International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society, Vol. 16, No. 1, Fall 2002 (© 2002)

II. The *Protestant Ethic*: On New Translations

Max Weber's *Protestant Ethic* in the 21st Century*

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The history of sociology's most famous study began with the publication of a two-part essay. Its author, educated as a lawyer but formerly employed as a national economist, had no formal training in its subject. He had just overcome a mood disorder that had debilitated him and all but finished his promising academic career, allowing his wife to become better known in some academic and social circles than he was. The essay's arguments were quickly challenged by historians, whose critiques the author rebuffed in an acerbic and cantankerous fashion. Within weeks and months after publishing the study, its author moved on to conduct other monumental studies and did not return to the original study's subject matter until close to the end of his life, when the essays were thoroughly revised and made part of a much larger project comparing the interface of religion and economics in the major religions. Since the author's death, there have been studies addressing the genesis of the original essays, the significance of the changes made in their revision, the original and revised essays' status in the larger context of the author's work, their extension both stepping back and moving forward in time, and, last but not least, their shortcomings and aberrations, real and imagined.[1] The work itself has been translated into numerous languages. A few years ago it 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)*. What more, then, could possibly be written about *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (hereafter: *PE*) and its author, Max Weber, to further our insight into the man and his work?

One of the answers to this question is a new English translation that also includes a new introduction to Weber's work. While some might find it

*Review essay of Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, translated by Stephen Kalberg (Los Angeles: Roxbury, 2001).

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0891-4486/02/0900-0133/0

puzzling to refer to a translation as a piece of scholarship, this publication is not as insignificant an event as it might seem. After all, English is the *lingua franca* of scientific discourse and global communication, and it is a real possibility that in the 21st century, notwithstanding demographic shifts in the world's population, this translation will have more readers than the translations into all other languages and the German original combined. In the following, I will discuss (1) whether a new translation and a new introduction were necessary and, if so, why; (2) what the new translation and the new introduction claim to accomplish, and what they actually accomplish, and (4) what, if any, implications for future studies on Weber and the *PE* result from this edition.

SOCIOLOGICAL LEGACIES: PARSONS' *PROTESTANT ETHIC*

For all intents and purposes, the reception of not just the *PE* but Weber's work in general in American social science began with the publication of Parsons' translation of Weber's best-known work.[2] Talcott Parsons happened to come upon Weber's writings while being a student in Heidelberg during the 1925/26 academic year after having spent the previous year at the London School of Economics. While it appears that Parsons was initially not well versed in the language, his German became good enough to enable him to write his Ph.D. thesis there, on the concept of capitalism in recent German literature. His dissertation committee, composed of Edgar Salin, Alfred Weber (Max's oldest brother), Karl Jaspers, and Willy Andreas awarded him the grade of "sehr gut" for his work in 1927, by which time Parsons had returned to the U.S. to teach first at Amherst College and then at Harvard University. While at Harvard, he published the third chapter of his dissertation, entitled "Der Geist des Kapitalismus bei Sombart und Max Weber," in an English version as a two-part essay that appeared in 1928 and 1929 under the title "The Concept of Capitalism in Recent German Literature." During that period, after having consulted Marianne Weber about it, he also worked on his translation of the *PE*, which came out in 1930 with an accompanying introduction by one his professors at LSE, the historian Richard H. Tawney.[3] This was the edition that would contain, with the exception of short passages translated elsewhere, the only version of the text available in English for the next seventy years.

This publication, with Parsons' and (some of) Tawney's work in it, established two legacies of interpreting Weber's writing among English-speaking audiences. For one, there was a janus-faced character to Parsons' translation. On the one hand, Parsons' often figurative rendition of phrases that the Germanic wordsmith with a notorious knack for complex sentence structures

had put in the original with great precision was arguably sometimes better than anything that could have resulted from a literal approach to translating. For example, who would want to argue that that the term "stahlhartes Gehäuse" would have found as much resonance in social science as it did had it been translated as "case that was hard as steel" instead of "iron cage"? In parts, there was almost a lyrical tone to Parsons' translation; for example, in his rendition of the change from otherworldly to inner-worldly asceticism instigated by ascetic Protestantism:

> Christian asceticism, at first fleeing from the world into solitude, had already ruled the world which it had renounced from the monastery and through the Church. But it had, on the whole, left the naturally spontaneous character of daily life in the world untouched. Now it strode into the market-place of life, slammed the door of the monastery behind it, and undertook to penetrate just that daily routine of life with its methodicalness, to fashion it into a life in the world, but neither of nor for this world.[4] (We will return to this passage later.)

