

C.I.d.9

INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DE SOCIOLOGIE

Volume 4

Number 1

March 1989

- FUTING LIAO
Positive Alienation and its Reflection in Taoist Thought
- ZSUZSA HEGEDUS
Social Movements and Social Change in Self-Creative Society: New Civil Initiatives in the International Arena
- UTA MEIER
Equality without Limits? Women's Work in the Socialist Society of the German Democratic Republic
- GINA ZABLUDOVSKY
The Reception and Utility of Max Weber's Concept of Patrimonialism in Latin America
- P.R. BOREHAM, S.R. CLEGG, J.M. EMMISON, G.N. MARKS and J.S. WESTERN
Semi-Peripheries or Particular Pathways: The Case of Australia, New Zealand and Canada as Class Formations
- ISHAQ Y. AL-QUTUB
Refugee Camp Cities in the Middle East: A Challenge for Urban Development Policies

Résumés

International Sociology

Journal of the International Sociological Association
Association Internationale de Sociologie

Volume 4 1989

Editor

Martin Albrow

University of Wales College of Cardiff

 **SAGE Publications**

International Sociology

Journal of the International Sociological Association
Association Internationale de Sociologie

Volume 4 Number 1 1989

March 1989

Contents

Articles

- FUTING LIAO. Positive Alienation and its
Reflection in Taoist Thought 5
- ZSUZSA HEGEDUS. Social Movements and Social
Change in Self-Creative Society: New Civil
Initiatives in the International Arena 19
- UTA MEIER. Equality without Limits? Women's Work in the
Socialist Society of the German Democratic Republic 37
- GINA ZABLUDOVSKY. The Reception and Utility of
Max Weber's Concept of Patrimonialism in Latin America 51
- P.R. BOREHAM, S.R. CLEGG, J.M. EMMISON, G.N. MARKS
and J.S. WESTERN. Semi-Peripheries or Particular
Pathways: The Case of Australia, New Zealand and
Canada as Class Formations 67
- ISHAQ Y. AL-QUTUB. Refugee Camp Cities in the
Middle East: A Challenge for Urban Development Policies 91
- Résumés 109

THE RECEPTION AND UTILITY OF MAX WEBER'S CONCEPT OF PATRIMONIALISM IN LATIN AMERICA*

Gina Zabłudovsky

Abstract The purpose of this article is to examine the validity of Max Weber's theory of domination as applied to Latin America and its social and political structures.

The article concentrates on the advantages and risks involved when using the concept of patrimonialism to explain the authoritarian regimes of Latin American societies. To do this, the author examines how this concept has been applied for the study of the political organisation in different countries during various periods of time: the colonial era, the nineteenth century and contemporary societies.

Focused on terminological analysis, the paper shows the conceptual problems of classical sociological theory when used for the study of social realities that were not at all central preoccupations for the original European writers. The author points out two main causes for the ambiguities and multiple meanings of concepts 1) the partial and fragmented reception of Weberian sociology in Latin America and 2) certain confusion already present in Weber's studies.

The present paper will examine how certain aspects of Max Weber's political sociology have been received in Latin America, specifically how the Weberian concept of patrimonialism has been used to analyse the peculiarities of the exercise of domination in some of these countries, particularly in Mexico. This focus will permit me to restrict the scope of the theme and also to encourage reflection on the advisability of utilising categories and concepts of classical sociological theory in the study of realities for which they were not originally conceived. However, prior to going into that particular problem, I should like to briefly discuss Weber's conceptualisation.

Let us keep in mind that Weber's main concern was to understand leadership and bureaucratisation in the nascent society of the masses. From this viewpoint he developed a typology of domination in which rational bureaucratic authority can only be understood by comparing it with both charismatic leadership and traditional authority. Traditional political structures may be categorised within two sub-types:

1. the stereotyped or feudal sub-type (patrimonialism of a rigid status system) in which social positions and status are inherited, and
2. the arbitrary sub-type (pure or patriarchal patrimonialism) in which the lord delegates the tasks of governing to his favourite officials.

While the first sub-type is characteristic of the occidental development, the second is typical of the oriental countries.¹

The oriental sovereign's military power and body of officials differ greatly from those of the Western counterpart. In occidental feudalism, with the increasing importance of the nobility's hereditary positions, the prince's power (especially political power) disintegrated, while in the East, where the positions

*This paper was presented at the conference of the Research Committee of the History of Sociology in Madrid in May 1988.

of nobility were not hereditary, the discretion of the lord predominated.

Since a complete treatment of the subject of traditional domination in Weber is beyond the scope of this paper, I will not give a detailed description of the respective sub-types at this time. Nevertheless, the following table summarises some of the basic characteristics of patrimonialism as compared with feudalism.

In contrast to occidental bureaucratic development, substantive rationality predominates in patriarchal and theocratic power. Formal justice is opposed to all forms of authoritarian power because it tends to lessen the people's dependence on the arbitrary decisions of the authorities.

The centralisation of decisions in the patrimonial prince favours whatever best satisfies his practical, utilitarian and ethical requirements and interests. Thus, although in despotic regimes real power does present a bureaucratic structure, which in itself could be a favourable factor for capitalist development, the pre-eminence of substantive rationality and subordination to the sacredness of tradition and the ruler's discretion impede it. The economic, political, religious and legal structures of the patrimonial type of domination impede the process of rationalisation and the accompanying calculability which characterise modern society.

