besets us now is not: how can this evolution be changed?--for that is impossible, but: what will come of it? (1909/1944, p. 127).

Since asceticism undertook to remodel the world and to work out its ideals in the world, material goods have gained an increasing and finally an inexorable power over the lives of men as at no previous period in history. Today the spirit of religious asceticism--whether finally, who knows?--has escaped from the cage. But victorious capitalism, since it rests on mechanical foundations, needs its support no longer. The rosy blush of its laughing heir, the Enlightenment, also seems to be irretrievably fading, and the idea of duty in one's calling prowls about in our lives like the ghost of dead religious beliefs (1904/1930, pp.181-182).

In the field of its highest development, in the United States, the pursuit of wealth, stripped of its religious and ethical meaning, tends to become associated with purely mundane passions, which often actually give it the character of sport (1904/1930, p. 182).

No one knows who will live in this cage in the future, or whether at the end of this tremendous development entirely new prophets will arise, or there will be a great rebirth of old ideas and ideals or, if neither, mechanized petrification embellished with a sort of convulsive self-importance. For of the last stage of this cultural development, it might well be truly said:

'Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has obtained a level of civilization never before achieved' (1904/1930, p. 182).

Politics is a strong and slow boring of hard boards. It takes both passion and perspective. Certainly all historical experience confirms the truth--that man would not have attained the possible unless time and again he had reached out for the impossible (1946/1958, p. 128).

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