Such poetic language is also found in Parsons' translation of the famous final passages toward the end of the *PE*, where Weber alluded to the lasting imprint of ascetic Protestant practices on modernity, with its references to the "tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order" founded on mechanical production that determines "the lives of all the individuals who are born into this mechanism . . . with irresistible force" and perhaps "will so determine them until the last ton of fossilized coal is burnt."[5] It undoubtedly helped popularize Weber's work, together with the dubious decision by Parsons or his publisher to relinquish Weber's notes to a section where few may have bothered to look, the back of the book. (This issue, too, we will revisit.) These characteristics made the *PE* palatable to generations of undergraduate students in sociology, and even to the English-speaking literate public at large.

On the other hand, Parsons often proposed facile solutions to complex problems. In his recent essay on problems in Parsons' translation, Peter Ghosh has judged it "indeed littered with a continuous stream of individual mistranslations, misprints and omissions of up to clause-length which can destroy the meaning of entire paragraphs," resulting in a "series of systematic intellectual distortions."[6] One of the most serious failures of Parsons was the mistranslation of Weber's term "Entzauberung." This term occurs in the *PE* in four different places. Weber inserted the term when he revised the *PE* in 1919/20 to allude to the religio-historical process of banishing magical elements from the world and circumventing magical means to accomplish religious or secular goals. Parsons translated the term as either "elimination of magic" or "rationalization," rather than "disenchantment," which is preferable to the literal "demagicalization." One of these important passages Parsons translated as follows:

> The rationalization [i.e., "disenchantment"] of the world, the elimination of magic as a means to salvation, the Catholics had not carried nearly so far as the Puritans (and before them the Jews) had done. . . . The priest was a magician who performed the miracle of transubstantiation, and who held the key to eternal life in his hand. One could turn to him in grief and penitence. He dispensed atonement, hope of grace, certainty of forgiveness, and thereby granted release from that tremendous tension to which the Calvinist was doomed by an inexorable fate, admitting of no mitigation. For him such friendly and human comforts did not exist. He could not hope to atone for hours of weakness or of thoughtlessness by increased good will at other times, as the Catholic or even the Lutheran could. The God of Calvinism demanded of his believers not single good works, but a life of good works combined into a unified system. There was no place for the very human Catholic cycle of sin, repentance, atonement, release, followed by renewed sin.[7]

The inspired prose notwithstanding, there is an obvious problem here. The translation's rendition of *Entzauberung* as rationalization instead of the much more specific and less ambiguous term disenchantment made it difficult for generations of scholars to recognize the relevance of this concept for Weber's sociology of religion, if not his entire theme of rationalization. For the concept, which also figured prominently in *Science as a Vocation*, served a conceptual brace between the originally narrow focus of the *PE* and the much wider theme of the "Economic Ethics of the World Religions" that Weber addressed in his *Collected Essays in the Sociology of Religion*. Weber had conceived his *PE* study narrowly and with a one-sided purpose, to inquire into the contribution of religion to the emergence of rational conduct on the basis of a calling in modern capitalism. The focus of his *Collected Essays*, that is, in his sociology of religion in the last decade of his life, was a much expanded one: Weber thematized the mutual influence of material and ideal factors in the world religions, and moreover, their place in what he termed the "typology and sociology of rationalism." In other words, he was interested in explaining what ideal and material factors in the world's religions had promoted or hindered the rationalization of institutional spheres and the behavior of groups and individuals, to determine and explain what constituted uniquely Occidental features of rationalism in comparative perspective. The concept of "disenchantment" played a crucial role in this, for it not only established a yardstick by which to measure the extent of rationality: "the extent to which religion has divested itself from magic," but also allowed him to move from the relationship between religion and modern capitalism on to the relationship between religion and modern culture in general.[8] If scholars had stuck with Parsons' translation of the term, they never would have been able to make sense of core themes in Weber's later writings. One of these writings, Weber's "Vorbemerkung," or "Prefatory Remarks" (on his *Collected Essays in the Sociology of Religion*), which Parsons, to the detriment of legions of students, fittingly mistranslated as "Author's Introduction," was included in this edition.