The centralism of the patrimonial state, the subordination of society to state criteria and the subsequent political and economic weakness of the different sectors preclude the development of a modern and autonomous capitalist system. It is precisely this concern with modernisation which led Latin American scholars to reconsider patrimonialism to explain some of the key reasons why our region, like the Orient, has not developed on the same lines as Europe and the United States.

The main emphasis of this paper will be an analysis of the way in which this Weberian conceptualisation has been used to analyse different historical periods in Latin American history: the colonial period, the post-independence period and the twentieth century.

Patrimonialism during the colonial period

The concept of patrimonialism is used by some scholars in an attempt to explain the political domination which prevailed in Nueva España during the three centuries of the colonial period.

In an article on this subject, Enrique Florescano and Isabel Gil indicate that, due to the patrimonial character of the Spanish state, the vice-royalty was considered the private patrimony of the Kings of Castille and the viceroy was a delegate who governed in the name of the ruling king. In this context they state:

The reward for services through the granting of prebends and the bequeathing of privileges, one of the typical features of the traditional forms of domination designed as *patrimonialism* took deep root in Nueva España and created extraordinarily differentiated social groups. Thus, instead of a process which rendered all citizens equal before the law and the bureaucratic state, the Hapsburgs promoted a differentiation of ranks in society. Each of the major ethnic groups – Indians, Spaniards, Blacks and Castes – was protected...

(Florescano and Sánchez 1976: 202)

TABLE 1
The Ideal Type of Patrimonialism

	Oriental Patrimonialism	Occidental Feudalism
1. Motives of social action, power bases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Piety. - Personal submission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Honour and fidelity. - Personal ties. - Social prestige. - Community sentiment.
2. Legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traditional veneration of the Lord. - Providential state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traditional norms.
3. Execution of power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Domination of the masses by an individual. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Domination of a small group based on capacity to bear arms.
4. Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The functionaries are the King's favourites. - Strong central administrative organization. - Absence of professional specialization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction to a minimum of functionary needs. - Stereotyping and monopolization of duties. - Hereditary right to honorary jobs.
5. Military power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Prince is supported by non-owner masses: professional officials who act as military functionaries. - Soldiers on permanent service receiving orders from the central power. - Planning and organization of the army. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feudal Knights. - Heroic and individual combat (without discipline of the masses). - Noblemen's army. - Military honour is a privilege of knight's status. - Occasional military campaigns.
6. Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Favours granted that allow exploitation to develop fortunes. - Monopolies of the property of the Prince. - Commerce - Hydraulic installations for the development of agriculture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribution and partition of goods to individuals. - Privileges to private capital. - Poor commercial development.

7. Properties and payments	– Life-time non-hereditary payments (in form of 'loans').	– Personal possession of land as an individual right.
8. Rights	– The privileged ones are the King's favourites.	– Subjective privileges and obligations.
9. Honour	– The honour of the functionaries rests in their services: bureaucratic utilitarianism.	– Honour is founded on the individual existence.
10. Education	– Education for the purposes of a bureaucratic administration.	– Educational community. – Aristocratic education. The main objective is to strengthen self-esteem. – Social group of 'cultivated Knights' or noblemen.
11. Factors that favour development of capitalism	– Bureaucratic administration, body of functionaries.	– The character of the legal order.
12. Obstacles to the development of capitalism.	– Non-formal rationality. – Tradition. – Arbitrariness (free and uncontrolled will and pleasure of the Leader).	– Tradition. – Feudal division of land.

Therefore, the term patrimonialism can be used to contrast the power structure of the society of Nueva España with other bureaucratic societies with rational laws.

The preceding quotation associated patrimonialism with a rigid status system. This meaning, however, is not consistently maintained. In the same article the historians stress the differences between patrimonialism and any social order of rigid ranks. As in the majority of Weber's writings on this subject these authors emphasise the contrast with feudal nobility when referring to the 'non-inheritable' nature of patrimonialism. Again I quote:

The Crown took care to assure – and this is typical of patrimonialism but not of systems based on rigid social ranks – that public offices were not hereditary and that the administrators did not appropriate the administrative positions for themselves.

(Florescano and Sánchez 1976: 203)

In the studies carried out by Mexican authors applying the concept of patrimonialism during the colonial period, there are frequent references to Richard Morse's article 'The Heritage of Latin America' (1964). In this essay, Morse analyses the development of Latin America from a Weberian

perspective which leads him to emphasise the differences between the Protestant Anglo-Saxon and the Catholic societies of the 'New World'.

The concept of patrimonialism in Morse's writing, unlike the texts of many other authors, is not ambiguous. The term always refers to and is limited by one of the forms of traditional non-feudal domination and therefore patrimonialism is distant from any hereditary stratification system.

After synthesising some characteristics of traditional domination and the patrimonialistic sub-type in Weber, Morse indicates that the Weberian typology of the patrimonial states is an astonishingly exact description of the logic of the Spanish Empire in America.

The *conquistadores* were the bearers of colonial power. They conceived of state administration as a combination of tributes, official positions, grants and honours which were a patrimony of the Crown, although they were legitimately managed by local authorities.

