

## Book Reviews

Anter, Andreas, *Die Macht der Ordnung. Aspekte einer Grundkategorie des Politischen* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), xii-311.

The author, a German sociologist and political scientist (legal studies, too, have obviously played a large role in his education and his research), has recently left the University of Bremen for that of Leipzig, where he holds the chair of politics. I have previously reviewed his first book, a valuable account of *Max Weber's Theorie des modernen Staats* (1995).

The author's deep but not uncritical familiarity with Weber's work is apparent also in this second book (which I review in its first edition, though there has been a second one) whose scope is much wider than the first. It utilizes an impressive body of sources, referred to in hundreds of footnotes, and in a 40pp. bibliography. (Most of the entries are of course unknown to me, but I was struck by the absence of one, Shils's essay on 'Charisma, order and status', which in my view deserves consideration. By and large, unlike Shils, Anter underestimates the *ordering* significance of social—as against political—inequality). The author mobilizes this massive scholarly apparatus in a sustained, wide-ranging, original confrontation with several aspects of the book's theme, which is nothing less than the concept of order itself. In the title, this concept is associated with that of power; and Anter privileges, as the *subtitle* suggests, a political perspective on the problem of order, among other things—as we shall see—by devoting much attention to the bearing upon it of the state and law. ('Politics' as such receives much less attention.)

Anter is well aware of the complexity of his theme, suggested by various considerations. 'Order' is among those concepts for which one is tempted to claim an utterly central position in one discipline (or more than one!), treating as subordinate qualifications and articulations of it other concepts of potentially equal scope and significance. It overlaps with other such concepts (for instance, those of structure, power, of system—but Anter pays little attention to the latter) or is dialectically related to others (for instance, freedom). It is intrinsically complex, for it postulates, more or less explicitly, a counter-concept: in German, *Ordnung* assumes as counter-concept *Unordnung*, an expression which incidentally does not have a precise lexical counterpart in French, English, or Italian, which prefer to talk of *dis-* rather than of *no* order. (Incidentally, there is a parallel difference of greater significance. In English, French, Italian, the noun 'order'/'ordre'/'ordine' has two main meanings: a *condition* of, indeed, order; an *act* of command. So far as I know this does not apply to *Ordnung*, for in my understanding the German expressions for 'command', in particular *Befehl*, have different roots).

Furthermore, the concept of order claims significance in a variety of material and intellectual contexts, from speech to economics. It is often invoked in ideologically

loaded discourses, though Anter remarks that its invocation is often, but not always, aimed at the preservation of the existent state of affairs. (He acknowledges, by the way, that German culture—academic and other—seems to have a particular fixation with the conservative meaning of *Ordnung*) (Ch. II). Also, many conceptions of order reveal some degree of ambivalence toward the phenomenon itself—as well as toward ‘security’, a closely related theme (see Ch. III). This ambivalence sometimes finds expression negatively, in a concern over the human consequences of the unchecked triumph of order (as in Weber’s metaphor of the little cogs more or less cosily locked into the big machine) sometimes positively, in an aspiration to the experience of novelty and creativity. Finally, particularly in complex societies one finds a plurality of orders, often relating to one another in a contentious manner.

Having chosen, then, an arduous topic, Anter manfully confronts those and other difficulties, producing in the end (what seems to me) a clear, enlightening and substantial treatment of it. He traverses, as already suggested, a broad and diverse conceptual terrain, assessing critically a great number of previous contributions to this or that part of it. For instance, after dealing respectfully with Eucken’s arguments about ‘the economy as an ordering power’, he gives a fairly rough time to Hayek, who acknowledges as a proper order of human affairs only an arrangement resulting spontaneously from the otherwise un-coordinated, competitive interactions among a plurality of units, and equates this arrangement with that rare and precarious creature, the market, and the market only. (I sympathize with this critique, but Anter might have paid more attention to something Hayek emphasizes: local agents typically rely in their activities on diverse—and changing—packages of dispersed knowledge). Also, Anter makes a significant contribution to the literature on Carl Schmitt by showing the intrinsic intellectual brutishness of his construction of ‘concrete legal thinking’ which represented his contribution to the legitimization of National Socialism.

