

Classics Series

MAX WEBER'S COMPLETE  
WRITINGS ON ACADEMIC AND  
POLITICAL VOCATIONS

Edited and with an Introduction by  
John Dreijmanis

Translation by Gordon C. Wells





MAX WEBER'S COMPLETE  
WRITINGS ON ACADEMIC AND  
POLITICAL VOCATIONS



MAX WEBER'S COMPLETE  
WRITINGS ON ACADEMIC AND  
POLITICAL VOCATIONS

EDITED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
JOHN DREIJMANIS  
TRANSLATION BY GORDON C. WELLS

Algora Publishing  
New York

© 2008 by Algora Publishing.  
All Rights Reserved  
www.algora.com

No portion of this book (beyond what is permitted by Sections 107 or 108 of the United States Copyright Act of 1976) may be reproduced by any process, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, or by any means, without the express written permission of the publisher.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data —

Weber, Max, 1864-1920.

Max Weber's complete writings on academic and political vocations / edited and with an introduction by John Dreijmanis; translation by Gordon C. Wells.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

ISBN-13: 978-0-87586-548-5 (trade paper: alk. paper)

ISBN-13: 978-0-87586-549-2 (hard cover: alk. paper)

ISBN-13: 978-0-87586-550-8 (ebook)

1. Education, Higher—Philosophy. 2. Academic freedom. 3. Politics, Practical. I. Dreijmanis, John. II. Title.

LB775.W3724 2008

378.001—dc22

2007035156

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many persons were helpful in the preparation of this book. The assistance of the following is gratefully acknowledged:

John Beebe, James W. Binns, Werner Bonefeld, Ulrich von Bülow, Annie Callaghan, David Chalcraft, Michael Chambers, Rima Devereaux, Jürgen Eichberger, Herbert Eiden, Sven Eliaeson, Bernhard Fleischmann, Jörg Frommer, Sabine Frommer, Thomas Fuchs, Mihoko Fukushima, the Institute of Translation and Interpreting (German Network), John Giannini, Felix Grigat, Edith Hanke, Michael Hartmer, Sarah Jackson, Matthias Jaroch, Jamelyn R. Johnson, Suzanne Kirkbright, Daniela Krämer, Sven Kuttner, Noriko Layfield, Tzu-Wen (Joyce) Lin, Roderick Main, Charlotte McDonough, Klaus D. McDonald-Maier, Arthur Mitzman, Gregory Moore, Matteo Montonati, Ahmad Musa, Cinara Naha, Joachim Radkau, Stephan Renner, Ulla Rieck, Guenther Roth, Kurt Salamun, Joachim Sauerland, Kurt Schneider, Thomas Schneider, Georg Siebeck, Malati Singh, Sandrine Singleton-Perrin, Julie Snell, Rosalind M. Temple, Adrian Udenze, Sam Whimster, and Jan Wiebers.

John Dreijmanis  
Universität Bremen





MAX WEBER

.....  
TRUTH after the setting of the sun

.....  
And we who doubted any middle way  
Bless early steps like these as well we may,  
Before the statements your pure voice is heard,  
Your smile gives heart to loyalty that's stirred  
And roused in wrath...for you we'll risk the task,  
And questions with no answer we will ask.

Friedrich Gundolf (born Friedrich Leopold Gundelfinger)  
(1880–1931)



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Weber's Personality Type	1
Weber's Illness	9
Weber's Two Vocations	13
Science as a Vocation	17
Articles on Academia	21
Politics as a Vocation	22
The Present and Earlier Translations	23
Earlier Translations in Chronological Order	23
SCIENCE AS A VOCATION	25
ARTICLES ON ACADEMIA	53
1. The Bernhard Case	53
2. [Unsigned]	58
3. Message of Congratulations to Gustav Schmoller on his Seventieth Birthday (24 June, 1908)	58
4. The "Bernhard Case" and Professor Delbrück	59
5. The Alleged "Academic Freedom" at German Universities	64
6. Second German Conference of Teachers in Institutions of Higher Education	68
7. Social Democrats in Academic Teaching Positions	68
8. Academic Freedom in the Universities	69
9. Transactions of the Third German Conference of Teachers in Institutions of Higher Education	75
10. The Conference of Teachers in Institutions of Higher Education	77

11. Professor Ehrenberg	78
12. Transactions of the First German Conference of Sociologists	80
13. The German Sociological Society	98
14. Challenge to Duel at the University of Heidelberg	103
15. On the Affair of Dr. Ruge — Professor Weber	104
16. An Opinion on the University Question	105
17. American and German Universities: How They Differ	108
18. German Conference of Teachers in Institutions of Higher Education	116
19. Professor Max Weber (Heidelberg) on his Speech at the German Higher Education Conference in Dresden	117
20. Max Weber on the “Althoff System”	122
21. The Schools of Commerce: A Reply by Professor Max Weber	125
22. The Prussian Educational Administration and Prof. Max Weber (Heidelberg)	129
23. Max Weber and the Althoff System	131
24. Professor Weber on the Althoff System	133
25. Max Weber, Statement (Memorandum to the Schools of Commerce)	136
26. Once Again Weber — Althoff	143
27. Once More the Statements by Professor Dr. Max Weber (Heidelberg)	146
28. Report on the Activities of the German Sociological Society for the Last Two Years	147
29. A Catholic University in Salzburg	150
30. Declaration of Withdrawal from the Allemannia Fraternity	151
31. Professor Max Weber and the Fraternity Students	152
32. The Demonstrations at the University	153
POLITICS AS A VOCATION	155
GLOSSARY	209
BIBLIOGRAPHY	211
INDEX OF SUBJECTS	215
INDEX OF NAMES	229

## INTRODUCTION

Karl Emil Maximilian Weber (1864–1920) was one of the founders of sociology as an academic discipline, living at a time when disciplinary boundaries were far less rigid than today, when it was still possible to master enormous historical, economic, legal, sociological, and political knowledge, and make contributions to a number of disciplines. Although the literature on him is vast,<sup>1</sup> there remain certain unexplored aspects. These are discussed and related to his academic and political vocations.

## WEBER'S PERSONALITY TYPE

Carl G. Jung's (1875-1961) theory of psychological types,<sup>2</sup> as further developed by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), is used to provide an understanding of Weber's personality type. This typological system differentiates sixteen personality types by identifying a person's normal preferred mode of psychological operation analyzed against four basic parameters, each parameter represented by a pair of opposite characteristics. From one's attitude to the outer and inner worlds arise two basic orientations to life — extraversion (E) or introversion (I).<sup>3</sup> There are two contrasting functional ways of perceiving — through sensation (S) or intuition (N), and two functional ways of judging — through

---

1 Allan Sica, *Max Weber: A Comprehensive Bibliography* (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers, 2004).

2 Carl G. Jung, "Psychological Types" [1921]. In *Collected Works of C.G. Jung*, revision by R.F.C. Hull of translation by H.G. Baynes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), Vol.6.

3 Isabel B. Myers and Peter B. Myers, *Gifts Differing: Understanding Personality Type* (Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black Publishing, 1995), p.7.

thinking (T) or feeling (F). The preferred manner of dealing with the outside world provides the fourth dimension of the profile and will reflect a preference for either judging (J) or perceiving (P). Each person will therefore, with greater or lesser consistency, demonstrate four preferences which acting together create one of the sixteen personality types. Of the four available functions (i.e., perceiving (S) and (N) and judging (T) and (F)), one will be the most preferred and the best developed and will therefore be superior. This will be supported by an auxiliary function, a tertiary function, and the fourth or inferior function, which will be the least preferred and least developed one.<sup>4</sup> This does not mean that “anyone is limited either to the inner world or to the outer.”<sup>5</sup> To some extent, everyone uses each of the functions. Only the “relative predominance of one or the other determines the type.”<sup>6</sup>

The MBTI is not perfect, does not explain everything, and does not measure ability and levels of creativity.<sup>7</sup> It does, however, indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the sixteen personality types and the mutual usefulness of opposite types.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, it provides an empirical basis for describing personality types and their behavior.

In extraversion there is “a transfer of interest from subject to object. If it is an extraversion of thinking, the subject thinks himself into it; if an extraversion of feeling, he feels himself into it.”<sup>9</sup> Jung defined extraversion as follows:

Extraversion is characterized by interest in the external object, responsiveness, and a ready acceptance of external happenings, a desire to influence and be influenced by events, a need to join in ....., constant attention to the surrounding world, the cultivation of friends and acquaintances, none too carefully selected, and finally by the great importance attached to the figure one cuts, and hence by a strong tendency to make a show of oneself.<sup>10</sup>

Whatever the extravert “thinks, intends, and does is displayed with conviction and warmth.”<sup>11</sup> The “peculiar nature of the extravert constantly urges him to expand and propagate himself in every way.”<sup>12</sup> There is, however, the danger

---

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-15.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7; John Beebe, “Psychological Types.” In Renos K. Papadopoulos, ed., *The Handbook of Jungian Psychology: Theory, Practice and Application* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 131-152; “Understanding Consciousness through the Theory of Psychological Types.” In Joseph Cambrey and Linda Carter, eds., *Analytical Psychology: Contemporary Perspectives in Jungian Analysis* (Hove and New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2004), especially pp. 99-105.

<sup>6</sup> Jung, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Isabel B. Myers, *Introduction to Type*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1993), p. 30.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>9</sup> Jung, *op. cit.*, p. 427.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 549.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 550.

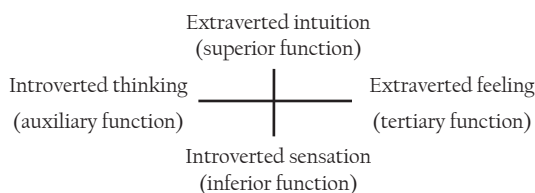
<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 332.

that “he gets sucked into objects and completely loses himself in them, [with] resultant functional disorders, nervous or physical.”<sup>13</sup>

The extravert receives energy from external events, experiences, and interactions, prefers to communicate by talking, and is often a confident public speaker.<sup>14</sup> He or she is a person of action who goes “from doing to considering back to doing.”<sup>15</sup> Extraverts are also the “most active change agents.”<sup>16</sup> The extravert’s “verbal fluency, decisiveness, self-confidence, and urge to organize others can overpower people at times.”<sup>17</sup> One may also expect riskier decisions from an extravert.<sup>18</sup> In contrast, in introversion there is an inward turning of psychic energy in the

sense of a negative relation of subject to object. Interest does not move towards the object but withdraws from it into the subject. Everyone whose attitude is introverted thinks, feels, and acts in a way that clearly demonstrates that the subject is the prime motivating factor and that the object is of secondary importance.<sup>19</sup>

From what is known about Weber, an *ex post facto* assessment of his personality type indicates that there is a very high degree of probability that he was an extraverted intuitive with introverted thinking (ENTP) type. His superior function was extraverted intuition, the auxiliary function introverted thinking, the tertiary function extraverted feeling, and the inferior function introverted sensation, diagrammed as follows:



Individual functions need to be considered in couplings, but this is beyond the scope of this introduction.

In order to substantiate this conclusion, considerable reliance is placed on Weber’s behavior, his writings under discussion, and the observations of his

---

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 336.

<sup>14</sup> Myers, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> Myers and Myers, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>16</sup> Mary H. McCaulley, “The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Leadership.” In Kenneth E. Clark and Miriam B. Clark, eds., *Measures of Leadership* (West Orange, NJ: Leadership Library of America, 1990), p. 409.

<sup>17</sup> Myers, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>18</sup> McCaulley, *op. cit.*, p. 409.

<sup>19</sup> Jung, *op. cit.*, pp. 452-453.



wife, Marianne Weber, née Schnitger (1870-1954), not only a perceptive observer but also one who reflected his views, and therefore it is possible to take much of what she wrote “as a statement of Weber’s own views....”<sup>20</sup> There are also many references to Karl Jaspers (1883-1969), physician, psychologist, philosopher, and a member of Max and Marianne Weber’s inner circle of friends who wrote extensively on him and provided some of the most profound analyses.

Weber’s extraversion manifested itself in many activities and areas. He longed for sunshine and a warm climate and therefore frequently visited southern France and Italy. In the words of Marianne Weber, “when the gray veils of November [1900] shrouded the autumnal splendor, Weber longed for the bright and cheerful south.”<sup>21</sup> They went to Corsica, but it rained for a long period: “The lonely days now crept by monotonously and colorlessly under overcast skies. There was no pleasant café, no window shopping, no music, nothing to see, and nothing happened. They realized to what extent the life of a civilized person is fed by *external stimuli* [my italics].”<sup>22</sup> In the winter and spring of 1907 Weber even considered leaving Germany: “Horrible thought of having to spend so many more sad winters in Germany; we should at least make the autumn of our lives sunny by spending it in the south.”<sup>23</sup> On another occasion on 21 April, 1911, when the weather in Italy was to his liking, he wrote to his wife that “most of the time I lie on the hot sand on the beach....”<sup>24</sup> Weber was also absorbed by paintings, sculpture, architecture, landscapes, and cities.<sup>25</sup>

True to his type, public speaking came naturally to him, be it lecturing to students, colleagues, politicians, or workers. “Weber was a master of speaking without notes....”<sup>26</sup> Sometimes he lectured for more than two hours without interruption. His lectures “were ‘events’.”<sup>27</sup> Hours before his lectures at the University of Vienna students would fill the largest auditorium.<sup>28</sup> Marianne Weber has described one such lecture in the summer semester of 1918.<sup>29</sup> Another event of a somewhat different nature occurred on 21 January, 1920, at the University of Mu-

---

20 Guenther Roth, “Max Weber’s Generational Rebellion and Maturation.” In Reinhard Bendix and Guenther Roth, *Scholarship and Partisanship: Essays on Max Weber* (Berkeley and Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1971), p. 30.

