

Ernst Peter Wilhelm Troeltsch (German: ; 17 February - 1 February) was a German liberal Protestant theologian, writer on the philosophy of religion and the philosophy of history, and a classical liberal politician.

Related Topics Ernst Troeltsch is not an easy figure to categorize owing to the breadth of his intellectual interests. He was a German Protestant theologian who made major scholarly contributions to theology, social ethics, philosophy of religion, philosophy of history, and sociology of religion. Troeltsch was preoccupied for much of his academic career with the advent of modern civilization and its implications for Christianity. His scholarly research was driven by a passionate concern for the wellbeing of the church and its relationship to society. Troeltsch perceived that the church in Europe at the dawn of the twentieth century was encountering an entirely new set of social realities in the wake of the Enlightenment: As Troeltsch surveyed the landscape of Europe in the early years of the twentieth century he worried about the present condition and future prospects of western civilization; he did not share the optimism that many of his contemporaries in church and society exhibited. He was the eldest of five children. The son of a doctor, his father encouraged him to think about scientific problems. On completing his studies at the gymnasium in Augsburg, Troeltsch entered the University of Erlangen to study theology in Owing to his dislike for the conservative character of the theology faculty, he transferred to Berlin for a year. Troeltsch moved to Bonn in to become a junior professor. He remained in the post until While at Heidelberg he was colleague and neighbor to Max Weber , one of the formative thinkers in the discipline of sociology, and friends with Georg Jellinek , a Jewish historian, and Abraham Kuyper , an influential Calvinist theologian. In Troeltsch accepted an invitation to become a professor in philosophy at the University of Berlin. He had initially been approached about the possibility of taking up a chair in the faculty of theology, but members within the faculty opposed his appointment. He died prematurely of a heart condition on February 1, Themes History and Historiography Troeltsch mastered several intellectual disciplines. Yet, the thread that runs through his substantial and diverse body of work is history. History is the fundamental category in his thinking. According to Troeltsch, history is essentially a flow of events connected in a network of interacting elements. The task of historiography or modern historical scholarship is to locate human beings in the complex web of interacting forces operative in nature and human events, those contingent factors that shape all human existence Troeltsch, b, Furthermore, historiography is practiced in a new intellectual context marked by three characteristics. First, the modern conception of nature omits reference to metaphysics. God and notions of ultimate reality beyond the empirical, material world play no part in contemporary descriptions of the natural order. Second, a new conception of history has emerged that views all events as interconnected. Third, a new approach to ethics is evident. Troeltsch sees contemporary historiography as a method of inquiry consonant with modern scientific rational method, which assumes a naturalist perspective to explain the world without reference to God or the supernatural. Troeltsch is keen to offer an explanation for the course of historical events that can be accounted for in terms of cause and effect within the cosmos and human action. He recognizes that social reality is complex Ibid and wrestles with the challenge of discerning normative values in the midst of the contingent process of history. Principles of Critical History Troeltsch formulated three principles of critical history, which, in practice, governed all his historical inquiry. First, the principle of criticism stipulated that all historical judgments are open to revision and, therefore, can only attain a greater or lesser degree of probability. Second, the principle of analogy maintains that historical judgments presuppose an essential similarity between our humanity and the humanity of the past period. Thus if people do not typically rise bodily from the dead in our contemporary world and experience, we have no basis for assuming that any person could have done so in the past. Third, the principle of interrelatedness correlation means that to understand a historical event one must see it in terms of its antecedents and consequences and not separate it from its environment. Troeltsch was constrained by a rigid nineteenth century understanding of scientific law in the sense of an inflexible principle that governs conditions and does not allow for exceptions. The historical method stresses the difference between then and now. Moderns see the nature of reality, the cosmos and human beings, very differently to the ancients. Yet,