After devoting his Chapter IV to the economy as a distinctive site of order, Anter discusses two other sites—law (Ch. V) and the state (Ch. VI). These do not lie on the same level, as he suggests by titling ‘The order of orders’ the chapter on the state. These are in my view the most substantial chapters in the book, among other things, perhaps, because of the position law (the constitution in particular) and the state hold respectively in Weber’s work and in the author’s own know-how. This does not mean that Anter considers law and the state as the most significant and reliable order-makers in contemporary society. In fact, these chapters (accounting for the last 100 pages or so of the book) expressly (though briefly) consider some phenomena related to the economy (those celebrated in neo-liberal ideology—globalization, privatization, deregulation) which seriously threaten both law and the state, and promote the economy itself as the dominant site of societal ordering.

Ch. V has one section titled ‘Abschied vom Recht?’ and in Ch. VI one titled ‘Ende des Staates?’ Both question marks reflect the problematical, open-ended approach of the author to these and other concerns (for instance his discussion of nationality). Curiously, however, Anter does not discuss the challenge posed to law by the fact that systematically corporations, when they need to settle legal problems with one another, negotiate between themselves mediations arrangements rather than appealing to state courts, a practice which directly threatens the notion itself of jurisdiction. And he barely mentions the erosion of the state’s monopoly of fiscal imposition.

Apart from this, his discussion of both the theoretical and the institutional problems connected with the ordering capacity of both law and the state is highly sophisticated and persuasive.

I wind up this appreciative statement on an impressive book by mentioning only reservation of minor significance, which may, however, appear relevant (if justified) to the readers of *Max Weber Studies*. At various points, Anter suggests that Weber was very much an *Ordnungsdenker*. Well, I am not sure. Given the highly polysemic nature of the expression 'Ordnung' one may wonder to which of its *semes* that suggestion applies. It is clearly valid as concerns Weber's methodology, with its Kantian emphasis on the 'ordering' significance of the conceptual apparatus and of the value preferences the scholar brings to her studies. But it may be less valid if applied to the so-called Hobbesian problem and what may be called 'the pathos of order'. On p. 86, after referring to Weber as 'einen...dezidierten Ordnungsdenker', Anter notes that he was totally committed to the *plurality* of orders—a commitment exhibited among other things in the subtitle of what we generally refer to as *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, that is 'Die Wirtschaft und die gesellschaftliche Ordnungen und Mächte'. To me the emphasis on that plurality, and the coupling of *Ordnungen* with *Mächte* suggest a substantive concern, which I would not associate closely with the Hobbesian problem.

I suggest this because Rainer Lepsius, in some essays collected in his *Interessen, Ideen und Institutionen* (there is now an Italian translation of this volume, why isn't there an English one?) has persuasively subsumed under the concept of 'Institution', many of the substantial arguments Weber developed in *WuG* and elsewhere. If this is a credible conceptual move (and I feel it is), then it introduces in the discussion of larger social affairs a dynamic and a sense of contingency which the notion of *Ordnung*, in the singular or in the plural, does not encompass, and which does not bespeak in Weber of any particular sensitivity to 'the pathos of order'.

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Weber, Max, *Agrarrecht, Agrargeschichte, Agrarpolitik. Vorlesungen 1894–1899*, Max Weber Gesamtausgabe, III/5 (ed. Rita Aldenhoff-Hübinger; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), pp. xii + 523 + CD ROM, ISBN 978-3-16-149485-7, €199.00.

Weber, Max, *Roman Agrarian History* (ed. and trans. Richard I. Frank; Claremont, CA: Regina Books, 2008), pp. xiv + 224, ISBN 1-930053-55-x, \$24.95.

