Contents

Acknowledgements x

Introduction 1

Part I  Antiquity and historical sociology 7

1 Max Weber and the theory of ancient capitalism 9

  Weber’s Die römische Agrargeschichte: from communism to capitalism in early Rome 13

  The materialist thesis of the essay ‘The social causes of the decay of ancient civilization’ 22

  Weber’s Agrarian Sociology of Ancient Civilizations and the problem of the peculiarity of ancient capitalism 35

  Weber’s view of ancient capitalism from the perspective of his later sociology 44

Part II  Max Weber and modern scholarship 57

2 On the economic character of the ancient agricultural estate: Oikos or enterprise? 59

  Survey of the literature on the nature of large agricultural estates 60

  Weber’s early account of the agricultural estate and the idea of agrarian capitalism 67

  The Roman writers on agriculture 73

  Critique of some aspects of Moses Finley’s The Ancient Economy 93

  Weber on Cato and the economic mentality of the Romans 98
Two developmental courses out of the household

3 ‘Industrial production’ and the economic use of slave labour

The literature concerning the possible existence of factories
Further evidence concerning scale of production, division of labour and the nature of manufacturing establishments
Weber on the economic character of ancient workshops
Slavery and the peculium in the economic life of Rome
Excursus on the rationality of ancient technology

4 The economic significance of ancient trade

Brief survey of the historical development of Roman sea trade
On the social position of traders
The role of freedmen in Roman trade: the case of Trimalchio
Weber’s analysis of the idea of capitalistic trade and the significance of the commenda
Evidence from Greece concerning the operation of maritime loans
‘Free enterprise’ and the role of the state

5 The role of state contracting and the societates publicanorum

The origins and development of the system of state contracting
The societates publicanorum
The scale of tax farming and the increasing power of the publicani
The struggle over the spoils of conquest in the late republic
The imperial bureaucracy and the selling of offices
The significance of patron–client relationships
Excursus on Roman imperialism

Part III Capitalism and the fate of Roman civilization

6 The nature of the market and the significance of capitalism in Roman antiquity
On the extent of market capitalism in antiquity
On the nature of political capitalism
Political capitalism and the decline of ancient civilization
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 Why rational capitalism was not established in antiquity</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>To what extent were the preconditions of rational capitalism present in Roman antiquity?</em></td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Excursus on the nature of law in ancient Rome and the implications for economic progress</em></td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Excursus on forms of rule and administration in antiquity</em></td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>