

New Horizons in the Translation and Interpretation of Max Weber?: An Interview with Joaquín Abellán

Novos horizontes na tradução e na interpretação de Max Weber?: uma entrevista com Joaquín Abellán

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Abstract

The interview with Joaquín Abellán, a teacher at the Complutense University of Madrid and a prominent translator of Max Weber into Spanish, analyzes common errors in traditional translations of his texts, especially in Latin America. Abellán emphasizes the necessity of philological revisions based on the critical edition (Max Weber Gesamtausgabe), pointing out conceptual problems that distort Weber's thought. He criticizes, for example, the translation of *Beruf* as “vocation” and *Herrschaft* as “domination,” and questions the usual interpretation of “plebiscitary democracy” as an authoritarian form. According to Abellán, Weber referred to changes in political parties, not to the defense of personalist regimes. The interview also addresses Marianne Weber's role in the posthumous edition of *Economy and Society*, the international dissemination of the work, and the influence of Talcott Parsons. Abellán proposes translations that are more faithful to the original and advocates for a critical, precise, and contextualized reading of Weber, contributing to the renewal of studies about the author.

Keywords: Max Weber; translation; plebiscitary democracy; critical interpretation; social theory.

Resumo

A entrevista com Joaquín Abellán, professor da Universidade Complutense de Madri e tradutor destacado de Max Weber para o espanhol, analisa erros comuns nas traduções tradicionais de seus textos, especialmente na América Latina. Abellán destaca a necessidade de revisões filológicas baseadas na edição crítica (Max Weber Gesamtausgabe), apontando problemas conceituais que distorcem o pensamento de Weber. Ele critica, por exemplo, a tradução de *Beruf* como “vocação” e de *Herrschaft* como “dominação”, além de questionar a interpretação usual da “democracia plebiscitária” como forma autoritária. Segundo Abellán, Weber se referia a mudanças nos partidos políticos, e não à defesa de regimes personalistas. A entrevista também aborda o papel de Marianne Weber na edição póstuma de *Economia e Sociedade*, a difusão internacional da obra e a influência



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de Talcott Parsons. Abellán propõe traduções mais fiéis ao original e defende uma leitura crítica, precisa e contextualizada de Weber, contribuindo para a renovação dos estudos sobre o autor.

Palavras-chave: Max Weber; tradução; democracia plebiscitária; interpretação crítica; teoria social.

Cristiano Bodart: *To begin this interview, could you tell us a little about your academic and intellectual journey? How did you come to dedicate yourself to the translation of the works of Max Weber?*

Joaquín Abellán: My university journey was varied, although within related fields. First, I studied Philosophy and Literature, then Political Science and Sociology, and finally Law, obtaining three degrees. For a time, I worked in Public Administration, at the Government Presidency, in a position obtained through a public competition.

After a few years, I decided to dedicate myself exclusively to the university, at the Complutense University. Throughout my academic career, I progressed through different levels until I reached the chair in the Faculty of Political Sciences and Sociology. My studies and research have always been related to German thought and the history of Germany.

My doctoral thesis was about Wilhelm von Humboldt, focusing not only on his educational approach but especially on his conception of the State, his critique of absolutism, and his political-constitutional proposals for Prussia. Humboldt was initially responsible for the area of Education and founded the university that today bears his name. Later, as Minister of Constitutional Affairs, he drafted a representative constitution project for Prussia, which ended up not being implemented due to his dismissal following disagreements with Chancellor Hardenberg.

I started my thesis in Germany, with a scholarship from DAAD, at the University of Freiburg (Freiburg im Breisgau), in the southwest of the country, under the guidance of teacher Wilhelm Hennis, a political scientist who passed away a few years ago. Hennis, a teacher of Political Science and the History of Political Ideas, devoted the last years of his life to a thorough study of the work of Max Weber. I followed, in part, the path I saw in him. As I focused on Max Weber, the first thing I did was to start translating some of his writings. Although some were already in Spanish, I considered that it was possible to improve the translations to make them more faithful to the original texts.