simultaneously, what is deemed to be possible within the purview of a naturalist worldview today ultimately determines what a scientific historian like Troeltsch judges to be probable in the past. Historical and Dogmatic Methods in Theology Troeltsch differentiated between a historical method and a dogmatic method in theology. The historical method subjected Christianity to comprehensive historical critical scrutiny. The dogmatic method made an exception for Christianity and viewed certain events, such as those associated with Jesus like the virgin birth and resurrection, in isolation from others by appealing to supernatural agency. Troeltsch insisted that every religious event must be seen in relation to its entire historical context. Hence, all occasions are particular and relative. Troeltsch applied historicism or radical historical contextualization to Christianity. Christian belief could not be founded on dogmatic assertion, but must be informed by historical studies. Anything that could not be verified according to the historical critical standards presupposing a naturalist world view should be abandoned. He avoids committing himself to affirmations of miracles, virgin birth, the cross as an atoning sacrifice for sin, bodily resurrection from the dead, and a second coming of Christ. Troeltsch applies social theory, specifically a social psychological explanation, to account for the impact of the person of Jesus upon his contemporaries and the emergence of the church. Jesus Christ is responsible by means of his personality and teaching for causing the response that resulted in the formation of a community, the early Church, although he had no control over the nature of the response he precipitated. A community is created that preserves and transmits the teaching of Jesus and teaching about Jesus. Jesus is like the first domino in a series lined up, that, when toppled, causes a sequence of events that stretches from the past to the present. Troeltsch thus eschews metaphysical categories to explain the person and work of Jesus, and his significance for faith through the centuries to the present day. Jesus is the supreme expression of the Old Testament prophetic tradition, but he is not God incarnate. Troeltsch disavows a universal and absolute salvific value to the death of Jesus on the cross. Yet, Christianity is so intertwined with Western culture that Jesus is, in effect, absolute for Europe and North America, but may not necessarily be of absolute significance to people immersed in cultures where other religious traditions are preeminent. His approach is defined by his commitment to historical study. He is concerned with the condition and prospects of the contemporary Christian Church, but his instinct was always to examine the past with a view to understanding the present and helping Christianity engage with the complexities of the contemporary situation. Properly speaking, Troeltsch is a historical sociologist. He does not study the empirical social reality of the church in his own generation. The intellectual currents that challenged Dogmatic theology and the forces of modernization rapidly reconfiguring the social and cultural landscape in the Western world precipitate his concerns for the Church at the start of the twentieth century. Troeltsch delves into the historical to assist in the task of forging a cultural synthesis in the present. Christianity and the Religions Troeltsch wrestled with the realities of contingent history and the traditional assumption that Christianity was inherently absolute and superior to other world religions. In *The Absoluteness of Christianity and the History of Religions* he asserted the superiority of Christianity over all other religions from within a European perspective. However, the massive program of research he undertook for *The Social Teaching of the Churches* impressed upon him to an even greater degree the multiplicity of responses from within Christianity to diverse social contexts and cultural conditions and laid the foundation for his change of views on Christianity and its relation to other religions that were expressed in his posthumous work *The Place of Christianity Among the World Religions*. Certain questions need to be revisited in the light of what is learned from other religions. The basis of Christian belief cannot reside in either outer or inner miracles, unless Christians are willing to legitimate other religions on that basis. Troeltsch, , If Christianity has an overall claim to superiority it may be less a theological assertion than a cultural one Ibid. Finally, he refines his observation that religion is ubiquitous by noting that there is no single agenda which all religions share. All people may be religious, but the manner in which religion operates in individual cultures is varied. Hence, comparison seeking to demonstrate superiorities may be regarded as beside the point. Still, Troeltsch follows in the footsteps of Scheiermacher in relegating the doctrine of the Trinity to the margins of his thought. The Trinity in its dogmatic form cannot be substantiated by the historical critical method. Troeltsch is comfortable with a type of monotheism uncomplicated by a doctrine of the Trinity that proposes One God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit existing from eternity. God is a transcendent