21 Marianne Weber, *Max Weber: A Biography*, edited and translated by Harry Zohn (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers, 1988), p. 245.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 247.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 365.

24 Weber quoted *ibid.*, p. 482.

25 Karl Loewenstein, *Max Weber’s Political Ideas in the Perspective of Our Time*, translated by Richard and Clara Winston (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1966), p. 101.

26 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 604.

28 Loewenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

29 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 605.

nich when some right-wing students hissed and booed him as he was about to proceed, but when Weber remained on the rostrum and “laughed at them, they became even wilder.”<sup>30</sup> The lights were turned out and the hall cleared. Afterward, Weber attended a social gathering and was “very animated, and then slept splendidly. Political strife obviously had a refreshing effect on him.”<sup>31</sup> At home Weber engaged in monologues which got on Marianne’s nerves, while she, also an extravert, in turn got on Max’s nerves by her excessive talking.<sup>32</sup> He was more of a speaker than a writer and therefore often made a stronger impression orally than in writing.<sup>33</sup> Marianne Weber also observed that Weber could express himself best when he had earlier orally formulated his thoughts.<sup>34</sup>

Jaspers noted that Weber gave “lectures that no student would ever forget.”<sup>35</sup> Moreover, his courage

in telling publicly what he saw and believed was equally great whether he was addressing the higher authorities of the old state or the workers. When he said uncomfortable things to the workers at a public meeting and was met with a furious reaction, we could see the effect that a great man can have. Despite the opposition, this awe-inspiring figure, whose sincerity and also profound seriousness and love of humanity could not be doubted, was able to assert himself. The listeners felt that he could speak to them at a deeper level than anyone else was capable of.<sup>36</sup>

Jaspers was not only impressed, but also deeply influenced by Weber.<sup>37</sup> Ernst M. Manasse expressed it well when he wrote that Weber was the “spirit of Jaspers’ philosophy.”<sup>38</sup> Jaspers regarded him as the “Galilei of the *Geisteswissenschaften*” (the arts and the humanities).<sup>39</sup> Even such a critic as Othmar Spann (1878-1950), saw him as “a demonic, restless person who was capable of affecting others through the strength of his personality....”<sup>40</sup>

As predicted by the ENTP typology, Weber cultivated friends and acquaintances. One such example was the Webers’ open house for younger academics

---

30 *Ibid.*, p. 673.

31 *Ibid.*

32 Joachim Radkau, *Max Weber. Die Leidenschaft des Denkens* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2005), pp. 94-95.

33 *Ibid.*, pp. 442, 445.

34 Marianne Weber cited *ibid.*, p. 442.

35 Hannah Arendt/Karl Jaspers *Briefwechsel 1926-1969*, eds. Lotte Köhler and Hans Saner (Munich and Zürich: Piper, 1985), p. 672.

36 Karl Jaspers, “Max Weber. Eine Gedenkrede (1920).” In *Max Weber. Gesammelte Schriften* (Munich and Zürich: Piper, 1988), pp. 41-42.

37 Jaspers, “Philosophical Autobiography.” In Paul A. Schilpp, ed., *The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (La Salle, IL: Open Court Publishing, 1981), pp. 854-855.

38 Ernest M. Manasse, “Jaspers’ Relation to Max Weber.” *Ibid.*, p. 391.

39 Jaspers, *Schicksal und Wille. Autobiographische Schriften*, ed. Hans Saner (Munich: R. Piper, 1967), p. 33.

40 Othmar Spann quoted in Roth, “Introduction to the Transaction Edition,” Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. xv.

on Sunday afternoons in Heidelberg from 1910 to 1914. Although it was intended to save time and accommodate their increasing numbers, many of the Sunday attendees also came on weekdays as well.<sup>41</sup> These gatherings enabled Weber to discuss a broad range of topics, including current events.

Weber was “passionately engaged by the political issues of the day.”<sup>42</sup> It is therefore not surprising that the Russian Revolution of 1905 “powerfully stirred” him, and he quickly learned sufficient Russian to follow developments in Russian newspapers.<sup>43</sup> He published an article on it in the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaften und Sozialpolitik*,<sup>44</sup> and posthumously a collection of his writings and speeches on it as a book.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, with the exception of Weber’s writings on religion, a large number of his works were the result of external events.<sup>46</sup> Further discussion of Weber’s political interests and activities is in the section dealing with his political vocation.

In academia as well Weber was deeply involved as an activist and organizer. In 1908 he defended the right of Robert Michels, a Social Democrat, to study for a *Habilitation* (a postdoctoral lecturing qualification). (See Article 5.) The next year he was a cofounder of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie* (German Sociological Association), and in 1910 and 1912 he gave the conference addresses. (See Articles 12 and 28.) Weber complained that “nobody wants to sacrifice any of his time and work and interests, and as for acting, they don’t do a thing!”<sup>47</sup> In 1909 he started a collaborative project on political economy, only to discover again “how hard it was to make scholars accommodate themselves to the requirements of fruitful collaboration.”<sup>48</sup> His part appeared posthumously and became a major work.<sup>49</sup> At the same time Weber was also preparing a large research project on the press. Marianne Weber became concerned that with all these projects he was “frittering away his strength.”<sup>50</sup> She noted that “hardly was one completed

---

41 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 467-471.

42 Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *Max Weber and German Politics, 1890-1920*, translated by Michael S. Steinberg (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p.1.

43 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, 327.

44 Vol. 22, No. 1, supplement (1906).

45 *Zur Russischen Revolution von 1905. Schriften und Reden 1905-1912*, ed. Wolfgang J. Mommsen in collaboration with Dittmar Dahlmann (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1989); published in an abridged version in English as *The Russian Revolutions*, edited and translated by Gordon C. Wells and Peter Baehr (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); and (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995).

46 Radkau, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

47 Weber quoted in Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 421.

48 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 419.

49 *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundriß der Sozialökonomik* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1922), 5<sup>th</sup> ed. 2002; published in English as *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretative Sociology*, eds. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), three volumes, essentially based upon the fourth German edition of 1956 as revised in 1964.

50 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 421.

when his restless intellect took hold of a new one.”<sup>51</sup> Further discussion of Weber’s academic activities is in the section on his academic vocation.

ENTP types are also creative, original, independent, individualistic, and enthusiastic.<sup>52</sup> At their best, such persons provide “insight amounting to wisdom and with the power to inspire.”<sup>53</sup> The force that animates them is “a perceptive energy — an intuitive vision of some possibility in the external world, which they feel to be peculiarly their own because they ‘saw it first’ in a very original and personal way.”<sup>54</sup> The thinking is productive, leading “to the discovery of new facts or to general conceptions based on disparate empirical material. It is usually synthetic too. Even when it analyses it constructs, because it is always advancing the analysis to a new combination....”<sup>55</sup> A characteristic feature of it is “that it is never absolutely depreciative or destructive, since it always substitutes a fresh value for the one destroyed. This is because the thinking of this type is the main channel into which his vital energy flows.”<sup>56</sup>

From what has been said so far, it is evident that Weber was interested in the external world, was influenced by it and in turn tried to influence it, cultivated friends and acquaintances, and was an excellent public speaker who could impress and inspire people. As evidence of his creativity and originality, one may cite his concept of charismatic authority.<sup>57</sup> It and similar contributions illustrate what can happen when introverted thinking interacts with extraverted intuitive perceptions. Weber’s independence, individualism, and enthusiasm are explored in later sections, especially those dealing with his two vocations.

As expected of this type, there are also problems. Such a person leads a life that is a succession of projects, but has problems in completing them,<sup>58</sup> as already indicated. Moreover, he did not like to write books. In the words of Jaspers, “his most outstanding works were hidden away in periodicals.”<sup>59</sup> Specifically, he “never wanted to look back at his manuscripts, let alone his printed work. He took no pleasure in the work, but moved forward in the enterprise of which the

---

51 *Ibid.*, p. 195.

52 Myers and Myers, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-106.

53 *Ibid.*, p. 106.

54 *Ibid.*

55 Jung, *op. cit.*, p. 351.

56 *Ibid.*, p. 352.

57 Weber, *Economy and Society*, Vol. 1, pp. 241-254; Vol. 3, pp. 1111-1157. For an application of Weber’s concept of charismatic authority and Jungian typology and the MBTI to Adolf Hitler (1889-1945), see John Dreijmanis, “A Portrait of the Artist as a Politician: The Case of Adolf Hitler,” *Social Science Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (2005), pp. 115-127.

58 Myers and Myers, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-106; Myers, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

59 Jaspers, “Max Weber, Politiker – Forscher – Philosoph (1932).” In *Max Weber. Gesammelte Schriften* (Munich and Zürich: Piper, 1988), p. 106.

work was only one step."<sup>60</sup> This happens to extraverted intuitives due to their inadequate development of their judgment function; they become easily discouraged and are unwilling to do anything that they do not desire.<sup>61</sup>

Weber's extraversion and his dislike of writing books were reflected in his work and writing habits. He notes the difficulty of

only getting down on paper just such a *tiny* fraction of everything that takes shape inwardly. For when I am "receptive" or contemplatively allow the thoughts to come *inwardly*, everything flows — no matter whether it is much or little, precious or worthless — and it flows in abundance — and then begins the struggle to express it on *paper*..., and that is the real and — for me — almost unbearable "torment," which no doubt shows itself in the "style."<sup>62</sup>

Significantly, Weber recognized that the thoughts came from external sources. According to Marianne Weber, "once he got going, so much material flowed from the storehouse of his mind that it was often hard to force it into lucid sentence structure."<sup>63</sup> The result was that a "great deal had to be hastily crammed into long, convoluted sentences, and whatever could not be accommodated there had to be put in footnotes. Let the reader 'kindly' take as much trouble as he himself did!"<sup>64</sup> Simply put, Weber "had more to say than he could really put into words."<sup>65</sup> Jaspers noted that Weber's "work contains repetitions, digressions followed by reversion to the subject, lists that are sometimes not absolutely necessary, encapsulated clauses, afterthoughts."<sup>66</sup> The plain fact is that his "work is difficult to understand."<sup>67</sup> There are long sentences and scholarly qualifications and therefore the

characteristic "style" of Weber's sociological writings, which tends to bury the main points of the argument in a jungle of statements that require detailed analysis, or in long analyses of special topics that are not clearly related to either the preceding or the ensuing materials. Weber undertook several interdependent lines of investigation simultaneously and put all his research notes into the final text without making their relative importance explicit.<sup>68</sup>

Finally, his independence and individualism are also evident in

his style; in his excessive use of quotation marks. Someone who puts common words within quotes thereby designates them as "so-called", meaning

---

60 *Ibid.*, p. 107.

61 Myers and Myers, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-108.

62 Weber quoted in Radkau, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

63 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

64 *Ibid.*

65 Loewenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

66 Jaspers, "Max Weber. Politiker – Forscher – Philosoph (1932)," p. 107.

67 Reinhard Bendix, *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1960), p. xvii.

68 *Ibid.*

---

that they are generally used in this way by others. This implies that I use them only in a distanced way, with reservations or, more directly: really with another meaning of my own.<sup>69</sup>

Weber reluctantly began to collect his works a year before his death; Marianne Weber collected them in ten volumes. J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) is in the process of publishing the collected works of Weber, and by the end of 2007 twenty-one volumes will be published, with a further nineteen planned. Finally, if this type neglects too much his or her least preferred feeling and sensing functions, insufficient attention may be given to the details and routine required to implement his or her visions and projects, which have already been noted. In psychoanalytical terminology,

even more seriously dysfunctional is what happens to the *anima* [soul] that is associated with the inferior function of introverted sensation, when the superior and auxiliary functions do their things and ignore that function and her with it. One gets into states of sympathetic nervous system collapse, severe agitated exhaustions, which are not quite depressions but states of standstill that represent the neglected introverted sensation function's reaction to non-stop chasing after intuitive possibilities and the thinking articulation of them, which leads to work addiction, too many projects, too little sleep, and a general neglect of all the introverted sensation values and finally a shutdown strike on the part of the *anima* carrying that function.<sup>70</sup>

The personal implications of one's decisions may also be neglected.<sup>71</sup> This matter is dealt with in the sections on Weber's academic and political vocations and the articles on academia.