Weber's work had an enormous global reception, but its interpretation gave rise to certain approaches that, over time, seemed inadequate to me. Especially in recent years, I have seen more clearly how some interpretations - particularly regarding his political writings and his political sociology - generated a stereotyped view with which I do not agree. Therefore, recently, I have been dedicating myself to questioning these readings, offering new translations or alternative explanations. This is how I began to work with Weber, without neglecting my role as a teacher of the history of political theory. Weber is naturally present in the themes and, especially in a faculty of Political Science and Sociology, he is widely studied and cited, but I believe that there are still analytical perspectives that I consider inadequate.

With Weber, perhaps the first thing I did was the translation of *The Protestant Ethic* in 2001. Then came other translations; the *Protestant Ethic* has been reprinted several times, and on January 30th, 2025, its third edition was released, after multiple reprints. In other words, it has been nearly 30 years since I started publishing about Weber.

Cristiano Bodart: *What motivates the retranslation of Max Weber's texts into Spanish, considering that there are already translated versions in that language?*

Joaquín Abellán: Yes, as I mentioned before, I noticed that the translations made in Spain, Mexico, or Argentina, for example, were not updated. The major work *Economy and Society* was translated into Spanish in Mexico by the Economic Culture Fund in 1944, but the German edition of Weber's *Collected Works* presented this text in a very different way from the edition published in Germany in 1921-1922, which went through several editions and additions later on. The current German edition has completely changed what we used to know as *Economy and Society* (*Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*).

As for the translation into Spanish, I felt that I couldn't understand the text itself. I realized that, for example, I didn't clearly understand the difference between rational action in relation to ends and the other type of action that Weber calls "wertrational". Around this term/concept, I believe there have been many interpretations that do not correspond to what Weber really says in *Economy and Society* or in other works I consulted to understand it better.

That was how I started to translate some of his writings: First, chapters from *Economy and Society*, and then other related texts, especially concerning his conception of social science, the objectivity

of knowledge, and the reason why this discipline cannot make value judgments or justify valuations. I also worked on his political writings, especially some that had not yet been translated, written in the last years of his life. Among them, his critique of the Constitution of the Deutsches Reich, the unified German state between 1871 and 1918, and his proposals for what could be the Constitution of the Weimar Republic.

It is on this theme that I have seen the most unfounded interpretations, which do not correspond to Weber's texts. An image of Weber was created as an antiliberal and antiparliamentary figure. And I believe there is a deep confusion at this point that we might be able to discuss. For example, his writing on the president of the Republic has been interpreted in a way that ignores what Weber is really proposing. Hence arose this exaggerated idea of the “charismatic leader,” but I don't find in his texts what many claim that Weber wrote about this concept and its historical context (Weber died in June 1920).

This has been my effort over the past few years: to try to clarify and explain this issue. In this sense, I believe I have made an important contribution - of course, subject to discussion. I have published some works on the subject and hope they gain traction. For me, the usual interpretation of “plebiscitary democracy” in Weber is misguided. I don't believe Weber understands it in the way it is usually presented - including in Brazil. I recall that a Sociology teacher from Hamburg (Stephan Breuer) gave conferences in Brazil a few years ago, where he presented a paper in German that was later published in Portuguese. I completely disagree with the opposition he makes between “plebiscitary democracy” and “representative democracy,” because plebiscitary democracy, I assert, is situated in Weber at a different level than a form of state or government.

All of this led me to translate a few more texts, in search of clarification.

Cristiano Bodart: *Could you highlight the central aspects of your review of Weber's works translations? In what points do your versions differ from the previous ones?*

Joaquín Abellán: Basically, I believe that the concepts or terms that I translated differently, as well as the explanations I provided, are quite different from what is usual in Spanish. Furthermore, I see that this also occurs in the French editions and, as far as I have observed, in the Portuguese versions.