Another failure of the original edition was the way in which Weber's argument was framed in Tawney's introduction. A respected historian, Tawney had published his own book *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (1926) on the topic a few years earlier in which he included some pseudo-refutations of Weber, such as the argument that capitalism had already existed before the Reformation. His introduction further bastardized some of the *PE*'s arguments in a fifteen-page foreword. Tawney alluded to the *PE* as if it represented the version of 1904–05, never mentioning why or how Weber revised the original essay. Nor did Tawney elaborate on the different economic ethics of the groups Weber studied and how they came about. Instead he claimed that there was "no lack of the 'capitalist spirit' in the Venice and the Florence of the fourteenth century, or in the Antwerp of the fifteenth century." His portrayal of Weber was that of a cultural determinist and methodological reductionist who had "insist[ed] that causation can only work in one direction."[9] Tawney's misrepresentations set a precedent of careless reading of Weber's work among sociologists and scholars in neighboring disciplines alike, especially until other writings by Weber became available in English translations and Tawney's foreword became replaced with one that actually presented Weber's argument in its strengths and weaknesses and addressed the argument's contexts.

The latter happened in newer editions of the *PE*, for which Anthony Giddens wrote an introduction in a new edition in 1976. In it, Giddens discussed the general philosophical background of Weber's study, presented its major themes, placed the study in the context of Weber's other writings, and addressed recent and past controversies about the book. This re-edition did not include translations of additional writings of Weber but omitted, unfortunately, the table of contents of the original edition. More recently, Randall Collins has presented a newer introduction to the "first Roxbury edition," which appeared in 1996 and then in a revised form, in 1998, for the second edition. (Stephen Kalberg's translation is now the "third Roxbury edition.") In addition to the themes addressed by Giddens, Collins also wrote about the sources of Weber's argument, discussed influence of the *PE* on American sociology, and suggested further readings. The first of these editions included no new writings of Weber. Instead, it gave a new title to the "Prefatory Remarks" (a.k.a. as the "Author's Introduction"), now further mistitled as "Max Weber's Introduction to the Sociology of Religion." The second did add one other writing by Weber, his essay on the "Protestant Sects," as translated by H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills.[10]

Giddens' crisp introduction is dated by now, of course. Conversely, while Collins' introduction is up-to-date, it includes many implicit references to Collins' own work on Weber that are presented as if they represented consensus positions in Weberian scholarship. Weberian scholarship, however,

has been critical of some of Collins' prolific writings on Weber. Some of that criticism certainly seems pertinent to his introduction as well. While it is true that in his introduction Collins no longer sharply juxtaposes the early with the late Weber, as he did in his earlier work—which goes against some of the major scholarship on the history and development of Weber's work—other troublesome issues remain. For example, Collins argues that medieval monasticism in its Cistercian forms embraced inner-worldly asceticism and as such was an early precursor to Puritan asceticism. In doing so, Collins not only misrepresents the nature of asceticism in the Cistercian order, which was otherworldly and left most inner-worldly tasks to associates of a lower religious status, but also leaves out other forms of monastic asceticism that indeed turned to the world as a fertile ground for ascetic practices, such as the early mendicants. While Collins' historical account seems suspect on occasion, so does his Weberology. For example, he claims that much of the notes were written later (i.e., part of the revision), when in fact most them were an integral part of the *PE* from the beginning. Inaccuracies and questionable assessments in the introduction apparently attracted the attention of a major Weber scholar, who is reputed to have presented Collins with a sharp criticism of his introduction. Those arguments appear to have had little influence on Collins' revision of the introduction, however, as it appears almost unchanged in the second edition.

Hence, a strong argument for both a new translation of the *Protestant Ethic* and, with it, a new introduction to this work can be made. Before Kalberg's new translation, no new translation of larger parts of the *PE* had been published since Parsons' original work, with the exception of Eric Matthews' expert translation of the last section in the *PE*, "Asceticism and the Capitalist Spirit," which placed the footnotes at the bottom of the page.[11]

Kalberg's new introduction and translation, thus, seems a highly worthwhile and timely undertaking. The fact that Weber's writings are certainly not easy to translate and that the art of translation is often underappreciated in the social sciences should make his endeavor all the more welcome.

KALBERG'S *PROTESTANT ETHIC*

Both as a translation and as an introduction, the book does many things well. Although there are shortcomings, the responsibility for some of them might well rest with the publisher rather than the translator.