## WEBER'S ILLNESS

Weber experienced serious health problems and therefore was able to hold continuous academic positions at the Universities of Berlin (law), Freiburg (political economy), and Heidelberg (political economy) for only the years 1893 to 1897. Political activity was possible only for short periods.<sup>72</sup> His pathology was an addiction to work. He was in effect following Jaspers' dictum: "I work; otherwise I do nothing."<sup>73</sup> In early 1898 he suffered what was then called neurasthenia (nervousness and insomnia) and gradually reduced and later stopped his teaching.<sup>74</sup> Earlier he had feared a serious depression, which did not happen, "because

---

69 Karl Löwith, *Max Weber and Karl Marx*, translated by Hans Fante (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 87, n. 93.

70 E-mail 24 March, 2007 from Dr. John Beebe, a Jungian analyst.

71 Myers, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

72 Jaspers, *Die Grossen Philosophen. Nachlaß I. Darstellungen und Fragmente*, ed. Hans Saner (Munich and Zürich: R. Piper, 1981), p. 649.

73 Jaspers, *Karl Jaspers in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten*, ed. Hans Saner (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1970), p. 114.

74 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 234-264; Radkau, *op. cit.*, pp. 254-315.

through continuous work I never allowed the nervous system and the brain to rest. This is why, among other things — quite apart from the natural need to work — I am so reluctant to take a really noticeable break from work....”<sup>75</sup> In summer 1898, he entered a mental hospital for nerve patients and remained there for a few months. From July to November, 1900 he was in a sanitarium.<sup>76</sup> Although he resumed some teaching in 1902, there were setbacks and in 1903 he resigned from his Heidelberg professorship and became an *Honorarprofessor* (adjunct professor). In 1904, however, he was well enough to become an associate editor of the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*. In 1908 a private inheritance by Marianne Weber enabled him to live as an independent scholar without the part-time university association. It was not until 1918 that he accepted an offer to teach at the University of Vienna on a trial basis for the summer semester. The next year he moved to the University of Munich as professor of social science, economic history, and economics.<sup>77</sup>

Although the exact nature of Weber's illness remains unknown, some of its symptoms are known. Jaspers has provided fairly detailed observations and analyses. On 2 February, 1910, after a meeting at Weber's house, he wrote a letter to his parents in which he praised Weber, but also noted the following:

Only one thing causes a little anxiety. Often you notice an aroused expression pass across his face, his eyes become peculiarly piercing and you fear that at any moment he might become nervously ill just like he was for almost two years. It is as though a mighty will is constantly wrestling to control a nervous system that is going to become agitated. The battle is not to give a trace of this away.<sup>78</sup>

A similar conclusion was reached by Karl Loewenstein (1891-1973), who also knew him well, a lawyer and later law professor at the University of Munich and subsequently a political science professor in the United States. He saw Weber as “a daemonic personality. Even in routine matters, there was something incalculable, explosive about him. You never knew when the inner volcano would erupt.”<sup>79</sup> When Weber spoke extemporaneously on 27 October, 1916 in a Munich beer hall, he held the audience spellbound for more than two hours, but Loewenstein observed that “something elementary, at times actually titanic, emanates from him.... His volcanic temperament erupts again and again. But he can also be jocular and turn sardonically humorous.”<sup>80</sup>

---

75 Weber's letter of 20 July, 1894 to Marianne Weber, quoted in Radkau, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

76 Radkau, *op. cit.*, pp. 255, 258.

77 E-mail 23 October, 2006 from Dr. Edith Hanke.

78 Jaspers quoted in Suzanne Kirkbright, *Karl Jaspers, A Biography: Navigations in Truth* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 77.

79 Loewenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

80 *Ibid.*, p. 98.

---

In June, 1907 Weber wrote a pathographic self-portrait, which Jaspers had read. Upon the coming to power of the national socialists, he encouraged Mari-  
anne Weber to destroy it.<sup>81</sup> In all probability she followed his advice. According  
to Eduard Baumgarten (1898-1982), nephew of Weber and a professor of philos-  
ophy and sociology, in a letter of 15 December, 1968 to Arthur Mitzman Jaspers  
regarded the pathographic self-portrait as “a classic of its kind beyond any com-  
parison in the whole literature known to him, a classic not only because of its  
ethos of absolute truthfulness (hiding *nothing*) but also as to all its details, which  
were reported on a level of extreme minuteness and drastic concreteness.”<sup>82</sup> In  
the notes for his 1960-1961 lectures Jaspers dealt with Weber’s illness in greater  
detail and concluded that it “did not touch his work or his personality, but was  
a physical and vital illness connected with the neurological functions. It was not  
an organic illness, but was an illness that was functional, unpredictable, vari-  
able, ongoing, and was curable.”<sup>83</sup> In a letter of 29 April, 1966 to Hannah Arendt  
(1906-1975) Jaspers expanded on this point by saying that it was “neither paraly-  
sis nor schizophrenia, but something hitherto undiagnosable. There were in his  
life elemental, somehow biologically based phases: supreme energy and achieve-  
ment and then breakdown, when he could no longer even read.”<sup>84</sup>

A German professor of psychomatic medicine and psychotherapy and  
a sociologist have analyzed the evidence and concluded that between 1897  
and 1902 Weber suffered from a severe depressive crisis (depressive syn-  
drome) with multiple recurrences of its symptomatology in the following  
years.<sup>85</sup> They also note that his sickness was largely that of a “creative ill-  
ness” as defined by the Swiss psychiatrist Henri F. Ellenberger (1905-1993).  
It is a “polymorphous condition that can take the shape of depression, neurosis,  
psychosomatic ailments, or even psychosis. Whatever the symptoms, they are  
felt as painful, if not agonizing by the subject, with alternating periods of allevia-  
tion and worsening.”<sup>86</sup> Jung experienced such an illness from 1914 to 1919 when  
he published little.<sup>87</sup> The recovery is often rapid, and the subject “emerges from  
his ordeal with a permanent transformation in his personality and the convic-

---

81 Dieter Henrich, “Denken im Blick auf Max Weber. Eine Einführung.” In *Max Weber. Gesammelte Schriften* (Munich and Zürich: Piper, 1988), pp. 23-24.

82 Baumgarten quoted in Arthur Mitzman, *The Iron Cage: An Historical Interpretation of Max Weber* (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers, 1985), p. 285.

83 Jaspers, *Die Grossen Philosophen. Nachlaß* 1, p. 649.

84 Hannah Arendt/Karl Jaspers *Briefwechsel 1926-1969*, p. 672.

85 Jörg Frommer and Sabine Frommer, “Max Weber’s Krankheit — soziologische Aspekte der depressiven Struktur,” *Fortschritte der Neurologie-Psychiatrie*, Vol. 61, No. 5 (May, 1993), p. 161.

86 Henri F. Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), p. 447.

87 *Ibid.*, p. 670.



tion that he has discovered a great truth or a new spiritual world.”<sup>88</sup> In Weber's case, however, there was no rapid and complete recovery, but Marianne Weber observed a “new phase” in Weber's productivity,<sup>89</sup> with a number of significant articles appearing in rapid succession.<sup>90</sup>

Jaspers raised two intriguing questions about Weber's illness: “Is illness a prerequisite for the highest knowledge?” and “What would he have been without the illness?”<sup>91</sup> Illness is not necessarily a prerequisite for the highest knowledge, since there have been and are many healthy people with the highest accomplishments, but in Weber's case it provided an additional stimulus.

For more than half a century Jaspers kept Weber's illness separate from his high overall evaluation of and regard for him.<sup>92</sup> In February, 1963, however, he was provided by Baumgarten with some love letters that Weber had exchanged with Else Jaffé, née von Richthofen (1874-1973), a former student of his.<sup>93</sup> Jaspers

was thus confronted with love letters filled not only with boyish passion but also with other peculiarities that did not fit the image of the man who had once given him a feeling of spiritual security, and that inevitably reminded him of elements of Weber's pathographic self-description.<sup>94</sup>

His love affair started in 1909, but was soon interrupted because of Else's affair with Max Weber's brother Alfred (1868-1958), an economist; it was restarted in 1917 and lasted until his death. In the interval Max Weber started an affair in 1912 with Mina Tobler (1880-1967), a Swiss pianist.<sup>95</sup> Marianne Weber had suspected an affair between her husband and Jaffé, but when she inquired about such a possibility after Weber's death, Jaspers had dismissed it by declar-

---

88 *Ibid.*, p. 448.

89 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

90 She mentions “Roscher und Knies und die logischen Probleme der historischen Nationalökonomie,” *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft im Deutschen Reich*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (1903), pp. 1-41; Vol. 29, No. 4 (1905), pp. 89-150; Vol. 30, No. 1 (1906), pp. 81-120, reprinted in Johannes Winkelmann, ed., *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1973), pp. 1-145; published in English as *Roscher and Knies: The Logical Problems of Historical Economics*, translated by Guy Oakes (New York and London: The Free Press and Macmillan, 1975). At the same time also appeared “Die protestantische Ethik und der ‘Geist’ des Kapitalismus,” *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (1904), pp. 1-54; Vol. 21, No. 1 (1905), pp. 1-110; published in English as *The Protestant Ethic and the ‘Spirit’ of Capitalism and Other Writings*, edited and translated by Peter Baehr and Gordon C. Wells (New York: Penguin Books, 2002). Original articles reprinted, including changes made for the 1920 version, *Die protestantische Ethik und der ‘Geist’ des Kapitalismus*, eds. Klaus Lichtblau and Johannes Weiß, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Bodenheim: Beltz-Athenäum, 2000).

91 Jaspers, *Die Grossen Philosophen. Nachlaß* 1, p. 649.

92 E-mail 25 September, 2006 from Dr. Suzanne Kirkbright.

93 Radkau, *op. cit.*, p. 854.

94 Henrich, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

95 Radkau, *op. cit.*, pp. 793, 564.

ing: "Max Weber was the truth itself."<sup>96</sup> Jaspers was shocked to learn that Weber had not told the truth to his wife and wanted to revise his view of him, but died before he could revise it.<sup>97</sup>

#### WEBER'S TWO VOCATIONS

That Weber lectured and wrote about academic and political vocations is no accident, since he was involved in both and experienced an inner struggle between them throughout his life. Conceptually there is also some overlap in that passion is, according to Weber, a prerequisite for both vocations.

ENTP types have a broad range of career options. It is therefore not surprising that Weber thought that "to a certain extent I fitted into a rather large number of positions."<sup>98</sup> He doubted his devotion to scholarship: "I simply am not...a real scholar. For me scholarly activity is too much bound up with the idea of filling my leisure hours, even though I realize that due to the division of labor, scholarly activity can be carried on successfully only if one devotes one's entire personality to it."<sup>99</sup> Typically of an extravert, on 3 January, 1891 he wrote to his uncle Hermann Baumgarten (1825-1893), a historian: "I hope that the *pedagogic* side of my university post, the indispensable feeling of *practical* activity will give me satisfaction...."<sup>100</sup> Weber believed that he would become a politician later.<sup>101</sup> This uncertainty persisted. As Marianne Weber has noted, it was an inner struggle "between his equally strong active and contemplative tendencies: between an intellect oriented toward an unprejudiced, universal, cerebral mastery of the world and an equally strong ability to form *convictions* and stand up for them at all costs."<sup>102</sup> She concluded that his "disposition was unmistakably toward an *active* rather than a contemplative life. Scholarly work...attracted him as an interesting sideline but not as the substance of his life, for political and social interests were equally strong in him, and as a strong-willed person he longed for great responsibilities...."<sup>103</sup> He was a "born fighter and ruler even more than a born thinker."<sup>104</sup>

This uncertainty reached its climax in the years 1918-1920. In the summer of 1918, Weber declared: "No — I was born for the pen and for the speaker's

---

96 Jaspers quoted in Martin Green, *The von Richthofen Sisters: The Triumphant and the Tragic Modes of Love* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), pp. 172-173.

97 Henrich, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

98 Weber quoted in Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

99 *Ibid.*, p. 165.

100 *Ibid.*

101 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

102 *Ibid.*, p. 316.

103 *Ibid.*, p. 162.