reality who encounters human beings directly in the interior subjective experience of the individual. Troeltsch focuses his attention on the development of the Church in Western Europe. The Social Teaching made its debut amidst the optimism that characterized culture and Christianity in Western Europe in the opening years of the twentieth century. Troeltsch did not share the optimism of many of his contemporaries. In his opinion a cultural confusion and crisis threatened the fabric of Western civilization. The intellectual foundations upon which Western Christianity was built were in the process of crumbling. Troeltsch was also preoccupied with an intellectual and personal struggle over the nature of history. Historians can speak of probabilities but not absolute proof in matters of faith. He cared about the Church and its future. Methodology The Social Teaching was a groundbreaking study, because it applied sociological modes of thought to the history of the Church and Christian social ethics. Society is vast and complex. He concedes that nobody can survey every element in Society. No comprehensive description is possible. The historian must be selective and focus on a sector within Society. Troeltsch concentrates his interest on the Church in Western Europe and its relationship to the State and Social Order. He adopts an historical methodology to answer his central question. Troeltsch seeks to understand the basis of the social teachings of the Churches in five periods of development: He was struck by the diverse range of responses that emerged from within Christianity to different social contexts through the centuries. The Mediaeval and Calvinist syntheses were, in his opinion, the most imaginative and satisfactory harmonization of Christianity and culture. Troeltsch examines the history of the Church to find a solution for the Church in his generation. Troeltsch sketches out a method in four movements. First, he describes the contemporary problem that the Church must engage with. Second, he explores the history of the Church for clues to interpreting the present situation. Third, he aims at a theological synthesis. Fourth, he wants to propose strategies to guide the Church in the present moment and into the future.

Chapter 2 : Bryce A. Gayhart, The Ethics of Ernst Troeltsch a Commitment to Relevancy - PhilPapers

Ernst Troeltsch, (born Feb. 17, , Haunstetten, near Augsburg, Bavaria" died Feb. 1, , Berlin), German scholar of considerable influence on younger theologians of his time for his insistence that the Christian church reexamine its claims to absolute truth.

In , he moved on to teach at the University of Bonn ; in , he moved on again to Heidelberg University. Finally, in , he transferred to teach at what is now the University of Berlin where he took the title of professor of philosophy and civilization. At an academic conference that took place in , following a paper on the doctrine of logos , Troeltsch responded by saying "Gentlemen, everything is tottering! He described European civilisation as having three periods: The modern period starts much later on his account, beginning only in the seventeenth century. The Renaissance in Italy and the scientific revolution planted the seeds for the arrival of the modern period, and Protestantism delayed rather than heralded its onset. Protestantism, Troeltsch argued, was "in the first place, simply a modification of Catholicism, in which the Catholic formulation of the problems was retained, while a different answer was given to them". Each of the principles served as a philosophical retort for the issue of the preconceived notions sustained by the historian. Troeltsch surmised that judgments about the past must be varied. In such, the absolute truth of historical reality could not exist, rather, he claimed historical situation could only be examined as more likely or less likely to have happened. In this, Troeltsch understood to never create a finite and non-revisable claim. Principle of analogy[edit] This principle pertains to averting the historian from applying anachronism to the past. Troeltsch understands that the probability in the former principle can only be validated if a historians present situation, when assessing the probability, is not radically different from the past. This understanding applies a casual nature to all events, equaling thus, an effect. Any radical event, the historian should assume, effected the historical nexus immediately surrounding that event. Troeltsch determines that in historical explanation it is important to include antecedents and consequences of events. This is in an effort to maintain historical events in their conditioned time and space. Listen to the ethos that resounds in the splendour of heroism: To your weapons, To your weapons! This was part of a wider rejection of liberal thought with the rise of Neo-Orthodoxy in Protestant theology, especially with the prominence of Karl Barth in the German speaking world. Dictionary of Christian Biography. The Thought of Ernst Troeltsch. University Presses of Florida. Montgomery, , p. Systematic Theologian of Radical Historicality. The Historian and The Believer:

Chapter 3 : Q&A with Stanford Humanities Center fellow Brent Sockness | Stanford Humanities

Ernst Troeltsch is not an easy figure to categorize owing to the breadth of his intellectual interests. He was a German Protestant theologian who made major scholarly contributions to theology, social ethics, philosophy of religion, philosophy of history, and sociology of religion. Troeltsch was.