From this perspective, the manifestations of discontent which took shape in the Spanish Empire prior to the fall of Fernando VII (in 1808) may be considered within the framework of the patrimonial state. Morse considers that the insurrections² which occurred in colonial times did not affect the bases of colonial society and its ultimate authority because they were not through charismatic revolutions. Based on the theory of Max Weber, Morse considers that charisma is an expression of revolutionary change and states that the only movements capable of affecting patrimonial power are those arising from the personal ambition of a leader.

Some essayists and poets outside the strictly sociological field have also characterised Nueva España as a structure of patrimonial domination. In his book *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz o Las Trampas de la Fe* (1982), Octavio Paz states that the nature of the administrative structures of Nueva España clearly corresponded to the patrimonial régime defined by Max Weber as one of the forms of traditional domination.

Among the characteristics of the patrimonial régime in Nueva España, the following are the most significant: a professional army in which positions of high command were denied to those born in the country; the special type of education provided to the members of the clergy and bureaucracy; and the struggle between the central power and local authorities with the respective conflicts between the native-born Spaniards and those of pure Spanish descent born in the new continent, known as Creoles. Therefore, from this perspective, the disputes between Spaniards and Creoles which began immediately after the Conquest, are a natural consequence of Spanish patrimonialism (Paz 1982: 36-9).

In the same book, Paz explains certain characteristics of the society of Nueva España by using conceptualisations that belong to other theoretical perspectives which have also analysed non-European societies. This is the case of the Marxist concept of the Asiatic mode of production. The author considers that this concept is also appropriate for the analysis of some of the typical institutions of Nueva España, which, as we have seen, have also been characterised as patrimonialistic, such as the *encomienda*,³ the organisation through corporations and the centralisation of power (Paz 1982: 34-5).

Some specialists in economic history have also emphasised the so-called 'oriental' character of Spanish Colonial America. In his study entitled *Historia del Capitalismo en México* (1973), Enrique Semo uses the term oriental or 'tributary despotism' – instead of patrimonialism or Asiatic mode of production – to refer to some aspects of the economic and political organisation existing both in the mother country and her colonies.⁴

Semo explains how the Spanish Crown was upheld by the Church and a powerful royal bureaucracy. These two solid pillars allowed the exercise of a type of independent state power which can only be observed elsewhere in those oriental states with absolute monarchs.⁵ However, even though some authors mark the importance of bureaucracy in the Hispanic colonial world, not all characterise it as a regime similar to oriental despotism and/or patrimonialism.

In his article, 'Burocracia y Corrupción en Hispanoamérica Colonial' (1984), Horst Pietschmann states that this public administration is modelled, in general, in line with the requirements of the modern state which was then coming into being. The absence of feudal institutions allowed the new system of government to exist 'in its pure form' in Latin America.

The administrative organisation was ruled by a legislation which regulated the power granted to officials in an attempt to prevent abuses. In this way – both in Spain itself and in the Colonies – the ethics of government administration were based on the ideal of an impartial, incorruptible official completely dedicated to the well-being of the Crown and the people. Evidently, if we adhere to the Weberian thesis, these attributes correspond more to the legal type of domination than to patrimonialism.

In this respect, Pietschmann says the following:

Considering ... the legislative efforts to assure the functionality of the administrative system and compliance with the laws, as well as the attempt made to legally regulate the most varied aspects of the political, social, economic and even cultural life, it is possible to conclude – according to Max Weber – that state policy ... endeavoured to establish a state very similar to the rational-legal type.

(Pietschmann 1984: 64)

Patrimonialism today

I have shown how some authors use the term patrimonialism in their analysis of the colonial society of Latin America. However, the application of this concept is not exhausted in the explanation of this period of our history.

In the article previously cited, Morse (1964) explains how the newly formed Latin American republics of the nineteenth century were a product of both the traditional heritage of the Spanish state and the imperatives of the modern industrial world.

Despite the influence of Anglo-French constitutionalism, the newly independent regimes recreated some structures of the patrimonial state. This combination provided the necessary political stability, while also satisfying the demands of the nineteenth century on a group of republics which had only recently rejected the absolutist regimes (Morse 1964: 163–6).

In the wake of the collapse of monarchic authority, strong charismatic leadership also developed. In addition to their personal abilities, these leaders raised the standard of a combination of native traditions and the nationalism and constitutionalism characteristic of the age.

The concept of patrimonialism is also valid for explaining certain characteristics of contemporary societies. In Latin America, in many cases, the daily exercise of the law has a patrimonial character, since the manner in which it is applied is not based on jurisprudence itself but on the personal criteria of the government official executing it. Frequently the modifications made to laws are not subject to any popular referendum or legislative body but depend solely on the discretion of the person in power.

Morse continually adapts his interpretation to a Weberian perspective, stating that, in South America, charisma commonly becomes routinised and gravitates toward a patrimonial state. The resulting political problem is how to reconcile the static structure of the patrimonial state (traditional domination) with the dynamics of the modern industrialised world (rational domination). The author cautions that this is a question of adaptation and should not be interpreted as an attempt to have one type of domination displace another nor, on the other hand, does this involve a problem of development.

In addition to these interpretations, in general terms for a large part of this century, the social sciences in Latin America were under the sway of modernisation theory.