Weber's lectures on agrarian law, agrarian history and policy are the first volume to appear of Section III in the Max Weber Gesamtausgabe. Section III is devoted to Weber's lecture notes and transcripts of the lectures and, just to remind readers, Section I is Writings and Speeches, Section II Letters. Section III materials—effectively the notes Weber wrote for giving his lectures—were deposited by Marianne Weber in the Prussian state archive in the 1930s. The MWG catalogue now provides an inventory of future Section III publications and we can expect five volumes in all. Three volumes will relate to Weber's abbreviated career as a lecturer from 1894 in Berlin and Freiburg to 1900 in Heidelberg, and two volumes from when he recommenced lecturing, 1918–1920.

This is the first time his archived notes have reached the light of day and so a frisson of excitement should ripple through the world of Weber scholarship. The questions that immediately spring to mind are as follows. 1. Are they legible and comprehensible? 2. What do they tell us about Weber's intellectual and academic formation as a youngish professor? 3. What are the connections to be drawn between this material and his published works? 4. Are there undiscovered gems that might invigorate debates in the historical and social sciences?

1. Are they legible? The facsimiles reproduced from 1894 look just about legible. Weber's handwriting has its distinctive (but decipherable) style and is relatively neat, though inclines to miniature. Weber's handwriting could degenerate into a scrawl after his breakdown, but at this point the transcribers and editor have managed to transcribe just about everything with only a few outstanding queries. These are notes and neat lists often break down into discretionary clustering on the page with lines, circlings and many crossing-outs (which text is faithfully retrieved in the editing). Abbreviations (very many) are restored in square brackets and the profuseness of Weber's technical-historical vocabulary is accurately rendered. This is an editorial achievement of a very high order.

Are the notes comprehensible? The volume starts with his Berlin summer semester course, when he was standing in for Professor Levin Goldschmidt who had been taken sick. He offered an extra course on Agrarian Law and Agrarian History and he repeated it in Freiburg. I shall provide more than usual detail (for a review) since the volume is unlikely to be translated (because of its note format) and those who can read German are unlikely to be able to afford the price.

Section 1 of 6 sections, is entitled Concept and Method of Agrarian Law. Following Weber's notes and numbering, (1) Agrarian law can mean a) the legal forms of agrarian economic enterprise or b) the complex of legal norms which are characteristic of, and exclusive to, the land of agrarian enterprise. a) is the subject matter of national economy, b) of the handbook of German private law.

(2) There is in the beginning no separate [agrarian] law. In general objective law are norms which regulate the external relations of people to one another and economic goods, and presuppose a human community (not necessarily the state). In the oldest times man stood within the naturally given community of the extended family. This was the stage of the patriarchal-communist closed (no exchange) household economy. There was no private law, which vanished in face of autocracy of patriarch who had rights over sexual relationships. Relationships of domination existed within the household community with servile dependence to the patriarch, and the slavery of the subjugated and propertyless and the absence of any business law. This changed with the advent of settlement when private rights created for the individual were guaranteed by the community.

Weber then moves onto the types of rights—inheritance, pasture rights, and a pure communism no longer possible. Law is created within the agrarian economic enterprise. Production needs are first met by the itinerant small holder who develops craft production as a side-line. Trade only exists within the framework of itinerant sellers and international markets.

A further stage is the city economy. Regular exchange of agricultural products for manufactured products originates within a territorial unit. In course of development the seller is differentiated from the craftsmen. Interest on capital is the profit of the entrepreneur. These [economic] relationships are subject to the special law of the merchant and producer stratum. Further, the property and land of the town

separates from the agrarian legal community. The cities were built not for economic but for *power* reasons. Then participation in monopolistic market trade and urban productions and this exploited as a source of rent. Thereby the city and its laws are removed [from agrarian law]. Agrarian law is the law of a stratum just as trade and production law is. With the conquest of city law came the break-up of the social organisation of feudal ties in the interests of partly the political power (Florence) and partly the extension of 'Capitalmarkets'. The transformation of law from the standpoint of urban business.