This relates, for example, to concepts such as “Beruf” (politics as *Beruf*, science as *Beruf*). Usually, in Spanish, it has been translated as “vocation” – “Science as a vocation” and “Politics as a vocation.” I delved into the explanation of this term and proposed an alternative because I believe that the meaning of the concept is more oriented towards the idea of “profession,” of work, of labor activity. For this reason, I consider it more appropriate to translate it as “politics as an activity,” “political activity” (the profession of a politician), or in the same way “science as a profession,” that is, as the activity of a scientist.

Evidently, when dealing with the activity that constitutes the profession of the scientist or the politician, nuances arise related to Weber's conception of “Beruf”. He explains in several writings - especially in *The Protestant Ethic and the “Spirit” of Capitalism* - that it is a profession, a job, an occupation, with certain aspects that we could qualify as having religious resonance. According to Weber, this was the concept present among Protestants: Beruf as the fulfillment of an activity in response to a divine calling, that is, work as an activity pleasing in the eyes of God. This content, in fact, is linked, according to him, to the Protestant tradition and its way of understanding work, profession, and life in the world - distinct from the Catholic view.

I have to admit that when I talk in my classes about “politics as a profession,” I don't always succeed, because the term “vocation” is very widespread. In Spanish - and I believe that a similar situation occurs in Portuguese - “vocation” is usually understood as a disposition or inclination to pursue a profession or a job that we feel particularly attracted to. And this, however, is not the central point of Beruf in Weber, as he explains in *Science as a Profession* (1917). In our language, we tend to restrict the idea of professional vocation to expressions like “I like my profession,” “I feel motivated by my work.” We also talk about professions that are especially vocational, such as being a priest or a doctor - that is, professions that require a special commitment or dedication.

However, when speaking of social science and politics, Weber is addressing what these activities consist of and what their limits are. In the case of social science, the limit is that it cannot establish value judgments, as its function is to explain a social phenomenon: Why it occurred in a certain way and not another, what its causes or reasons were, and what its consequences were. In the case of politics, the limit lies in the fact that the politician should not forget that they engage in a struggle for power in our world - a world that, for Weber, is not rational from a moral point of view - and politics is an activity that uses force; that is, the politician's guide cannot be absolute convictions that aim to be realized “come what may.”

I have reflected a lot, especially in recent years, about the limits that Weber imposes on social science. For him, social analysis, historical analysis, cannot substantiate, based on the empirical analysis of reality, moral, philosophical, or, in general, so-called value judgments. Therefore, it is essential that these concepts are properly understood. This is why I placed such importance on the theme of objectivity and other methodological writings of Weber on the distinction between, on one hand, scientific-social analysis and explanation, and on the other hand, the formulation of value judgments.

Some of these texts had already been translated, for example, in Argentina, but in my translations, I needed to distance myself from them in some fundamental points.

Another concept that I believe I have contributed to is that of “ideal types,” a theme that is inevitably present in Weber's work. However, I did not find a definition of ideal type that considers certain passages in which Weber himself offers a definition of the term. When speaking of ideal types, I usually expressively say that “ideal types” is the term that Weber uses for the concepts of social sciences, that is, for the theoretical and conceptual constructions that the researcher utilizes. These are concepts specifically elaborated, whose relationship with reality is distinct from that established by philosophy or the natural sciences and which, in the case of social sciences, are constructed as instruments for conducting empirical research.

It is Weber himself who, in a passage of the article published in the magazine *Logos* (1917), writes that he calls these concepts ideal types, but could have given them another name. We continue to use the term “ideal type” because it was the name he gave, but essentially, it refers to the conceptualizations, the conceptual categories of the social sciences. These passages to which I refer are not usually mentioned or considered, and I have brought them to the forefront.

Cristiano Bodart: *Inaccurate translations can lead to misguided interpretations. In your opinion, did this happen with Max Weber's thought?*

Joaquín Abellán: Yes, especially because, for me, there is already a fundamental problem: The concept of “plebiscitary democracy” is the origin of many interpretations that I consider completely inadequate. But this is a recurring problem in the history of concepts.