Judging the book by its appearance and presentation, it gets off to a less than formidable start. If one did not know anything about the *PE*, one might think that Kalberg, not Weber, was its actual author. While Kalberg's name figures prominently everywhere, there is no mention of Weber's name on the

front cover. The spine lists "Weber/Kalberg"—as if they were joint-authors perhaps?[12] The back cover includes no fewer than four blurbs with advance praise, and there are two more inside the book, between the table of contents and Kalberg's introduction to the translation. All of these blurbs are laudations of Kalberg's translation, and none of the featured commentators says anything about Weber's work itself, or why it should still be read nowadays. This strategy seems unwise: Scholars will pay no attention to blurbs anyway, and the general public and students will hardly be enticed to read the *PE* because of laudations of the translation, whether justified or not. By inherent association, the merit of a translation rises or falls with the merit of the translated work itself, so what is the purpose of this?

But things go from unwise to what can only be described as peculiar. If one skips the preliminary materials, which consist of the introduction of the translation, the introduction to the *PE*, and the glossary, and goes on to the *PE* itself, one is greeted by a display of several quotes in front of each of the two parts of the *PE* that made up the two parts of the original essay. Such quotes were not part of *Weber's PE*, but their inclusion can be justified on the basis of wanting to peak the reader's interest. Of the five quotes given, four are to passages in the *PE* itself, and one is to a passage in *Economy and Society*. Hence, one would expect the author to be identified as Max Weber himself, of course. In the three instances in which the author of these passages is given, how many times is Weber actually identified in this way? Not once. The three references are to "Kalberg, p. 20," "Kalberg, p. 29," and to "Kalberg, *E & S*, p. 572." According to this, Kalberg wrote not only the *PE*, but *Economy and Society* as well!

While there is no reason to believe that a scholar of Stephen Kalberg's caliber would have wanted to have anything to do with this case of utter misrepresentation, his work, unfortunately, is placed in a setting that is apt to detract from, rather than highlight or bring to the fore, the merits of his contribution. The culprit, most likely, is the press, and this alone could make one wish that Kalberg had gone with a publisher with stronger academic credentials and integrity. Scholarly publishing, quo vadis?

The book itself makes several claims and representations regarding the intended outcomes of the translation and the goals of the introductory essay. For the translation itself, Kalberg's stated goal is a combination of precision and accessibility. Precision, of course, is exactly what Parsons' translation lacked, and in this context Kalberg rightfully points to problems with Weber's writing that cannot be reduced to the latter having lacked the benefit of a copy editor, as was common for that time. As seems prudent, Kalberg makes the usual disclaimers regarding Weber's excessive use of footnotes, his occasional penchant for sentences that run on forever, and references to scholarly discourse that were often more implicit than explicit. To remedy

or alleviate these problems, the translator offers a variety of strategies. Sentences are broken up, key terms standardized throughout the book, and supplementary phrases are added where clarification seemed necessary. A glossary contains an explanation of major terms and concepts. With these provisions the book also strives for accessibility, to make Weber's writing more readable for an audience that is now broader in its scholarly background and interests than Weber's intended audience ever was, and less steeped in particular cultural and historical traditions, that is, those of cultural Protestantism and, as Guenther Roth would add, multiple connections to the Anglo-bourgeois family lineages.[13]

Of particular interest, and worth highlighting, is that Kalberg also identifies documents and persons for which the original provided incomplete information. This practice also includes the completion of partial bibliographic entries, of which the original contained many. Hence, Kalberg sets a very high bar for his translation, particularly with the inclusion of the latter elements. Extensive research on the bibliographic apparatus Weber used is normally not something expected of a translation, especially when no critical edition of the original is available. Such an edition is forthcoming in the *Max Weber Gesamtausgabe* I/18 under the editorship of the historian Hartmut Lehmann. Given the slow pace at which volumes in that edition have appeared so far, however, Kalberg's edition promises to be the best source for such information for some time to come.

The analysis of the translation itself reveals that it is meticulous and fairly literal. It succeeds in achieving the stated objectives, in that it is rendered with precision and an eye toward readability. To illustrate this point, let us look at Kalberg's version of the first passage rendered *in extenso* above:

> At the beginning, Christian asceticism had fled from the world into the realm of solitude in the cloister. In renouncing the world, however, monastic asceticism had in fact come to dominate the world through the church. Yet, in retreating to the cloister, asceticism left the course of daily life in the world by and large in its natural and untamed state. But now Christian asceticism slammed the gates of the cloister, entered into the hustle and bustle of life, and undertook a new task: to saturate mundane, *everyday* life with its methodicalness. In the process, it sought to reorganize practical life into a rational life *in* the world rather than, as earlier, in the monastery. Yet this rational life in the world was *not of* this world or *for* this world (101).

