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Protestantism and Capitalism Pre-Weber—Precedents of the Weber Thesis

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Abstract

This article re-examines the Weber Thesis or hypothesis which assumes an association between Protestantism, above all Calvinism, and the spirit and activity of modern capitalism. It suggests that certain antecedents as well as opposing versions precede the Weber Thesis. These are termed positive and negative precedents of the Weber Thesis in the sense of alternative accounts of Calvinism and modern capitalist development that do or do not consider Calvinism as a crucial factor of this development. The article identifies and examines such precedents both in economics and sociology prior or in part contemporaneously to Weber. The positive precedents of the Weber Thesis are consistent with and support it but may make it appear less novel and original. Its negative precedents are inconsistent with and even contradict the Weber Thesis and can render it less valid empirically or theoretically plausible. The article therefore aims to provide a prior historical background of the Weber Thesis in economic and sociological theory. It contributes to a better understanding of how the relationship between Calvinism and capitalism, and generally religion and economy, is analyzed within economics and sociology before Weber's famous Thesis.

JEL Classifications: N01, Z13.

Keywords: Calvinism; capitalism; economy; rationalism; Protestantism; the Weber Thesis.

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Introduction

The economics, sociology, historical and other, including theological, literature features the Weber Thesis or, as also sometimes termed, hypothesis. It is also called the Weber question, theory, argument and the like. As he initially presents it in the *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber's Thesis postulates that Protestantism as a type of theology, religion and ethic has a strong positive influence on the emergence and expansion of capitalism as an economic spirit, activity and structure. The Weber Thesis hypothesizes that Protestantism represents a causal, explanatory factor in this context. Specifically, it is a theological and religious, ideational, value-orientation, ideological or ideal factor.

However, this factor operates within a set of multiple, mutually reinforcing factors. In his full theory of the development of capitalism, as presented in *General Economic History*, Max Weber (1927, 368) incorporates Protestantism into "necessary complementary factors" such as the "rational spirit, the rationalization of the conduct of life in general, and a rationalistic economic ethic". They reportedly complement and operate in the "complex interaction of innumerable different historical factors", notably rational enterprise, accounting, technology, and law. Alternatively, the Weber Thesis assumes that capitalism constitutes the aggregate outcome of Protestantism and non-religious factors, even if an intentional, "unforeseen and unwished-for" outcome or product. In sum, Weber's Thesis posits what he calls a specific "causal evaluation" and "causal chain". This proceeds from Protestantism to capitalism in which the first has a positive effect on the second, as an instance of that from religious beliefs to economic processes, not just the other way round, as in the "materialistic conception", while forming part of the "chains of factors".

In particular, the Weber Thesis attributes such positive causal effects on capitalism to "ascetic Protestantism". The latter involves, first and foremost, Calvinism, i.e., the Calvinist Reformation or Revolution. Calvinism originated in France, moved with Calvin to and dominated in Geneva, and expanded to Europe and beyond, yielding its Anglo-American sectarian variation "Puritanism" and its Scottish variant "Presbyterianism" identical or synonymous to the latter. Weber (1976, 174) considers Calvinism ("Puritan outlook") "above all the only consistent influence in the development" of capitalism standing at the "cradle of the modern economic man" such as the "typical capitalist entrepreneur(s)", the "entrepreneurial spirit", entrepreneurship and **"**entrepreneurial capitalism".[1] Weber (1968, 588) infers that the "inner-worldly asceticism of Protestantism" epitomized most intensively in Calvinism, in particular Puritanism, acted as the "first" producer of "a capitalistic ethics", even if "unintentionally".

On this account, the Weber Thesis posits a strong and consistent positive association between Calvinism as a theology, religion, and ethic and modern capitalism as an economic ethos, activity, and system, specifically the impact of the first on the birth and growth of the second. Hence, by involving only two variables it represents originally, as in the *Protestant Ethic*, a bivariate cause-effect relationship or covariation for theoretical and methodological purposes. These purposes consist in exploring that presumably-overlooked side of the causal link between religion and economy running from the former to the latter. In a refinement and extension, Weber subsequently analyzes this bivariate relationship in *General Economic History* and to some extent *Economy and Society* within the framework of complex multivariate relations between a variety of social factors—ranging from rational permanent enterprise, accounting, technology and law to Calvinism and other ascetic Protestantism—and capitalism as their hypothesized product. In this respect, the Weber Thesis, while initiated as a seemingly self-sufficient, stand-alone explanation, later becomes an integral element of his general

[1] For a comparison of Weber's theory of entrepreneurship and the development of capitalism with those of Joseph Schumpeter and Frank Knight, see Maria Brouwer 2002.

theory of the development of capitalism, of the interrelations between religion and economy and the "interdependence between social institutions" (Robert Merton 1968, 63).

In sum, it is the Thesis of a positive association between Calvinism and capitalism, in a specification such that the first is considered the independent and the second the dependent variable, as distinct from correlation without such specification of variables. In this association, the Thesis is that Calvinism and other ascetic Protestantism religiously conditions and sanctifies capitalism hence assumed to be its economic consequence. In his words, Weber formulates his Thesis in terms of an "inner" and "intimate" relationship, "connection", "inner link", "causal linkage", "association", "elective affinity", "strong congruence", or "causal chain" between Calvinism and the "qualitative formation and quantitative expansion", the "genesis" of capitalism as an economic "spirit", "enterprise", "practice", "structure". He specifies such relations in that he deems Calvinism a "causal factor", "producer", "creator", "determinant", "condition", "influence", "impact", "foundation", "basis", "root", or "origin", and the spirit and system of capitalism an "effect", "creation", "product", "result", "consequence", "ramification", or "expression". It is well-known that Weber presents his Thesis in the *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (published in 1904), but elaborates, refines, and qualifies it in his later posthumously-published works, especially *Economy and Society* and *General Economic History*.

Since the original formulation, Weberian and other sociologists, economists, and historians have undertaken various theoretical reformulations, elaborations and revisions, as well as empirical examinations, confirmations, and refutations of the Weber Thesis.[2] These responses to the Weber Thesis are multiple and wide-ranging, and mostly beyond the scope of this article. They range from Werner Sombart, Lujo Brentano and some religious historians, Richard Tawney, Talcott Parsons and others (Henri Pirenne 1914; H.M. Robertson 1933; Gordon Walker 1937) through their later and contemporary counterparts. Even Weber in the revised edition of the *Protestant Ethic* recognizes "comprehensive criticisms" in the "voluminous literature" concerning his essay on Calvinism and capitalism, mentioning his colleagues from the Historical Economic School Sombart and Brentano, along with religious historian Felix Rachfahl, participating in the resulting fierce polemical exchange discussed later. In general, the Weber Thesis has yielded what some Weberian specialists denote a "library of criticism" and overall an "enormous debate" and a vast secondary literature in which "probably a majority" of social scientists tend to argue against Weber on theoretical or historical-empirical grounds (Merton 1968, 63; Neil Smelser and Richard Swedberg 2005, 8; also, Alberto Alesina and Paola Giuliano 2015; Sascha Becker, Steven Pfaff, and Jared Rubin 2016; Marion Fourcade 2011; Bryan Gharad, James Choi, and Dean Karlan 2021; Sriya Iyer 2016). And while rejecting Weber's Thesis, many "capitalist" scholars still endorse markets and capitalist institutions (Becker and Ludger Woessmann 2009; Vincent Geloso 2022; Felix Kersting, Iris Wohnsiedler *and* Nikolas Wolf 2020; Christoph Schaltegger and Benno Torgler 2009), although, as noted, this literature is itself subject to some serious criticisms (for example, Zhang 2021).

These theoretical and empirical issues, notably the voluminous secondary literature, following and inspired by the Weber Thesis, just as itself, are relatively well-known in sociological and economic theory and research, and do not primarily concern this analysis. Still, one should pay due attention and give serious consideration to the vast secondary literature on the so-called Weber problem or question of Calvinism and capitalism, as I do specifically in the next several sections and throughout the article overall.

By contrast, such questions of Calvinism and capitalism, as well as analogously the less voluminous literature, preceding or contradicting the Weber Thesis are hardly analyzed in

[2] For a recent rigorous defense of Weber against empirical attacks on his Thesis, see Tong Zhang 2021.

sociology and economics and are the main focus of this article. Both the adherents and critics of the Weber Thesis typically do not identify or analyze its precedents—positive or negative in the sense of its extant anticipation or contradiction—while addressing its successive voluminous secondary literature. For instance, Parsons, probably the most prominent and enthusiastic early defender, hardly detects, analyzes, or implies such precedents, and neither does its probably best known and strongest contemporaneous critic Sombart, along with Brentano. This applies to most of its later adherents and critics, with rare exceptions identifying or implying some positive or negative precedents, such as William Petty and Karl Marx via the "materialist conception of history" (Walker 1937).

This article focuses on these precedents, the ex-ante context of the Weber Thesis, as distinguished from its original formulation and successions, its ex-post framework manifested in the voluminous secondary literature accumulating around it. The remainder of the article revolves around these precedents of the Weber Thesis. The next section classifies these alternative accounts of the relation between Protestant Calvinism and modern capitalist development. I then analyze certain positive precedents consisting of alternative accounts of modern capitalist development that consider Protestant Calvinism as a crucial factor of capitalism. The following section examines some negative precedents involving alternative accounts of modern capitalist development that do not consider Protestant Calvinism as a crucial factor of capitalism. The penultimate section re-examines these accounts in the context of the relationship between religious-cultural collective-ideational entities and capitalism or economy overall, which forms a broader theoretical problem within Weber's framework. The final section concludes.

Precedents of The Weber Thesis: Alternative Accounts of Calvinism and Modern Capitalism

Despite its fame or infamy, paradigmatic or compromised status, Weber's is far from being the only and first Thesis, thesis, or theory of the relationship between Calvinism and capitalism, and religion and economy in general, in the development of sociology and economics.[3] Specifically, when he presented, elaborated, and refined it, during the 1900-20s, this was not the sole and first sociological and economic thesis on this subject. This is largely overlooked in the Weberian and related literature, including early works such as Parsons' (1935) defense of it against critics (for example, Robertson 1933), Tawney's (1962) elaboration of it, and Sombart's (1928), Brentano's (1916) and other "comprehensive criticisms" of it.[4]

Moreover, some alternative theses or theories in sociology and economics presented below precede and prefigure—positively or negatively—the Weber Thesis, although they are less known or considered in the sociological and related literature than its initial rendition and subsequent variations. These precedents hence might be termed pre-Weberian theses of the relationship between Calvinism and capitalism, generally religion and economy, religious beliefs and economic activities in the sense of preceding the Weber Thesis. Still, they are better designated and considered as prior or to some degree nearly-contemporaneous accounts of the relation between Protestant Calvinism and the development of modern capitalism to the Weber Thesis.

