No matter whether understood in goal-oriented (zweckrational), value-oriented (wertrational), emotional, or traditional terms, people’s actions are always self-consciously for their own benefit. Their benefits may be material ones like the goals or values afforded via bureaucratic means, or the authority permitted in accordance with “what we are traditionally accustomed to.” Or then again, they may be emotional ones gained from acts of devotion toward a charismatic leader. Like most of Weber’s scholarship, this reading addresses Weber’s central question, “Why did capitalism first emerge in Western Europe?” Part of Weber’s answer is that this emergence was only possible given sufficiently extensive developments in communication, transportation, and other technologies. Yet he also argued that capitalism could only emerge within societies in which social action was broadly interpreted as goal-oriented. So where do new ideas (for example, goal-oriented action) come from? Weber’s answer was that they originate spontaneously in charismatic leaders’ appeals for disciples at times of despair, hopelessness, or banality. However, charismatic authority is inherently unstable and nontransferable. Charismatic leaders confer authority on disciples by personally summoning them to administrative duty. When a charismatic leader dies, the beginnings of a new traditional or rational social form emerge with the inevitable routinization (i.e., traditionalization and/or rationalization) of disciples’ authority as each seeks to preserve her or his material interests within their community. Accordingly, social change (for instance, toward capitalism in Europe) is driven by the shocks charismatic leaders’ ideas pose to the routine structures of the everyday world.