without committing party treason. Professional party-political organizers outside the legislative arena begin to monopolize the policy-making powers once exercised by notables and parliamentary members. In Weber's eyes, this decline of legislatures is hastened by the growing importance of specialists in state officials in matters of public policy making. No doubt, the official is present within many modern civilizations. Modern occidental nation-states, however, qualitatively expand the role and power of civil services staffed by commercially, technically, and legally informed and expert officials. These civil services, in collaboration with the military, courts of law, and bureaucratic political parties, come more and more to influence the daily existence of the whole population of modern capitalist countries. These populations become the generalized object of a constitutionally defined state guarded by its monopoly of the means of violence, a state that rationally formulates, administers, and adjudicates laws by means of highly trained specialist officials who obey strictly formulated rules. Modern democracies, Weber insists, are everywhere being transformed into highly ordered, bureaucratic state regimes. Under the sway of bureaucratic imperatives, the governance of the population by legal, military, administrative, and party-political experts and officials now appears to be inevitable.36

The merger of corporate and state bureaucracy

These political developments, to repeat, are not viewed by Weber as the simple consequences or effects of the capitalist accumulation process. Weber in fact proposes that in the contemporary period the rational capital accounting of the profit-seeking enterprise becomes increasingly dependent upon calculable and predictable state administration. Nowadays, if only for their mutual survival, the bureaucratic state and corporate capitalism have become interdependent in their patterns of reproduction and growth. “The significance of the state apparatus for the economy,” Weber observes, “has been steadily rising, especially with increasing socialization, and its significance will be further augmented.”37 There are several reasons for this development. From the viewpoint of the capitalist economy, so to speak, this growing interpenetration of state and economy is generated by the increasing dependence of the fixed-capital, rationally calculated capitalist enterprise upon a calculable monetary system and a strict and stable administrative, legal, and military framework. Contemporary capitalism thrives best under the guidance of formally rational systems of administration and law, conditions in which the mode of operation of state policy is to a great degree calculable.38 The corporate dependence upon the state's military means is also decisive, especially in a world of intensifying economic competition; equally, the state's quest to secure itself militarily within a hostile nation-state system intensifies its dependence upon a permanently expansive and rational system of private capitalist production.39 For these reasons, bureaucratic state administration more and more becomes a sine qua non of the orderly corporate pursuit of profit. This growing dependence of capital upon the state leads, conversely, to the increasing dependence of the state upon capital. This process of reciprocity derives from the fact that modern corporate capitalism (according to Weber) is the most dynamic and fecund system of production ever, and that it can therefore readily supply the requisite financial resources for a stable system of bureaucratic administration. The modern bureaucratic state becomes a “taxation state,” upon whose stability the whole political economy depends. It is increasingly dependent upon money contributions (that is, taxes) that are collected by its own staff and that are generated primarily from within the capitalist order. This growing importance of money taxation means that the state has become both the largest single receiver and the largest single maker of payments in contemporary capitalist society.40 To be sure, the development of a money economy has not always been decisive for the secure expansion of bureaucratic state administration. The organized subsistence economies governed by the bureaucracies of the Roman Empire and the new Empire of Egypt are cases in point. Developed capitalist money economies nevertheless facilitate the predictable generation of revenues through taxation (of wages, salaries, and private profit). Weber contrasts the fiscal buoyancy of the modern state with its Roman counterpart. By virtue of the Roman state's attempt to organize large Continental areas politically by means of a salaried bureaucracy and professional armies, it incurred enormous expenditures. But as commerce, cities, and labor supplies declined, and as society relapsed into a natural economy, rural districts were less able to raise the constantly increasing sums of money demanded by the tax system.41 By contrast, the capitalist economy indirectly promotes the formulation of regularized, systematic state budgets. It therefore also facilitates the overcoming of the uncertain, hand-to-mouth mode of operation typical of early states such as Rome, the intermittent payments in kind (fees, customs excises, and sales taxes) common throughout the Middle Ages, and the compulsory obligations to personal service (labor in mines, the maintenance of roads and bridges) typical of such corvée states as the New Kingdom of ancient Egypt.