[3] An interesting question would be where one should classify Adam Smith and David Hume with regard to the Weber Thesis. Tentatively, one could classify both Adam Smith and David Hume, along with John S. Mill, into the negative precedents of the Weber Thesis (see Table 2).

[4] Further and more recent works on the Weber Thesis include Becker et al. 2016; Davide Cantoni, Jeremiah Dittmar, and Noam Yuchtman 2018; David Chalcraft and Austin Harrington 2001; Randall Collins 1980; Armin Falk, Anke Becker, Thomas Dohmen, Benjamin Enke, David Huffman, Uwe Sunde 2018; Fourcade 2011; Gharad et al. 2021; Erik Hornung 2014; Iyer 2016; Stephen Kalberg 1990; Kurt Samuelsson 1961; Smelser and Swedberg 2005; Mara Squicciarini 2020.

One may divide these precedents into proto- and counter-Weberian theses or alternative accounts of the relation between Calvinism and the development of modern capitalism depending on whether these accounts do, or do not, consider Calvinism as a crucial factor of this development and thus are continuous or discontinuous with the Weber Thesis. Hence, those preceding or contemporaneous accounts of the relation between Calvinism and the development of modern capitalism that consider Calvinism as a crucial factor of this development are consistent and continuous with the Weber Thesis. They exemplify a trend of continuity and cumulation in economic-sociological theory, research and knowledge before and during the Weber Thesis formulation, just as afterwards by the "resilience" of this and other "theoretically derived hypotheses" (Merton 1984, 1092). By contrast, those preceding or simultaneous accounts of the relation between Calvinism and the development of modern capitalism that do not consider Calvinism to be a crucial factor of this process are inconsistent and discontinuous with the Weber Thesis. They demonstrate the opposite trend prior to or during its statement, just as do his acknowledged "comprehensive criticisms" and "library of criticism" after it (Merton 1968, 63). Hence, these preceding or contemporaneous alternative accounts of the relation between Calvinism and the development of modern capitalism represent in a sense positive and negative precedents or analogues of the Weber Thesis.

Accordingly, the ensuing sections of the article concentrate on alternative economic, sociological, historical and related accounts of the origin and development of modern capitalism depending on their respective treatment of the role Calvinism plays in this process. I differentiate these accounts according to whether or not they consider Calvinism and Protestantism in general as a crucial social, especially religious, factor of modern capitalist development. This yields two general corresponding directions of this analysis: first, Calvinism as a crucial socio-religious factor of the development of modern capitalism in pre-Weberian and later writings; and second, Calvinism as an irrelevant socio-religious factor of the development of modern capitalism in these works.

In this light, the Weber Thesis looks less novel and original than what Parsons (1938, 659) describes as an "original historical thesis". Instead, it has certain pre-discoveries, anticipations, and adumbrations or prior theoretical tradition-creation, and extant preclusions, preemptions, and contradictions (Merton 1968). Its positive precedents may make the Thesis appear a re-discovery and reformulation or an elaboration, revision or reconstruction, and therefore relatively conventional. Hence, if Weber and his followers invoke such positive precedents to ground it, they may unwittingly diminish or cast doubt on its novelty and originality to make it reappear as conventional wisdom and derivative, or an attempt at codification of antecedent economic-sociological theory and research on the subject of Calvinism and capitalism, religion and economy in general. Weber does so by invoking two earlier economists and sociologists Petty and Charles Montesquieu as precursors, but as a result his Thesis may reappear in this conventional and derivative light, though his followers hardly ever recognize or consider such precedents. In turn, the negative precedents may cast some preemptive doubt, anticipatory shadow, or extant question on the Thesis making it implausible or questionable. Critics can invoke these negative antecedents to dispute its theoretical importance or empirical validity. In both cases, the Thesis does not remain intact, as its degree of novelty and originality or that of its theoretical-empirical plausibility is affected: in the first case, it may prove to be not completely "new", in the second not entirely "true".

Concerning selection principles or inclusion criteria, they are primarily relevance, influence or reputation, combined with invocation or citation by Weber. Thus, of the positive precedents, Weber explicitly mentions Petty and Montesquieu in *The Protestant Ethic* (mentioning Montesquieu in passing and Petty as a recurring reference alluding to his work in the 1904-05 version and explicitly discussing it in the debate with critics and the 1920 version). In addition, Weber repeatedly implicates without naming Marx by referring to the "doctrine of the more naive historical materialism", the "materialistic standpoint", "economic" or

"materialistic" interpretation, the "materialistic" causal interpretation of culture and history, and the like, although he does not mention Marx's specific statements about the connection between Protestantism and capitalism. This seems somewhat odd because he was probably familiar with these pronouncements in his predecessor's second-best-known work in political economy. In turn, Weber makes no mention of Jean-Baptiste Say and Alfred Marshall and does not seem familiar with their writings. This essay includes these scholars because of their importance in or impact on economic history and theory. For example, David Ricardo (1975) describes Say as the "most eminent" Continental follower of Adam Smith, regarded as the founder of economic science, and Parsons (1967, 14) equally characterizes Marshall as the "most eminent economist of his generation".

Positive Precedents of The Weber Thesis: Accounts of Calvinism and Capitalism Considering Calvinism a Crucial Factor of Capitalist Development

Against the background of the vast secondary literature on the Weber question and the fierce polemical debate about it, accounts of Calvinism and capitalism that consider Calvinism as a crucial factor of modern capitalist development represent pre-discoveries, anticipations, adumbrations, or a prior "tradition-creation" of the Weber Thesis. The latter hence reappears as a rediscovery and reformulation, or elaboration, revision or reconstruction in this context and in that sense not entirely new. Such accounts posit, demonstrate, or imply that Calvinism and Protestantism overall support or connect with capitalism and economic activity and development, as does the Weber Thesis. Specifically, like it, they suggest that this religion, unlike non-Protestant Christianity and non-Christian religions, has a positive impact on both the "spirit" *and* "practice" and "structure" of capitalism, capitalist mentality and activity through the propensity for calculation in terms of money, including Weber's "capital accounting", and the profit-seeking enterprise. Table 1 summarizes certain positive precedents of the Weber Thesis as accounts of Calvinism or more broadly Protestantism and capitalism considering Calvinism or Protestantism as a crucial factor of capitalist development, along with some contemporaneous cases noted above.

Table 1

Positive Precedents of the Weber Thesis—Accounts of Calvinism or Protestantism and Capitalism Considering Calvinism or Protestantism a Crucial Factor of Capitalist Development

Precedent	Time	Work
William Petty	1690	Political Arithmetick
Charles Montesquieu	1752	The Spirit of The Laws
Jean-Baptiste Say	1803	A Treatise on Political Economy
Auguste Comte	1839	Course of Positive Philosophy
Thomas B. Macaulay	1848	The History of England
Karl Marx	1859	A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy
Henry T. Buckle	1861	Civilization in England
Emile Laveleye	1875	Protestantism and Catholicism
Matthew Arnold	1878	Equality
Alfred Marshall	1891	Principles of Economics
Ernst Troeltsch*	1912	Protestantism and Progress
Richard Tawney*	1920	Religion and The Rise of Capitalism
Conrad Moehlman*	1934	The Christianization of Interest

Note: * Contemporaneous and Similar Cases

From Petty to Marx

Probably the first among these accounts considering Calvinism or more broadly Protestantism as a crucial factor of modern capitalist development is that of William Petty, who hence provides a precedent of the Weber Thesis (expounded in his 1690 work *Political Arithmetick*). Petty, an early English economist who is sometimes even deemed the founder of economics (see André Vanoli 2005), suggested that Calvinism has a positive impact on the development of capitalism and generally economic activity, including industry and trade, in those societies in which this religion emerged and prevailed. In Petty's (1690, 21) account, these Calvinist "Dissenters" and "Heterodox" settings are, first of all, the Netherlands and the Huguenot-controlled regions of France. This focus on only two Calvinist societies and the omission of some others makes Petty's precedent more limited in scope than the Weber Thesis. Still, it remains consistent with and even a pre-discovery in relation to the latter assuming that Calvinism promotes capitalism and economic activity, and does more so than do the other branches of Christianity, especially Catholicism, as well as Lutheranism. Alternatively, the Weber Thesis consequently appears less novel when considered in relation to Petty's prior statements about the relations of Calvinism and capitalism.

For illustration, Petty (1690, 21) states that Calvinists described as the "present Dissenters" hold the belief that "Labour and Industry" represent their "Duty towards God"—adding "How erroneous soever their Opinions be"—while noting that they claim to follow the "Primitive Christians". The first part of this statement anticipates the Weber Thesis, in particular its emphasis on the concept of a calling as God's assigned life task and restless laboring and industriousness in it as a moral duty and proof of Divine "predestination" in the double decree of "election" or "salvation", and conversely a sign of avoiding "reprobation" or "damnation". The second adumbrates Weber's (1968, 1175) insight that Calvinism considers and establishes "Biblical theocracy", "Bibliocracy" as "Divinely ordained" and thus aims to return to the primitive Christian religion, as Auguste Comte (1839) also emphasizes. Moreover, this is the double-entwined meaning of Calvin's theological magnum opus *Institution of the Christian Religion*—instituting a "Christian polity" and the "Reformed" Christian church. Petty (1690, 22) cites the Calvinist "Dissenters" in Europe under the "Roman Catholick Religion" such as the Netherlands during Spanish rule until the late sixteenth century and the "Hugonots"—French Calvinists since and after Calvin—as "proportionably far the greatest Traders" in France during that time and later. On this account, Petty's examples of the association of Calvinism and capitalism are identical with those of Weber who also invokes Dutch Calvinists and French Huguenots as his exemplars, though he focuses more on Calvinist "Puritans" in England and New England, and in part Calvin's Geneva.

Weber (1976, 43) mentions Petty's "discussion of the reasons for the capitalistic development of the Netherlands" as the positive precedent and support of the Weber Thesis in response to its "comprehensive criticism" (in the second version of the *Protestant Ethic*), but in so doing unwittingly reduces its degree of novelty. If Petty already identifies such reasons in Calvinism as an "Heterodox" religion, i.e., Calvinists as "Dissenters", the Weber Thesis adds little to explain the development of capitalism in the Netherlands and France. At most, therefore, the Weber Thesis provides the Calvinist "reasons for the capitalistic development" of the countries Petty does not explicitly mention such as Puritan England and New England, thus generalizing what he said about the Netherlands and France.