104 *Ibid.*, p. 166.

platform, not for an academic rostrum.”<sup>105</sup> This is because “ten informal talks are nothing compared to a two-hour academic lecture.”<sup>106</sup> In a letter of 10 October, 1918, however, he wrote: “My inward ‘calling’ is scholarly work and scholarly teaching.”<sup>107</sup> Yet, in the middle of November, 1918 he joined the founding committee of the *Deutsche Demokratische Partei* (German Democratic Party, DDP), created mainly at the suggestion of his brother Alfred. From then until January, 1919 Weber gave many speeches on its behalf, and typically experienced “joy and suffering at one and the same time.”<sup>108</sup> Jaspers became concerned that Weber with his speeches and articles on political matters of the day was wasting time, “instead of objectivizing himself.”<sup>109</sup> His highly critical speeches and articles on the German war effort and its aftermath (1914-1920) appeared in two volumes.<sup>110</sup>

Weber accepted a nomination at the top of the DDP list for a seat in the 19 January, 1919 *Nationalversammlung* (National Assembly) election and thought that he would be elected, but did nothing to support his candidacy. When the local party decision was overturned by a higher party organization and his name was put in a hopeless position on the party list, he withdrew.<sup>111</sup> Marianne Weber observed that Weber found it “unseemly” to make the usual efforts within the party structure to gain support.<sup>112</sup> He preferred to get a “call” for “which he was, deep down, waiting.”<sup>113</sup> This also agrees with Jaspers’ more general assessment that Weber was ready for high political office, but only if he were to be *called*.<sup>114</sup>

Weber’s other main political activities in 1918 and 1919 involved being a consultant to the German delegation negotiating the Treaty of Versailles and to a commission drafting the Weimar Constitution.<sup>115</sup> He succeeded in getting a popularly elected Reich president, but it fell far short of his preferred plebiscitary leadership democracy.<sup>116</sup> On 14 April, 1920 Weber resigned from the DDP over a policy dispute, noting that a politician “should and *must* make compromises. But

---

105 Weber quoted *ibid.*, p. 612.

106 *Ibid.*

107 Weber quoted in Mommsen, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

108 Hannah Arendt/Karl Jaspers *Briefwechsel 1926-1969*, p. 672.

109 Jaspers quoted in Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 571.

110 See *Zur Politik im Weltkrieg. Schriften und Reden 1914-1918*, ed. Wolfgang J. Mommsen in collaboration with Gangolf Hübinger (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1984) and *Zur Neuordnung Deutschlands. Schriften und Reden 1918-1920*, ed. Wolfgang J. Mommsen in collaboration with Wolfgang Schwentker (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1988). An English translation of some of them appears in Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs, eds., *Weber: Political Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

111 Mommsen, *op. cit.*, pp. 305-308.

112 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 643.

113 *Ibid.*

114 Jaspers, “Max Weber. Politiker – Forscher – Philosoph (1932),” p. 67.

115 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 649-658; Mommsen, *op. cit.*, 311-389.

116 Mommsen, *op. cit.*, p. 401.

I am a *scholar* by profession.... The scholar does not need to make compromises or to cover folly."<sup>117</sup> His resignation was already foreshadowed by a speech on 19 January, 1920 to students at the University of Munich: "So long as madmen carry on in politics from the right to the left, I shall stay away from it."<sup>118</sup> However, had he lived long enough to experience the hyperinflation of 1923, the mass unemployment of the early 1930s, and the national socialist rule, there is little doubt that he would have become again politically active, and as critical of politicians and their policies as earlier.

Felix Somary (1881-1956), an Austrian economist and diplomat who knew Weber, observed that "Weber was never in his life able to give his tremendous intellectual and spiritual powers full expression."<sup>119</sup> Politically, he was a "loner."<sup>120</sup> His polemics had the "character of one-man guerrilla actions against the puerile enthusiasms of his contemporaries: what he called 'the power of stupidity'."<sup>121</sup> Weber's political conduct in critical situations corresponded with the norms of the ethic of ultimate ends.<sup>122</sup>

Loewenstein concluded that if Weber had secured the leading political position that he deserved, "he would probably have cut a great figure in political life, but he would have offended so many people that he would have created hosts of enemies."<sup>123</sup> Even Jaspers in a letter of 24 March, 1964 to Arendt believed that if Weber had become a statesman, he would have "failed, and probably soon, because at some point he would have been too trusting or too chivalrous."<sup>124</sup> Weber's "foundering was significant, as he wanted what was humanly true but factually impossible."<sup>125</sup>

At the same time that Weber was politically active he expressed doubts about the material conditions to sustain his scholarly work. In the same 10 October, 1918 letter he added: "People like *myself* are now outwardly as well as inwardly 'luxuries'.... The kind of work I can do pays nothing — and with justice. The nation will now have to struggle for its bread, and there will not be much left for academics.... So I shall have to try to reorient myself."<sup>126</sup> In April or May, 1920 in a letter from Munich he raised the same possibility of having to find some oth-

<sup>117</sup> Weber quoted *ibid.*, p. 310.

<sup>118</sup> Weber quoted in Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 673.

<sup>119</sup> Felix Somary quoted in Paul Honingsheim, *The Unknown Max Weber*, ed. Alan Sica (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers, 2000), p. xi.

<sup>120</sup> Mommsen, "Introduction." In Mommsen and Jürgen Osterhammel, eds., *Max Weber and his Contemporaries* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), p. 12.

<sup>121</sup> Mitzman, "Personal Conflict and Ideological Options in Sombart and Weber." *Ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>122</sup> Mommsen, *Max Weber and German Politics, 1890-1920*, p. 442.

<sup>123</sup> Loewenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>124</sup> Hannah Arendt/Karl Jaspers *Briefwechsel 1926-1969*, pp. 584-585.

<sup>125</sup> Jaspers, "Max Weber. Politiker - Forscher - Philosoph (1932)," p. III.

<sup>126</sup> Weber quoted in Mommsen, *Max Weber and German Politics, 1890-1920*, p. 286.

er employment, but was even more critical of an academic vocation: "Instead of playing professor, I would have to work for a newspaper or a publisher *here*, and to this I would have no objection. After all, I can do such administrative work better than this academic gabbing, which *never* gives me spiritual satisfaction."<sup>127</sup> Even taking into consideration the severity of the German defeat, it is noteworthy that Weber put the national interest so high above his own vocational interest. Such statements also show passion, an overreaction to external conditions, as well as insufficient development of the judgment function. They are similar to his initial reaction to World War I on 28 August, 1914: "For *no matter* what the outcome — *this war is great and wonderful*."<sup>128</sup> Yet, when the war had started going badly for Germany, Loewenstein heard Weber say several times: "If they would only let me at him [Wilhelm II (1859-1941), German emperor, 1888-1918], I would personally twist the bungling fool's neck."<sup>129</sup>

Reinhard Bendix has noted that Weber was "continuously engaged in the simultaneous effort to be a man of science with the strenuous vigor more common in a man of action, and to be a man of action with all the ethical rigor and personal detachment more common in a man of science."<sup>130</sup> His almost simultaneous activism and detachment may be seen as a reflection of the "personal and intellectual tensions that marred his life and made it creative."<sup>131</sup> Somary saw him as a "restless, nervous type...with deeply-held convictions, for which he strove with every atom of his energy."<sup>132</sup> Moreover, his "rigid standards in the context of academic and political life helped exclude him from the active participation he consciously sought."<sup>133</sup>

According to Marianne Weber, in academia Weber was "known to many colleagues only as a difficult, excitable man whose intellectual superiority was a burden, whose ethical standards were inordinate, and whose constant criticism of the political conduct of his own group was disquieting."<sup>134</sup> Jaspers also spoke of Weber's "moral absoluteness," but stressed that it was without fanaticism.<sup>135</sup> He also noted that his "moral demands were not comfortable in their effects; he was the living conscience of anyone who did not completely shut himself off."<sup>136</sup> Most academics who knew him "were afraid of him. His very presence was like

---

127 Weber quoted in Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 692-693.

128 *Ibid.*, pp. 521-522.

129 Weber quoted in Loewenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

130 Bendix, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

131 *Ibid.*, p. 10.

132 Somary quoted in Honingsheim, *op. cit.*, p. xi.

133 Bendix, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

134 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 667.

135 Jaspers, "Max Weber. Politiker - Forscher - Philosoph (1932)," p. 51.

136 Jaspers, "Max Weber. Eine Gedenkrede (1920)," p. 38.

a reproach.”<sup>137</sup> Jaspers admitted that Weber’s “temperament led him to excessively emotional reactions, and to momentary acts of injustice. But it was wonderful how the man acknowledged this, and when it came to great tasks that demand frequent and instantaneous decisions, he doubted his ability: ‘I make mistakes’.”<sup>138</sup> What happened “was only the emotion of the moment, which could be corrected.”<sup>139</sup>

Since Weber’s feeling and sensing functions were the least preferred and developed, he was unaware of how his actions might affect others. More importantly, his behavior may be explained by what happens to extraverted intuitives when they are unable to find a place where they can fully use their talents. They “feel imprisoned, bored, and desperately discontent.”<sup>140</sup> This may lead them to criticize others for their incompetence.<sup>141</sup> There is some further discussion of these matters in the section dealing with Weber’s articles on academia. Yet, this raises a more fundamental issue, already touched upon by Marianne Weber and Jaspers. For all of Weber’s typological problems, it can be maintained that he was acting for the common good. Most fundamentally, in the words of Jaspers, his “struggle was for justice”<sup>142</sup> and the truth. Weber’s colleagues took his criticisms too personally, not realizing what was at stake. He paid a high price. When Weber resigned his professorship in 1903, although he remained as an adjunct professor he did not retain faculty status and a vote at faculty meetings, which disappointed him.<sup>143</sup> At a time when honorary doctorates proliferated, Weber was never awarded one.<sup>144</sup> Marianne Weber was, however, awarded an honorary law doctorate by the University of Heidelberg in 1924. Upon his death on 14 June, 1920 the University of Heidelberg Senate forbade an official ceremony. On 17 July, 1920 Jaspers gave a commemorative address at the invitation of the student association.

#### SCIENCE AS A VOCATION

Weber examines two broad topics — what may be expected of an academic vocation and what are the requirements for it. The essay still remains the best introduction to academia and together with the articles on the topic provides a realistic assessment of what may and does happen.

---

137 Jaspers, *Die Grossen Philosophen. Nachlaß 1*, p. 651.

138 Jaspers, “Max Weber. Eine Gedenkrede (1920),” p. 38.

139 *Ibid.*

140 Myers and Myers, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

141 Myers, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

142 Jaspers, “Max Weber. Politiker – Forscher – Philosoph (1932),” p. 104.

143 Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

144 Jaspers, *Die Grossen Philosophen. Nachlaß 1*, p. 651.

Science (*Wissenschaft*) is used in a continental European sense to mean a body of objective and organized knowledge or any academic discipline, unlike in the Anglophone world where it has been more narrowly defined as empirical study, the aim of which is to establish general laws, its definition being therefore restricted to the life and physical sciences. When Weber refers to the “exact natural sciences,” these are mostly the ones he has in mind, but he does not make this explicit. These are the ones where there is the expectation of one’s work being surpassed scientifically, which is not the case in the arts and the humanities. The social sciences are still experiencing controversies about their scope, methodology, and objectives, and may be regarded as somewhere between the life and physical sciences and the arts and the humanities.

There is a similar problem with the term *Beruf*, which means both vocation and profession, as well as having a strong connotation of *rufen* (to call). Thus, Weber talks about the “inward calling for science.” The term call is also widely used when someone receives an unsolicited offer from another higher education institution, which Weber got in large numbers, as well as an offer in general.

Although Weber devotes only a few pages to the “external conditions” of an academic vocation, they are of equal importance to the “inward calling” and deserve far more attention than they have received. Abraham H. Maslow (1908-1970) greatly expanded upon this point and made explicit what Weber implied. According to his basic needs hierarchy, at the fifth and highest level

discontent and restlessness will soon develop, unless the individual is doing what *he* or *she*, individually, is fitted for. Musicians must make music, artists must paint, poets must write if they are to be ultimately at peace with themselves. What humans *can* be, they *must* be. They must be true to their own nature. This need we may call self-actualization.<sup>145</sup>

This is in effect the actualization of one’s “inward calling.” What Weber calls the “material sense” corresponds to Maslow’s first and second level basic physiological needs for food, shelter, clothing, security, stability, protection, structure, order, and law. At the third level are the socio-psychological needs for love and belongingness, followed at the fourth level by the self-esteem needs for achievement, competence, reputation, status, fame, dignity, and appreciation.<sup>146</sup>

Alfred Weber, who shared Max Weber’s socio-economic and political views, noted in 1923 that the intelligentsia was beginning to experience adverse “external conditions” because of unemployment and underemployment (educational qualifications exceeding employment requirements), and made the prophetic observation that the “question of the fate of intellectual workers is today a world

---

145 Abraham H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Harper Collins, 1987), p. 22.

146 *Ibid.*, pp. 15-22.

problem....”<sup>147</sup> Unlike in the interwar period, the present situation dating from the early 1970s is a truly global one and is also qualitatively different from all earlier ones in that it involves far more university graduates in both developed and developing countries, and is a permanent condition within a globalized labor market in many academic disciplines and professions.<sup>148</sup>

As predicted by Weber, there has been considerable convergence between the German and American higher education systems. Since at least 2002, Germany is attempting to implement much of the Anglo-American higher education model, from bachelor degrees to junior professorships (assistant professorships),<sup>149</sup> as well as increasing the use of English in lectures, let alone widespread use of English terminology without any German translation, something which Weber already practiced.

Weber remarks that despite the supposed meritocracy principle in the selection process of academics, chance plays a major role. This is an area of considerable sensitivity and therefore it is not surprising that little work has been done.<sup>150</sup> The whole selection process has become more bureaucratized and competitive. The more informal and subjective evaluations of candidates, especially in the cases where there are large numbers of at least minimally qualified applicants, need more detailed and comparative studies.<sup>151</sup>

Another sensitive and little analyzed matter is the perceived need for an academic to be both a scholar and a teacher, there being few research professorships. Weber correctly notes that the two are not identical and therefore a role conflict may arise; he cites the cases of Hermann von Helmholtz (1821–1894), one of the greatest scientists of the nineteenth century, and according to Jung an

---

147 Alfred Weber, *Die Not der geistigen Arbeiter* (Munich and Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1923), p. 6. See also Dreijmanis, “Weimar, Washington, and Beyond: the Plight of the Intelligentsia,” *Educational Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Fall, 1978), pp. 255–265.