The question of patrimonialism was long used only in relation to its traditional character, so that Latin American societies were considered 'traditional societies' in the process of transition towards being modern societies. This was the source of the contrast in the expression 'traditionalism-modernisation' which was so popular in the social sciences in Latin America during the 1960s, when interest was centred on the obstacles impeding the consolidation of the modernisation process.⁶

However, not all studies favour this aspect of the problem. Some researchers consider that the classification of patrimonialism as a sub-type of traditional domination (a continuity of customs, beliefs in traditions, etc.) is not so relevant. In contrast, their emphasis with respect to Latin America is on the patrimonial characteristics of the instruments of sovereign power, the evolution of the bureaucratic mechanism, the structure of officialdom, etc.

This type of interpretation characterises some of the studies conducted in the 1970s. The rise of the totalitarian régimes in Latin America (particularly in Brazil, Argentina and Peru) and the 'discovery' that 'behind the façade' facMexico has an authoritarian régime (Malloy et al. 1977: 3) has led those who study our reality to search for new concepts and make use of 'classical terms' of sociology and political science to explain our particular situation.

In this sense, the essays on Brazil written by Vamire Chacón (1977) and Simon Schwartzman (1977) are significant. Returning to Weberian terminology, the authors analyse the problem of semi-modern and underdeveloped régimes in terms of a continuum between patrimonialism and bureaucracy, more than in relation to traditional and old patterns of conduct.

Patrimonial bureaucratisation, in which society is dominated by the state, is characterised by the lack of unity and passivity of the masses, government centralisation, the semi-disguised despotism of the chief executive, the regional distribution of the centres of decision and the gulf between the legal system and the daily exercise of power.

The studies which emphasise these characteristics frequently link the concept of patrimonialism with that of corporatism which, according to some authors, is valid since contemporary corporatist systems occur in societies having strong centralised governmental structures of the patrimonial bureaucracy type which make use of its corporatist relations to obtain sustenance by exploiting state property as its private patrimony. Chacón states that Weber himself considered that the corporatist model tends to exclude the majority of the population from the process of political decisions (1977: 52).

Nevertheless, although in historical reality corporatism and patrimonialism are frequently found together, other Brazilian authors, such as Schwartzman, expressed the necessity of differentiating between the two concepts. Corporatism refers to the mode of political participation, to the form in which social groups organise and interrelate among themselves and with the state. (Schwartzman indicates that in political sociology this concept may be considered as the same type as the term 'interest group'.) On the other hand, the concept of patrimonialism – or others, such as as bureaucratic centralism – refer to the form in which power is exercised in and distributed throughout society. (Some other concepts of the same type are feudalism, plutocracy, etc.) (Schwartzman 1977: 91–3). As applied to modern Mexico, the patrimonialistic character of the present régime⁷ is fundamentally explained by the concentration of power in the executive branch. Lorenzo Meyer states the following in this respect:

... those who have examined the functioning of the Mexican political system from 1940 on, agree that all the channels of information converge in the chief executive and all important decisions emanate from him; in other words, he is the nervous system and indisputable center of Mexican politics. The form which the interaction between the president, his collaborators and the rest of the political actors took was almost patrimonial.

(Meyer 1976: 243)

When sustaining specific social policies, the paternalism of the Mexican government leads it to present itself as guardian of the people.⁸

The political structure of the country can also be considered patrimonialistic in so far as the different groups – workers, peasants, labour unions, professional associations, etc. – are related principally through the hierarchical administrative organisation of the central government (there is seldom a 'horizontal' relation among the different groups).

Most regional and state conflicts usually require some type of presidential intervention in order to be solved. In this respect, and keeping in mind Weber's typology of domination, Morse states that the only way to overcome this situation is by the presence of a local charismatic political boss, or *caudillo*, capable of counterbalancing the central authority (Morse 1964: 170).

Another point which has been analysed, using the Weberian term of patrimonialism, is the corruption of government officials as an inherent characteristic of a political system.

From a similar perspective to that of Pietschmann in his study of the colonial period (1984), Gabriel Zaid suggests that corruption in Mexico 'persists despite the new ideals of administrative rationality' (Zaid 1979: 185). To this degree, corruption can be seen as a patrimonialistic residue which comes to the fore despite the imposition of bureaucratic rationality.

Like Schwartzman, Zaid considers that there is a link between patrimonialism and bureaucracy:

...patrimonialism (the private ownership of public functions) can be modernised by eliminating all that is private and personal in official power (which is the bureaucratic ideal).

(Zaid 1979: 185)

Ironically, the author proposes that the prevalence of the *mordida*, or bribe, could be considered as the 'private patrimonialism of an official or a ruling family whose source of wealth is, temporarily, none other than the public treasury itself'. As Weber indicates:

The patrimonial state makes it possible for the entire sphere of favors granted by the sovereign to be converted into a source of exploitation for the formation of fortunes and an open pathway for the enrichment of the sovereign himself, his court officials, favorites, governors, mandarins, tax collectors and peddlers of favors of all kinds, great merchants and capitalists....

