



# Max Weber's Theory of Modernity: The Endless Pursuit of Meaning (Classical and Contemporary Social Theory)

*Michael Symonds*

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## **Max Weber's Theory of Modernity: The Endless Pursuit of Meaning (Classical and Contemporary Social Theory)** Michael Symonds

This book illuminates an important dimension of the work of Max Weber. Weber's theory of meaning and modernity is articulated through an understanding of his account of the way in which the pursuit of meaning in the modern world has been shaped by the loss of Western religion and how such pursuit gives sense to the phenomena of human suffering and death. Through a close, scholarly reading of Weber's extensive writings and Vocation Lectures, the author explores the concepts of "paradox" and "brotherliness" as found in Weber's work, in order to offer an original exposition of Weber's actual theory of how meaning and meaninglessness work in the modern world. In addition to making a substantial and highly original contribution to the sociology of modernity, the book applies the theory of meaning extracted from Weber's thought, addressing the claim that Weber's work has been rendered out-dated by the supposed re-enchantment of the modern world, as well as discussing the ways this theory can contribute to our understanding of the development of specific forms of modernity. A rigorous examination of the thought of one of the most important figures in classical sociology, this volume will appeal to scholars of sociology, social theory and philosophy with interests in modernity, Weber and the concept of meaning.

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