He married in 1868, and an only son was born in 1870. During 21 years at Heidelberg he published, besides his *Grundprobleme der Ethik*; *Fundamental Problems of Ethics*, a large number of articles on various subjects thematically linked with the development of the Christian churches. Many of these were later integrated into his best known work, *Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen*. In that work he explored the relationships between and within social and cultural groups in the context of the social ethics of the Christian churches, denominations, and sects. In 1890, realizing that his strength lay more in the philosophy of religion than in theology, he moved to a chair of philosophy at Berlin, a post he held until his death in 1903. Although the view seemed to him in important respects inescapable, he surmised that it applied inadequately to the norms—whether legal, religious, or ethical—that govern human conduct. If consistently applied, the historicist view would, he thought, make any present understanding of past ages impossible. The polymorphous, historically changing dogmas of the Christian church had to be reconciled with the absolute aspects of revealed truth interpreted anew by every generation. Despite this, many theologians have seen in Troeltsch only a critic of the certainties of Christianity. Paul Tillich, for example, accused him of sacrificing the absolute to the purely relative in religion *Kant-Studien*. His work has been influential precisely in those aspects that reveal his dislike of very general terms of reference—in its pioneering study of small social units or groups, such as the family, the guild, and the individual state, church, or sect, and also in its advocacy of the comparative approach to religious studies. Within Protestantism, he made important contributions to the study of the genesis of Lutheranism and Calvinism and their differing social ethics and social impact. Here he was in close sympathy concerning the nature of Protestant ethics with his friend the German sociologist and economist Max Weber—Troeltsch was familiar with the Marxist approach to sociology and found its perspective on the socioeconomic substructure of civilization exciting and superior to the then current Hegelian view of history as the forward march of an inevitable dialectical process. Yet he rejected Marxism in favour of a more flexible conception of the interaction of cultural, social, and economic factors. This preoccupation with the problems of historical relativity and what he called the logic of historical development found expression in a late but important work, *Der Historismus und seine Probleme*; *Historical Relativism and Its Problems*. Troeltsch had more than an academic interest in social and political affairs. He was a member of the Baden Upper House during his years in Heidelberg, later, in Berlin, a member of the Prussian Landtag the provincial legislature, and, for a number of years, undersecretary of state for religious affairs. A plan to visit England was frustrated by his death in 1903. The course of five lectures, which he was to have delivered in London and Oxford during March of that year, was published posthumously under a title that puts his work in perspective: *Its History and Application*. They do not contain all his published writings but those for which Troeltsch himself would have wished to be remembered.

Chapter 4 : Works by Ernst Troeltsch - PhilPapers

Ernst Troeltsch () ranks together with Adolf von Harnack () as one of the most accomplished and influential German liberal Protestant theologians of the early twentieth century.