Part of my research has focused precisely on this, on the history of concepts, and, concretely, I have worked on some of them. I published in Spanish, by Alianza Editorial, studies on the history of the concepts of democracy, politics, state, sovereignty, and nation (in Germany, England, and France). Currently, I am preparing a study on the concept of nation in Spain, which will be published in a separate volume. In the history of concepts, I have observed that it is common for many authors to appropriate a term or word from tradition or from other authors, but attributing to it a meaning or semantic content different from what that author (or historical period) originally gave. I believe that this is exactly what happened with the term “plebiscitary democracy.”

It has been quite common to interpret Weber in relation to the “plebiscitary democracy,” to the “charismatic leader” and so on, following the line of Carl Schmitt, who, in fact, had very little personal contact with Weber - just a seminar at the University of Munich. However, it seems clear that Schmitt had nothing to do with Weber's thought; in fact, he was opposed to it. The word used by Schmitt bears no relation to the meaning and semantic content that Weber attributed to it.

This has been the theme I have reflected on the most recently. In other words, in light of a tradition that has lasted for decades - and which dates back to Wolfgang Mommsen in the late 1950s and early 1960s - my position is that “plebiscitary democracy” is not a type of democracy opposed to representative democracy or other forms of democracy, as I have pointed out before.

Weber himself, in *Politics as a Vocation* - a lecture given to students at the University of Munich in January 1919 and published in the spring of the same year under the title *Politics as a Profession* -, uses the term “plebiscitary democracy” to refer to the phenomenon of the transformation of political parties throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. This transformation consisted of the evolution of parties towards organized and centralized structures, with their own bureaucracy and leaders. This process of change is what Weber calls “plebiscitary democracy.”

The curious thing is that in “*Politics as a Vocation*” there is a passage where, after discussing this historical and sociological phenomenon of the transformation of parties, Weber writes that this phenomenon is, “putting it in other words, the introduction of plebiscitary democracy.” In this work, he analyzes this process of party transformation, particularly in the United States and England. He explains that, in the mid-19th century - and in the United States, a little before that - the parties, along with their leaders and bureaucratic structures, became the center of politics, displacing those who had directed politics up until then. In previous decades, after the consolidation of constitutional states and following the French and American revolutions, the main political actors were the parliamentary deputies (in connection with the “notables” of their

respective electoral districts). These deputies, still without a centralized organization, were elected in small districts (and by a limited number of voters). In the case of England and the United States, it was then the deputies themselves who directed and established policy (in conjunction with local elites).

The great change occurs when parties transform into more organized structures and begin to play a central role. From then on, it is the parties and their leaders who command politics and exercise authority over their own parliamentarians. This is the key point. And this is what has been happening - and continues to happen - for more than a century: Although legislative activity takes place in parliament, political direction is no longer in the hands of the parliamentarians themselves, but of the parties, through which citizens elect their representatives.

This is what Weber refers to as “plebiscitary democracy.” For him, this is the most significant case of “plebiscitary power.” And “plebiscitary power” is, according to Weber, a type of power that combines elements of charismatic power with legal/rational power. Weber considers both what occurs in modern parties since then - or what occurred in his time - as examples of “plebiscitary power,” as well as certain forms of state in which there were heads of state whose power combined legal/rational with charismatic. He mentions, for example, the Napoleons in France (caesarism or bonapartism), where the election by citizens was combined with the concentration of power, subverting the democratic principle to ultimately govern authoritarily, legitimizing their decisions through plebiscites.

For me, the major mistake surrounding this concept was to understand “plebiscitary democracy” as a kind of direct democracy, or a democracy based on the personal charisma of the leader, when in fact Weber is referring to the modern transformation of parties. In other words, “plebiscitary democracy” is, in fact, the phenomenon of party transformation that occurred in England. This transformation was accelerated, especially, by the electoral reform of 1867-1868, and in the United States it occurred even earlier, during the time of Andrew Jackson (the seventh president of the U.S., from 1829 to 1837), in the second decade of the 19th century, between 1820 and 1830.