A side-by-side comparison of the old and the new translation is revealing. It shows that the new translation is undoubtedly closer to the original and does not overly simplify notions and concepts for the sake of readability. Both of these observations hold true, I found, for the rest of Kalberg's translation. It may not flow as well as the original, and in its literal blandness it sometimes has the charm of a lightbulb, but this may be a worthwhile price to pay, and it is much easier to criticize this fact *ex post facto* than provide as good a translation as Kalberg does. However, it is striking just how different the

new translation often is from the old one, not just for the passage presented above. In fact, Kalberg seems to have gone to great length to avoid almost *any* appearance of a similarity to the original translation, perhaps out of concerns of infringing upon its copyrights (if such still exist).

Kalberg's strategy is problematic in so far as some of Parsons' phrases, and also some coined by others, for that matter, have become a part of the English Weber repertoire. What comes to mind in particular is the term iron cage, which Kalberg chooses to render as "steel-hard casing" (123). Here literalism backfires, as it arguably does when Kalberg refers to *Entzauberung der Welt*. Here is how the passage for which Parsons' equivalent was given above reads:

> The "elimination of magic" from the world—namely the exclusion of the use of magic as a means to salvation—was not followed through with the same degree of consistency in Catholicism as in Puritanism (and before it only in Judaism). . . . [T]he priest was a magician who carried out the miracle of transubstantiation in the mass. The pivotal power had been bestowed upon the priest. The faithful could turn to him for assistance in contrition and penitence. Because the priest provided the means of atonement and bestowed hope for salvation and certainty of forgiveness, he granted the believer a *relief* from tremendous *tension*. By contrast, the Calvinist's destiny involved the necessity of living inseparable from this tension. Calvinists must live amidst this tension, and no mechanism existed for lessening it. A friendly and humane comforting did not exist for believers. Moreover, they could not hope that hours of weakness and frivolity could be compensated for with intensified good will during other hours, as could Catholics and Lutherans. The Calvinist God did not demand isolated "good works" from His faithful; rather, if salvation were to occur, He required an intensification of good works into a *system*. There was here no mention of that genuinely humane cycle, followed by the Catholic, of sin, repentance, penitence, relief, and then further sin (70).

Compared to Parsons' translation of this passage, Kalberg's is much longer and sometimes a bit choppy, more of a science and less of an art, and therefore lacks somewhat the poignancy and rhythmical qualities of the first translation. But the real issue here is Kalberg's use of the term "elimination of magic from the world." In other places in the text this term is rendered similarly, as "*elimination of magic* from the world's occurrences" (60) and "process that 'eliminated magic' from the world" (95). In its fourth occurrence, Kalberg decided to place the term that occurs in Weber's original in the main text in an endnote, "because they [the passage and other sentences] express a new idea and hence disrupt the flow of his argument" (224, n. 216). While this may well be, it is hardly a justification for making such a significant change to the text, and it remains unclear why the term disenchantment was not used. This is clearly a case of a missed opportunity, as is Kalberg's curious choice of the verb to "testify" for "Bewährung." Parsons did not really seem to know what to do with the noun, but I am not convinced that Kalberg's choice is a better one. In the glossary, he gives a good explanation of what the term is about and makes reference to the verb to "prove." Used

as a reflexive verb, this is indeed the way the concept could be rendered appropriately.

In reference to another key facet of the *PE*, Kalberg approaches Weber's allegorical language at the end of the *PE* in a similar fashion as he does other parts of the text. Parsons' "tremendous" cosmos becomes a "powerful" one that lasts until the last ton of "fossil fuel" has burnt "to ashes" instead of "fossilized coal" that is simply burnt. "Pleasure-seekers" instead of "sensualists" are without heart; and they now face "narrow specialists without mind" instead of "specialists without spirit." Appropriately, Kalberg puts this in the context of Weber's "last humans," which had fallen by the wayside in Parsons' translation.