As a current fellow at the Humanities Center, he is completing a book about the ethical thought of the German Protestant theologian Ernst Troeltsch. Troeltsch was a pioneering historian of religion, theorist of modernity, sociologist of religion, and philosopher of history. Sockness is also the author of *Against False Apologetics*: He recently answered some questions about his work. What is the focus of your current research? My research at the Humanities Center is focused on the ethical theory of Ernst Troeltsch, a leading Protestant theologian active in Heidelberg and Berlin exactly one hundred years ago. Troeltsch was, to be sure, a religious person in his own quasi-mystical and latitudinarian way, and he defended a manner of being Christian in the modern world that drew its energy and symbolism from the tradition. So he was something of a polymath. Kant is of course well known, and his ethics still defines one of the major alternatives in moral philosophy today. The problem is—and herein resides my puzzlement—their two accounts of the moral life are not easy to reconcile. Troeltsch attempted this synthesis in large part, I think, because his intellectual situation required a moral theory that could at once make sense of our uniquely human experience of normativity and acknowledge the particularity and plurality of human goods and values as they emerge in different cultures and change over time. By his intellectual situation, I mean the encroachment of various forms of philosophical naturalism, on the one hand, and the so-called crisis of historicism then plaguing German culture, on the other. By normativity, I mean the idea that there really are things that humans animals uniquely endowed with Vernunft, nous, Geist ought to do or forego, and the reasons for this are not reducible to natural satisfactions or eudaemonic considerations. Troeltsch was a deeply historical thinker who insisted that history is no place for absolutes. Why is it valuable to study Troeltsch? It is also surprising because his reputation outside of Germany is based on his magisterial cultural history of Christian ethical and social thought entitled *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches and Groups*. This thousand-page classic was translated into English in and for decades employed as a textbook at mainline seminaries and divinity schools in the U. Presentism is alive and well on the Farm: Troeltsch would be the first to remind us that there is an unexamined philosophy of history lying behind the notion that our age is morally, intellectually, and politically superior to previous eras simply by virtue of its coming last. Creating opportunities for students to wrestle with seminal ideas—regardless of what continent or century they come from—is not all that the humanities are about, but it certainly belongs to their core. How do you conduct your research? I pore over books, articles, student lecture notes, book reviews, speeches, letters, etc. Does the theory have any legs? What can we learn from it? Contextualizing his thought is, of course, indispensable for understanding it, and I spend a lot of time reading and learning about his interlocutors. My source base is quite large; there is plenty to do. In addition to this meticulously edited comprehensive edition, an extensive secondary literature has grown up around Troeltsch since roughly the s. There is even a series, *Troeltsch-Studien*, and a scholarly society, the *Ernst-Troeltsch-Gesellschaft*, devoted to specialized research. To be sure, Troeltsch is not a household name, but my interests in him are hardly unique or esoteric. What would people be surprised to learn about the topic you are working on?

Chapter 5 : Ernst Troeltsch (Boston Collaborative Encyclopedia of Western Theology)

Troeltsch, Ernst. Sociology of religion. Historicism. WORKS BY TROELTSCH. SUPPLEMENTARY BIBLIOGRAPHY. Ernst Troeltsch (), German historian and sociologist, was born in Augsburg, a descendant of an old burgher family and the eldest son of a practicing physician.

With regard to the impact of his work, Troeltsch was the most significant evangelical theologian since Friedrich Schleiermacher. As the central figure in German Protestant theology in the early twentieth century, he was able to exercise an enduring influence on philosophy, religion, sociology, and the study of history. Troeltsch was born in Haunstetten, a small town near the old southern German imperial city of Augsburg. He spent his childhood and youth in Augsburg. Through the efforts of his father, a well-to-do physician, Troeltsch became acquainted at an early age with the modern natural sciences, and the famous preparatory school at Sankt Anna gave him the sense of a cosmopolitan Christian humanism. In 1878, Troeltsch began the study of philosophy for two semesters at the Roman Catholic preparatory school in Augsburg and then, in the fall of 1880, of Protestant theology in Erlangen. He was particularly interested in the reconciliation of faith with knowledge and, therefore, attended lectures in art history, political science, national economics, history, psychology, and philosophy. Here the systematic theologian Albrecht Ritschl, the most prominent contemporary representative of a liberal, Lutheran, cultural Protestantism, exercised a primary and profound influence upon him. He emphasized the far-reaching cultural differences between the "Old Protestantism" of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and the modern world, which had emerged only with the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. Insofar as Luther had remained committed to the ideal of a religiously dominated, homogeneous culture and had represented a pacifist ethic that sanctioned submission to the status quo, he was, for Troeltsch, still part of the Middle Ages. He believed that theology must be changed from the old dogmatic paradigm to a "historical method" and must be based upon a general, rational theory of religion. Already in the Disputationsthesen, published on the occasion of his doctoral degree in text in Troeltsch-Studien I, 2d. They therefore attempted to understand the origins of Christianity from the perspective of the ancient religions, especially of late Judaism. The breaking down of the traditional isolation of Christianity from other religions should not, however, imply any skeptical relativism, but rather should serve as a foundation for the specific validity that Christianity claims. The difficulties of making such a connection, however, demanded extensive epistemological, historical, and philosophical analyses of the relationship between historical contingency and the absolute. This Troeltsch was not able to bring to completion. To that extent, his massive literary work is, for the most part, fragmentary. After a short lectureship in Bonn, and at the age of only twenty-nine, Troeltsch was called to Heidelberg in 1885 as professor of systematic theology. After the turn of the century, he became known far beyond the narrow borders of academic theology. This was a result of his intensive engagement in ecclesiastical politics on behalf of different organizations in liberal Protestantism, and also his prominent position within the University of Heidelberg. From 1891 to 1905, Troeltsch represented the university in the lower chamber of the parliament of the grand duchy of Baden. He was especially known for his numerous publications. First, empirically given religion should be analyzed according to a psychology of religion as an autonomous phenomenon of life that is constitutive for all culture. Second, in the epistemology of religion, the level of reality proper to religious consciousness must be rationally justified. Third, within a special historical philosophy of religions, the general concept of religion should be realized specifically and concretely in terms of the plurality of real existing religions for comparative religious-historical studies. Fourth, a metaphysics of religion bases the religious understanding of worldly reality upon the self-revelation of God. In this way, the universal history of religion should be proven to be the progressive revelation of God, and the presence of the absolute would be demonstrated in finite consciousness. Troeltsch was not, however, able to carry out this great program. The concept of the religious a priori remained especially unclear. He could do justice to the statement that the pious subject knows itself or all finite reality to be grounded in a divine substance only insofar as he understood the a priori as a product not proper to the intellect. To presuppose objects of cognition as directly