Weber insists that the growing interdependence of society and state also derives from the fact that the successful and precise functioning of the modern bureaucratic state — and, correspondingly, of the modern corporation — is more and more conditional upon its centralized control of efficient systems of telecommunication and transportation. The collective form of these means of communication (such as the railway) has increased the need for their centralized state deployment.42 In turn, their proliferation (and the corresponding rise in the rate and quantity of commodity transmission) has tended to improve the technical efficiency of state reactions toward various situations, including the field of capitalist accumulation.43 This technological interdependence of state and economy is only accelerated by the fact that the precise tools of these communication systems are typically developed and marketed by dynamic capitalist corporations.44

Finally, Weber observes that the erosion of the boundaries of state and civil society is promoted by the growth of demands upon the state from the sphere of civil society itself. Unfortunately, Weber by no means analyzes this development and its implications in any depth. He merely notes, for example, that the state's social welfare policies have come to play a crucial role under contemporary capitalist conditions. These welfare strategies have been fostered by both the
pressure of organized interests on the state and, in turn, the state's usurping of social policy formation to enhance its own power and legitimacy. These examples of the growing interpenetration of state and civil society are of immense significance, Weber argues, inasmuch as they reveal the growing convergence of the bureaucratic means of operation of the state and the modern corporation. Under contemporary conditions, the bureaucratic control of the wage laborer is contingent upon the same form of rational, calculable domination within the state sector. State organization, the specifically political form of modern bureaucratic domination, is more and more the indispensable medium of bureaucratic corporate domination. The separation of workers from their means of production is not restricted to the industrial capitalist factory or office. The separation of the worker from the material means of production, destruction, administration, academic research, and finance is general is the common basis of the modern state, in its political, cultural, and military sphere, and of the private capitalist economy. In both cases, the disposition of these means is in the hands of that power whom the bureaucratic apparatus...directly obeys or to whom it is available in case of need. This apparatus is nowadays equally typical of all those organizations; its existence and function are inseparably cause and effect of this concentration of means of operation - in fact, the apparatus is its very form. Everywhere, and in all spheres of conduct, from the factory to the university, the means of operation are concentrated in the hands of those who control machine-like bureaucracies. Marx's depiction of the complete separation of laborers from all ownership of the means by which they can realize their labor is but one instance of a more universal bureaucratization process.

The indispensability - and limits of bureaucratic domination

It is precisely this bureaucratic concentration of the means of operation which makes the present phase of modern life so problematic for Weber. Consuming and replacing other forms of life, bourgeois rationalization processes tend to become an end in themselves. Under their monopolistic sway, contemporary capitalist societies knit themselves into a self-enfolding "iron cage" of bondage. All spheres of daily life tend to become chronically dependent upon disciplined hierarchy, rational specialization, and the continuous deployment of impersonal systems of abstract-general rules. Bureaucratic domination is the fate of the present, whose future is likely to be more of the same. A "polite night of icy darkness and hardness" is the specter that haunts the modern world.

It is worth emphasizing in this context that Weber does not mean to imply that the evolution toward a fully mechanized, predictable, and clocklike system of command is necessarily desirable. Though this bureaucratisation process is fundamentally irreversible, Weber nevertheless remains concerned to emphasize - in explicit opposition to Schmoller, Wagner, and other defenders of bureaucracy within the Verein für Sozialpolitik - that contemporary bureaucratic organizations systematically produce irrational effects. He is concerned to "challenge the unquestioning idolization of bureaucracy," to call into question the modern, bureaucratic presumption that all mysterious incalculable forces have been banished forever, that modern rulers can, in principle, master all situations by calculation and command. This arrogant presumption is in fact an unreal and unrealizable reverie. In opposition to this metaphysical reverence, Weber soberly insists that the irrational effects generated by organized capitalist societies are necessary, because symptomatic of a developing imbalance, under contemporary conditions at least, between the requirements of formal and those of substantive modes of rationality. This imbalance within the bureaucratization process is a key source at once of the unique achievements and of the limitations of modern civilization.