In sum, Petty's "discussion of the Calvinist reasons for the capitalistic development" in parts of Europe, notably its citation by Weber, warrants the designation of a Weberian positive precedent, albeit not identical in its broader sense. Petty (1690, 53) suggests that Calvinism is one of the major factors of the development of capitalism in the Netherlands and France because of its societal position of a "Heterodox", unofficial and minority—which the Huguenots exemplify—"part of the whole" involving other groups rather than of its unique "species" or

nature of religion (Cantoni et al. 2018; Cédric Chambru 2019; Hornung 2014). Weber argues this, but omits to mention his precursor's different view. Conversely, Petty implies that when Calvinism attains the social status of an Orthodox, official, and majority religion, it does not operate as such a factor and thus functions in the manner of Catholicism and other religions in the same position, rather than acting so invariably, as Weber suggests but fails to mention this implication of his cited precursor.

After Petty, some sociologists and economists preceding Weber provide accounts of the positive relation between Calvinism and the development of modern capitalism, as shown by Montesquieu, Say, Marshall, Comte, and Marx. Montesquieu's (2001, 480) positive precedent of the Weber Thesis is implicit in his proposition that Calvinism tends to support capitalist activity such as commerce, and to suppress its opposites through the "suppression of festivals" more than does Catholicism. In particular, he observes that early Calvinists in France and elsewhere practiced a proxy alchemy by converting "all the sacred plate into specie" of money after plundering the Catholic churches and monasteries (Montesquieu (2001, 686). Just as mentioning Petty, Weber mentions Montesquieu and cites his observation about the connection between the Protestant religion and commerce in England to background his Thesis of an association between Protestantism and capitalism, and in so doing, unwittingly weakens its novelty. Arguably, if Montesquieu pre-discovers such an association in England, the Weber Thesis adds little new to it and thus to the problem of a relationship of Protestantism and capitalism in such settings, other than re-discovering and generalizing, as to New England, that connection.

Unlike the previous two, the next positive precedents of his Thesis are not acknowledged and thus there is no evidence that they are known by Weber. Say (2001, 198), a French economist who was a Calvinist and Smith's most prominent European follower who became famous for his "law of markets" in equilibrium, observes that Protestant countries are "both richer and more populous" than the Catholic. Notably, he argues that they are such because of their habits being "more conducive to production" (Say 2001, 198). Say does not, however, specify which Protestant habits have positive effects on the production of wealth regarded, following Smith (also a Calvinist), as the prime subject of political economy which he suggested "better" to rename "social economy" (Evelyn Forget 1999; Swedberg 1998).

Marshall, widely deemed the preeminent neoclassical English economist also with a Puritan heritage yet turned agnostic, perhaps provides some answer. These Protestant "habits" include the hostility of Puritans in England and North America to what Marshall (2004, 428) denotes, evoking David Hume and John S. Mill, "all lighter thoughts and lighter amusements", their having "little joy in society", avoiding and condemning "public amusements", and their hostile attitudes to aesthetic art. These are some of the attributes that Weber observes in Calvinism, especially Puritanism, and regards as conducive to the development of the "spirit" of capitalism and generally the production of wealth in Smith-Say's sense.

Say's statement explicitly—and Marshall's implicitly—qualifies as a positive precedent of the Weber Thesis, because it is what Weber argues by emphasizing the differences among Protestants and Catholics in wealth, as in Germany and Europe, and attributing these differentials to the different character of their respective religious beliefs and ethical norms. In general, however, Say (2001, 183) posits that a religion based on the "principle of fraternal love"—in Weber's words, "brotherly love"—such as early Christianity tends to disapprove of capitalism by strongly disapproving economic calculation that is unknown among "generous bosoms" and becoming "repugnant to the common maxims of morality". Say (2001, 183), for example, notes that Montesquieu attributed the "decline of commerce" to the religious, including Christian and Islamic, proscription of money lending with interest or prohibition of usury, while Weber (1976, 201) notes the "more liberal attitude of Calvin".

Yet, the Calvinist Say evidently considers Calvinism and related Protestantism the sole exception to this pattern of a negative religious influence on monetary calculation and investment by arguing that this religion is "more conducive to production" than are Catholicism and other branches of Christianity and all "fraternal" religions. This anticipates Weber's (1968, 594) distinction between religions of passive adaptation or "prudent accommodation to the world" such as Oriental religions and Catholic and Orthodox Pre-Protestant Christianity, and those pursuing an "ascetic mastery" of the world of which an exemplar (together with Islam) is deemed Calvinism and other ascetic Protestantism. Thus Say's "fraternal" religions and Christianity correspond to Weber's religions of accommodation to the world, in particular to the pre-Protestant Christian religion. In turn, Say's Protestant "habits" correspond to Weber's religions of the mastery of the world epitomized by Calvinism that, particularly Puritanism, replaced a "fraternal" religion and "brotherly love" and, as Tawney (1962, 230) observes, "almost exactly" reversed the "traditional scheme of Christian virtues", including what Pitirim Sorokin (1970, 678) extols as "Christian love". Notably, by proposing that the Christian and all "fraternal religion" disapproves of monetary calculation and capital investment, by contrast to Protestantism as "more conducive to production", Say anticipates Weber. Weber (1968, 594-596) contends that religions of a "mere accommodation to the world" obstruct the development and expansion of capitalism, while those of the "ascetic mastery of mundane affairs", specifically Calvinism (but not Islam), promote the capitalist spirit and enterprise.

If this is correct, the preceding yields Say's version of a positive precedent of the Weber Thesis that seems even more consistent with the latter than Petty's that Weber acknowledges and invokes for extant support. Moreover, Say's precedent is almost identical to Weber's rendition in two general outlines. The first involves the differences between Catholic and Protestant societies/groups in wealth in favor of the latter explained by the different nature of their religious beliefs and their resulting moral rules and habits. The second is that Protestantism, above all Calvinism, by being "more conducive to production" forms the only exception to religions and ethical systems, including Christianity as a "fraternal religion", in their pattern of disapproving monetary calculation and capital investment. Even if not cited by Weber, Say's precedent seems almost a pre-discovery or anticipation in relation to the Weber Thesis hence rendered a rediscovery or reformulation relative to the first.

Even Marx, whose "materialism" or economic "determinism" is the theoretical trigger and target of the Weber Thesis refuting it by the reverse causal chain from religion to economy, may anticipate the latter. First and foremost, Marx identifies and defines what Weber calls the "spirit of capitalism". Marx (2015, 161) points to the "cult of money" driving capitalists and prevailing in a capitalist society as equivalent or compatible with Weber's "spirit of capitalism". Marx (2015, 161) characterizes the capitalist "cult of money" by "its asceticism, its self-denial, its self-sacrifice—economy and frugality, contempt for mundane, temporal and fleeting pleasures; the chase after the *eternal* treasure", thus in almost the same terms as Weber does the "spirit of capitalism": money acquisition for its own sake and as a duty. In this respect, what Marx denotes the capitalist "cult of money" Weber restates as the "spirit of capitalism" despite his attempt to distinguish it from the mere "greed for gold" deemed universal and thus non-specific and even irrelevant for modern capitalism. Yet, Weber (1976, 279) implicitly defines the "spirit of capitalism" by such cult or greed of money invoking as an expression of this capitalist ethos the "strong greed for profits" of New England's Puritans in the early seventeenth century.

Second, Marx (2015, 161) infers "hence the connection between English Puritanism, or also Dutch Protestantism, and money-making" and consequently capitalist calculation and enterprise, as do reportedly later German historians (for example, Conrad Moehlman 1934). This striking and relatively unknown inference merits an important place among positive precedents of the Weber Thesis because the latter posits such a "connection" especially between "English Puritanism" and "Dutch Protestantism" and the "money-making" spirit and

practice of capitalism. The inference implies a general connection between Calvinism, of which English Puritanism and Dutch Protestantism were particular non-French species emanating from Calvin's France/Geneva to England and Holland, and continuous, systematic "money-making" as the inner logic or spirit of capitalism according to Marx and Weber and his contemporaries Georg Simmel, Sombart, Max Scheler and others. It also indicates that Marx empirically observes or theoretically assumes that in particular English and American Puritanism and Dutch Calvinist Protestantism within the broader family of Calvinism are linked with capitalist calculation and activity, thus effectively pre-discovering or anticipating what Weber discovered or hypothesized later.

Moreover, Marx (1909, 825) makes an interesting and hardly-known or -noticed historical reference to "those sober virtuosi of Protestantism, the Puritans of New England" thus regarded as super-Calvinists and hyper-ascetics overall. Notably, he implies that these Puritans harbored what Tönnies and other critics of the capitalist economy or the Weber Thesis deem the deadly spirit and activity of capitalism through profitable murders of the "heathen". Marx (1909, 825-826) observes that these super-Calvinists practiced the alchemy of converting the systematic murders and scalps of Native Americans "by decrees of their assembly" in 1703 setting, for example, "a premium of £40 on every Indian scalp", as a paradigmatic instance of genocide into rational, methodical money-making business, another observation unacknowledged by Weber and unnoticed in the Weberian literature of Calvinism and capitalism. In so doing, the Puritans probably followed their ancestors, French Calvinists and other Protestants who converted the "sacred into a specie" after plundering Catholic churches, monasteries, and other properties. In stating the above, Marx was both historically specific to pinpoint these Calvinist varieties—from Holland and England to New England—being in a "connection" and sufficiently general to imply that Calvinism was connected with the capitalist spirit ("cult") and enterprise of "money-making", as is Weber.

So far, it might appear as if Marx's "connection" between Calvinism and "money-making" in capitalism were identical to the Weber Thesis also positing such a relationship between the two. But the question arises as to the specific nature and meaning of Marx's "connection" between Calvinism, particularly Puritanism, and capitalist "money-making", i.e., which is the explanatory factor and the dependent variable within it. If the explanatory factor is Calvinism and the dependent variable capitalism, this connection is identical to that posited by the Weber Thesis, and hence Marx's precedent the same as the latter. However, Marx seems to suggest the reverse—that capitalism instead represents the explanatory factor of Calvinism. This is what prompted the Weber Thesis to counter such an application of the "materialistic conception of history" or "economic determinism", although Weber nowhere cites or mentions Marx's statement of a "connection" between the two variables.