(Weber 1974: 837)

In Mexico in recent years the term patrimonialism has no longer been confined only to academic circles but is now used in government speeches. When referring to the projected political modernisation of the country, the representatives of the president speak out in favour of strengthening a nationalism which will be able to abandon patrimonialistic attitudes and replace them with the efficiency required for a modern non-authoritarian political rationality (Camacho 1983).⁹

In fact since the presidential period of Miguel de la Madrid, some members of the cabinet have been considered as representatives of a new technocracy¹⁰ which is replacing the old ministers and officials. However, rhetoric aside, the process is difficult precisely because it frequently goes against the self-interest of those who apparently promote it. For, despite their specialised professional studies, their economic projects and their speeches, in reality what has come into existence is a patrimonial techno-bureaucracy which continues to exercise its administrative function by defending the privileges it has obtained through the centralisation and authoritarianism of the system.¹¹

In practice, in many cases the constitutional rational legality is in constant opposition to the daily exercise of power.¹² Although the traditional bureaucratic element has been replaced by the modern form of technocracy, the questions of political control continue to be handled within patrimonial logic. On this basis, the Weberian conceptualisation is still useful in emphasising the existing contradiction between an extremely complex and punctilious legalism,

which supposedly regulates the bureaucracy and the actual functioning of the government administration that is determined in large part by kinship, friendship, bribes and political affiliation (Solari et al. 1976: 282-5; Chacón 1977).

The usage of the concept of patrimonialism and the reception of the writings of Max Weber in Latin America

The way in which the Weberian concept of patrimonialism has been used for the analysis of our political reality shows the peculiar evolution of the social sciences in Latin America. The preceding summary of the relevant literature led me to reflect on some of the problems which arise when referring to classical European sociological theories for the study of a social reality remote from the essential concerns of the original writers.

Latin America has had no specific position in the models which have been definitive in the development of social and political theory. This is the case of the long-standing opposition between the East and West, as two geo-political entities which actually sustain each other. Although the basic function of this contrast has been to explain the European process through a series of notions which identify 'we Europeans' as opposed to all outsiders (Said 1979), this distinction has also been useful in the analysis of the regional and temporal characteristics of a series of countries and situations from which, however, Latin Americans have generally been excluded.

The lack of theoretical propositions specifically conceived for the analysis of Latin America within the classical sociological tradition explains why some researchers make use of concepts related to the Orient to analyse our societies, emphasising those attributes which are absent in our cultures when compared to models of political life in Europe and the United States. Some conceptualisations, such as the Asiatic mode of production, tributary despotism and patrimonialism have been especially relevant in this sense.

This paper has summarised some of the writings in which the Weberian conception of patrimonialism has been appropriately applied to explain certain aspects of domination in Latin America. Among the most important of these aspects are the concentration of power in the chief executive and the resulting presidentialism, the lack of true regional and local autonomy, the absorption of the opposition by the political leadership and the problem of corruption as an inherent characteristic of the political system.

Nevertheless, it is also important to consider some weaknesses of most of these studies in their attempts to use and update this terminology. There is no clear demarcation of the historical periods in which the concept of patrimonialism is most applicable. Thus, there is no indication on whether it is useful to emphasise the characteristics present over the entire history of Latin America or if, on the contrary, it is only valid to use the term for the study of certain specific periods.

In general, the different studies lack the conceptual clarity which has characterised Weberian political sociology as it has been received in Latin America. This can be explained, however, by the fact that only some of the

works of the German sociologist were translated and disseminated.

For over forty years, the only writings on the political sociology of Weber known in our countries were those compiled in the book *Economy and Society* (translated in Mexico by the Fondo de Cultura Económica in 1944, which is before it was translated into English). The two lectures 'Politics as a Vocation' and 'Science as a Vocation' were not translated until 1967, and then they were read under the influence of Parsonian thought and the defence of the supposedly apolitical position of academic thought (Aguilar 1984: 51).

Other political writings such as 'Parliament and Government in the New German Order', the article entitled 'Socialism' and the works on Russia have only recently begun to be widely available (in Folios Editores, Mexico, 1982) and with the exception of the *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1981), we have not had easy access to Weber's sociological writings on religion.

The lack of a global perspective of the work of Max Weber is one of the causes which, from our point of view, explains the ambiguities of the treatment of the problems analysed in this paper. The resulting vagueness and deficiencies are manifested in several ways:

1. Some authors do not consider the methodological-theoretical conceptions of Max Weber, and consequently lose sight of the fact that the forms of domination must be conceived as ideal types, with the respective differentiation between sociology and social reality.
2. In their use of the concept of patrimonialism, most scholars have limited themselves to the readings contained in *Economy and Society*. Although it is true that this is the text which most fully systematises and develops the types of domination, by not consulting other sources, the writers have missed the diagnoses contained in some studies of historical patrimonialistic régimes. The analysis of China in Max Weber's sociology of religion is especially important in this respect.
3. The writers' lack of knowledge of other political writings results in their losing sight of the fact that the fundamental concern of Weber is the problem of leadership in the incipient mass society and this perspective becomes essential for the interpretation of other types of domination. In the conceptualisation of patrimonialism, Weber reveals his own fears of the threat of uncontrolled bureaucratic domination. Concerned with the similarities of bureaucratic organisations, which permit few outlets for the possibilities of creativity, individual expression and personal leadership, Weber suggests that the dangers of modern bureaucracy are already evident in the organisation of power in Asiatic states.
4. Despite the great impulse given to the diffusion of Weber's work in recent years, the reading of his writings has been greatly influenced by an interpretation which accentuates the differences between those of his works classified as political texts and those as sociological writings. The Spanish translation of David Beetham's book *Max Weber and Modern Politics* (edited in Madrid in 1979) had influenced Mexican scholars years before

many of Weber's original articles were available. Although Beetham's position is actually based on the same objective differences between the various texts, I consider that the uncritical reception given to Beetham's book has promoted a sharp demarcation – which, far from breaking with the Parsonian proposal, continues to rigidly classify *Economy and Society* – into a supposed sociology of order in which, in contrast with other more controversial writings, politics are examined within a very narrow scope.

