

This Week's Citation Classic®

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Bendix R. *Work and authority in industry: ideologies of management in the course of industrialization.* New York: Wiley, 1956. 464 p.

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This book deals with ideologies of management that seek to justify the subordination of large masses to the discipline and authority of employers. Four case studies are examined: England in the process of industrialization, modern-day America, Russia under the czars, and the Eastern Zone of Germany under the commissars. In each of these a more or less well-defined managerial ideology is found and traced to its historical sources. [The *SSCI*® indicates that this book has been cited in over 275 publications since 1966.]

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Looked at some 30 years after publication, the book appears to me as a turning point in my career as well as a harbinger of things to come. I came to the US in 1938, a refugee from Hitler's Germany and an aging freshman of 22 at the University of Chicago. My initial impulse was a preoccupation with the "German problem," but by the early 1950s I thought this preoccupation too parochial, even though my firsthand experience with tyranny continued to trouble me. As a result, the book focuses attention on those features of autocratic and dictatorial rule in czarist Russia and the German Democratic Republic that (as it turns out) have become dominant world-political influences ever since.

At the University of Chicago I was confronted with two intellectual orientations. One emphasized life histories, urban as well as eth-

nic and occupational subcultures; the other emphasized demography and public-opinion research. Some tension concerning methodological issues existed between the two. I was dissatisfied with these alternatives because neither seemed concerned with the disastrous political developments that had nearly destroyed my family.^{1,2}

With the support of Louis Wirth,³ I turned to comparative social history, which satisfied my sense that we don't live on the "knife-edge of the present," my preoccupation with the use and abuse of authority, and my concern with the empirical world that I had learned at Chicago. This led me to make industrial organizations and industrial relations my major focus: it was where the work of the world was getting done with increased productivity and where the lives of large numbers of people are affected by institutional authority. What difference did dictatorial rule make, not to an educated elite, but to the proverbial man in the street? In pursuing this question in terms of "ideologies of management, East and West, then and now," I explored the development of industry in England and Russia during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and in the US and the German Democratic Republic in the recent past. This set the stage for an analysis of the bureaucratization of industry.

My major themes are with us still: the East-West conflict at an ideological level and the exercise of authority in industrial organizations, the legitimation of commands and the presence or absence of a work ethic, the modernization of the economy, and the enabling or disabling legacies of each country's past. Not only that: since my career began in the mid-1940s, the interest of sociologists and political scientists has shifted, not so much away from the concerns of the "Chicago School" as towards macroscopic studies, whether in the context of systems theory or, as an alternative, in the comparative context of social history. The book's relevance in so many different respects may account for the continued interest.

1. Bendix R. *From Berlin to Berkeley: German-Jewish identities.* New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1986. 300 p.

2. ———. *Embattled reason, essays on social knowledge.* New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1988. 2 vols.

3. Wirth L. Preface. (Mannheim K.) *Ideology and utopia: an introduction to the sociology of knowledge.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, (1936) 1968. p. xiii-xxxii.

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