Marx (1904, 173) specifies such a connection between Calvinism and capitalism by observing that the typical capitalist (the "hoarder of money") represents "intrinsically a Protestant by religion and still more a Puritan" by combining "asceticism with assiduous diligence". Strikingly, this process is analogous to what Weber (1976, 53) emphasizes as a combination of Calvinist "inner-worldly asceticism" with business "diligence" characterizing modern capitalists, as epitomized by Benjamin Franklin who followed the preaching of his "Calvinist father" of being a "man diligent in business". Notably, the observation that capitalists are "intrinsically" Protestant, especially Puritan, "by religion" implies that capitalist economy is the determining factor, and Protestantism, particularly Puritanism, its religious effect. It means that a person is a Protestant, above all Puritan and thus Calvinist, because of being a capitalist first, so that capitalists become Protestants/Puritans and capitalism conditions or selects Protestantism as its proper religion and sanctification. It does not mean the reverse, as the Weber Thesis assumes.

It is also noteworthy that by stating that a capitalist is "a Protestant by religion and still more a Puritan", Marx distinguishes subtly between Protestantism and Puritanism and thus

Calvinism in particular, and hence suggests that the second, not the first, primarily displays a "connection" with capitalism. In turn, Weber adamantly insists that not all Protestantism, including Lutheranism, Anglicanism and Arminianism, just as Catholicism, but only its ascetic branch Calvinism with its variation Puritanism and the latter's variants like Methodism show a "connection", "intimate relationship", "elective affinity", and "strong congruence" with the spirit of capitalism. Weber argues that early Protestantism such as Lutheranism is of secondary importance and even unimportance for the development of capitalism in Germany and elsewhere (yet see Becker and Ludger Woessmann 2009; Becker and Luigi Pascali 2019). He sharply contrasts this to the prime role played in this process by its later branch Calvinism in France, Geneva, and the Netherlands, and through Puritanism in England and New England.

Weber therefore implies what Marx states ("a Protestant by religion and still more a Puritan (Calvinist) is intrinsically a capitalist"), but in reverse, so that Protestants and Puritans become capitalists and Protestantism encourages capitalism as its compatible economic system. Hence, Marx's "connection" between ascetic Protestantism such as Puritanism and capitalism in the sense of "money-making" calculation and enterprise remains essentially intact and assimilated in Weber's context. Yet Weber reverses the "causal chain" from the capitalist economy to religion into the opposite direction and in that, sense turns Marx on his "head". This indicates that the Weber Thesis in the sense of a "connection", "inner relationship", "elective affinity", and "strong congruence" between ascetic Protestantism and the spirit of capitalism is identical to Marx's inference of a "connection" between Calvinism and "money-making" but differs from it by positing an inverse causal link from (Protestant) religion to (capitalist) economy. In short, relative to Marx, Weber infers the same association or correlation but a different cause-effect relationship. To that extent, the Weber Thesis is a theoretical innovation and empirical discovery on account of its reversal of Marx's causal link between Protestantism and capitalism.

Generally, Marx suggests definite causal relations between these types of economy and religion stating that Protestantism constitutes the "most fitting form of religion" for capitalism, as Catholicism does for feudalism. This signifies that capitalism determines or "selects" and perpetuates Protestantism—as feudalism does Catholicism—rather than conversely, as in the Weber Thesis in reaction to Marx's economic determinism.[5]

Other Positive Precedents

Weber invokes some other scholars as proponents of the thesis that a connection exists between Calvinism and capitalism. These include Belgian economist Émile Louis Victor de Laveleye, cultural critic Matthew Arnold, and historians Henry T. Buckle and Thomas Babington Macaulay. It is useful to chart the ways in which this set of scholars conceive the relationship between Calvinism and capitalism, even though their relevance, influence or reputation seems relatively marginal compared to Say and Marshall and the other positive precedents from the stance of this essay.

Laveleye (1875, 11), observing that Protestants progress more rapidly and steadily than Catholics, attributes such "superiority" of the first over the second to their professing religion. He elaborates that the Protestants tend to be more active, industrious, economical, and therefore wealthier than the Catholics where these two religions coexist within the same nation (Laveleye 1875, 14). For instance, Laveleye (1875, 15) notes that that prior to the 1685

[5] Weber (1976, 56) states that in many historical cases the causal relationship between economy and religion "is certainly the reverse of that suggested by the materialistic standpoint" referring to Marx's economic determinism. Also, Collins (1980, 925) comments that the Weber Thesis "has been taken to be essentially idealist [as] his correcting of the [Marxian] balance sheet in [the Protestant Ethic] concentrates largely on ideal factors".

revocation of the Edict of Nantes in France, the Calvinist Protestants named Huguenots assumed leadership in "all branches of labour", while the Catholics, because of their lack of competitiveness, attempted to prohibit them from participating in the diverse industries in which they were the leaders. Laveleye (1875, 16) concludes that what caused the "extraordinary prosperity" of some countries is religion rather than race, specifically the Reformation by imparting to those nations adopting it a "force" that history finds hard to explain.

Arnold (1878) observes that the English middle class adopted and inhabited the "prison" of Puritanism at the beginning of the seventeenth century, with the Puritan prison "key" closing and molding its "spirit" for two hundred years. Furthermore, Arnold (1878, 595) suggests that the Puritan middle classes were developing and establishing the "sense of conduct" for England as a society. However, as a critic of the culture of Puritanism, Arnold (1878, 595) deplores the fact that these Puritans generated a "type of life and manners" plagued with manifest but slowly recognized "faults" such as its "hideousness" and its "immense ennui" that make it "fatally condemned", with the "instinct of self-preservation in humanity" rebelling against this Puritan lifestyle.

In addition, Buckle (1861) extols Protestantism in England for diminishing superstition, weakening the clergy, increasing toleration, and generally securing the triumph of secular, including economic and related, interests, over the ecclesiastical, in sharp contrast to its different results in Scotland. He regrets that the Protestant movement in Scotland did not produce the beneficial economic and related effects that it produced in England, instead forcing the people to endure "ecclesiastical despotism"[6], namely the Scotch falling into "religious servitude" during the seventeenth century under the "influence of the Protestant clergy", even if guarding them against "political despotism" (Buckle 1861, 153). Notably, Buckle (1861, 314) deplores that in Scotland under Protestantism being "poor, dirty, and hungry", spending life "in misery", and "tormented in all possible ways", including the "power and torment of those metaphysical conceptions", implying the doctrine of predestination, in short, submitting to all these sufferings was considered a "proof of goodness". For example, Buckle (1861, 314) recounts that the Protestant clergy exerted ecclesiastical despotism by depriving the Scottish of their "holidays, their amusements, their shows, their games, and their sports", repressing "every appearance of joy", forbidding "all merriment", stopping "all festivities", blocking "every avenue" for admitting pleasure, and spreading over Scotland "a universal gloom".

Macaulay *(*1953), while recognizing that the Church of Rome had a "generally favourable" influence on science, civilization, and good government, suggests that its "chief object" has been stunting the "growth of the human mind" during the last three centuries, such as the time after the Reformation. Moreover, he argues that any advance in knowledge, freedom, wealth, and in the "arts of life" within Christendom has proceeded in spite of the Church of Rome and in "inverse proportion" to its power. Specifically, Macaulay *(*1953, 36) suggests that under the rule of the Church of Rome the "loveliest and most fertile provinces of Europe" have degraded in "poverty, in political servitude, and in intellectual torpor", by contrast to Protestant countries, "once proverbial for sterility and barbarism", becoming by "skill and industry into gardens". Macaulay (1953, 36) provides such contrasting examples as the "descent of Spain, once the first among monarchies, to the lowest depths of degradation" versus the highest "elevation of Holland, in spite of many natural disadvantages". Also, he describes passing in Germany "from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant principality, in

[6] This journal's editor remarked that while the observation of the "ecclesiastical despotism" in Scotland is acceptable, "at least in Scotland's 'Central Belt' industry and all that went with it were very prominent. Glasgow is sometimes described as the 'Second City of Empire'; much of this would have been apparent in 1861".

Switzerland from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant canton, in Ireland from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant country [sic!]" as moving from a "lower to a higher grade of civilisation", and also depicts the Roman Catholics of Lower Canada as "inert" in contrast to the rest of the continent being "in a ferment with Protestant activity and enterprise".

Negative Precedents of The Weber Thesis: Accounts of Calvinism and Capitalism Not Considering Calvinism a Crucial Factor of Capitalist Development

In addition to Marx in the second rendition, accounts of Calvinism or more broadly Protestantism and capitalism that do not consider Calvinism as a crucial factor of modern capitalist development include those of Hume, and, to some extent, Smith and Mill among others prior or contemporaneously to Weber. In general, the Hume-Mill joint Thesis postulates that Calvinism, including Puritanism, has a negative impact on capitalism and economic activity, as well as on human agency freedom, tolerance, rationality and science. Curiously, this pre-Weberian Thesis of Calvinism is neglected in sociology and economics compared to the Weber Thesis. Table 2 lists selected negative precedents of the Weber Thesis as accounts of Calvinism or Protestantism and capitalism that do not consider the latter a crucial factor of capitalist development, combined with some contemporaneous examples.

Table 2

Negative Precedents of the Weber Thesis—Accounts of Calvinism or Protestantism and Capitalism Not Considering Calvinism or Protestantism a Crucial Factor of Capitalist Development

Precedent	Time	Work
David Hume	1754-61	The History of England
Adam Smith	1759	The Theory of Moral Sentiments
John S. Mill	1859	On Liberty
Vilfredo Pareto* (implicit)	1901	The Rise and Fall of Elites
Werner Sombart*	1913	The Quintessence of Capitalism
Henri Pirenne*	1914	The Stages in the Social History of Capitalism
Lujo Brentano*	1916	Die Anfänge Des Modernen Kapitalismus

Note: * Contemporaneous and Similar Cases

From Hume to Mill and Beyond

Hume observes that Calvinism, specifically its English transplant Puritanism, adversely affects and ultimately eliminates individual liberty, tolerance, reason, science, learning, rule of law, and hence implies that it may negatively impact capitalism, economic activity, and freedom. Hume (2010a, 94) suggests that Calvinism does this, first, through Calvinists' attacks on and intolerance of any other religions, including the "religion of their ancestors" such as Catholicism and generally pre-Reformation Christianity, not to mention "paganism" vanquished in the "new world" through its extermination of Native Americans. In this connection, Weber implies (1976, 243) that religious war and intolerance are inconsequential, in particular not necessarily detrimental, for the development of capitalism, by rejecting the idea that religious tolerance is "favourable" on the ground that no relation exists between the two. What he identifies as Calvinism's extreme militancy and radicalism by its being in its self-designation the "Church Militant" and its, especially Puritanism's, intolerance would have no effect, positive or negative, on this capitalist process.