One of the consequences of this type of reading is the limited importance given to political conflicts in the interpretation of the different types of domination.

I consider that, on the contrary, social antagonisms are fundamental in the conceptualisation of Weberian domination. It is precisely through the analysis of patrimonialism that we may note the importance of political struggles and social change in the analyses of the author. Unlike other classical writers of social theory (Montesquieu, Marx, etc.), Weber does not conceive of the Orient as a static and immutable reality, but as a dynamic and relatively unstable order. Nevertheless, if this is true, then one must keep in mind that patrimonialism is unstable in comparison to modern bureaucracy but not at all in relation to charismatic domination.

The continual struggles for power are evident on the regional political level as constant confrontations between the central leadership and local forces and between city and village interests. Within the bureaucratic apparatus, the favourite loyal officers of the king are usually rivals of those who attempt to feudalise their own positions. But the struggle also exists on other levels: between those subjects totally dependent on the king and those who have a degree of economic autonomy and between the lords of the different patrimonial dominions.

Nevertheless, despite the validity of the preceding points, it would be unfair to attribute all the conceptual confusions noted in the texts analysed to a biased reading of the work of Max Weber. On the contrary (although here my German colleagues can tell me if I am correct or if it is only a question of mistranslation), I consider that certain ambiguities are already present in the original work itself. The following are some of the most important in relation to the present theme.

1. The concept of patrimonialism is used under at least three different definitions. In general terms – as developed in our table – we can state that Weber considers patrimonialism as a sub-type of traditional domination, different from and opposed to feudalism to the degree that one is characteristic of the East and the other of the West.

Nevertheless, at times the concept of patrimonialism is used with a broader meaning considering both feudalism (patrimonialism with a rigid status system) and 'pure patrimonialism' (or patriarchal patrimonialism) as sub-types of patrimonial domination. Thus understood, classical Western feudalism is a decentralised variation of patrimonialism and the latter is not conceived as a sub-type, but rather as a synonym for traditional domination.¹³

In addition to these two meanings, which are used indiscriminately in different sections of the book *Economy and Society*, in his studies on religion (China and India), Weber uses the term patrimonialism in a third meaning. When characterising post-feudal régimes, patrimonialism is conceived as the form of state political organisation which permits the triumph of an authoritarian administration over the different local powers (Weber 1968: 52-03). In this sense, despite the great differences between the spirit of bureaucratic work in the East and West, in both cases the patrimonial bureaucracy is constituted as a centralised nucleus linked to the formation of the state.

2. The relation between the forces of tradition and the discretion of the monarch are two basic components of traditional domination. Traditional domination is exercised by virtue of the sacredness of traditional and lordly powers – the grace and discretion of the leader. Therefore, when referring to the bases of traditional authority, one can make use of the polar expression: tradition–discretion.

Nevertheless, Weber's attitude to tradition seems to oscillate between two different positions:

- A. Tradition 'in the service of' the power of the monarch. In this sense, tradition is a community consensus based on the conviction that princely power exercised in a traditional manner is the lord's right.
- B. Tradition as a restriction to the authority of the monarch in his capacity to use force to impose his own decisions. Thus understood, traditional strengths tend to weaken the power of the lord. This is characteristic of the traditional sib organisations in China and India.

In addition to this multiplicity of meanings for a single terminology, there are other problems in the work of Max Weber which have received varying interpretations, such as the case we all know, of rationality and rationalisation. With respect to our theme, this would be related to the supposed pre-eminence of substantive rationalisation over formal rationalisation in patrimonialism.

The Weberian treatment of these and other themes greatly exceeds the objective of the present study. However, I consider that Weber's relative lack of precision is justified – up to a point – since he does not intend to reduce the infinite diversity of reality to a simple model but only to create some points of conceptual orientation which can be used for specific purposes.

On the one hand, Weber's antinomies bestow a controversial character to his work and enrich the interpretative possibilities by allowing varying readings. On the other hand, it would be worthwhile to inquire up to what point Weber himself is 'responsible' for the ambiguities we find in some authors who attempt to use his concepts to analyse concrete situations.

Finally, and to evaluate whether it is appropriate to use Weberian concepts in the analysis of Latin American societies, it would be necessary to make a more consistent effort to operationalise the variables in such a way as to close the gap between the theoretical model and the historical-social reality. In this respect, I would like to conclude this work with Fernando Cardoso's warning when referring to Latin American social sciences, that ideal-typical concepts

should not be received uncritically, to then become arbitrary procedures which substitute for the analytical work required by empirical sociology (Cardoso 1977).

Notes

1. As we know, the East-West opposition is present in a large part of the work of Max Weber, particularly in his writings on the sociology of religion. However, due to the limitations of the present work, I concentrate only on the contrast developed in the sociology of domination.

2. According to Morse the three types of insurrection in Nueva España were: the mutinies of the original '*conquistadores*', the uprisings due to questions of race and caste, and the protest movements of the creoles.