Sorry to insist, but I think this is very important: if Weber studies “plebiscitary democracy” in two different types of state, it cannot be interpreted as a direct democracy or as a regime in which a single person concentrates all power. The fact that this phenomenon has occurred in two distinct systems of government - a presidential republic and a parliamentary monarchy - demonstrates that its meaning lies in another dimension. And, as far as I know, I have never seen this being presented in this way by anyone. And it is Weber himself who states - and I quote verbatim: “This

phenomenon is, said in other words, the introduction of plebiscitary democracy.” In other words, the introduction of new parties, even in two distinct political systems.

Weber highlighted a phenomenon that remains relevant regarding the centrality of political parties. Modern parties are the ones that dominate politics today. When there are parliamentary or presidential elections, it is the leaders and parties that draft the lists of candidates, conduct electoral campaigns, and ultimately promote someone to be the head of government - in the case of a parliamentary monarchy - or president, in a presidential republic.

Cristiano Bodart: *Weber became a classic of Sociology worldwide, partly thanks to the translation of his works into various languages. Besides the quality of his work, what other factors contributed to his international diffusion?*

Joaquín Abellán: I believe this is due to the fact that Weber was one of the first to introduce sociology - that is, a study of society and history carried out in a way different from what existed until then, with a specific type of concepts: The so-called ideal types. These are the concepts of social sciences, which do not work like those of philosophy or natural sciences. They have a relative “objectivity” - always in quotes - depending both on the nature of their object of study and on the way they are constructed.

Moreover, Weber became especially known on the occasion of the centenary of his birth, at a congress held in 1964, in Germany, with specialists from the country and many German teachers who had exiled in previous decades. Various central themes of his sociology were discussed, and the thesis was also spread that Weber's writings had somehow prepared the Germans to accept the authoritarianism that culminated in the catastrophe of National Socialism. Now, you ask me: How was all this related to Weber? Was it through his concept of charisma? Or through his proposals about the presidency of the future republic?

In summary: Regarding your proposal about the President of the Republic, there are two fundamental texts. One is very brief, from February 1919, about the president of the Deutsches Reich, shortly after the Weimar Constituent Assembly elected the first President of the Republic (Friedrich Ebert, from the SPD party). This text is almost a summary of a more extensive text he wrote in 1918, after the end of the war and with eyes turned towards the immediate future. In this text, Weber proposed a fundamental change in relation to the previous political system: He advocated for a republic, as he believed that the monarchy no longer served for the future, and he

believed that the republic should have a president elected by all citizens (universal male and female suffrage).

Why this preference? Weber analyzed several options for the way to choose the president: A federal presidency, like that of Switzerland; a presidency elected by the parliamentary chambers, like in the Third French Republic; or a president elected directly by the citizens - the option he favored. One of the interpretative errors is to assume that because Weber advocated for a president elected directly by the citizens and not by parliament, he wanted to eliminate parliament. Nothing could be further from the truth. For him, there should be two chambers: One elected by universal suffrage, as I mentioned, and a federal chamber representing the Länder, as he advocated for a federal and democratic state. This president, however, should be subject to the constitution and the laws. Weber states this clearly in these two texts written after the war.

That's why I wonder: How was the idea constructed that Weber supported a "plebiscitary democracy" that could lead to totalitarianism? I have already mentioned that when Weber talks about "plebiscitary democracy," he is not referring to a form of state or government. Do you see, Cristiano, how certain concepts have been articulated to form a distorted image of Weber? Where did this idea come from? His writings are clear - and so are the reasons why he preferred a president directly elected by the people: So that this institutional power would serve the unity of the new state and the task of social and economic reconstruction of Germany after the war.

When it is insisted, as a criticism of Weber, that he wanted a presidential republic, it is generally omitted that he also proposed a parliament - which would control the government - that is, a parliament with a relevant role, even if it did not have the competence to elect the president, since the latter would be elected directly by the citizens. In his proposals regarding the presidency of the state, there is nothing that points towards authoritarianism. He writes that the president must uphold the laws and always keep before him "the rope and the gallows," to remind himself not to exceed the limits of his institutional powers.