However, Weber (1968, 335) emphasizes that capitalism precisely requires the "market peace" and presupposes "general pacification" of social relations, and thus absence of violence, including war of any form, so that the "expansion" of the market and "exchange relations" and the capitalist economy "always" corresponds to "a process of relative pacification" in society. Hence, he adopts Hume's and Montesquieu's classical view that commerce, markets, industry, and capitalist activity thrive under "peace and tranquility" (Albert Hirschman 1977). If so, Hume implies that Calvinist "holy" wars, violence, terror, and intolerance far from being economically inconsequential eliminate the peace, undermining a necessary condition for the development and expansion of capitalism. By doing so Calvinism promotes the violent "ghost" rather than the peaceful spirit of capitalism, exemplified by the Puritans' profitable genocide, "money-making" methodical murder of Native Americans as the "heathen". In passing, the latter is a term the Puritans' heirs, "born-again" US evangelicals, adopt, and with similar repercussions via their "terror in the (name and) mind of God" and "holy" ideological and culture warfare against, together with Islamic fundamentalism, liberal-secular institutions and forces (Mark Juergensmeyer 2003; Dennis Mueller 2009; also, Samuel Bazzi, Gabriel Koehler-Derrick, and Benjamin Marx 2020).

As a corollary, Calvinism has a negative effect on capitalism in that having captured the state and attained absolute power, Calvinists suppress the Catholic and other religions and severely punish their believers (and non-believers) often with death, striving to ensure what Hume (2010a, 284) derides as an "imagined orthodoxy by the most rigorous executions". In turn, seizing the state and attaining absolute power forms Calvinism's invariant "divinely ordained" purpose prefiguring what Karl Mannheim (1936, 141) calls fascism's *putschist* seizure of government to attain total domination. Hume (2010a, 284) and Vilfredo Pareto (1935, 380) cite as a case in point that "Calvin has burned Servetus at Geneva", demonstrating the murderous autocratic rule of the "Protestant Pope" in a small city-state identified as the "Rome of Protestantism" and the theocratic "anti-Paris". Moreover, this act supplies a model of murder, holy terror, theocracy, and moralistic oppression ("Christian Sparta") for subsequent Calvinist, including Puritan, rulers and societies. These span from England under Oliver Cromwell and Scotland during John Knox et al. to New England, also named "Christian Sparta" since John Winthrop, and the "Bible Belt" US South (Mueller 2009). In addition, Hume invokes the personal communication of the first English Puritans and Scottish Presbyterians *à la* Knox with, and their instruction and training in Calvinist rebellions, religious revolutions, and "holy" wars by, their French master during the 1560s. Sombart (1928, 41) echoes Hume by commenting that the "God of Calvin and John Knox" was a "bloody tyrant" inspiring these and other Calvinists and their evangelical heirs to act accordingly, and seeking and capturing absolute power, as through their penetration into the US power structure (Mueller 2009).

What Hume (2010a, 284) diagnoses as Puritanism's imposing "imagined orthodoxy by the most rigorous executions" and godly tyranny, holy oppression and terror form an internal theocratic form and intensification of Calvinist religious wars and intolerance once Calvinism captures and exercises absolute power. What was said about the adverse impact of war and violence on capitalism or the market, and conversely of its requiring Weber's (1968, 639) "market peace" and societal "pacification", holds at this point. In Clausewitz's terms, Calvinism's holy wars on "infidels" represent the continuation, escalation and intensification of the politics of intolerance in religion and orthodoxy in theology by other, violent means. "Infidels" is a term Calvinism shares with Islam—just as the dual concept of religious revolution and war, plus the dogma of predestination, according to Weber—and comprises non-Calvinists, pagans, and non-believers, and executions of "heretics" like Servetus in Calvin's Geneva and "witches" in Puritan New England. Consequently, such wars probably have the negative effect on the development of capitalism and the expansion of the market in accordance with Hume-Montesquieu's non-violence presupposition of commerce, trade, markets, and thus capitalist activity, which Weber fully adopts.

Next, Hume observes that Calvinism, particularly Puritanism, perverts individual, political, and intellectual liberty, human reason and rationality, learning and science, artistic taste, joy of life and humor, and rule of law by its intrinsic and intense irrationalism and anti-rationalism. The latter manifests itself in what Hume (2010b, 17-18; 2010c, 375; 2010d, 101) denotes "dismal", "wild", and "wretched fanaticism" of Puritanism thereby spreading "cant, hypocrisy, and fanaticism" in England and Scotland pervaded by the "highest fanaticism of Knox's sect" which he "imbibed" from his "commerce" with Calvin, making Puritans extreme "zealots" and epitomizing the "nervousness and fanaticism of Calvinist godliness" (Michael Walzer 1963). This observation is crucial so long as irrationalism, especially religious fanaticism, represents an enemy to both democratic governance and rational economic activity, and alternatively, capitalism, like democracy, presupposes liberty, reason, rationalism, knowledge, and science. This is what Weber implies especially in *General Economic History* by including science implicitly and technology explicitly among the crucial social factors in the development of capitalism. It epitomizes itself in the critical role that the liberal and rationalistic Enlightenment played in the Industrial Revolution, as in the emergence of liberal democracy and modern science (also, Daniel Dombrowski 2001; Jürgen Habermas 2001; Joel Mokyr 2010; Mueller 2009; Squicciarini 2020). It also holds for the rule of law Weber acknowledges. Weber (1927, 339) states that capitalism necessitates "law which can be counted upon, like a machine" in the form of a rational legal system, a state "in which alone capitalism can flourish", and administration in the form of "expert" bureaucracy placed among these factors.

So long as, as Hume observes, Puritanism and Calvinism generally subvert the above elements in society, they therefore violate these presuppositions of capitalism even if indirectly, just as those of liberal democracy, civil society, and rationalistic culture directly. This holds in accordance with the observed pattern of Puritan characteristic and any religious extremism or radicalism. Confirming and specifying Hume, later research (Walzer 1963, 63) identifies the "basic incompatibility of Puritanism with both liberalism and capitalism". Moreover, Hume (2010d, 6) observes that the "wild fanaticism" of the Puritans reaches—as through their supreme authority Cromwell—the no-return point of "madness with religious ecstasies". Sombart, Pareto and other analysts diagnose this condition also for Puritanism and Calvinism in general, as well as its descendant evangelicalism in the US. The blend of religious "fanaticism" and "madness" helps explain why Puritans in England and New England were connoted the "hotter sort" of Protestants. Such an extremely irrational, psychopathological "hot" state clearly runs counter to rational "cold" calculation and action as the hallmark of the spirit and practice of Weberian "rational", "sober bourgeois capitalism". This holds true unless converting Puritan religious irrationalism, fanaticism, and "hot-headedness" to "economic rationalism", "reasonableness", and "cold-headedness" through "depraved" mental gymnastics (Paul Samuelson 1983, 6).

Lastly, Hume proposes that Puritanism eliminates freedom of religion and ultimately all human liberty by forcibly instituting itself as a species of religious and consequently political monopoly and thus legal theocracy. Hume (2010c, 85) observes that Puritanism claims to be the "only pure church" that must be "established by law", while suppressing all others and executing and persecuting their members, in accordance with the purpose or meaning of Calvin's theological magnum opus *Institution of the Christian Religion* by Calvinism as the claimed "Reformed Church".[7] Even more explicitly than Hume, Weber (1968, 594, 1175; 1976,

[7] Hume's (2010c, 85) full citation is that the Puritans "maintained that they themselves were the only pure church; that their principles and practices ought to be established by law; and that no others ought to be tolerated", and apparently views such Puritan lack of religious tolerance negatively. It appears that for Hume Puritanism's establishment of itself as the "only pure church" and thus religious monopoly, and not competition between churches, is the most effective means of attaining its domination and indeed perpetuation rather than its self-destruction as the "rational choice" model of religion would claim. Historically, just as did the Catholic Church in Europe, Puritanism by its monopoly

37) observes that Calvinism considers the "Biblical theocracy" to be "divinely ordained", specifically invoking the Puritan "theocracy of New England" as a paradigmatic instance manifesting the "unexampled tyranny of Puritanism". The same holds for Weber's theologian colleague Ernst Troeltsch and follower Tawney, with even Parsons (1935, 695), given his Puritan lineage, referring to "Calvinist theocracy" and thus religious monopoly and oppression that Hume identifies. The Puritan-Calvinist invariant theocratic pattern exerts a negative indirect impact on capitalism and economy overall if its suppression of religious freedom of choice leads to, as Hume implies and Mill explicitly suggests, suppressing economic, political, individual, and intellectual liberties, activities, and capacities, just as a direct destructive consequence on liberal and pluralist democracy and society. For illustration, Tawney (1962, 97) finds that the Puritan "theocracy of Massachusetts" was "merciless" not only, as Hume would expect, to "religious liberty", but to "economic license" and to the unconstrained capitalist spirit and enterprise, and therefore simply permitted neither religious nor economic freedoms characterizing democracy and capitalism, respectively.

Smith, raised as a Scottish Calvinist (Emil Kauder 1953) qua Presbyterian to become a deist, largely follows Hume in respect of the relationship of Calvinism and society, including the economy or capitalism, as in other respects in his both moral philosophy and economic theory. In this sense, Smith implies a Hume-based negative precedent of the Weber Thesis positing the negative effect of Calvinism, specifically Puritanism, on capitalism and economic activity generally, as well as on rationalism, reason, science, freedom, and tolerance. It is well-known (Emma Rothschild 1994) that Smith especially admired Hume's *History of England* where the latter presented his seminal historical analysis of the rise and fall of Puritanism before, during, and after the Puritan Revolution/English Civil War of 1640.

Like Hume, Smith (2005, 647) implies a negative precedent of the Weber Thesis. He does this by depicting all religion, including Puritanism, as a compound of irrationalism, namely a "mixture of absurdity, imposture, or fanaticism", thus incompatible with emerging capitalism as economic rationalism, just as with the Enlightenment defined by scientific rationalism, freedom, tolerance, and liberalism expressed in the "liberal plan of equality, liberty, and justice". Smith was a member of the Scottish and European Enlightenment, of the first Hume being the leader and of the second Montesquieu, Voltaire, Kant, and Condorcet the best-known representatives. While characterizing religions as an irrational mixture compounded with "popular superstition and enthusiasm", like Hume, Smith (2005, 647) laments that "pure and rational religion"—apparently in the Enlightenment's sense of "natural religion" (or deism) guided by reason *à la* Voltaire and Jefferson—probably never existed nor will exist, although eventually becoming a deist himself.

