

# The Essential Weber A Reader

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in 1904 1905 max weber published the sociological classic *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* in this book weber argues that religion specifically ascetic protestantism provided the essential social and cultural infrastructure that led to modern capitalism weber suggests that protestantism has an affinity for capitalism indeed something within protestantism by accident or design creates the necessary preconditions that lead to the flowering of a just free and prosperous society at the same time weber wonders if the economic backwardness of certain

societies and regions of the world are somehow related to their religious affiliation weber s century old thesis challenges the erroneous core assumptions of many secular humanists postmoderns roman catholic traditionalists and islamists in view of the threat of the war on terror and in the face of the inadequate response of secularist and post modern intellectuals it is vital that we understand and appreciate the profound paradigm shift that occurred during the sixteenth and seventeenth century that led to the unfolding of modern capitalism despite a plethora of critics max weber s one hundred year old thesis still stands

lawrence scaff provides new details about weber s visit to the united states what he did what he saw whom he met and why and how these experiences profoundly influenced weber s thought an immigration capitalism science and culture romanticism race diversity protestantism and modernity scaff traces weber s impact on the development of the social sciences in the united states following his death in 1920 examining how weber s ideas were interpreted translated and disseminated by american scholars such as talcott parsons and frank knight and how the weberian canon codified in america was reintroduced into europe after world war ii

a comprehensive account of the wide ranging impact of max weber s ideas on german and american intellectuals in the twentieth century

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