(3) The specific agrarian institutions, the agrarian special law, is a complex of fragments, part residues, part new creations. Weber goes on to make notes about legal norms in relation to the economic and social organisation of agriculture. The historical development is fragmentary and fluid, and there were influences acting on the existing German law that can be traced back to Roman law. The starting point of the external physiognomy of the land is the patterns of German settlement. These were different with Celts, Slavs and Germans in addition to Roman influences. The basis of these differences depends on the *stage* of the social development of settlement. At the start there were patriarchal nomadic families and the question is whether their form continued unchanged with settlement and then disappeared, or whether the opposite, that they settled as cooperatives. The latter in case of Germans and Romans, the former with Celts and Slavs. The debate about the social constitution [of settlements] cannot be skirted. The general viewpoint not at the beginning but at the conclusion. Section I finishes with some references to the literature.

Section I, from this paraphrase, I would judge fairly comprehensible. Since these are notes, there are a lot of ellipses – some indicated by my square brackets – and the continuity of the argument is sometimes tricky to follow. No doubt the students would have been furnished with elaborations of the argument and provided with concrete examples. The notes are more than headings but clearly do not represent a fully written text.

Sections 2 to 6 are more comprehensible as chronological socio-economic and legal accounts of the agrarian organisation of some of the main European regions. Section 2 is entitled the Social Organisation of Roman Agriculture and here Weber cites his own book *Roman Agrarian History*, published in 1891. This affords an opportunity of comparing his lecture notes with his book treatment. *Roman Agrarian History* now exists in a fluent and knowledgeable translation by the classical historian Richard I. Frank and we also possess the MWG edition (I/2), edited by Jürgen Deininger published back in 1986. The book is an audacious piece of scholarship, completed as the culmination of Weber's 'Habilitationsschrift'. Weber argued that the key to understanding the agrarian economy and its legal forms was through Roman survey methods and cadastral registers. Weber goes into detail here and the reader has to follow him closely. There were two types of survey method. One was a numbered grid of the land surveyed with the grid lines oriented as accurately as possible to the east-west meridian with the north south fixed from the stars. The names of possessors of the land and their plots were marked to the grids but with only a vague depiction of boundaries or geographical features. The surveyor would note that, say, Varius, was in square numbered 10 on its left side and 9 on its top side (and presumably Varius knew he was so numbered). Quite a lot of information was inscribed on the drawing of the plot – who held it, its status as a claim to land, its area, and the payments that had to be made on it, for instance as tax.

The other survey method was a more accurate map of settlements with the plots abutting one another as rectangles. This survey map had all the boundaries of the plot marked, and accurately measured in *actus* (about 35 metres). As Weber introduces his task, 'I first attempt to show that the way in which territories were surveyed was closely connected with both the status of the territories in public law and also the status of individual parcels in private law' (p. 2). The two different survey methods transmit to the historian through 'debris of thousands of years' the conditions under which parcels of land were allotted and their status within the socio-economic circumstances. The first method of surveying and assigning land (*ager limitatus*) was indicative that this land had been given with no great concern about boundaries and taxable acreage. The land was assigned to Roman citizens who paid no tax (excepting inheritance tax). The other method (*ager per scamna et strigas* – the widths and lengths of the plot) was exact because the land was subject to taxation obligations. This was public land distributed in the provinces outside Italy and subject to rent, taxes and levies of various kinds.

With this historical method Weber found a key to describing the different classes and statuses of the Roman agrarian landholders. Land surveys of *ager limitatus* led the historian to those who had full rights of ownership; land surveys *per scamna et strigas* to those who held grants of land under more onerous conditions. Weber writes in his introduction, 'One can sum up the developments follows: the expansion of Rome's sphere of economic activity, in particular its public lands, so that eventually the Roman *ager publicus* came to include a large portion of Italy. The question than naturally arises: what use was made of this enormous area?' The whole history, it might be said of Rome, can be traced through the conquest and holding of land, from the expansion of Rome, the conquest of provinces, and the eventual decline of Roman power. Each stage of this history is accompanied by redistributions and expropriations of land as occurred with each civil war and political upheaval. Tracking the conditions under which land was held provides the information with which to construct an economic and class history of Rome. As is well known, Weber did not hold back from providing those wider generalizations in his *Roman Agrarian History*.