3. Other authors like Richard Morse consider the '*encomienda*' as a type of ownership characteristic of patrimonialism. The '*encomienda*' or trusteeship – one of the main organisations during the colonial period – was a restricted grant since the '*encomendero*' or trustee who was granted the right to work the land, had only limited rights for obtaining possessions. Unlike other forms of acquisition, the '*encomienda*' did not involve permanent ownership of the land but was a favour granted by the Crown, not by local authorities. (One must keep in mind, however, that the representatives and governors of Peru had been delegated this authority more than had those of Nueva España.) (Morse 1964: 148). Morse also explains the differences between the *encomienda*, the *hacienda* and the plantation in Spanish America. *Haciendas* began to be formed in the sixteenth century in Mexico but did not acquire their most characteristic form until the nineteenth century. Unlike the '*encomienda*', in the case of the institution of the *hacienda* the owner held the title to the land, the Indian workers were bound to the *hacienda* through a type of peonage and under the jurisdiction of the '*hacendado*' without there being any type of tutelage from the state. The author places the *hacienda* as an intermediate institution between the *encomienda* and the capitalist plantation (Morse 1964: 148–9; see also Gibson 1966).

4. However, it is necessary to keep in mind that Semo indicates that there are three definite types of production which are, in addition to tributary despotism, feudalism and embryonic capitalism (Semo 1973: 15).

5. Semo explains how these strong relations between the Catholic Church and the Spanish Crown began with the struggle against Islam. The lands seized from the Moors during the reconquest were distributed among the feudal lords, but the political power and administration always remained with the Crown. With the consolidation of the royal bureaucracy in the thirteenth century, a body was created with accumulated experience and strength in the administration of territories. These individuals were known as 'lettered officials'. Semo states: 'The bureaucratic omnipresence of the Spanish state was also expressed in the unparalleled flowering of the law. Many studies were written on the abstract principles of government and administration and an imposing body of law and ordinances was created which regulated all aspects of public life' (Semo 1973: 65–6).

6. In their criticism of this type of analysis, some authors indicate how, by the use of some Weberian categories out of context, this inherent dualism implies that the only outlet for traditional societies is to end up integrating themselves into modernity. 'Once this model is placed into position – the traditional and the modern – it is easy to classify the social realities under one of these terms' (Sotelo 1975: 23–4).

Medina Echavarría also criticises this type of interpretation of Max Weber, pointing out that the expression 'traditional society' is used as a useful and indispensable generalisation to refer to its opposite, modern society, defined in relation to the countries at the head of Western culture. 'This type of diagnosis contained an implicit counsel, given from outside, of course, and reiterated unceasingly: the urgency of accelerating the process of modernisation and development. This was the equivalent, definitely, of the theoretical and practical confusion between modernization and development. ... This conception, useful to explain some elements of the transition from traditionalism to modernity has some elements of neo-evolutionism similar to Spencer's ideas. The inevitable destiny of the less developed countries is to acquire a type of economic and political organization similar of that of the developed ones' (Echavarría 1972: 12–3).

PATRIMONIALISM IN LATIN AMERICA

7. This article was written before the Mexican elections of July 6, 1988. The date is important because many authors have pointed out that the votes show the end of a 'One Party System' (the official party Partido Revolucionario Institucional - PRI) and the unavoidable future weakness of the power of the executive branch. For the first time in history, the legislative power has a significant number of deputies of the opposition parties that may eventually reduce the President's discretion. That could probably mean that we are witnessing the 'beginning of the end' of the patrimonialistic regime.

8. "The provider state" is the slogan of patrimonialism, a slogan which has arisen not from a sworn oath to free comradeship but by virtue of the relation between parents and children' (Weber 1974: 845).

9. In 1983, at the time of this declaration Manuel Camacho was Under-Secretary of Budget and Planning of the Government of Miguel de la Madrid. Later he became Housing and Developments Secretary. In 1988 he resigned to become General Secretary of the PRI.

10. For the conceptualisation of technocracy, some authors make use of theses found in Gouldner (1976) and Habermas (1981) following the Weberian tradition: 'Technocracy - a phenomenon unknown to Weber - is, from Habermas' perspective, a result of the interpretation of the economic and political system of the hegemonical states. On an institutional scale, Gouldner has analyzed it as the growing incorporation of "technicians" (engineers, economists, etc.) into the bureaucratic apparatus, first as staff, which then becomes personnel with bureaucratic training and hierarchical discipline and eventually has displaced the old bureaucracy whose position was based on their knowledge of legal norms and juridical rationality' (Weiss 1987: 256-7; see also Gouldner 1976).

11. This has provided the basis for some authors to distinguish between a traditional patrimonialism and a modernising patrimonialism (see Chacón 1977: 6).

12. One of the examples of this contradiction is the supposed rationality in the public education system of Mexican bureaucracy and the granting of 'positions' in the National Educational Workers Union (the largest labour union in Latin America) which is carried out through patrimonial exchange of favours and clientelism (Weiss 1987). A similar process takes place in the oil workers' union.

13. '...While in *pure patrimonialism* there is an absolute separation between administrators and administrative positions, in patrimonialism with a rigid social structure exactly the opposite occurs: the administrator owns all the administrative positions or at least an essential part. In the same way, for example, the feudal knight who equipped himself had full ownership of the administrative positions. In contrast, the pharaoh who put armies of colonists and slaves under the control of his clients...was a patrimonial LORD, ABSOLUTE OWNER of the administrative positions' (Weber 1974: 775).

