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Sociology and estrangement: three sociologists of Imperial Germany

Arthur Mitzman

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Arthur Mitzman : Sociology and estrangement: three sociologists of Imperial Germany before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sociology and estrangement: three sociologists of Imperial Germany:

Arthur Mitzman's critical study of three major German sociologists—the nineteenth-century pioneers Ferdinand Tönnies, Werner Sombart, and Robert Michels—is rooted in the context of German social and intellectual history. Mitzman shows how Tönnies's interest in community and Michels's critique of socialist bureaucracy were both intimately connected with their allegiance to an older, more communitarian and decentralized Germany that was being irreparably destroyed by Prussian domination. Sombart's analysis of modern capitalism and his evolution from supporter of revisionist socialism to bitter critic of modernity are similarly related, by the author, to his increasing estrangement from German society. With the brilliance of analysis that distinguished his study of Max Weber's *The Iron Cage*, Arthur Mitzman's book has revised long-held ideas about the beginnings of sociology: Far from originating as an antiseptic development of scientific objectivity, it grew out of a passionate commitment to humanist values within a social order apparently determined to destroy them.

"Mitzman is absolutely first-class, perceptive, disciplined, unobtrusively learned, compelling." Robert K. Merton, Columbia University
About the Author Arthur Mitzman is professor of modern European history at the University of

Amsterdam in Holland. He has taught at Brooklyn College, Goddard College, the University of Rochester, and Simon Fraser University, and is the author of *The Iron Cage: An Historical Interpretation of Max Weber*.