Returning to Section 2 of the lecture course, Weber provides his students with a complete run-through of Roman social and economic history and the legal forms of sale and transfer of land and property. His students were not spared the finer details of land survey techniques. Section 2 with its numerous and cryptic abbreviations must have presented considerable transcription problems for the editor. However, with *Roman Agrarian History* to hand, one can follow the train of thinking of Weber's lectures.

Section 3 of the lecture course covers feudal lordship and feudal landholding from the late Roman period to the Carolingians. The manorialization of the great landed estates in the late Empire is covered in *Agrarian Roman History*, so again this provides a valuable and necessary aid. The underlying structure of Weber's thinking begins to emerge in this section and is confirmed by the succeeding ones. He operates with a dynamic land, labour and capital model with a continuous concern for the ways in which agrarian products were cultivated and consumed. This conceptual whole is strongly determined by the respective statuses of those who own the land and those who work the land. The social organisation of this whole involves a consideration of the long term sustainability of any one agrarian system. Do landowners work their

slaves or servile tenants 'into the ground', do they have a notion of care and provision of the agrarian workers, and how do ownership models (despite different legal claims to ownership) compare to communally organised models as in the Russian 'mir', the Irish Townlands, and the German 'Mark'? Weber's interest in the legal forms of ownership and work remains secondary to those of socio-economic organisation. In status organised societies the legal forms are indeed crucial – because they define rights and their absence, e.g. slavery – but Weber is not writing a legal history of the subject. 'Agrarrecht' is as much rights as law.

We know from Weber's 1896 essay on the decline of Antiquity that he had a strong grasp of the late Roman empire. These notes show how detailed that grasp was. He uses the elder Cato's writings on estate management (during the republic) and is able to detail the capital and land costs of wine and oil production, including Cato's observations on how to operate book-keeping. Cereal production was dependent on slave labour and in turn slave markets. When the supply was plentiful, slaves were kept in barracks, men and women kept separate, marriage of slaves was not allowed but regulated prostitution was. Older slaves are killed off and there was no renewal through births. With the shortage of slaves in the imperial period adverts, preserved in inscriptions, show that in Roman Africa land was being offered for workers. Slaves were released from barracks and allowed to have children, and a complex internal division of labour grew up within autarkic 'oikoi' (as noted by Rodbertus). Unfree workers were allowed to rent land on the great estates. Contractors were brought in to run estates and meet the taxation demands of the state. With the decline of population and the rise of estate autarky, the towns decline and, as Weber jokes, 'Landluft macht frei'. The empire subsided into manorialism ('Gutsbezirke').

Weber charts, with some authority, the role of the estates in the Merovingian period, and the role of the bishops in providing the sole remaining public authority. Weber then turns to the capitularies – detailed instructions to estate managers, appointed by Charlemagne, to run crown estates and meet the payments in kind to the crown. For example, how much of the harvest should be set aside as seed, how much to servants, how much for the army, how much for the king.

Section 4 is entitled the Social Organisation of Celts and Slavs. Weber's approach to Britain is very much what would now be called 'Atlantic Isles'. The transition from Roman to Gallic manorialism is one model, but the Celts and Slavs provide an entirely different genealogy. The nature of Irish settlement was already well-researched in Germany (by Meitzen and Herkner). Settlement in the sixth and seventh century was organised into army districts (184 'Tricha ceds' and 30 Townlands) and farms were distributed as 'Tates' to families and subject to periodic redistribution by clan leaders and, later, the Tanist. It is interesting to follow Weber's account of the arrival of the English. Prior to the Tudors, the English changed the status of clan chiefs to that of barons but otherwise things remained unchanged. After the Tudors came colonisation and land grants. James I abolished the patriarchal and communal Irish land system of Tanistry, which had allocated land on a lifetime's basis to a tenant. The Tudors recognised the claim to property of the Irish as freeholders who paid rent. 'Tenant at will' had an ongoing right to land, but this was abolished with Oliver Cromwell and William III. There was no testamentary right of tenants, land was split up into rental leaseholds most of which could not exceed 31 years, landlords operated through a complex of middlemen, and any relaxation of rents was the right of landlord. The system dynamic led to larger landholdings by landlords and smaller

and smaller tenancies. This was the social organisation of agriculture of the famine of 1845–47 when countermeasures were forbidden, half a million people died, two million were beggared, and the famine led to three million emigrating by 1870. Weber concludes with Gladstone's agrarian reforms of 1871 and the second land reform act of 1881 (fair rent, fixity of tenure, fair sale).

