possibilities" open to the actors of a given period. His study of the great crises of the past reveals the role played by the occidental world religions in the process of rationalization. The rational prophecies of Judaism and Christianity, the stress of Calvinism on inner-worldly asceticism, are described as contributing to the triumph of modern capitalism - a power destined to eventually destroy its own creators.

IV

On the basis of Max Weber's philosophy and methodology his younger brother, Alfred Weber, as early as 1914, undertook to develop his historico-sociological system. Since then he has published several articles and essays; the latest publication, the magnum opus entitled Kulturgeschichte als Kultursoziologie (Cultural History as Cultural Sociology) appeared in 1935 in Leiden outside of the boundaries of the Third Reich. Alfred Weber gives his interpretation of the whole of human history both in historical and sociological terms. The historic detail is well integrated into a network of ideal-types. Looking at human history from the standpoint of present-day society, Alfred Weber makes a first step towards a synthesis of the linear and the cyclical conceptions of history, combining the methods of historical materialism and cultural idealism and therefore interpreting history both as the unfolding of the laws of mass movements and as the result of the free and unique actions of individuals. Taking as the point of departure the concept of man as he develops historically in all his various manifestations in society, Weber comes to a pluralism of social and historical levels.

Before presenting a full picture of the historic dynamism, Alfred Weber gives us a vertical scheme, a cross-cut of the processes into which the totality of human development may be ideal-typically dissected. Starting from three "focal-points"[52], he distinguishes the following three processes (spheres, systems): The "civilizational process" (Zivilisationsprozeß), the "societal process" (Gesellschaftsprozeß), and the "cultural process" (Kulturprozeß)[53]. The civ-

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51) H. Speier, op.cit., p.386; cf. also H. Becker's concept of the "constructed type", ibid., pp.527-530 and pp.17-46.

52) Barnes and Becker, Social Thought.... p.772.

53) Alfred Weber and those authors who follow him name Toynbee's Civilizations "Geschichtsbezirke", "Hoch-Kulturen", or sometimes simply "Kulturen" (as for example does Spengler). The terms culture and civilization, as used in the compounds cultural process and civilizational process for Alfred Weber have a completely different meaning since they refer to two diverse processes going on at the same time within the same Historic Civilization (this term now used in the sense of Toynbee) and to two different spheres of life existing side by side within the same society and typical for all civilized societies. For Alfred Weber culture means the "higher" symbolic expressive activities and achievements of the human soul, especially religion and art, whereas civilization stands for the technical, scientific, utilitarian, material