References

- AGUILAR, L. 1984. 'El Programa Teórico-Político de Max Weber', in Galvan Diaz, F. and Cervantes Jauregui, L. (eds.), *Política y Desilusión*. Mexico, D.F.: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana.
- BEETHAM, D. 1979. *Max Weber y la Teoría Política Moderna*. Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales.
- CAMACHO, M. 1983. 'Simposio la Crisis en México'. *Nexos* No. 68.
- CARDOSO, F.H. 1977. 'Las Clases Sociales y la Crisis en Latinoamérica', in Solari, A. (ed.), *Poder y Desarrollo en América Latina*. Mexico, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- CHACON, V. 1977. *Estado e Povo no Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: Camara dos Deputados.
- ECHAVARRIA, M. 1972. *Discurso sobre Política y Planeación*. Mexico, D.F.: Siglo XXI Editores.
- FLORESCANO, E. and GIL SANCHEZ, I. 1976. 'La Epoca de las Reformas Borbónicas y el Crecimiento Económico'. *Historia General de México*, Vol. 2. Mexico, D.F.: El Colegio de México.
- GIBSON, C. 1966. *Spain in America*. New York: Harper and Row.
- GOULDNER, A.W. 1976. *The Dialectics of Technology and Ideology*. New York: Seabury Press.

- HABERMAS, J. 1981. *The Theory of Communicative Action, Reason and the Rationalization of Society*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- MALLOY, J. et al. 1977. *Authoritarianism and Corporativism in Latin America*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- MEYER, L. 1976. 'La Encrucijada'. *Historia General de México*, Vol. 4. Mexico, D.F.: El Colegio de México.
- MORSE, R.R. 1964. 'The Heritage of Latin America', in Hartz, L. (ed.), *The Founding of New Societies*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.
- PAZ, O. 1982. *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz o Las Trampas de la Fe* (Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz or the Snares of Faith). Mexico, D.F.: Seix Barral.
- PIETSCHMANN, H. 1984. 'Burocracia y Corrupción en Hispanoamérica Colonial'. *Siempre* (Cultural Supplement), July.
- SAID, E.W. 1979. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- SCHWARTZMAN, S. 1977. 'Back to Weber: Corporativism and Patrimonialism in the Seventies', in Malloy J.M. (ed.), *Authoritarianism and Corporativism in Latin America*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- SEMO, E. 1973. *Historia del Capitalismo en México*. Mexico, D.F.: Ediciones Era.
- SOLARI, A., FRANCO, R. and JUTKOWITZ, J. 1976. *Teoría. Acción Social y Desarrollo en América Latina*. Mexico, D.F.: Siglo XXI Editores.
- SOTELO, I. 1975. *Sociología de América Latina*. Madrid: Editorial Tecnos.
- WEBER, M. 1968. *The Religion of China*. London: Macmillan.
- WEBER, M. 1972. *Ensayos de Sociología Contemporánea*. Ed. by H.H. Gerth and C.W. Mills. Spain: Ediciones Martínez Roca.
- WEBER, M. 1974. *Economía y Sociedad*. Mexico, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- WEBER, M. 1978a. *Sociología de la Religión*. Buenos Aires: La Pleyade.
- WEBER, M. 1978b. *Ensayos sobre Metodología Sociológica*. Buenos Aires: Amorrortu Editores.
- WEBER, M. 1979. *El Político y el Científico*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.
- WEBER, M. 1981. *La Ética Protestante y el Espíritu del Capitalismo*. Mexico, D.F.: Premia Editoria.
- WEBER, M. 1982. *Escritos Políticos*, 2 vols. Mexico, D.F.: Folios Editores.
- WEBER, M. 1983. *Historia Económica General*. Mexico, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- WEISS, E. 1987. 'La articulación de las formas de dominación patrimonial, burocrática y tecnocrática: el caso de la educación pública en México'. *Estudio Sociológicos* 5 (14).
- ZABLUDOVSKY, G. 1983. 'La dominación patrimonial de Max Weber'. *Cuaderno de Sociología* 2. Mexico, D.F.: Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, UNAM.
- ZABLUDOVSKY, G. 1984. 'Racionalidad formal y racionalidad material: Max Weber y el pensamiento neoconservador'. *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales* No. 117-118 (July/Dec.).
- ZAID, G. 1979. *El Progreso Improductivo*. Mexico, D.F.: Siglo XXI Editores.

Biographical Note: Gina Zabludovsky is Professor of Sociology and Head of the Research Centre in Social Theory at the Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). Her two main academic interests are in the history of business organisation in Mexico and studies in social theory. Her publications include: *México: Estado y Empresarios* (State and Entrepreneurs in Mexico) (Mexico: ENEP-Acatlán, 1980); 'La Dominación Patrimonial en la Obra de Max Weber' (Patrimonial Domination in Max Weber's Work) (*Cuaderno de Sociología* 2, 1983); (co-author/co-editor) *La Sociedad a través de los Clásicos* (Classics of Social Theory) (Mexico: UNAM, 1988).

Address: Cerrada de Monte Kamerun 42 PH, Mexico, D.F. 11000, Mexico.