Weber continues at the same level of detail for the South Slavs and North Slavs (Russia), the latter showing him informed about the Russian debates of the 1870s on rural communities.

Section 5 covers the Germanic forms of the communal organisation of agriculture: the original nomadic cultivators described by Tacitus, the village settlements of a group of farms where arable, pasture and woodlands were allotted on a cooperative basis ('Hufenverfassung'), the communal control over common land (the 'Mark'). In an echo of his Roman study Weber makes the point that land was never carefully measured as part of a communally directed distribution, but it was when it came to the colonisations of new land in the East. These claims to legal title to land were handed out by royal authority, whereas in village settlements alienation of property, enclosures and inheritance were closely controlled. It was as late as 1821 before Prussian reformers allowed the appropriation of common land and pastures and the start of the process of consolidation of privately held plots of land. Section 5 comes across a tidy exposition of the social organisation of communal forms of landholding—a subject that received extensive historical coverage by Germanists like Gierke and Lamprecht, who held up the model of the freely organised German peasant in contrast to Roman based property law and the individualism of land ownership. Contra Lamprecht, Weber notes that legal forms of 'Genossenschaftsrecht' should not always be taken for the economic reality.

The sixth and last section is entitled Landlordship and Manorialism ('Grundherrschaft und Gutswirtschaft')—and if one thinks of Georges Duby, Weber's division of agrarian forms between community and lordship is up to the minute. Manors with their more compact units of land and the performance of servile labour originated from Merovingian Gaul as kingly and ecclesiastical domains and reached their highpoint in German territories in the tenth century. Demesne lands were administered by a 'villicatus' who was granted his own farmland and collected the dues in kind for the feudal lord. In its Germanised version the 'villicatus' became the 'Meier'. (Weber omits any mention of feudal vassalage.) Lords extended manorialism through colonisation and clearance of new land. In England the origins of manorialism remain unclear—and England originally had the same common land traditions as the Germans. There are two complex transitions which Weber appears to be well informed about (his sources are Seebohm, Pollack and Vinogradoff)—the Norman conquest bringing with it a complex legal and economic system of landholding, and the dissolution of the agrarian system with rational enterprise and money rents taking the place of servile duties performed in kind. Village ploughland is reduced with the rise of wool prices. This leads Weber into the enclosures, free contracts, copyholding, property law, tenancy and leases. France is covered in a couple pages, the Prussian eastern provinces in some detail, and the lectures end with shortish accounts of Austria and Russia.

All in all the lectures notes amount to just under 90 printed pages in MWG. They are in fact a composite of three repeated lecture courses given in Berlin, Freiburg and Heidelberg. MWG III/5 also publishes Weber's lecture course entitled 'Agrarpolitik'

which he gave in the winter semester 1897/8 at Heidelberg. These notes are more cursory and it is difficult to get a sense of narrative or argument from them. Happily, one of his students, Else von Richthofen, attended the course (as did Marianne Weber) and took copious notes, filling a 200 page exercise book. She was obviously a diligent student – Alfred Weber seems to have borrowed her notes – though she does get the Norman invasions out by two centuries. Unlike some English Weber translations, mistakes are left uncorrected by the editor. Richthofen's notes are published in their entirety and taken together with Weber's notes a fairly reasonable reconstruction of the 'Agrarpolitik' lecture course (2 hours a week) is possible. They do not completely coincide – did Else fall asleep (unlikely), did Max go 'off-piste' (very likely)?