That is why, when his proposal is interpreted as indicative of a "plebiscitary democracy" - in the sense of a direct democracy - it is ignored that "plebiscitary democracy" has nothing to do with this, because, as I have been insisting, for Weber this term does not designate a form of State or government. I wonder: At what point does Weber refer to his proposal for Weimar as "plebiscitary democracy?"

This is where many of the confusions arise. Weber proposed that the president should have the powers established in the Constitution - directly related to the reconstruction of Germany - but

always within the limits of the Constitution itself, which, for him, was above the powers of the State. That was the central idea of the Weimar Constitution.

Cristiano Bodart: *What is the translation that you proposed for the term that has commonly been translated as “domination?”*

Joaquín Abellán: I believe that the problem lies in what we understand, in Portuguese or Spanish, by “domination.” What do we call domination?

If they tell me that domination is a power capable of imposing itself on other people, even against their will, then we would be talking about a concept of power that is different from another: That of a power which also imposes itself on others, yes, but which is accepted because there is some reason that justifies it - and therefore, a reason for obedience. These are clearly two distinct concepts of power. The first is more generic and indefinite: A power of a person that imposes itself on others, but could also choose not to impose itself, should it wish to. Someone has power today and imposes it, but tomorrow may decide not to exercise it. It is a somewhat imprecise, variable concept. The second concept, on the other hand, is a power that imposes itself, but is accepted, because there is a reason or basis for such imposition and for it to be accepted: the relationship established in this second concept provides a basis for a stable relationship between the one who commands and the one who obeys.

How do we differentiate between these two types of power in Portuguese or Spanish? One power that is imposed arbitrarily, and another that is imposed because there is a foundation for the command and obedience - that is, a legitimized, grounded power?

In German, Weber refers to *Macht* as the arbitrary, discretionary power that can impose itself or not, according to the will of the one who holds it. It has the capacity to impose itself but also not to do so. A stable power relationship is not established; it is an undetermined power (“sociologically amorphous,” as Weber puts it). On the other hand, *Herrschaft* is the term he uses for the power that imposes itself and has a reason or cause to compel and be accepted.

If we translate *Herrschaft* as “domination” in Spanish (or in Portuguese), we create confusion because, in our languages, “domination” usually refers to a power that imposes itself on others, even against their will, arbitrarily or at their discretion - that is, exercised or not according to the

wishes of the one who dominates. But that is precisely what Weber calls *Macht*. We would then be translating *Herrschaft* with the content of *Macht*, that is, exactly the opposite of what Weber does.

Do you see the problem? That's why my proposal is to distinguish between these two types of power. Both *Macht* and *Herrschaft* are forms of power, but *Herrschaft* implies a relationship that can be accepted - that is, it is a power that is grounded, legitimized (to command and to be obeyed). And this is exactly what Weber does. Therefore, I propose to translate *Herrschaft* as "legitimate power" (legitimized, grounded) and *Macht* as "simple power," that is, the power of pure and simple imposition.

Moreover, in one of his writings published posthumously, Weber not only talks about *Herrschaft* but explicitly defines it as legitimate *Herrschaft*, that is, "legitimate power." With this adjective, he clearly highlights the differentiated content of *Herrschaft* in relation to *Macht*: A power that is imposed because there is a reason that justifies its acceptance.

And that is what I bring in my translation proposal: *Herrschaft* as legitimate power (legitimized, grounded). I myself started by using the traditional translation - domination - until I replaced it with the conceptual contradiction it contained.

Cristiano Bodart: *Weber's fame has been very much linked, at least in Brazil, to the idea that Marianne Weber collaborated in the translation and dissemination of his texts. On one hand, the quality of his intellectual production is undeniable, but on the other hand, there was also a structure that facilitated its dissemination. What factors do you consider contributed to Weber surpassing the borders of Germany and achieving international recognition?*

Joaquín Abellán: Many factors contributed to Weber's diffusion. On the one hand, several German emigrants, especially Jews, translated him into English after settling in the United States. And the sociologist Talcott Parsons, for example, who was in Germany in the late 1920s and 1930s to complete his doctoral thesis, played a huge role in promoting Weber, offering an interpretation of him as a functionalist sociologist. This interpretation has been rightly criticized, as has his translation - see, for example, the English translations made by Keith Tribe.