Axiomatically, for Smith as for Hume religious irrationalism is adverse and destructive to any rationalism, including its economic form of rational production and accumulation of the "wealth of nations" as both the main subject and objective of political economy. Calvinism, in particular Puritanism, does not therefore represent a unique Weberian exception to such irrational religions that are not "conducive to production" *à la* Say and thus capitalism, let alone liberal democracy. Instead, it represents an exemplar of these religions, as is reportedly its revival, Protestant fundamentalism cum "evangelicalism" in the US, as well as its substitute and enemy alike, Islam (Mueller 2009). In this regard, it is also far from being a sole exception to Weber's (1968, 594) ideal type of non-rational religions of "prudent accommodation to the world" and the unique instance of a rational religion of the "mastery of the world", and on that account a religious origin and stimulus of capitalism. This holds unless "mastery" is understood, as in Calvinism, in the sense of, in Weber's words (1968, 596), total political

rather than destroying itself dominated and perpetuated itself in England's and notably America's history up to the present through "Puritanical" Protestantism like evangelicalism (Mueller 2009, 392).

"domination over the sinful world" by the "pure church" through theocracy that it shares, along with religious revolution and war, with Islam.

More explicitly, Smith (2005, 647) concurs with Hume in that he acknowledges that Puritans as Calvinist sectarians, the "sect called Independents", represented a "sect no doubt of very wild enthusiasts" (note the same word "wild") as an equivalent to "zealots", thus exemplifying the "madness with religious ecstasies" and being extremely irrational from the stance of the Enlightenment and "rational" religion. In addition, akin to Hume, Smith (2006, 181) characterizes a "puritan" with "severity of manners (plus) cant, cunning, hypocrisy, and low manners", while lacking "generosity, sincerity, magnanimity, loyalty" associated with "liberal education" indicating a "gentleman" as the non-puritan opposite (Michael Perelman 2000). Mill, as well as in part Pareto and especially Sombart make this same characterization. Therefore, like Hume and Mill, Smith (2005, 540) suggests that such Puritan characteristics represent a manifest antithesis to "liberal education" and "liberal spirits", as well as to liberal democracy, generally to the "the "liberal plan of equality, liberty, and justice", simply liberalism, as well as to capitalism or economic activity and capacity. In Say's terms, they represent religiously-formed "habits" that are not "conducive to production" and in that sense to capitalism. Conversely, Hume certainly, and Smith and Say probably, would not consider such Puritan, if "Protestant", "habits" as "conducive to production" and capitalism, particularly not considering "wild" enthusiasm as leading to economic and any rationalism and reason. The same applies to "cant, cunning", as Weber (1976, 282) specifies "honesty is the best policy" as an ingredient of Franklin's "spirit of capitalism".

Lastly, like Hume, Smith (2005, 660) observes that Calvinism, along with Lutheranism, was the only Protestant sect that established itself as a religious monopoly in the form of theocracy "by law", perhaps having in mind its establishment in his native Scotland in the form of Presbyterianism as the state religion supplanting Catholicism. Thus, what one finds in Hume's framework applies to that of Smith. Calvinist monopoly through theocracy suppresses not only religious freedom and pluralism but also all other, including political, individual and economic, freedoms and to that degree democracy, civil society, and capitalism itself. This total, consistent and obstinate suppression of liberty/choice is the inner logic of Calvinist theocracy—an instance of Weber's "iron consistency" of Calvinism and Hume's diagnosed "unreasonable obstinacy" of Puritanism—including the Puritan "theocracy of New England", as well as Islam's theocratic analogue in contemporary Islamic states. What Hume and Smith imply, Tawney (1962, 97) explicitly suggests in that he observes that the Puritan "theocracy of Massachusetts" in colonial America acted "merciless" not just, as axiomatic, to religious liberty, but, contrary to the Weber Thesis, to unlimited economic freedom defining Weberian early "unfettered" American capitalism.

Following Hume and Smith, Mill in particular posits the anti-liberty core of Calvinist-Puritan theocracy and theology, and notably suggests that they generate strong negative consequences for economic and all human capacity and activity, thus for capitalism. Generally, Mill is another eminent classical economist who, in Schumpeter's (1950, 144) view, allocated "about one-third" of his main work *Principles of Political Economy* to economic sociology and introduced into economics the concepts of statics and dynamics taken from and generally influenced by Comte. Particularly relevant to the present question, Mill (2001, 57-58) probably provides the most explicit and unambiguous negative precedent of the Weber Thesis of Calvinism and capitalism. He emphasizes that Calvinism, especially Puritanism, has a strong negative effect on capitalism and economic and all human activities and capacities. Mill suggests that Calvinism does so by its denying, suppressing, and substituting human free will and choice, thus liberty in economic and all other human activity, with complete unquestioned obedience to the super-human Divine power. As he states, for Calvinism the "one great offence of man is Self-will", and it dictates "You have no choice; thus you must do, and not otherwise; whatever is not a duty is a sin" (Mill 2001, 57-58). This dictate against

freedom of choice epitomizes the symbiotic link of religious extremism and conservatism with anti-liberalism and dictatorship resulting in the eradication or impossibility of liberal democracy, as observed in the US during revived evangelicalism and Islamic states. In a similar way as Mill, Weber's contemporary Scheler (1964, 14-15) suggests that Calvinism compels the "denial of 'free will'", joined with the "complete, unmediated surrender of the individual soul to God's grace", as do many later analysts.

Mill hence implies that Calvinism treats human choices, pleasures, and amusements, as grave offenses and sins and thereby crimes to be punished accordingly to the point of typically brutal, cruel death and other severe punishment, as Pareto explicitly observes detecting the Calvinist pleasure-crime equivalence. Such punishment especially manifests Puritan brutality and cruelty that is (as Alexis de Tocqueville (1945) implies) an extant source of the exceptional US death penalty and penal system with its irrational Draconian severity, which ranks as a "unique anomaly" (Devah Pager 2003) among Western societies. In Mill's context, the social cost of such a Puritan-rooted legal system for political freedoms and rights is enormous in that millions of Americans due to being current or former prisoners are denied by conservative powers the basic right to vote and thus totally excluded from the democratic process resulting in a drastic degeneration of democracy.

Comparatively, this represents an exceptional phenomenon unparalleled in Western societies. Mill might add, just as Pareto suggests, that treating individual choices and pleasures as mortal sins and capital or serious crimes is a pattern observed in all Calvinist, particularly Puritan, societies and times. These settings range from Calvin's Geneva and Calvinist parts of France through the Netherlands under the "Reformed Church", Presbyterian Scotland and Puritan England and New England—all self-named (Mill refers to the last two) the Christian "Holy Commonwealth"—to the post-Calvin US under "Puritanical" evangelicalism (Mueller 2009, 392). In the US, this includes, above all, the neo-Puritan South designated the "Bible Belt" due to the perpetual dominance of "evangelical religion" and its zealous Biblical sanctification of the death penalty and other severe punishment for sins-crimes.

In addition, Mill indicates that the underlying reason why Calvinism negates and suppresses individual free will and choice in the economy and society consists in its tenet of humans' total depravity and corruption and their supposed utter inability for redemption. While not naming it, he hence implies that the primary ground for such negativity toward individual freedom is the Calvinist fundamental doctrine of Divine predestination that denies human free will, choice, and agency. Weber emphasizes this doctrine as the theological foundation of the ascetic Protestant ethic of restless work in a calling as "proof of election", as Troeltsch, Scheler, Tawney, Parsons and other writers stress (for example, Roland Bénabou, Davide Ticchi and Andrea Vindigni 2015).

Notably, Mill (2001, 58) infers that the outcome of Calvinism's denigration of human choice is "crushing out any of the human faculties, capacities, and susceptibilities", thus including those of an economic nature, capitalist capacity and susceptibility as identical to the spirit and activity of capitalism in the Weber Thesis. Mill (2001, 58) elaborates that, as a result of their "faculties, capacities, and susceptibilities" being crushed out, humans are deprived of the need of freely chosen capacity and activity in the economy and society and compelled to totally submit themselves to the "alleged will of God" according to the "theory of Calvinism". On that account, Mill considers Calvinism a radical theological dogma of "abnegation" of humanity, of humans' autonomous and creative economic-social faculty and activity, including Weber's spirit and practice of capitalism, negated and eliminated by their surrendering to the "alleged will of God". Intriguingly, Mill's identified Calvinist radical "abnegation" seems identical with what Marx identifies as "self-denial" traced to "English Puritanism" and "Dutch Protestantism" as variations of Calvinism beyond France and Geneva.

At this point, Mill and Marx converge to anticipate Weber's (and Tawney's) view that Calvinism represents religious radicalism and the extremism exemplified by Puritanism. By

contrast to Weber, Mill suggests that the effect of this religious radicalism on the economy and society and thus capitalism is negative precisely owing to such radical suppression of human actors, capacities, and actions, economic and non-economic. This exemplifies what Mill implies and later analysts identity as the negative, anti-rational economic, including anti-capitalist or anti-materialistic, and *a fortiori* anti-liberal, anti-democratic, anti-rationalistic, anti-science inner logic and outcome of religious extremism. It holds in particular for "Puritanical" American evangelicalism and Islamic fundamentalism deemed equivalents, as Calvinism and Islam are in Weber's account. Reportedly (Mueller 2009), these Puritan and Islamic species of religious extremism and conservatism "go together" with "dictatorship" and "holy" war and against liberal-secular democracy, civil society, and rationalistic culture, as well as oppose capitalism or materialism and do not promote economic development and prosperity, instead perpetuating poverty. Exemplars are the US South and those Muslim countries dominated by American Protestant evangelicalism and Islamic fundamentalism, respectively.