The centre of gravity moves from the historical to the present in this second set of lectures. In a sense the policy question concerns what happens when the various agrarian systems in their historical and country-specific particularity come into collision with the modern nation state and capitalism. The specific quality of land is its immobility compared to the mobility of capital. The owner of land is tied to it through a variety of legal forms, whereas the owner of shares can buy and sell as he wishes. Joachim Radkau in his recently translated book on environmental history *Nature and Power* argues that medieval and early modern common land and pastures were not only controlled by the community but that the community had a three-generational timeframe which ensured sustainability of the soil. Modern economies look for immediate and rising returns on land. The food needs of the industrial nation demand large farms not small units broken into even smaller units through rules of inheritance and distribution. One of the defining moments of the modernization of agriculture is when the linkage between land and its customary and communal usage is cut, when farming becomes an enterprise independent of customary landholding. This is the separation of 'Boden und Besitz', mostly achieved through private ownership and leasing on a commercial basis. When countries, supported by governments, follow through on these modern tendencies a rural labour crisis is created. To this, with as Weber notes a fifth of the world's grain being traded internationally, was added the fall in agricultural prices, and so rents and wages. The policy repercussions of these changes are multiple, intractable and far-reaching. Weber devoted a decade of his life to investigating these issues, and Rita Aldenhoff-Hübinger makes clear in her introduction that Weber was building the subject up, through his lectures, as a 'Schwerpunkt' for research studies. 'Agrarpolitik' was the last course he held on to as his illness gradually incapacitated his lecturing activity. The lecture notes are highly detailed in tracing process and policy and but for illness would have been the centre of his thought for some further period of time.

Returning to the questions posed at the start of this review, the lectures tell us a great deal about Weber's intellectual and academic formation. The first lecture course reveals Weber to have a seamless knowledge of ancient, medieval and modern agrarian worlds, a knowledge – guided by his Berlin supervisor Meitzen – that was rooted in the seminar exercises of primary sources. The lectures form a bedrock knowledge constantly mined throughout his later writing career, even as his intellectual modus operandi moved from historical process to ideal-typical theory. That said, there is no shortage of theory, and agrarian historians will be rewarded in seeing what Weber has to say about specialist subjects.

Rita Aldenhoff-Hübinger has probably undertaken the most arduous editorial work of the MWG to date. The lecture notes were deposited in the archive in no fixed order. The notes had to be coordinated to different semesters and topics,

and continuity and coherence restored. The range of technical terms Weber used is encyclopaedic and each had to be correctly rendered. The glossary is indispensable. Indexing and browsing has been simplified by the provision of a CD version, allowing word searches. The edition also includes a couple of fragments from the lecture notes ('Effects of Distribution of Ownership in the East' and 'The Historical Foundations').

The historical gem is the *Roman Agrarian History* whose impact is somewhat dimmed in the lecture course. This is a 'must-buy' purchase for historians and historical sociologists for its unrivalled combination of method and speculation. The translation brings across not only the depth of Weber's scholarship but the laconic way in which he conducts his arguments. Ostia was one of the first settlements relieving the pressure of plebians in Rome. Weber surmises, 'As for Ostia, if a hypothesis be allowed—and in this case how could it be avoided?—one might well connect its division into *scamna et strigae* with the fact that at least a part of its population belonged to an urban tribe'. The editor does not provide a glossary, which is essential, and for this the reader should turn to MWG II/1 edited by Jürgen Deininger. The diagrams (of survey inscriptions) are poorly reproduced and the reader should consult some of the more up to date works on classical history, which the editor usefully lists.

For the inscriptions of Arausio, A. Piganiol's edition confirms the sense of Theodor Mommsen's expansion of 'Ex tr. XII col XCVIII' as 'ex tributario 12 jugera redactus in colonicum XCVIII jugera'. 12 plots of land were being transferred from one land distribution system (with less taxes) to a redesignation of plots for colonial settlers (with higher taxation). A major thesis of Weber's *Roman Agrarian History* turns on the correctness of the reading of this inscription. And when our world burns up, historians of post-modernity will perhaps unearth a fossilised swap with the mysterious initials C D O—and only when this is revealed as 'collateral debt obligation' will historians be able to explain the downfall of modernity.

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