148 Allan M. Cartter, *Ph.D.'s and the Academic Labor Market* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976); Marzio Barbagli, *Educating for Unemployment: Politics, Labour Markets, and the School System – Italy 1859–1973*, translated by Robert H. Ross (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982); H.G. Kaufman, *Professionals in Search of Work: Coping with the Stress of Job Loss and Underemployment* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1982); Dreijmanis, “Higher Education and Employment: A Problematic Relationship,” *Higher Education in Europe*, Vol. XXII, No. 4 (December, 1997), pp. 485–493; Dreijmanis, “Is Graduate Employment a Right?,” *Higher Education Review*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (Summer, 2004), pp. 54–60.

149 Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, *Hochschulrahmengesetz* (Bonn, 2002). For updated information about the German higher education system, see the *Deutscher Hochschulverband* website: [www.hochschulverband.de](http://www.hochschulverband.de)

150 Theodore Caplow and Reece J. McGee, *The Academic Marketplace* (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers, 2001 [1958]).

151 Dreijmanis, “An Institute for the Study of Academia?,” *Higher Education Review*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Autumn, 2004), pp. 61–62.



introvert,<sup>152</sup> and Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886), probably an introvert, a historian who had great influence on Western historiography.

According to Jung, the root cause of this problem lies in “one of the greatest errors of our [Western] civilization, that is, the superstitious belief in verbal statements, the boundless overestimation of instruction by means of words and methods.”<sup>153</sup> In Western civilization extraversion is the dominant attitude.<sup>154</sup> Extraverts to introverts are in the ratio of three to one.<sup>155</sup> Even among the general student population the extraverts are in the majority. Among traditional American male university students between 1971 and 1982, 51.18 percent were extraverts and 48.82 percent were introverts, and for women university students the percentages were 59.76 and 40.24, respectively.<sup>156</sup> As students advance in their studies, the percentage of introverts increases and reaches a majority, as evidenced by the fact that of the physicians in the same period 58.48 percent were introverts and 41.52 percent were extraverts.<sup>157</sup> There are country and academic discipline variations, but the trend towards introversion at more advanced levels is evident. Among all American university lecturers in the period 1971-1984, 54.21 percent were introverts and 45.79 percent were extraverts.<sup>158</sup> Despite the introverts being in the majority among the professoriate, little attention has been given to the difficulties that they face in lecturing to large classes of undergraduate students. This typological dissonance has been ignored. Instead, there are endless controversies and the myth prevails that all academics *must be* both teachers and researchers, and also increasingly administrators, with the result that many introverts try to reduce their teaching role to a minimum by offering as few seminars as possible and by assigning large lecture courses to graduate students.

In Weber's case, he came after a long line of great German philosophers who were all introverts — Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), Georg W.F. Hegel (1770-1831), Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), and Friedrich W. Nietzsche (1844-1900).<sup>159</sup> The latter three were strong introverted intuitives, and in the case of Hegel and Schopenhauer, “intuition was subordinated to intellect, but with Nietzsche it ranked above it.”<sup>160</sup> With Weber's extraverted intuition and powerful

---

152 Jung, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

153 *Ibid.*, p. 404.

154 *Ibid.*, p. 373.

155 Myers and Myers, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

156 Gerald P. Macdaid, Mary H. McCaulley, and Richard I. Kainz, *Atlas of Type Tables* (Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, 1986), pp. 61, 54.

157 *Ibid.*, p. 376.

158 *Ibid.*, p. 255.

159 Jung, *op. cit.*, pp. 309, 320.

160 *Ibid.*, p. 321.

introverted thinking functions, he was a phenomenon to the population at large and to the students.

Assuming that one has the “inward calling,” there are six prerequisites for success in one’s vocation — systematic work, talent, complete devotion to one’s subject, imagination, passion, and inspiration, the latter being the decisive one. Science calls for increasing specialization, but Weber did the opposite. Finally, Weber draws attention to the different qualities needed of an academic and a political leader (with the exception of passion), but leaves unanswered the question why he believed that he possessed the necessary prerequisites for both vocations. In today’s bureaucratized, overregulated, and underfunded academia it may be said that the only one who has a vocation for it, just as in politics, is the one who can still say “nevertheless!” in spite of everything.

#### ARTICLES ON ACADEMIA

*Nous sommes non seulement responsables de ce que nous faisons, mais aussi de ce que nous ne faisons pas.* (We are responsible not only for what we do, but also for what we do not do.)

—Attributed to Jean-Baptiste Molière (1622-1673)

If Weber’s *Science as a Vocation* may be regarded as the skeleton, these articles put the flesh upon it. They demonstrate that Weber was not afraid to speak truth to power. In the words of Loewenstein, he “was utterly fearless....”<sup>161</sup> and therefore criticized those deserving of criticism, from the Prussian higher education bureaucrats to his colleagues and students, but was also capable of praise where it was deserved, as the case of Gustav von Schmoller demonstrates. (See Article 3.) Weber’s legalistic approach is quite evident in many of these articles, especially those on Ludwig Bernhard, Robert Michels, Richard Ehrenberg, and Friedrich T. Althoff. He “treats his subject-matter with an advocate’s passionate commitment...and with the cool, dispassionate tranquillity, conscientiousness and pitilessness of a judge whose whole purpose is to apply the law.”<sup>162</sup>

As indicated, Weber’s struggle was for justice and the truth. In the words of Joachim Radkau, for him “science was committed to truth; the honor of the scientist consisted in this. For him, truth and honor belong together.”<sup>163</sup> Loewenstein observed that Weber had an “innate and inflexible sense of justice that made him take the side of anyone whom he thought was being unjustly dealt

---

161 Loewenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

162 Arthur Salz, “For Science: Against the Intellectuals among Its Despisers.” In *Max Weber’s ‘Science as a Vocation,’* eds. Peter Lassman and Irving Velody with Herminio Martins (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), Part II, p. 55.

163 Radkau, *op. cit.*, p. 641.

with.”<sup>164</sup> A similar conclusion was reached by Somary: “He battled on without letting up, even when only minor issues were at stake.”<sup>165</sup> Weber upheld the autonomy of higher education institutions against a powerful state and what today might be called a culture of managerialism. He did not, however, advocate the abolition of the professoriate’s civil servant status, especially the government’s authority to make professorial appointments, which was at the root of the Bernhard Case. (See Article 1.) Weber’s warnings materialized with the coming of the Third Reich when the German higher education institutions lost all of their remaining autonomy.

Although much has changed in higher education in Germany, the United States, and globally, it would be a mistake to regard these articles as being of mainly historical interest. There is an Italian proverb: *I musicisti cambiano, ma la musica rimane la stessa*. (The musicians change, but the music remains the same.) If Weber were to reappear, he would find the increasing percentages of academics on temporary contracts with little or no prospect of getting tenured positions, part-time lecturers with little chance of securing full-time positions, women with the same qualifications as men receiving lower salaries, age discrimination, let alone unemployment and underemployment, and similar developments deplorable and condemnable. His legacy is that the truth and justice that academics proclaim to the external world must also be struggled for and implemented internally.

#### POLITICS AS A VOCATION

This essay is an introduction to Weber’s socio-political and religio-ethical writings and his political preferences. He draws sharp dichotomies between the ethic of ultimate ends and the ethic of responsibility, although near the end he regards them as complementary, and between leadership democracy and leaderless democracy. Such dichotomization may be seen as a pedagogical device, as well as drawing upon his religious studies, especially the dualism in Manichaeism.

As noted, Weber favored a plebiscitary leadership democracy. This was clearly illustrated in his conversation in May, 1919 with General Erich F.W. Ludendorff (1865-1937). After Ludendorff had asked Weber for a definition of democracy, he responded:

In a democracy the people choose a leader whom they trust. Then the chosen man says, “Now shut your mouths and obey me. The people and the parties are no longer free to interfere in the leader’s business.”

---

<sup>164</sup> Loewenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>165</sup> Somary quoted in Honingsheim, *op. cit.*, p. xi.

Ludendorff: I could like such a “democracy!”

Weber: Later the people can sit in judgment. If the leader has made mistakes — to the gallows with him!...<sup>166</sup>

Weber lists three qualities necessary for a politician — passion, responsibility, and a sense of proportion.

#### THE PRESENT AND EARLIER TRANSLATIONS

This is the first translation of Weber’s writings on academic and political vocations by a single translator. The translation adheres more closely to Weber’s manner of expression and style than the earlier ones. Although the editor has provided some input, mainly to take note of the standardization of certain concepts and terms which have entered social science vocabulary, the translator has made his own distinct contribution to Weberian scholarship.

Like other academics of the time, Weber neglected to footnote his references and identify more fully many of the mentioned persons, organizations, and events. This edition includes more annotations than any of the previous ones, even in cases where such information may seem superfluous to some Western readers, in order to make it accessible to a global readership.

#### EARLIER TRANSLATIONS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

Hans G. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds. and translators, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 77-156, reprinted London and New York: Routledge, 1991.

Edward Shils, ed. and translator, *Max Weber on Universities: The Power of the State and the Dignity of the Academic Calling in Imperial Germany* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1974). It has twelve of the thirty-two articles in this edition.

Peter Lassman and Irving Velody with Herminio Martins, eds., *Max Weber’s ‘Science as a Vocation,’* translated by Michael John (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), pp. 3-31.

\_\_\_\_\_ and Ronald Speirs, eds., *Weber: Political Writings*, translated by Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), “The Profession and Vocation of Politics,” pp. 309-369).

David S. Owen and Tracy B. Strong, eds., *The Vocation Lectures: “Science as a Vocation” / “Politics as a Vocation,”* translated by Rodney Livingstone (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 2004).

There also exist a few widely dispersed selections.

---

166 Weber quoted in Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 653.



## SCIENCE AS A VOCATION<sup>167</sup>

You have asked me to speak about “Science<sup>168</sup> as a Vocation.”<sup>169</sup> Now, there is a certain pedantry about us political economists,<sup>170</sup> from which I am not exempt. It dictates that our point of departure should always be the external circumstances. In this case the question: What is the nature of science as a vocation in the material sense of the word? Today, this means, in practice, essentially: What is the situation of a graduate student who has resolved to devote himself to the academic pursuit of science? In order to understand the distinctive nature of our German situation it will be helpful to proceed in a comparative manner and to call to mind how things are in the country that differs most sharply from our own: the United States.

As everyone knows, here a young man who wishes to devote himself to science as a vocation normally starts his career as a “*Privatdozent*”<sup>171</sup> (“adjunct lecturer”) at a university. To achieve this position, he must first consult with and gain the approval of the relevant subject head, and may then be granted his *Habilitation*<sup>172</sup> (postdoctoral lecturing qualification) at a university on the basis

---

167 “Wissenschaft als Beruf.” In Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Wolfgang Schluchter in collaboration with Birgitt Morgenbrod, eds., *Wissenschaft als Beruf 1917/1919 – Politik als Beruf 1919* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1994), pp. 1-23. Originally given as a lecture on 7 November, 1917 at the University of Munich to the *Freistudentische Bund. Landesverband Bayern* (Free Student Association. Bavarian branch).

168 See the glossary.

169 *Ibid.*

170 Now simply economists.

171 See the glossary.

172 *Ibid.*

of a book and an examination, which is usually little more than a formality, in the presence of the faculty, and can now, with no remuneration other than the lecture fees paid by the students, give lectures on topics that he can determine himself, provided they fall within the limits of his *venia legendi* [license to lecture]. In America, the equivalent career normally begins quite differently, namely, with his appointment as “assistant.”<sup>173</sup> This is rather similar to the procedure customary at our large institutes of natural sciences and medicine, where only a fraction of the assistants aspire to formal adjunct lectureships and even then in many cases only at a late stage. By contrast, under our system, on the whole, the career of a man of science is, in practice, constructed on plutocratic foundations, for it is extraordinarily risky for a young scholar with no private means to embark on an academic career under such conditions. He must be able to sustain it for a number of years without having any way of knowing whether or not he will eventually get the opportunity to take up a position that will enable him to earn his keep. In the United States, on the other hand, the bureaucratic system is the norm. There the young man receives a salary from the beginning. True, it is modest. The pay is usually scarcely equal to the wages of a not entirely unskilled laborer. All the same, he starts with an apparently secure position, as he is on a fixed salary. Normally, however, his employers have the right to dismiss him, like our assistants, and this right is freely exercised without compunction if he fails to come up to expectations. These expectations, however, are that he gets a “full house.”