given, however, contradicted the Kantian point of departure of his argumentation. Although in close personal contact with the leading German representatives of Neo-Kantianism, Troeltsch did not share their basic assumptions. After the turn of the century, in addition to his studies in the philosophy of religion, Troeltsch published in relatively quick succession several cultural-historical investigations into the profound transformation of the Christian consciousness during the transition to the modern period. The very close, seventeen-year friendship meant a substantial scholarly enrichment for both Troeltsch and Weber. It is true that Troeltsch had established a sociological foundation for his understanding of the church even before the meeting with Weber. However, it was only under the influence of his friend that he distinguished precisely between church and sect as different types of religious community-building. Troeltsch wanted to present the social and ethical consequences of the Christian conceptual world and its interaction with cultural phenomena. The eschatological ideal of the kingdom of God of the Gospels stands in a relationship of unresolvable tension to the facticities of culture. Nevertheless, in that the church institutionalizes the grace of redemption sacramentally, it can become the place of salvation for the masses and fit the Christian concepts to the political- social order and its needs for legitimation. In contrast to this, the sects, small groups on the margin of society with demands for high achievement on their members, radicalize the tensions of religion and society to the point of absolute opposition between the norms of culture and the *lex Christi*, the Sermon on the Mount. From the types of church and sect, Troeltsch further distinguished mysticism as the third particular social form of Christianity. Here the opposites of religion and society are reconciled within the pious subject himself, to the extent that he knows himself to be a participant in the divine spirit and he glimpses the true reality of the kingdom of God in a purely spiritual and universal brotherhood of those gifted by God. Troeltsch especially ascribed to his third type significant historical effects for modern Christianity. Weber, however, did not consider mysticism to be a separate social form of religion. This difference is the expression of contradicting evaluations of the real meaning of religion for modern societies. Unlike Weber, Troeltsch was convinced that, even under the conditions of Western rationalism, religion was an extremely important factor in societal formation. He understood the Christian tradition primarily as a force for the strengthening of individual autonomy over against the depersonalizing developmental tendencies of modern capitalism. In the spring of 1905 Troeltsch was transferred to Berlin by the minister for cultural affairs. The chair he occupied there was renamed specifically for him, as a professorship in "religious, social, and historical philosophy and the history of Christian religion" and was transferred from the theological to the philosophical faculty. Troeltsch interpreted World War I as an imperialistic power struggle, at the root of which lay not only economic antagonisms, but also deep-seated political and cultural contradictions between the German spirit and Western rationality. In spite of this connection with his earlier analyses of the social and ethical differences between Lutheranism and Calvinism, Troeltsch was not a theoretician of a separate political way for Germany. This was reflected in manifold activities for the limitation of war and for peace negotiations. Troeltsch was a delegate of the leftist-liberal German Democratic party in the Prussian state assembly and undersecretary in the Prussian ministry for cultural affairs. After defeat and revolution, he was one of the leading representatives of that small minority in German Protestantism that interceded for the acceptance of the constitutional compromise of Weimar and for its concrete actualization as a social democracy. In close connection with his political and practical activity, Troeltsch turned his attention in Berlin primarily to this question: Because of his sudden death on 1 February 1906, Troeltsch was not able to realize concretely his program for a "European cultural synthesis. Troeltsch now expressly restricted to the European-American cultural arena the old claim of Christianity to a position of relative superiority among the world religions. To pretend to understand foreign cultures was cultural imperialism. Against monistic worldviews, which presuppose that a universal history of humanity can be recognized, Troeltsch argued for a pluralistic understanding of reality. In that he was guided by the theological insight that an overview of history is possible only for God, but not for finite persons. Indeed his theology of cultural modesty is important, in that it permits central problems of contemporary theological and philosophical discussion—”for instance, the pluralism of religious traditions, the dependency of theology upon contexts, the relationship of Christianity to cultural modernity—”to be grasped outside of all claims of dogmatic absolutism. *Geschichtsphilosophie in praktischer Absicht,*" in *Grundprobleme der grossen*