Mill (2001, 58) opposes the negative, anti-choice, and anti-human "theory of Calvinism" to a positive "different type of human excellence", a non-Calvinist "conception of humanity" in terms of "self-assertion". Simmel (1955) also makes this dichotomy by contrasting the ascetic "ethic of renunciation" to the (European) "ethic of self-assertion". What Mill calls the Calvinist "abnegation" of humanity according to the "alleged will of God" and for—in Weber's words citing Calvin—the "glory of God", Pareto denotes tormenting others and oneself, and Marx "self-denial". Later sociologists (Erich Fromm 1941; Neil McLaughlin 1996) denote such abnegation a sadistic-masochistic and authoritarian character structure socially conditioned by changes in class stratification. In this account, this Calvinist character prefigures that of fascism and the conservative-fascist authoritarian personality defined by a mix of sadism and masochism and socially generalized in right-wing authoritarianism. It simply anticipates and indeed predicts fascism as conservative, "right totalitarianism" (Anthony Giddens 1979, 145). Alternatively, Mill's positive humanistic conception of self-assertion is termed in later economics, sociology, and psychology as that of self-affirmation, self-determination, self-expression, or self-actualization, as the essential attribute and outcome of human choice, autonomy, freedom, capacity, activity, and life as a whole (Bruno Frey and Alois Stutzer 2010; Habermas 2001; Edmund Phelps 2013).

In this connection, Mill classifies Calvinism into what Simmel (1955) calls the "ascetic" and "fatalistic" ethics of "renunciation" opposed to the "typical European morality" in the form of the "ethic of self-assertion", contradicting Weber's assumption away of elements of fatalism in Calvinist theology such as the dogma of predestination. In short, Calvinism thereby belongs to ascetic predestinarian fatalism shared with Islam versus human capacity and activity. Mill therefore reverses Weber's religious typology by classifying Calvinism into religions of passive adaptation or absolute accommodation to the world—thus alongside Oriental ones—rather than those of active mastery of the world of which it is supposed to be an exemplar (with Islam) per the Weber Thesis. Mill's explanation of such a reversal would be that a Calvinist and any (for example, Islamic) theology of "abnegation" and "crushing out" of economic and all human capacities and activities as the "alleged will of God" can only result in "accommodation" to and hardly ever in "mastery" of the world. This holds unless resorting to "verbal gymnastics" (Samuelson 1983) such as what Weber assumes as active work for the glory of the "God of Calvinism", which is a contradiction considering humans' self-negation dictated as "God's will". At this juncture, Simmel implies that the Calvinist and any ascetic "ethic of renunciation" has an identical result to that which Mill predicts.

In particular, like Hume, Mill (2001, 77) implies that the sectarian variation of Calvinism such as Puritanism adversely affects individual freedom of choice and thus autonomous human capacity and activity in the economy and society because of Puritan "fanatical" religious and moral intolerance. Evidently, Puritanism inherited the latter as its model, like everything else, from Calvin's Geneva theocracy, including the burning of Servetus. Mill (2001,

80) observes that whenever and wherever Puritanism establishes itself in absolute power, as in England and New England during their "Holy Commonwealth", it suppresses personal liberties and private activities such as art and private amusements. The Puritan hostility to and suppression of theater following Calvin's Geneva model is especially intense and notorious, and stimulated "Shakespeare's hatred and contempt of the Puritans" (Weber 1976, 274) because of their theater-closing where he lived at the time.

In Mill's context, this Puritan suppression is not inconsequential, random, and unrelated to, but an additional instance of, the Calvinist pattern of dictating "you have no choice", "crushing out" of human capacities and actions, economic and non-economic, and "abnegation" and submission of humans to the alleged will of and for the glory of God. At the minimum, even if Puritanism's suppressing moral and artistic liberty, faculty, and creativity does not directly lead to "crushing out" and "abnegation" of economic faculties and actions such as the spirit and practice of capitalism, it does so indirectly in Mill's context. This is because for Mill the Puritan repression of humans is not partial and incoherent but total and consistent, encompassing all "human faculties, capacities, and susceptibilities", including economic-capitalist, due to Hume's "unreasonable obstinacy" of Puritanism. Weber (1976, 197, 37) emphasizes Calvinism's "iron consistency" exemplified by Calvin's theology in being the "most absolutely unbearable ecclesiastical control of the individual", in particular the "unexampled tyranny of Puritanism". Alternatively, as does Hume, Mill implies that the promotion of individual moral and artistic liberty, creativity, and faculty may be related to and consistent with that of other "human faculties, capacities, and susceptibilities", including economic-capitalist, rather than being unrelated and opposed to these, contrary to the Weber Thesis.

In this connection, Mill (2001, 80) describes the "stricter Calvinists and Methodists"—Methodism being described by Weber as the last revival of Puritanism—in England and North America as "intrusively pious members of society" and advises them to "(better) mind their own business" rather than intruding in other people's lives, following Hume. In Mill's framework, like their suppression of artistic freedom and faculty, their refusal to "mind their own business" through intrusion into that of other people is not accidental and unconnected to but part of the Calvinist system of "crushing out" all human capacities and actions, economic and non-economic, and of "abnegation" and control of humans. This Puritan tendency for intruding into people's private lives after the image of Bentham's *Panopticon* forms an extant source and rationale for the lack of respect, bequeathed from Puritanism, for privacy, individual liberty, and personal choice in England and North America up to Mill's lifetime and after, as Sombart, Scheler, and Pareto emphasize.

Lastly, like Hume, Mill (2001, 80) observes that Puritanism tends to establish by coercion a religious monopoly—the "only true" religion and church by law—thus theocracy (the "Christian Commonwealth") in England and North America, resting on the "principle of the pretension" and dictating that "all persons must be ready to conform" to this system. Mill thus implies that Puritan religious monopoly and theocracy, like their precursors, represent the all-encompassing and coercive form of the Calvinist system of "crushing out" all human capacities and actions, including economic ones, and "abnegation" and sacrifice of humans to the "alleged will of God" supposedly implemented in such a theocratic order. In short, just as Hume, he regards theocracy as destructive to all human faculties and activities, economic and non-economic, in particular capitalist and democratic.

Collective-Ideational Entities and Capitalism—A Broader Theoretical Problem Within the Weber Thesis

More broadly, the preceding discussion suggests that various scholars prior to (and during and after) the Weber Thesis have conceived in very different ways the association between a

collective-ideational entity, such as Calvinism or ascetic Protestantism in its varieties, and an economic system or performance, specifically capitalism or capitalist activity. These scholars operating with different aspects of that same entity, different causal pathways, and different auxiliary assumptions and observations reach different estimates of the "net balance of an aggregate of consequences" (Merton 1968, 105) of Calvinism for the evolution of capitalism. This is a variation of a more general historical-sociological problematic such as collective-ideational entities, as Weber's (1968, 14) "concepts of collective entities" suggest (also Stephen Vaisey 2007), and of the relations between their various constructions, as well as with the "same" entity of which they are descriptions, exemplifications or variations. These collective-ideational entities are of a religious and corresponding cultural type, for example, "Buddhism", "Christianity", "Confucianism", "Hinduism", "Islam", "Judaism", etc. or of social and ideological types like "communism", "conservatism", "liberalism", "nationalism", "rationalism", "socialism", and so on.

In Weber's and related economic-sociological frameworks, these religious-cultural collective-ideational entities in relation to capitalism and the economy generally comprise variants located on at least four levels of decreasing generality and scope. First, on the most general level and with the widest scope, they consist of the great world religions and cultures, including "Buddhism", "Christianity", "Confucianism", "Hinduism", "Islam", and "Judaism", and their underlying cultural values and civilizations in their different and even contradictory relations to capitalism and economy overall. In this context, Weber differentiates and sharply contrasts two broad types of religion and in that sense overarching collective-ideational entities: religions and cultures of passive adaptation and resignation or "mere accommodation" to the world; and those of the "mastery" or "domination" of the world. He classifies into the first type most world religions, especially Oriental ones, as well as traditional pre-Protestant Christianity like Catholicism among Occidental religions (together with the Eastern Christian Orthodox Church). In contrast, he incorporates into the second type solely ascetic Protestantism, specifically Calvinism, along with (curiously) Islam, thus only one of both Occidental and Oriental religions, respectively.

For illustration, Weber (1968, 594, 604) characterizes Confucianism as "a prudent accommodation" to the world and points to the "Confucian ethic of absolute accommodation" to the world, as he does almost other world religions. By contrast, he describes Islam and especially Calvinism by "an ascetic mastery of mundane affairs" and a "rationalism" oriented to it that is consistent with the shared "concept of a religious revolution" (Weber 1968, 596). In other words, Weber (1968, 596) notes that, as "a similar solution" to the problem of religion and politics as that of Islam, "radical Calvinism" aims to attain the "domination over the sinful world by religious virtuosi belonging to the 'pure' church" as the evident origin of Calvinist "Puritanism" in Anglo-American settings. The Oriental type of religion including Asiatic religions, for example, Hinduism, attempts only the "intellectual mastery of the world" as distinct from the practical mastery uniquely characterizing Calvinism, as well as Islam (Weber 1968, 553).

Notably, Weber postulates that religions of "mere accommodation" and thus corresponding cultural collective-ideational entities impede or retard the development of capitalism and economy overall. In stark contrast, he posits that religions of "ascetic mastery", more precisely only Calvinism (but not Islam), generate, enhance and reinforce the emergence and expansion of capitalism and economic activity more generally. Weber (1976, 27) undertakes a "causal evaluation" of these religions and cultural collective-ideational entities in relation to capitalism. He causally evaluates those "elements of the economic ethics" of Western religions distinguishing them from their non-Western counterparts, specifically Calvinism from that of the Oriental type of religion, as well as from those of Catholicism and

pre-Protestant Christianity as a whole (see also Parsons 1967).[8] In general, Weber infers from this evaluation that, due to its peculiar "economic ethics" differentiating it from both Oriental religions (including Islam seen as lacking such a Protestant work ethic despite its shared "ascetic mastery") and Catholicism practicing passive adaptation or concession to the world, only Calvinism and more broadly ascetic Protestantism has a "causal" consequence for or positive association with the development of capitalism (see also Gerard Delanty 2000).[9]

On a second level of lower generality/scope and as a corollary, Weber's religious-cultural collective-ideational entities involve branches of the Christian religion and culture in their differing and often opposite relations to the development of capitalism and economic performance overall. Specifically, Weber classifies Catholicism and pre-Protestant Christianity overall into the religions and cultures and to that extent collective-ideational entities of passive adaptation, resignation or concession, to the world, and Protestantism (above all, Calvinism), into those of "ascetic mastery" of the world (also, Parsons 1935). Notably, he ascertains from his "causal evaluation" of the relation between these entities and the evolution of capitalism that Catholicism is causally unrelated and even opposed to the latter, specifically the capitalist "spirit", just as are the other, Oriental religions and cultures of "mere accommodation" to the world. Thus, he identifies the "typical antipathy of Catholic ethics" to "every capitalistic tendency" because of the "repugnance of the impersonality of relations within a capitalistic economy" (Weber 1926, 357). Conversely, Weber concludes from such a "causal evaluation" that Protestantism causally associates strongly with the development of capitalism, forming a unique positive association with capitalist processes among religious collective-ideational entities consisting of Christianity and other major religions. Referring to Weber, Parsons (1935, 694) remarks that insofar as capitalism equals economic individualism, the "gulf" between the first and traditional Christian ethics is impossible to reconcile and that "accommodation" and "concession" by the second, such as "Catholic lay ethics", is the "only possible alternative to acute hostility and attempted suppression of capitalistic tendencies". In this regard, Parsons (1935, 690) comments that the "central core of Weber's thesis" is that ascetic Protestantism as more "rigorous and uncompromising" than Catholicism enforced intense psychological religious sanctions on a definite mode of activity, with their source consisting in the doctrine of predestination (as the central Protestant dogma) directing individuals' attitudes and activities in the direction of "systematic, rational mastery over the external environment" and endowing them with "a very special ethical intensity".