There are some caveats that the reader should be aware of. First, the authoritative German edition of the original is to be found in the first volume of the *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, which was originally published by Weber's Tübingen publisher Paul Siebeck and has since been reprinted numerous times in photomechanical reproductions that stay true to the first printing. For the original two-part essay, one needs to go back to the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* or, if need be, make do with Lichtblau and Weiß's edition of the essay that appeared a few years back and included a list of some of the most important changes between the 1904–5 and the 1920 edition. This is not what happened here, though. While he appears to have consulted the original two-part essay, for the revised version Kalberg consulted an edition that was edited by Johannes Winckelmann. No reputable German scholar ever uses that edition, for Winckelmann's changes to the text, which Winckelmann himself affirmed to have made without indicating where he had made them, resulted in a stiff reprimand by eminent scholars such as the late Friedrich Tenbruck.[14] While indeed the changes might not be of enormous significance for a translation, there is just no reason not to consult the authoritative 1920 edition.[15]

Second, the unholy practice of placing Weber's footnotes at the end of the book continues in this edition. Anyone who has had the opportunity to read the original knows how convenient it is to have the notes right at the bottom of each page, especially in this case, where the notes include more words than the text. Kalberg states the latter himself, and unlike Collins in the previous Roxbury editions he makes it clear that the notes contain very important materials indeed, even exhorting the reader to pay attention to the notes and discover the wealth of information offered therein. Why, then, are the notes placed in the back, and why would we need a "rough sketch of their contents" (lxv)? While the answer might be somewhat of a conjectural nature, it seems implausible that production costs played a role in such a decision, as they once might have when Parsons brought out his translation. The fact that all three Roxbury editions contain a synopsis of the

endnotes suggests a different intent of the publisher: What is offered here is Weber *lite*, geared toward students—Roxbury's usual target audience—who cannot be expected to read through notes and therefore need an *easy-to-read*, *convenient*, *user-friendly* guide that reduces almost 100 pages of notes to less than three. As this *simulacrum* shows, postmodernism and Weber may have finally met! In any case, this further strengthens the impression that a consideration for scholarly concerns was not the forte of the commercial publisher Roxbury Press in this edition.

Third, if there was an appropriate use of endnotes, it should have been for some of Kalberg's own comments and additions to the notes. Clearly, his work to adjust and complement the numerous partial bibliographical entries should be appreciated, and to have clarifications of issues is often useful.[16] However, the whole is less than the sum of its parts. While it is already tedious to wade through the notes by Weber clumped together in the back, it becomes even more tedious to keep apart what Weber wrote from what Kalberg inserted into existing notes or added in his own beyond those clarifications. True, in each case such insertions and additions are indicated as such, but the frequency of their occurrence and the small font in which the notes are printed make it all the more laborious to read through them. This really is quite unfortunate, for it must have a tremendous amount of work to locate some of the materials.

The *PE* is not the only translation included in this book. Kalberg also provides a new translation of the "Prefatory Remarks" that rivals Eric Matthews' and is placed at the end of the book, and a slightly altered version of H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills' translation of the "Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism."[17]

Finally, there is Kalberg's introduction. The back cover offers the following description: the author "[1] examines the controversy that has surrounded this book for nearly a century and [2] summarizes major aspects of Weber's complex analysis. He also [3] discusses *The Protestant Ethic* in the context of Weber's other writings" (numbers added).

This is not what Kalberg's introduction actually contains. The introduction has practically nothing to say concerning (1) but covers (2) and (3) extensively. After some punchy opening sections, Kalberg gives the reader a cursory sketch of Weber's life and only a slightly more detailed overview of the currents in German culture, politics, and academia that gave rise to Weber's argument. We are told that after being called to the University of Heidelberg, Weber remained there until his death in 1920 (xiv)—omitting his resignation from a full professorship there in 1903, his intermezzo at the University of Vienna in 1918, and his stint at the University of Munich during the last year of his life. We are not told about Marianne Weber and the role she played in his life (apart from that of being a major feminist and

recognized scholar in her own right), and the complex relationship between Max and Ernst Troeltsch and his monumental study *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches and Groups* remains unmentioned. There is also no discussion of what had been a staple of the previous introductions by Giddens and Collins, namely the critical responses to Weber's argument, and beyond that, an account of comparative historical scholarship that has shed new light on the relationship between ascetic Protestantism and economic, political, and intellectual conduct.[18]