Philosophen, vol. A critical biography of Troeltsch does not yet exist. However, there are detailed studies for a biography of the young Troeltsch in Troeltsch-Studien, vol. Moreover, an instructive introduction is offered by Arrigo Rapp in Il problema della Germania negli scritti politici di E. Troeltsch, â€” Rome,

It has been frequently assumed that Ernst Troeltsch's real contribution lies in the field of the science of religion. This study proposes that Troeltsch's ethics is a vital component of his theological agenda.

In this section Troeltsch makes a distinction between the gospel of Jesus and that of Paul that will have lasting influence throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The Gospel Troeltsch begins his discussion of the Christian gospel with an immediate challenge to Karl Marx: According to Troeltsch, while the gospel arose in the context of various social forces, it cannot simply be reduced to a product of its time. It was concerned with matters such as eternal salvation, proper worship, and ascetical practices of discipline and holiness. Among the ethical ideals that arise from such a gospel message are sincerity, integrity, conscientiousness, humility, and self-denial. According to Troeltsch, this gospel ethic leads to the following sociological characteristics: Individualism and universalism, according to Troeltsch, are mutually interdependent, and both are conditioned by the eschatological expectation of the kingdom of God. All of this arises quite naturally and freely as a result of the Gospel ethic; it is not a result of a sociological or institutional structures. What does the gospel of Jesus have to say about the State, the economic order, and the Family? Of the State Jesus has virtually nothing to say.

In no way does the gospel directly challenge any of these orders. With the Pauline ethic the situation has changed in two broad ways. First, the Christian message has become more Christocentric. The pure, absolute individualism was lost, and therefore so was the universalism. According to Troeltsch this ambiguity is at the core of both a debates about theodicy and theological voluntarism and b the rise of Christian patriarchalism. Paul speaks about human equality before God in multiple ways. Humans are also equally loved by God. These equalities are of a purely religious sort, and manifest themselves in the equality of all members of the congregation in the act of worship. A tension arises, however, because not all realize the equality of Grace in the same way; some come to it slowly, and with great difficulty, if at all. Paul attributes the source of this inequality of the realization of grace to the inscrutable will of God, which gives rise to the classical question in metaphysics and theology: Or do they only have value through his inscrutable Will? Troeltsch also sees in this ambiguity the seeds for the rise of Christian patriarchalism. It generally shows an outward conservatism mixed with an inner detachment that relativizes the social realm. It must first be acknowledged that Troeltsch does not draw an absolute division between Jesus and Paul. It seems to make the more Christ-centered aspect of Christianity a Pauline aberration. Such a view, in my opinion, claims too much. Plato has Euthyphro ask a similar question in one of his dialogues. It seems to arise in all theistic religions, and continues today in Muslim debates about theological voluntarism and Jewish philosophical debates about legal positivism and natural law in ethics. See especially chapter 2:

Chapter 7 : Troeltsch's Constructive Ethics - Oxford Scholarship

Ernst Troeltsch was the most gifted, provocative, and influential Protestant theologian of the Kaiserreich. A thinker and scholar of tremendous range and erudition—the critical edition of his oeuvre will span 25 volumes—Troeltsch pursued a historicist program in theology undergirded by a philosophy of history and ethics.

He became extraordinary professor at Bonn in 1878, and in ordinary professor of systematic theology at Heidelberg, a position that he held for twenty-one years. He also served as a member of the Bavarian upper legislative house. In 1886 he moved to a chair of philosophy in the University of Berlin, serving concurrently as a member of the Prussian Landtag and as undersecretary of state for religious affairs. Troeltsch contributed to the philosophy and sociology of religion and also to cultural and social history, ethics, and jurisprudence. His work raised in many related fields the much-debated questions of the extent and limitations of the historicosociological method. He played a leading role in the clarification of the conception of historicism and made important contributions to the study of methodology in the historical sciences. By recognizing the impact of sociological and historical thinking on the shaping of modern mentality, Troeltsch became involved in the intractable problems of the relation between absolute ethical and religious values and historical relativity. He remained uncompromisingly sincere in revealing the difficulties of this approach and admitted to not being able to surmount them or to reconcile conflicting results in an all-embracing theory. He chose theology as the field in which, in his own words, "one had access to both metaphysics and the extraordinarily exciting historical problems. He argued that moral awareness was basic to the human constitution and that it was only during the course of historical development that morality and religion became connected and interdependent. To understand Christian ethics as the supreme manifestation of such historical combination was nevertheless his aim in *Grundprobleme der Ethik* written in 1898; in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. 1. Troeltsch was aware of the problems arising from two basic assumptions: The point of reference for an understanding of the moral person is no longer the will as such, but morality as realizing itself through persons in history. The work is unified by the sociological formulation of the entire history of the Christian churches. It is easy to see how Troeltsch maneuvered himself into what has been described as the "crisis of historicism. Troeltsch faced the problems his position posed for Christian ethics and theology, with their claims to historically unique or historically transcendent values. In *Die Trennung von Staat und Kirche* Separation of state and church he spoke of the polymorphous truth of the churches. This conception was still present in his later attempts to reconcile the absolutist claims of Christian revelation—which as monomorphous truth belongs strictly to the early church—with the later developments of the three great Christian forms of social expression: Troeltsch made reliable and learned contributions to the history of ideas, notably his analysis of the role of Protestantism in the formation of the modern world and his searching studies of the differentiation of Protestantism into Calvinism and Lutheranism with their important differences in ethos. He was in basic agreement with his friend Max Weber, whose theses he summarized and elaborated. His important contributions to the conception of group personalities are generally recognized in sociology, philosophy, and jurisprudence. He urged a return of German political thinking to the position of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, before the romantic glorification of the state. He thought that this position was compatible with Western thought, as rooted in Stoic and Christian ethics with their essential respect for the individual person that grew into the modern democratic idea of the rights of man. Troeltsch made the point that German political thinking had yet to learn from the West not to despise arrogantly the serious possibilities of compromise. In Troeltsch collected his writings on the philosophy of history under the title *Der Historismus und seine Probleme* Historicism and its problems.

Chapter 8 : The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches Summary - calendrierdelascience.com

This study explores the doubts Ernst Troeltsch had about the study of religion, the religious life, about science as applied to culture, and the future of civilization.

Dennis P. McCann & Ernst Troeltsch - - Journal of Religious Ethics 4 (1) - Ernst Troeltsch's essay on socialism presents a summary account of his views on the prospects for a socialist economic order within the Weimar Republic.