This cannot happen to a German adjunct lecturer. Once you have him, you can never get rid of him. True, he makes no “demands.” But he does have the understandable idea that, if he has been working there for years, he has a kind of moral right to be given consideration. This also applies—importantly—to the question of the possible *Habilitation* of other adjunct lecturers. The question is whether one should, as a matter of principle, grant *Habilitation* to every scholar of proven worth, or, bearing in mind the “teaching requirements,” give the *Dozenten* (lecturers) already in place a monopoly of the teaching. This is an awkward dilemma and it has to do with the dual aspect of the academic profession, which we shall soon be discussing. Usually a decision is made in favor of the second alternative. This, however, increases the risk that the professor of the subject in question, however subjectively conscientious he may be, will give preference to his own students. If I may speak personally, I have always followed the principle that a scholar who obtained his doctorate under my supervision had to demonstrate his worth and obtain *Habilitation* under someone *other than* me. Following

---

173 In English [Tr.]

this principle did, admittedly, once result in one of my most able students being rejected by another university because nobody *believed* that this was the reason I had sent him.

A further difference with America is this: In Germany the adjunct lecturer is generally *less* involved with lectures than he would wish. Admittedly, he has the right to give any lectures within his discipline. To do so, however, is regarded as improper and a discourtesy toward more senior lecturers. Usually, the head of institute gives the “main” lectures and the lecturer has to be content with giving supporting lectures, the unintended advantage being that he has greater freedom to pursue scholarly work in his early years.

In America, the system is organized on a different principle. In his early years the young lecturer is heavily overburdened precisely because he is *paid*. In a department of German studies, for example, the professor might give three hours of lectures on [Johann W. von] Goethe<sup>174</sup> and no more, while the young assistant, with twelve hours teaching a week, can consider himself fortunate if, alongside trying to drill some German into his students’ heads, he is only assigned authors up to, say, [Ludwig] Uhland.<sup>175</sup> The syllabus is, after all, laid down by the departmental authorities, and the assistant is just as dependent in this respect as one of our assistants would be.

Here in Germany we can now clearly observe that in broad areas of science the university system is developing along the lines of the American system. The large institutes of medicine or the natural sciences are “state capitalist” enterprises. Their administration would not be possible without extremely generous resources. The result is the same as it is wherever capitalist business operates: the “separation of the worker from the means of production.”<sup>176</sup> The worker, in this case the assistant,<sup>177</sup> is dependent on the means of labor that are provided by the state; consequently he is just as dependent on the director of the institute as a factory worker is on his employer. The institute director, in all good faith, regards this institute as *his* institute, and holds sway there— and the assistant’s situation is often as precarious as any “proletarian” type of existence, or that of an assistant<sup>178</sup> in an American university.

---

174 Johann W. von Goethe (1749-1832), major poet, novelist, and playwright.

175 Ludwig Uhland (1787-1862), minor poet.

176 A reference to Karl Marx (1818-1883): “The so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production,” “Capital: A Critique of Political Economy.” In *Karl Marx/Frederick Engels Collected Works* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1996), Vol.35, pp. 705-706.

177 Although the assistants taught certain courses, they were answerable to the institute director.

178 In English [Tr.]



Our German university life is becoming Americanized, like our life in general, in some very important ways, and this development, I am convinced, will spread to those disciplines where, as is very largely the case today in my own discipline, the craftsman owns his own tools (essentially, the [private] library), very much like the old type of craftsman in the past within his trade. This development is well under way.

The technical benefits are beyond doubt, as in all capitalist and bureaucratized organizations. But the "spirit" that prevails in them is different from the atmosphere that has historically prevailed at German universities. There is an extraordinarily wide gulf, externally and inwardly, between the boss of a large capitalist university enterprise like this and the familiar old-style professor. There is also a difference of inward attitude. I do not propose to elaborate on this point here. Inwardly as much as externally, the old university *constitution* has become fictitious. What has remained, however, and indeed has considerably increased, is a factor peculiar to the university *career*. Whether or not an adjunct lecturer, let alone an assistant, ever succeeds in achieving the position of a full professor, let alone of a head of an institute, is a matter of pure *chance*. Of course, chance is not the only factor, but it is an unusually powerful factor. I can think of almost no other career on earth in which it has such a large part to play. I am especially well placed to say this, as I personally owe it to a few instances of sheer chance that at a very early age<sup>179</sup> I was appointed to a full professorship in a discipline in which at that time my contemporaries had undoubtedly achieved more than I had. And I feel that this experience has given me a keener awareness of the undeserved fate of those many others whom chance has treated unkindly and still does, and who despite all their ability failed to reach the position they merited as a result of this mechanism of selection.

That chance rather than ability plays such an important role is not solely, and not even chiefly, due to human factors, which of course have their part to play in this particular selection just as much as they do in any other. It would be unjust to hold personal failings of faculties or ministries responsible for the fact that so many mediocrities undoubtedly figure so prominently in the universities. It is due, rather, to the laws of human interaction, especially the interplay of several bodies, in this case the proposing faculties and the ministries. For comparison, we can study the process of papal elections through many centuries. This is the most significant comparable selection of an individual to be recorded. Rarely does the cardinal who is said to be the "favorite" stand a chance of emerging as the winner, who is normally the second or third on the list. The same applies to

---

<sup>179</sup> In political economy at the University of Freiburg in 1895, when he was thirty-one years old.

the election of the president of the United States. It is exceptional for the top man, the one with the highest profile, to be selected for the “nomination”<sup>180</sup> by the party conventions and then to contest the election. It is usually the number two, and often the number three, who is chosen. The Americans have coined technical sociological terms for these categories, and it would be interesting to analyze the laws of selection through the collective will by studying these examples. We shall not do this here today. But these laws apply also to the academic staff of a university, and we ought not to be surprised that mistakes often occur, but rather that the number of *correct* appointments, in spite of everything, is still relatively high. It is only when, as in certain countries, parliaments, or, as here in Germany, monarchs (and they work in quite similar ways) or, as at the present time, revolutionary leaders, intervene for *political* reasons, that we can be sure that complacent mediocrities or overambitious persons will find that the odds are in their favor.

No university teacher enjoys looking back on discussions about appointments, as they are seldom pleasant. And yet it is fair to say that the *will* to let purely objective reasons govern the decision has been present without exception in all the many cases I have known.

We must be clear about this: it is not only thanks to the inadequacy of selection through the collective will that decisions about academic destinies are so largely determined by “chance.” Every young man who believes he has a vocation to be a scholar must clearly understand that the task that awaits him has a dual aspect. He is to become qualified not only as a scholar but also as a teacher. And the two are by no means identical. A person can be a quite outstanding scholar and a dreadfully poor teacher. I am thinking of the teaching careers of men such as [Hermann von] Helmholtz<sup>181</sup> or [Leopold von] Ranke.<sup>182</sup> And these are not rare exceptions. Now, however, the situation is that our universities, especially the small ones, are competing for students in the most ridiculous manner. The house owners in the university towns celebrate when the thousandth student is enrolled, and they would like nothing better than to celebrate the two thousandth with a torchlight parade. Income from lecture fees— we might as well admit it frankly— may be affected by an “attractive” professorial appointment in closely related disciplines. And even apart from that, attendance at lectures is a tangible mark of success that can be measured in figures, whereas scholarly quality is im-

---

180 In English [Tr.]

181 Hermann von Helmholtz (1821-1894), physiologist and physicist who made fundamental contributions to physiology, optics, mathematics, electrodynamics, and meteorology.

182 Leopold, since 1865, von Ranke (1795-1886), leading historian, the first to establish a historical seminar, who had great influence on Western historiography.

ponderable and, especially in the case of daring innovators, often (and perfectly naturally) a matter of controversy.

The idea of the immeasurable benefits and value of high attendance figures thus overshadows practically everything else. If it is said of a lecturer that he is a poor teacher, this is usually an academic death sentence, even if he should be the world's foremost scholar. But the question whether someone is a good or a poor teacher is answered according to the number of students that condescend to honor him by their presence at his lectures. The fact is, however, that the reason why students flock to a particular teacher is determined— to a degree that is scarcely credible— by purely external factors, such as personality, or even tone of voice. Quite extensive experience and sober reflection have taught me a deep suspicion of mass lectures, however unavoidable they may be. Democracy has its place. But the scientific training that is traditional in German universities, which we should be providing, is a matter of the *aristocratic spirit*, and we should face up to this. On the other hand, it is also undoubtedly true that the presentation of scientific problems in such a way that an untrained but receptive mind can understand them and— crucially— go on to think about them independently is perhaps the most difficult pedagogic task of all. (Whether or not the task has been accomplished, however, is not decided solely by attendance figures.) To return to our theme— mastery of this art is a personal gift and by no means necessarily coincides with the scientific abilities of a scholar. Unlike France, we have no body of “immortals” of science; in our tradition, the universities are supposed to satisfy both demands: research and teaching. Whether or not the two abilities are both found in one person is a matter of pure chance.

Academic life, then, is a wild venture. When young scholars come to ask for advice regarding *Habilitation*, the responsibility for speaking to them is almost too much to bear. If the young man is a Jew, then, of course, we say to him: *lasciate ogni speranza*<sup>183</sup> [“Abandon all hope, you who enter here”]. But we also have to ask all the others to examine their consciences and answer the question: Do you believe you could bear to see mediocrities getting ahead of you year after year without feeling inwardly embittered and crushed? Of course, the answer comes back every time: Certainly, I live only for my “vocation”— but I for one have known very few who were able to come through the experience unscathed.

That was what it seemed necessary to say about the external conditions of the scholar's vocation.

I believe you now really want to hear something else from me. You want to hear about the *inward* calling for science. At the present time, the inward situ-

---

<sup>183</sup> Inscription at the entrance to hell in Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), *Inferno*, translated by J.G. Nichols (London: Hesperus Press, 2005), Canto III, line 7.

ation regarding the practice of science as a vocation is determined by the fact that science has entered a phase of specialization that has never been known before, and this will not change for the indefinite future. Not only externally, no, especially inwardly, the situation is that the individual can only really achieve complete success in the sphere of science under conditions of the most rigorous specialization. Whenever we do work that crosses over into neighboring fields (and we often do such work— sociologists, for example, do it constantly), we are painfully aware that at best we are introducing experts in the field to useful *problem areas* that they might easily have overlooked, and are resigned to the fact that our own work must inevitably remain imperfect in the extreme. Only through rigorous specialization can the scientific worker truly gain the feeling of satisfaction, for the first and perhaps the only time in his life, of being able to say: here I have achieved something that will *last*. Today, a really final and proficient achievement is always a specialist achievement. And anyone who does not have the ability to put on blinkers, as it were, and to enter into the idea that the destiny of his soul depends on his being right about this particular conjectural emendation at this point in this manuscript, should stay well away from science. He will never have what may be called the “experience” of science. Without this strange intoxication (which appears faintly ridiculous to outsiders), without this passion, and without this feeling that “thousands of years had to elapse before you entered life, and more thousands of years are silently waiting” to see whether or not your conjecture will be confirmed, one has *no* vocation for science and should do something different. Nothing has any value for anyone, as a human being, that he *cannot* do with *passion*.

It is a fact, however, that however great such passion, and however genuine and deep it may be, the result can never be forced. It is, however, a precondition of the decisive factor, “inspiration.” Today in certain circles of young people, it seems to be widely believed that science has become an arithmetical calculation, which can be manufactured, as “in a factory,” in laboratories, or statistical card index systems, by cool reason alone and not with the whole of one’s “soul.” Incidentally, there is usually no understanding of what actually does go on in either a factory or a laboratory. In both places something, and the right thing at that, has to *occur* to a person before he can achieve anything of value. But this process cannot be forced. It has nothing to do with any kind of cold calculation, although this too is an essential precondition. No sociologist, for example, should think it beneath him to go on doing, perhaps, many tens of thousands of quite trivial calculations in his head for months at a time until he is old and grey. It is futile to rely entirely on mechanical assistance if anything is to be produced. And what is finally produced is often precious little. And if still nothing definite “occurs”

to him about the direction in which his calculations are taking him, or about the weight he should give to the emerging individual results as he makes his calculations, then even that little will not be produced. Normally, an idea only grows out of the soil of really hard work. Not always, admittedly. An idea that comes to an amateur may, from the scientific point of view, carry exactly the same or even greater weight than that of the expert. In fact, we owe many of our very best problem formulations and insights to amateurs. The amateur differs from the expert— as Helmholtz said of Robert [von] Mayer<sup>184</sup>— only in that he lacks a firm and secure working method, and is therefore not usually able to check and assess the idea for its importance or able to put it into practice.

The idea does not replace the work. And for its part, work cannot replace the idea or force it to appear, any more than passion can. Both— especially, both *together*— can entice it to come out. But it comes when it chooses, not when we choose. It is indeed true that the best ideas come to us in the way that [Rudolf von] Ihering<sup>185</sup> describes: when smoking a cigar on the couch, or as Helmholtz, speaking for himself, puts it, in his scientifically precise way: when walking along a gently rising road. They come, at any rate, when one does not expect them, not while racking one's brains and pondering at one's desk. Of course, the ideas would not have occurred to us without our having been through the stage of racking our brains and being engaged in impassioned questioning. Be that as it may, all scientific work is accompanied by an element of chance— will "inspiration" come or will it not?— and the scientific worker must accept this. Someone may be an excellent worker and yet never have had a worthwhile idea of his own.