Instead, Kalberg delves into the inner workings of Calvinist theology and the organization of ascetic Protestantism. Kalberg's account is succinct yet detailed; it may well be the best depiction of the argument in the *PE* to date. It even includes new information, such as Weber having completed research on the economic ethics of the Quakers at the end of the 1890s (xxvii).[19] This is recommended reading, even for Weber specialists.[20]

A *PROTESTANT ETHIC* FOR THE NEW CENTURY

There can be no doubt that Kalberg's book is a scholarly achievement. It might have been better to publish it with a different publisher and not rush it into print with deplorable oversights, but there are probably very few people alive today who have the skills and the knowledge to do as good a job as Kalberg did here, given the parameters alluded to earlier. Perhaps ironically, the translation has many of the same qualities with which ascetic Protestantism imbued its followers: it is precise, serene, dispassionate, methodical, and without a hint of sensual elements. In a revision, which will hopefully appear in print as quickly as Collins' did but actually include substantial changes, one would hope that Kalberg addresses Weber's biography in greater detail and adds a section on the controversies surrounding the *PE* thesis. He undoubtedly will be able to draw on continuous stream of new studies on the merits and demerits of Weber's historical argument and its socio-economic, -cultural, and –political significance. Indeed, the fact that a sensible translation of Weber's famous study is finally available may engender more such studies. The *PE* will therefore likely remain an intellectual landmark in the new political and religious realities of the 21st century, and Stephen Kalberg is to be thanked for having made his contribution to it.

ENDNOTES

1. To give but one example of each category: Roth 1992; Weber 1993; Schluchter 1988; Marshall 1982; and Lehmann and Roth 1993.
2. This is not to say that Weber's work was completely unknown before that. The first English translation of Weber's work, *General Economic History* (trans. Frank Knight),

a compilation of lecture notes of students, appeared in 1927. There was already some recognition of other writings by Weber as well (see, e.g., Abel [1929] 1965: 116–59).

3. On this chapter in Parsons' life, see Camic 1991: xix–xxvi. Camic reports that before publication Parsons made some changes to his translation in response to reviewers' objections.
4. Weber [1930] 1958: 154.
5. Parsons [1930] 1958: 181.
6. Ghosh 1994: 104–105. In his essay, Ghosh gives many illustrative examples of such shortcomings.
7. Weber [1930] 1958: 117. The concept also appears on pages 105, 147, and 149.
8. The recognition of much of this we owe to the scholarship of Wolfgang Schluchter. Specific references to the documents quoted here are given, together with a longer exposé of the issues alluded to here, in Kaelber 1998, chap. 1.
9. Tawney, in Parsons [1930] 1958: 7, 8.
10. Weber 1976; 1996; 1998.
11. Weber 1978: 138–73. Andreski (1983: 111–25) published a translation of a different section in the *PE*, but he made only slight revisions to Parsons' translation and omitted the footnotes.
12. Sure enough, one of my students recently turned in a paper on "Kalberg's *Protestant Ethic*"!
13. Roth 2001. Unfortunately, no English translation of his *opus magnum* is available.
14. See especially Tenbruck, 1985: 721–24. He summarizes his assessment of Winckelmann's edition as "herbe Enttäuschung" (724).
15. There is evidence that Kalberg used the original 1904–5 and very carefully compared them to the edition of 1920 (in Winckelmann's version). Based on my own line-by-line comparison of the two versions, which I once undertook for my dissertation, I am not sure that I agree with Kalberg's assessment that the newer version's "major additions were in full paragraph form" (ix, n. 6).
16. So are, of course, his translations of the other parts. While generally all passages in foreign (i.e., non-English) languages are translated, and translated well, I found only one that was not (178, n. 35).
17. Weber 1978, pp. 331–40; [1946] 1958: 302–22.
18. See, e.g., Zaret 1985; Gorski 2001, Merton 1970.
19. Guenther Roth is credited with providing this information. It is also noted that Weber had completed his research for the *PE* in 1903 (xxvii). This means that Weber may have carried out some of his research while still recuperating from his illness in Italy, a country that Weber relished to visit—perhaps because it provided a stark contrast to (and welcome relief from) Puritan austerity?
20. Only in one case did I find an inaccuracy: Kalberg writes that at the end of his life Weber had planned to write a study on ancient Christianity (lxxii, n. 48), when, in fact, such a study would likely have comprised Christianity as a whole.

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