On a third level of further diminishing generality/scope and as another corollary, Weber's religious-cultural collective-ideational entities include various denominations of Protestantism as a peculiar Christian religion and culture in their specific, including sometimes different, relations to the development of capitalism and more broadly to economic activity and ethos. Generally, Weber differentiates ascetic and non-ascetic Protestantism, incorporating into the first Calvinism, including Puritanism and other Calvinist derivatives and sects, and into the second pre-Calvinist Protestantism like Lutheranism (as well as Anglicanism) regarded as closer to Catholicism in regard to the absence or weakness of asceticism. Accordingly, he implicitly considers Lutheranism a religion and thus collective-ideational entity of accommodation or concession to the world converging with Catholicism but diverging from Calvinism aiming at the "mastery" of the world (see also Parsons 1935). Most importantly,

[8] Parsons (1967, 61) implies such an association between collective-ideational entities and capitalism, or economy and society generally, stating that the "most striking feature of Weber's analysis is the demonstration of the extent to which the variations in socially sanctioned values and goals in secular life corresponded to the variations in the dominant religious philosophy of the great civilizations".

[9] Delanty (2000, 36) states that for Weber the "uniqueness of the West was that Christianity, particularly in its Calvinistic variant, involved a tension with the material world. In order to ensure salvation in the next world, Christianity, unlike the other religions of the world, requires an ethic of world mastery which is both intellectual and material".

Weber infers from his "causal evaluation" of the relation between religious collective-ideational entities and the advent of capitalism that Lutheranism at least in Germany is, almost like Catholicism in this and other countries, causally unrelated and to some extent even resistant, showing "antipathy", to the capitalist "spirit" and process. Thus, Weber (1926, 357) registers that Lutheran ethics shares the "typical antipathy" of Catholic ethics to "every capitalistic tendency" and for the same reason noted above. By contrast, Weber emphasizes based on this "causal evaluation" that Calvinism as an epitome of ascetic Protestantism and distinct from Lutheranism (and Anglicanism) is most strongly associated causally with the origin and expansion of capitalism, and thus creates the exclusive and strongest positive association with capitalist tendencies among religious collective-ideational entities involving Protestantism, Christianity and other major religions (see also Warren Scoville 1953).[10]

On a fourth and most specific level and with definite scope, Weber's religious-cultural collective-ideational entities include varieties of Calvinism as a special case of Protestantism in their concrete, not always identical, relations to the development of capitalism and to economy and society overall. In Weber's framework, its main varieties are in historical sequence the Huguenot movement as original Calvinism ("Calvin's sect") in France emerging during the 1530-40s, its spreading to and settling in Geneva with Calvin's 1536 exile, the Reformed Church in the Netherlands, Puritanism in England and North America, Presbyterianism in Scotland, as well as other Calvinist extensions in Europe, including Germany, and beyond. Crucially, in his "causal evaluation" of the above relation Weber suggests that among Calvinist varieties the French Huguenot movement and Anglo-American Puritanism primarily and most strongly were causally associated with the evolution of capitalism, creating the main and strongest positive association with capitalist processes among collective-ideational entities including Calvinism, Protestantism, Christianity and other major religions. For example, he emphasizes the "clear connection between the development of the capitalist 'spirit' in France and the Huguenot movement (i.e.) the significance of the Huguenots in France and their industrial connections" (Weber 2001, 35). In turn, Weber admits or implies in his "causal evaluation" that among these Calvinist varieties the Dutch Reformed Church and Scottish Presbyterianism just secondarily and weakly were causally associated, or even, as with the second, unrelated, with the development of capitalism; they largely failed to generate or promote modern capitalist industrial processes such as large-scale industry (as distinct from commerce and so merchant capitalism), to some degree in the Netherlands and especially Scotland (although as noted earlier, there was much large-scale industry in Scotland, at least from say the mid-nineteenth century) which he mostly ignores in his analysis despite being the most fully Calvinist-ruled country. This signifies that in Weber's framework, not all varieties of Calvinism as a specific collective-ideational (sub)entity within Protestantism are equally important causally for or show an identical association with the development of capitalism, such that the Huguenot movement and Puritanism are more strongly associated with the latter than other Calvinist variants, especially Scottish Presbyterianism (Cohen 1983; Albert Hyma 1938; Robertson 1933; Scoville 1952).[11]

[10] Echoing Weber, Scoville (1953, 435) cautions that the "mere fact that Calvinism differed in many ideological and practical ways from Anglicanism and Lutheranism, for example, would preclude identifying its effects on group and individual [economic] behaviour with the effects of Protestantism in the abstract".

[11] Hyma (1938, 330, 342) suggests that "Calvinism cannot possibly be held responsible for the rapid growth of capitalism in the Netherlands" and adds moreover that "Calvinism in the Netherlands retarded the development of capitalism". Scoville (1952, 397-398) observes that under Calvinism "Holland's economy, however, was primarily commercial rather than industrial (so) the most prosperous merchants and the wealthiest among the (French) Protestants fled to Holland". Further, Scoville (1952, 410) finds that, for example, in 1685 both England and Holland were somewhat "behind France industrially and commercially (as were more) Ireland and Germany (and) Switzerland". Robertson (1933, 87) observes that for long "Scotland was both Calvinist and poor" and "remained more

In sum, in Weber's context, religious and cultural collective-ideational entities in their relation to modern capitalism comprise in a descending comprehensive and narrowing scope, first, major world religions and cultures, second, the Christian religion and culture, third, Protestantism, and fourth Calvinism. And of these entities solely Calvinism—and within it primarily the French Huguenot movement and Anglo-American Puritanism—turns out to be of critical causal consequence for or has a strong positive association with the origin and development of capitalism in Weber's context.

Conclusion

It appears as if it would be perhaps the "best" for the Weber Thesis if neither positive nor negative precedents existed so that both its originality and theoretical-empirical validity would remain intact—i.e., presumably high—but they do, as this article has shown. In other words, it would be "optimal" for this thesis if there were neither accounts of the relation between Calvinism and the development of modern capitalism that do consider Calvinism as a crucial factor of modern capitalist development nor those that do not before Weber. The second "best" is that no such accounts exist, because in their absence the Weber Thesis would appear novel, even if contradicted by its negative precedents. In turn, if no negative precedents existed, this would make it a proxy truism, common knowledge, and in that sense "nothing new under the sun" of sociology, economics, and history. The presence of both positive and negative precedents thereby indicates that the Weber Thesis seemingly overstates its novelty and/or its theoretical relevance and historical-empirical validity.

To do justice to Weber, he normally does not overstate either of these elements. First, he does not consider the Weber Thesis of the positive linkage ("connection", "inner relationship", "elective affinity", "strong congruence") between Calvinism as the independent variable and capitalism as the dependent completely new and original, by acknowledging Petty and Montesquieu as the antecedents, and instead mostly seeks to codify, condense, or restate it. On this account, Weber might not object to the designation of this theory as a "re-discovery" relative to those—i.e., pre-discoveries—of his acknowledged precursors, as well as those unacknowledged, including Say, Comte, and Marx. Further, in view of these precedents he might not be too much disturbed if it were designated as "nothing new under the sun" but an "old" theory.

Second, Weber does not normally claim that his Calvinist Thesis provides the sole explanation, that is, that Calvinism represents the only social factor, of the origin of the spirit and enterprise of modern capitalism, but being one among others, except in the heat of fierce polemical debates especially with Rachfahl (1909). Rather, he explains capitalism's formation and expansion by a multiplicity of necessary and complementary social factors. Recall they comprise "rational capital accounting" as the "most general presupposition" involving private "appropriation of all physical means of production", then "freedom of the market", "rational technology", particularly "mechanization", "calculable law" and "administration" (bureaucracy), "free labor", the "commercialization of economic life", including "speculation", as he expounds them in his posthumous works *Economy and Society* and *General Economic History*. On this account, the Weber Thesis in the sense of hypothesizing that Calvinism is a special religious factor, forms approximately half of the equation/explanation of the development of capitalism, the other half being these non-religious social factors. One can consider this a mature, full or relaxed version of the Weber Thesis.

Lastly, Weber's admitting that he was not the first to suggest a link between Calvinist Protestantism and capitalism is not the only possible or even most plausible interpretation. For

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feudalised, less affected by the growth of the new state-system than most countries of Western Europe". Cohen (1983, 624) points to "Presbyterian Scotland's lack of economic development".

example, in the 1920 edition of the essay, Weber (1976, 26) states that the most difficult side of the problem of religion-economy relations is to explain or comprehend the "influence of certain religious ideas on the development of an economic spirit, on the ethos of an economic system", specifically the "connection of the spirit of modern economic life with the rational ethics of ascetic Protestantism", namely the relationship between the spirit of capitalism and Calvinism. He adds that what is new is not maintaining the "existence of this relationship" but the "quite unfounded denial of it. Our task here is to explain the relation" (Weber 1976, 191). Specifically, he proposes that the origin of capitalism is what actually requires an explanation by explaining how it originated "somewhere as a way of life common to whole groups of people" (Weber 1976, 55). In this sense, Weber proposes a genetic mode of explanation of the above relation—the genesis of capitalism in relation to early Calvinism as a specific religious collective-ideational entity or construct within larger entities of this type like Protestantism, Christianity and the other world religions and sociocultural systems, as stated before (see also Parsons 1935; Scheler 1964). To that extent, Weber focuses on modes of explanation and on genetically connecting, as elaborated earlier, a concrete religious collective-ideational construct like Calvinism within Protestantism and Christianity with the birth and growth of modern capitalism, or with a particular mode of conduct (or "ethos") becoming decisive to the emergence and functioning of the capitalist type of economy.

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