It is, moreover, a serious mistake to imagine that this applies only to science and that an office, for example, is different from a laboratory in this respect. A businessman or big industrialist with no "business imagination," i.e., without ideas, brilliant ideas, will be merely a man who is best suited to remain a clerk or technical official all his life. He will never introduce organizational innovations. The importance of inspiration in the field of science is no greater— whatever scholars may arrogantly imagine— than it is for the modern entrepreneur tackling the practical problems of life. Conversely— and this is something that is often overlooked— its importance is no less than it is in the field of art. It is childish to imagine that a mathematician at his desk with a ruler or with mechanical tools or calculators could arrive at a scientifically valuable result. Of

---

184 Robert von Mayer (1814-1878), physician and physicist who formulated the general principle of the conservation of energy.

185 Rudolf von Ihering (or Jhering) (1818-1892), jurist.

course, the mathematical imagination of a man like [Karl T.W.] Weierstraß,<sup>186</sup> in terms of its meaning and result, is quite differently oriented from the imagination of an artist, and qualitatively it is quite different too. But this is not true of the psychological process. Both are intoxication (in the sense of Plato's "mania")<sup>187</sup> and "inspiration."

Now, whether or not someone experiences scientific inspiration depends on the fates, which are hidden from our eyes, but it also depends on "talent." This undoubted truth has been largely responsible for the tendency of many people (especially young people) to worship certain idols, the cult of which we today find firmly established on every street corner and in every periodical. These idols are "personality" and "experience." They are closely linked. The idea is prevalent that the latter constitutes the former and is a part of it. One puts oneself through agonies in order to have "experience"— as this is thought to be part of the appropriate way of living for a personality— and if one fails, one at least has to act as if one had this gift of grace. This "experience" used to be called, in German, "sensation." And there was— I believe— a more accurate conception of what "personality" was and what it signified.

Ladies and gentlemen! Only the person who serves *purely the object of investigation* has "personality" in the scientific sphere, and not only in the scientific sphere. We know of no great artist who ever did anything other than serve his art and that alone. As far as his art is concerned, even a personality of the stature of Goethe paid the price for taking the liberty of wanting to make his "life" a work of art. Some may doubt this, but this much is at any rate true: only someone like Goethe could even permit himself to take such a liberty. Everyone will at least admit that even for someone like him, who only appears once in a thousand years, there was a price to be paid. It is no different in politics. I shall not speak of this today. In the field of science, however, no one can possibly be a "personality" if, like an impresario of the task to which he should be devoting himself, he steps on to the stage himself and, wishing to legitimize himself through "experience," asks: How do I show that I am something other than a mere 'expert' [?] How do I manage things so that, in form or substance, I have something new to say that no one has ever said before in quite the same way [?] This is a phenomenon that is found on a massive scale in our time. It always appears petty, and diminishes

---

186 Karl T.W. Weierstraß (1815-1897), mathematician who made important advances in the theory of elliptic and Abelian functions.

187 A reference to Plato (428/427-348/347 B.C.), "Phaedrus," 245: "If anyone comes to the gates of poetry and expects to become an adequate poet by acquiring expert knowledge of the subject without the Muses' madness, he will fail, and his self-controlled verses will be eclipsed by the poetry of men who have been driven out of their minds." In *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper and translated by Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1997).

the person who asks such questions, whereas inward devotion to his task, and that alone, would raise him to the height and dignity of the cause that he claims to serve. This is also no different for the artist.

While our work shares these preconditions with art, it is sharply distinguished from artistic work by a fate that dictates that it is harnessed to the course of *progress*. In the sphere of art, by contrast, there is no progress in this sense. Seen from a purely artistic point of view, it does not follow that because a work of art was created in an age that saw the discovery of new technical tools or, say, the laws of perspective, it is necessarily on a higher level than one that has not benefited from any knowledge of those tools and laws—*provided* the latter has been true to its material and form; that is to say, if it has selected and shaped its object in a manner that had no need of the application of those conditions and tools. A work of art that attains real “fulfillment” will never be surpassed, and will never become obsolete; the individual may assess its significance for himself variously, but no one will ever be able to say of a work that attains real “fulfillment” in the artistic sense that it has been “surpassed” by another one that also attains “fulfillment.”

By contrast, every one of us who works in science knows that what he has produced will be obsolete in ten, twenty, or fifty years. That is the fate, indeed, the *meaning* of scientific work, to which it is dedicated and devoted in a quite specific sense, unlike all otherwise comparable cultural elements. Every scientific “fulfillment” means new “questions,” and *is intended* to be surpassed and rendered obsolete. Everyone who wants to serve science has to come to terms with this. Scientific works can indeed remain permanently important as “luxuries,” on account of their artistic qualities, or as tools for training. But to repeat, it is not only the fate, but also the goal, of all of us to be surpassed scientifically. We cannot work without hoping that others will get further than we have. In principle, this progress can go on indefinitely.

This brings us to the problem of the *meaning* of science, for it is by no means self-evident that something that is subject to such a law is inherently meaningful and reasonable. Why pursue something that, in reality, never comes to an end and never can? Firstly, for purely practical, or more broadly, technical purposes: in order to be able to adjust our practical actions to the expectations that scientific experience places in our hands. Fine. But this is only meaningful for practical life. What inward stance does the man of science himself adopt vis-à-vis his profession?— if indeed he wishes to adopt a particular stance. He maintains that he pursues science “for its own sake” and not because it will make it possible for others to attain commercial or technical success, such as enabling them to feed, clothe, light, or govern themselves better. But what does he believe he can mean-

ingfully achieve with these creations that are destined for constant obsolescence, and what can he achieve by allowing himself to be harnessed to an enterprise that is divided into specialist areas and runs on to infinity? This calls for some general considerations.

Scientific progress is a small part, albeit the most important part, of that process of intellectualization to which we have been subject for thousands of years and toward which in our time such an extraordinarily negative stance is usually adopted.

Let us first of all be clear about what precisely this intellectual rationalization through science and scientifically oriented technology means in practice. Does it mean that we today— everyone, for example, sitting here in this hall— has a greater knowledge of the conditions of life under which he exists than an Indian<sup>188</sup> or a Hottentot?<sup>189</sup> Hardly. Those of us who travel by streetcar— unless we are physicists— have no notion of how the streetcar works or what sets it in motion, and there is no need to know, either. All we need to know is that we can “depend” on it to behave in a certain way and can act accordingly; but as to how a streetcar is built so that it will move, of that we know nothing. The savage knows incomparably more about his tools. I am willing to bet that almost everyone, including any colleagues in the field of political economy present in the hall, would give a different answer to the question: What is it about money that enables us to buy things— sometimes a lot, sometimes a little— with it? The savage knows how to obtain his food for the day, and knows which institutions enable him to do this. Thus, increasing intellectualization and rationalization does *not* mean increasing general knowledge of the conditions under which we live our lives. It means something else. It means the knowledge or belief that *if we only wanted* to we *could* learn at any time that there are, in principle, no mysterious unpredictable forces in play, but that all things— in principle— can be *controlled through calculation*. This, however, means the disenchantment of the world. No longer, like the savage, who believed that such forces existed, do we have to resort to magical means to gain control over or pray to the spirits. Technical means and calculation work for us instead. This, above all, is what intellectualization actually means.

Does this process of disenchantment in Western culture, which has been going on for millennia, and in general, this “progress,” to which science belongs as a constituent part and motive force, have any meaning above and beyond the purely practical and technical? This question is dealt with at the level of prin-

---

188 Also called Amerindian or Amerind, indigenous people of the Western Hemisphere.

189 Now regarded as a pejorative term for Khoinkhoi, also spelled Khoi-khoi, indigenous people of South Africa and Namibia.



ciple in the works of Leo [N.] Tolstoy.<sup>190</sup> He came to the subject in the most curious way. The entire problem with which he was wrestling revolved around the question: "Is *death* a meaningful phenomenon or not?" And for him the answer was: For civilized people [*Kulturmenschen*]<sup>191</sup>— no, the reason being that the individual civilized life, existing within "progress" and infinity, cannot, as far as its own immanent meaning is concerned, come to an end. This is because further progress always lies ahead of it; no one, when he dies, stands at the pinnacle, which is found in infinity. Abraham, like any peasant in ancient times, died "old and fulfilled by life,"<sup>191</sup> because he had lived in the organic cycle of life, because, in accordance with its purpose, in the evening of his days, his life had brought him what it had to offer, and because no puzzling questions remained unanswered, and he could therefore be "content." A civilized man, however, placed in the continual process of the enrichment of civilization with ideas, knowledge, and problems, can become "weary of life," but not "fulfilled by it," for he can snatch only the tiniest part, and always only what is transient, nothing final, of what the life of the mind constantly gives birth to, and consequently death for him is a meaningless event. And because death is meaningless, civilized life itself is meaningless too, as through its meaningless attachment to "progressiveness" it brands death as meaningless. We find this idea as an undertone to Tolstoy's art throughout his late novels.<sup>192</sup>

What should be our attitude to this? Does "progress" actually have any recognizable meaning beyond the technical, so that its service might become a meaningful vocation? The question must be faced. It is, however, no longer merely the question of a vocation *for* science, i.e.: What does science as a vocation mean for those who devote themselves to it? The question is now: What is the *vocation of science* within the totality of human life, and what is its value?

The contrast between past and present is enormous. You will recall the marvelous image at the beginning of the seventh book of Plato's *Republic*:<sup>193</sup> those cave dwellers, chained up and facing the wall of the cave in front of them. Behind them lies the source of the light. They cannot see this, and thus have only the shadow pictures thrown on to the wall, the meaning of which they try to fathom. But

---

190 Leo N. Tolstoy (1828-1910), major Russian novelist.

191 A biblical reference to Abraham, Genesis 25:8: "Abraham had lived for a hundred and seventy-five years when he breathed his last. He died at a great age, a full span of years, and was gathered to his forefathers." All biblical quotations are based on *The Revised English Bible with Apocrypha* (Oxford and Cambridge: Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press, 1989).

192 "The Death of Iván Ilych and Hadji Murád." In *The Works of Leo Tolstóy*, translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), Vol.15, pp. 1-73; *Resurrection* (Moscow: Raduya Publishers, 1990).

193 "Republic," 514-518. In *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper and translated by G.M.A. Grube, revised by C.D.C. Reeve (Indianapolis/Cambridge:Hackett Publishing, 1997).

then one of them succeeds in breaking free; he turns and sees the sun. Blinded, he feels his way around and can only stammer a description of what he has seen. The others say he has gone mad. But gradually he learns to look into the light, and then his task is to go down to the cave dwellers and to lead them up to the light. He is the philosopher, and the sun is the truth of science, which alone does not reach out for illusory images and shadows, but for true being.

Who now takes such a view of science? Today the feeling is rather the opposite, especially among young people: The intellectual constructions of science constitute an obscure realm where artificial abstractions strive with their scrawny hands to grasp real life with its blood and its juices, but never manage to get a grip on it, whereas here in life, in what for Plato was the play of shadows on the walls of the cave, true reality pulsates; the other things are nothing but lifeless ghosts derived from it. How did this transformation come about? The passionate enthusiasm of Plato in the *Republic* can ultimately be explained primarily by the fact that the meaning of one of the great tools for gaining all scientific knowledge had been found and entered the consciousness, the *concept*. It was Socrates<sup>194</sup> who made the momentous discovery, but he was not alone. In India we find the first beginnings of a logic that is similar to that of Aristotle.<sup>195</sup> But nowhere else was there this consciousness of its importance. Here, for the first time, a means was at hand with which it was possible to put someone in a logical vise, so that he could not escape from it without admitting either that he knew nothing, or that this and nothing else was the truth, the *eternal* truth that would never pass away, unlike the efforts of the blind people. This was the tremendous experience that the disciples of Socrates discovered. And from this it seemed to follow that if the true concept of the beautiful, the good, or even, perhaps, of courage, the soul—or whatever it might be—could be found, then their true essence could be grasped. And this again seemed to show the way to know and to teach how to act rightly in life, and especially as a citizen. This was the question that mattered most to the Greeks, who were political through and through in their thinking. This was why they engaged in science.

This discovery by the Hellenic mind was joined by the second great tool of scientific work, born of the Renaissance period, the rational experiment, which was a means of reliably controlling experience. Without it, today's empirical science would be impossible. Experiments had been carried out previously: for example, there had been physiological experiments in India in the service of the ascetic techniques of the Yogi. In the ancient Hellenic period there had been mathematical experiments for the purposes of military technology, and in

---

194 Socrates (c.470 B.C.-399 B.C.), Greek philosopher.

195 Aristotle (384 B.C.-322 B.C.), Greek philosopher.

the Middle Ages, for example, experiments concerned with mining. But it was the achievement of the Renaissance to have made the experiment the guiding principle of research itself. The great innovators were from the field of *art*, such as Leonardo [da Vinci]<sup>196</sup> and others like him. Especially characteristic were the sixteenth century experimenters in music with their experimental keyboards. Thereafter, the experiment moved into science, especially thanks to [Galileo] Galilei,<sup>197</sup> then into theory through [Francis] Bacon,<sup>198</sup> and then it found its place in the exact individual disciplines at the continental universities, beginning with Italy and the Netherlands in particular.