Regarding what you mention about Marianne Weber: It is true that she prepared the book *Economy and Society* for the first edition (since Weber only managed to revise the first four chapters before his death), wrote a biography of her husband in which she included excerpts from

his writings, and always took care to organize the works he left behind. However, as the editors of the Complete Works (Max Weber Gesamtausgabe) showed, she made many mistakes, and therefore the current edition of *Economy and Society* is completely different from the first German edition and the subsequent editions that served as the basis for translations into other languages.

The Spanish translation published in Mexico (by the *Fondo de Cultura Económica*) is from 1944, and the second edition was already based on the fourth German edition from 1964, carried out by Johannes Winckelmann. From what I could observe, the Italians have already produced a different edition, and the French are also starting to revise the old edition. However, the Mexican edition has not yet changed, although it has been supplemented with extensive comments by Gil Villegas.

Cristiano Bodart: *How do you assess the current reception of Weberian theory in Spain? What impact do you expect from the more recent introductions, including those in which you have participated?*

Joaquín Abellán: Weber's reception in Spain occurred not only through the Mexican edition of *Economy and Society* but also through the mediation of Anglo-Saxon authors who wrote about Weber. It is a pity, indeed, that there is no collaboration among various Hispano-American publishers, for example, to launch editions of Weber's texts in accordance with the Complete Works in German. It would have been very helpful to coordinate efforts to revise at least the works of Weber translated into Spanish in various areas: Methodology of the sciences, religion, politics, for example.

In the Hispanic world, we have many texts by Weber translated and reissued repeatedly without this revision being made - such as *The Protestant Ethic and the "Spirit" of Capitalism*, *Science as a Vocation*, *Politics as a Vocation*, *The Sociology of Religion*, in addition to various methodological and political writings. In some of these cases, the translation was not even done directly from German. This was the case, for example, of the edition of *The Politician and the Scientist*, but in my most recent edition, published by *Alianza Editorial* - one of the main publishers in Spain - the translation was done directly from the original German text.

As for the influence that my edits of Weber may have, honestly, I don't know what to tell you. I would be very happy if they were taken into account and helped to foster the debate about Weber. However, I can tell you that I often encounter the fact that, when I explain my edits of Weber (which generally include a glossary of proper names, among other tools) or in my university classes,

Weber's interpretative framework is already very crystallized. This same framework tends to be repeated in various areas of Weber's work - both in fundamental aspects of his methodology and in his political sociology - without questioning. It took me some time to feel comfortable presenting translations and interpretations that differ from those traditionally established.

As I learned the German language better, and having been a teacher in Berlin for several semesters - which allowed me to access the original texts of Weber with more preparation - I began to notice nuances that I had not seen before in the translations I myself used. Still, I continue to encounter some resistance to the acceptance of these new interpretations.

Allow me to tell an anecdote: Recently, at a conference, a colleague from the university said to me: "Joaquín, you are trying to 'clean up' Weber," meaning that my works were trying to soften or redeem Weber's image, as if he were a suspect thinker and I was trying to absolve him. Honestly, I believe that what I do is not "cleaning up," but bringing to light passages from his works that have not been considered in the dominant interpretation, or reviewing Spanish translations that I consider inadequate.

I hope that colleagues and readers can tell me whether what I present is correct or not - whether it is or is not consistent with Weber's texts - and, if it is, that this serves to show that it may be necessary to thoroughly review the analytical and interpretative framework that has consolidated around some parts of his work.

Throughout this interview, which I sincerely appreciate, we discussed some of these cases. Thank you very much.

Cristiano Bodart: *Thank you very much for this enriching interview.*

Como referenciar este artigo

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