Weber discusses several instances of this disequilibrium; these are cited and analyzed further in the following three sections. At this point, it is necessary only to affirm his central thesis. Irrespective of the standards of value by which substantively rational action is judged, its requirements or conditions of realization, or so Weber wants to argue, are always in principle nonidentical with the exigencies of formal, bureaucratic rationality. The degree of formal rationality of any type of action, he recalls, consists in the degree to which it can be and actually is structured by a reliance upon quantitative calculation. Formally rational activity is goal-oriented, rational calculation guided by the most technically suitable methods at hand. By contrast, the substantive rationality of action does not refer to the degree to which it is structured by means based upon rational calculability. Rather, action and its outcomes are substantively rational inasmuch as they are oriented and judged by ultimate values that, in principle, are highly variable in content and number.

Production, administration, and the suppression of particularity

Weber's first example of the disequilibrium between the requirements of formal and substantive rationality concerns the abstract-general mode of operation that is typical of all efficient bureaucratic organizations. With respect to particular individuals, cases, and events, Weber demonstrates, bureaucracies chronically produce definite obstacles to the coordinated discharge of their functions. From the standpoint of substantively rational criteria (that is, various and competing conceptions of human needs), bureaucracies' fetishism of standardized and general calculation contradicts the plurality or particularity that typically attends the definition of those needs. This contradiction marks both private and public bureaucratic organizations. With respect to modern capitalist forms of production, for example, Weber comes very close to conceding the Marxian critique of capitalism as an abstract and calculating system of production for exchange, a system whose ability to satisfy a plurality of concrete human needs is erratic and, at most, unintentional. Typically, the bureaucratic mode of operation of capitalist corporations contradicts both the possibility of worker control over production and the simple interest of workers in the maintenance of their jobs. The substantive irrationality of the bourgeois mode of production derives from the fact that its compulsion to systematize and rationally perfect the calculating pursuit of profit is contingent upon the domination of workers by entrepreneurs.
In Weber's eyes, the contemporary socialist movement's criticism of the "domination of things over humanity" under bourgeois conditions is not unfounded. This criticism accurately depicts the anonymous subjection of living labor power to the rationally calculated discipline of the bureaucratic factory and office. This contradiction between the corporation's formally rational calculation of profitability and particular substantive goals within the sphere of production is duplicated within the sphere of consumption. Profit-oriented capitalist production, Weber admits, can serve only those consumers who have sufficient income and therefore power to demand certain goods and not others effectively. The orientation of capitalist production to money prices and profits (and also to production opportunities provided by state power, as under colonialism) therefore means that certain expressed needs—those which are not backed by the means of consumption—may fail to be satisfied. "Profitability is indeed formally a rational category," Weber remarks, "but for that very reason it is indifferent with respect to substantive postulates unless these can make themselves felt in the form of sufficient purchasing power." This irrationality is further exacerbated by the power of capitalist corporations to determine the type, quantity, and degree of technical efficiency of production, a power that again derives from its control over the means of production. The corporate drive to profitability, that is, is not automatically or even necessarily identical with the optimum use of available productive resources for the satisfaction of a plurality of consumer needs.

Within the sphere of state action, the bureaucratic rejection of doing business from case to case also directly presupposes the quashing or denial of the needs of particular individuals and groups. Weber was convinced that this suppression of particularity was already evident within modern state capitalist systems and would become especially problematic under conditions of state socialism. This conviction placed him at considerable odds with the naive statism of many of his socialist contemporaries. In his view, their "camp following" and simple-minded belief in historical progress through state planning was thoroughly misguided. The contemporary socialist movement too frequently believed that its victories were a matter of course, its defeats a symptom of backwardness, its failures a temporary rebellion against the judgment of history. This movement wrongly assumed that history, of whose knowledge Marxism was the privileged bearer, somehow expresses its animosity toward all complications and unintended effects that stand in its way. As a consequence of its evolutionism, the contemporary socialist movement suppressed the point that there are no historical guarantees against the substantively irrational effects of bureaucratization.

Peace, freedom, and the uncomplicated satisfaction of various needs do not necessarily lie hidden in the lap of a future guided by bureaucratic state planning. This anti-evolutionist conviction stands behind Weber's bitter criticism of the Bolshevik (and Kautskyite) hopes of reconciling the goal of freedom from all forms of hierarchic domination with that of the abolition of the rule of private property through efficient, bureaucratically planned production for human needs. Weber typically projects at least two complementary arguments in defense of his thesis that these hopes are radically at odds with themselves. In a