What did science mean to these people on the brink of the modern period? To art experimenters like Leonardo and the musical innovators, it meant the path to *true art*, which for them meant at the same time the path to *true nature*. Art was to be raised to the level of a science. In particular, the artist was to be raised to the status of a doctor,<sup>199</sup> both socially and in terms of the meaning of his life. This is the ambition that underlies, for example, Leonardo's sketchbooks. And today? "Science as the path to nature" would sound to young people like blasphemy. No, for them it is rather the reverse: liberation from the intellectualism of science in order to return to their own nature and so to nature itself! And science as the path to art? Here no criticism is needed.

But in the age of the rise of the exact natural sciences people expected even more from science. When you consider the words of [Jan] Swammerdam:<sup>200</sup> "I bring to you here the evidence of God's providence in the anatomy of a louse," you can see what the scientific work of that time, under indirect Protestant<sup>201</sup> and Puritan<sup>202</sup> influence, regarded as its own task, namely, to find the path to God. At that time they did not find this in the philosophers and their concepts and deductions— every Pietist theologian of that period, especially [Philip J.] Spener,<sup>203</sup> knew that God was not to be found by the route the Middle Ages had chosen. God is hidden, his ways are not our ways, his thoughts not our thoughts.

---

196 Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), Italian painter and engineer.

197 Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), Italian mathematician, astronomer, and physicist.

198 Francis Bacon (1561-1626), English philosopher, essayist, and politician.

199 A university graduate with a doctorate.

200 Jan Swammerdam (1637-1680), Dutch naturalist and anatomizer of insects and author of a book on them.

201 A member or follower of any of the Western Christian churches that are separate from the Roman Catholic Church in accordance with the principles of the sixteenth century Reformation.

202 A member of a group of English Protestants who regarded the Reformation of the Church of England under Elizabeth I (1558-1603) as incomplete and sought to simplify and regulate forms of worship.

203 Philip J. Spener (1635-1705), a major figure in German Pietism, a reform movement within Lutheranism.

They hoped, instead, to trace his intentions for the world in the natural sciences, where his works could be physically grasped.

And today? Who— apart from a few overgrown children, who are indeed to be found in the natural sciences— still believes that the insights of astronomy or biology or physics or chemistry could teach us anything about the *meaning* of the world, or even anything about the way in which to trace such a “meaning”— if one exists? If anything, they are more likely to destroy the roots of any belief that anything like a “meaning” of the world exists *at all!* And finally science, the power that is alienated from God, as the path “to God”? Today, no one, whether he admits it or not, is in any doubt in his innermost being that it is indeed alienated from God.

Liberation from the rationalism and intellectualism of science as the fundamental prerequisite of life in communion with the divine— this, or something along these lines, is the watchword that expresses all that is felt by those young people who are attuned to religion or who seek religious experience. And not only religious experience, no, experience in general. The only thing that is strange is the path they take, for it is the realm of the irrational, the one as yet untouched by intellectualism, that is now made conscious and closely examined.

This is what modern intellectualist romanticism is leading to in practice. This path toward liberation from intellectualism is likely to achieve the exact opposite of what those who take it see as their goal. After [Friedrich W.] Nietzsche’s devastating criticism of those “last men” who “invented happiness,”<sup>204</sup> there is probably no need for me to remind you of the naïve optimism with which we once celebrated science, or the technology for the mastery of life based on it, as the path to *happiness*. Who believes this, apart from a few overgrown children occupying university chairs or editorial offices?

Let us retrace our steps. What, beneath these internal presuppositions, is the meaning of science as a vocation, since all these earlier illusions— “the path to true being,” “the path to true art,” “the path to true nature,” “the path to the true God,” “the path to true happiness”— have disappeared from view[?] Tolstoy gave the simplest answer with the words: “It is meaningless because it gives no answer to the only questions that are important for us: ‘What should we do? How should we live?’”<sup>205</sup> The fact that it gives no answer is quite simply indisputable. The questions are merely in what sense it gives “no” answer, and whether

---

204 A reference to Friedrich W. Nietzsche (1844-1900), *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, translated by R.J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 47.

205 A reference to Tolstoy, “What Then Must We Do?” In *The Works of Leo Tolstóy*, translated by Aylmer Maude (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), Vol. 14, pp. 304-329.

or not it perhaps could, after all, be of use to someone who put the question in the right way.

It is common, these days, to speak of “presuppositionless” science. Is there such a thing? It depends on what we understand by the term. What is presupposed in every piece of scientific work is the validity of the rules of logic and method, the rules of these general foundations of our orientation in the world. These presuppositions, at least for our particular question, are the least problematical. But there is a further presupposition: namely, that the products of scientific work are *important* in the sense of being “worth knowing.” It is here that all our problems begin, for this presupposition itself cannot be demonstrated by scientific means. It can only be *interpreted* to determine its ultimate meaning, which can then be rejected or accepted according to one’s own ultimate attitude to life.

Furthermore, the nature of the relationship of scientific work to these presuppositions varies greatly, according to the structure of the particular science. Natural sciences, such as physics, chemistry, and astronomy, assume that the ultimate laws of cosmic events, which science, within its limits, can explain, are worth knowing. Not only because with this knowledge technical successes can be achieved, but because, if these sciences are to be a “vocation,” they are worth knowing “for their own sake.” This presupposition itself cannot be demonstrated, let alone the question whether or not the world that they describe is worthy to exist, whether or not it has a “meaning,” and whether or not existence in the world is meaningful. They do not ask these questions.

Or take a scientifically highly developed practical art such as modern medicine. The general “presupposition” of medical practice is, in trivial terms, that the task of the pure preservation of life as such and maximum possible reduction of suffering as such should be affirmed. And this is problematic. Using the means at his disposal, the medical practitioner keeps alive a terminally ill patient, even when he begs for his life to be ended, and even when the relatives, even if they do not admit this to themselves, understandably desire his death as a release from his suffering, or find it beyond their means to meet the expense of preserving a life without value—the patient could, perhaps, be a pitiful lunatic. And yet the presuppositions of medicine and the penal code prevent the doctor from deviating from his principles. Medicine does not ask whether or not or when life is worth preserving. All the natural sciences give us an answer to the question: What should we do *if* we want to gain *technical* control of life? But whether or not it is right to gain such technical control, and whether or not we want to do so, and whether or not, in the final analysis, it really makes sense to do so, are

questions that they leave unanswered, or to which they assume answers that suit their purposes.

Or take a discipline such as esthetics. The fact that works of art exist is a given of esthetics. It tries to discover the conditions under which they exist. But it does not consider the question whether the realm of art is not perhaps a realm of diabolical glory, a realm of this world, and therefore at enmity with God in its innermost depths and anti-fraternal in its innermost aristocratic spirit. It therefore does not ask whether or not there *should* be works of art.

Or consider jurisprudence: it establishes what is valid according to the rules of juristic thought, which is determined partly by the force of logic, and partly by conventional assumptions. In other words, it establishes *when* certain rules of law and certain methods of interpretation are recognized as binding. It does not answer the question *whether or not* law should exist and *whether or not* these particular rules should be established. It can only state that if anyone is aiming at success, then according to the norms of our legal system, this legal rule is the appropriate means of achieving it.

Or take the historical cultural sciences. They teach us how to understand the political, artistic, literary, and social phenomena of a culture and the conditions in which they originated. But they neither choose to answer the question whether or not these cultural phenomena were, and are, *worthy* of existence, nor do they answer the other question, which is whether it is worth the trouble to learn about them. They assume that there is interest in sharing, through this procedure, in the community of "civilized people." But they cannot "scientifically" demonstrate to anyone that this is the case, and the fact that they assume it in no way demonstrates that it is self-evident, which it quite definitely is not.

Let us now focus our attention on the disciplines with which I am most closely concerned; that is, sociology, history, political economy and political science and those varieties of cultural philosophy whose function is to interpret them. It has been said, and I support this, that politics has no place in the lecture hall. It is out of place there when students introduce it. I would, for example, find it deplorable if, say, pacifist students surrounded my former colleague Dietrich Schäfer<sup>206</sup> in Berlin in one of his lectures and created a disturbance, and I would find it equally deplorable if, as is said to have occurred, anti-pacifist students behaved in the same way toward Professor [Friedrich W.] Förster,<sup>207</sup> although my views are in many respects as far from his as it is possible to be. But neither does politics have any place in the lecture hall when the lecturer introduces it. Least of all, when his own particular subject is political science. Views regarding

---

206 Dietrich Schäfer (1845-1929), a historian who advocated expansionism by military means.

207 Friedrich W. Förster (1869-1966), philosopher, educationist, and pacifist.

issues of practical politics and scientific analysis of political structures and party positions are two quite different matters. If someone speaks about democracy in a public meeting, he should make no secret of his personal point of view. It is his confounded duty and obligation to take a clear partisan position. The words used are then not a means of scientific analysis, but of political campaigning to win over others to his point of view. They are not plowshares to break up the soil of contemplative thought, but swords to use against the adversary. They are weapons in the struggle.

In a lecture or in a lecture hall, on the other hand, it would be an outrage to use words in this way. In that situation, where the topic is "democracy," for example, one will take the different forms of democracy and analyze them to establish how they function, and what particular consequences each has for the conditions of life, and then contrast them with other, non-democratic, forms of political order and attempt to reach the point at which the listener *himself* can adopt a stance in the light of *his* ultimate ideals. But the genuine teacher, speaking from the lectern, will take great care not to force any point of view on him, whether explicitly or by suggestion, while claiming to "let the facts speak for themselves," which would naturally be a most underhand tactic.

But why should we not do this? I admit that many highly esteemed colleagues are of the opinion that such self-denial is not feasible, and if it were practiced it would be a mere eccentricity and should be avoided. Now, one cannot demonstrate scientifically what the duty of an academic teacher should be. One can only demand from him the intellectual integrity to be clear about the difference between, on the one hand, establishing facts, mathematical or logical states of affairs, or establishing the internal structure of cultural values, and on the other hand, answering the question of the *value* of culture and of its individual contents, followed by the question of how one should act within the cultural community and political associations. These are two entirely *heterogeneous* problems. If he goes on to ask why he should not deal with both in the lecture hall, the answer is because the prophet and the demagogue have no place at the lectern in the lecture hall. The message to both the prophet and the demagogue is: "Go out on the streets and speak publicly,"<sup>208</sup> which is to say, go where criticism is possible. In the lecture hall the teacher sits facing an audience who are obliged to attend his lectures for the sake of their careers and remain silent while he speaks. I regard it as irresponsible if instead of giving his listeners the benefit of his knowledge and scientific experience, which is his duty, he takes advantage of a situation where there is no one there who can criticize him and attempts to

---

208 A reference to Jeremiah 2:2: "Go, make this proclamation in the hearing of Jerusalem."

impose his political views on them. No doubt, it may be impossible for the individual to disregard his subjective sympathies entirely, but he must then face the severest criticism in the forum of his own conscience. Promoting his own views confirms nothing, as purely factual errors are also possible. Yet, they attest nothing against his duty to seek the truth. I am therefore against this approach, not least in the interests of science. I am prepared to demonstrate, from the works of our historians, that whenever the man of science puts forward his own value judgment, full understanding of the facts *ceases*. But this subject is beyond the scope of this evening's topic and would call for lengthy discussion.

I ask only: How, on the one hand, could a devout Catholic,<sup>209</sup> and on the other hand a Freemason,<sup>210</sup> attending a course of lectures on forms of church and state or on the history of religion, ever arrive at the same *valuation* of these things! It is out of the question. And yet the academic teacher must aim to be, and make sure that he is, of use to both the one and the other by means of his knowledge and methods. Now you will be quite justified in saying: The devout Catholic will never accept a view put forward by a teacher who does not share his dogmatic assumptions, even when this relates to the facts concerning the origins of Christianity. True! But the difference with regard to science is this: Science can truthfully be said to be "free from presuppositions" in the sense that it rejects religious ties. It acknowledges neither "miracles" nor "revelation," and it would be untrue to its own "presuppositions" if it did. But the believer acknowledges both. And "presuppositionless" science expects of him no less— but also *no more*— than the admission that *if* the process is to be explained without those supernatural interventions, which must be discounted as causal factors for an empirical explanation, then it must be explained in the way science attempts to do. And it is quite possible for the believer to accept this without betraying his beliefs.

But do the achievements of science have no meaning for someone who is unconcerned about facts and cares only for the practical point of view? Perhaps they do have meaning. Firstly in this respect. The first task of any competent teacher is to teach his students to acknowledge *inconvenient* facts, by which I mean facts that are inconvenient for his particular party viewpoint; and for every party viewpoint— even my own, for example— such extremely inconvenient facts exist. If the academic teacher can get his listeners to accept this, then I believe this is more than an intellectual achievement. I would be immodest enough to use the expression "moral achievement," if that did not sound a little too pretentious for what is so self-evident.

---

209 A member of a Christian church characterized by its uniform doctrine and organizational structure.

210 A member of a secret fraternal order of Free and Accepted Masons.



So far I have spoken only about *practical* reasons to avoid imposing one's personal point of view on someone. But there is more to it than that. There are far more profound reasons why, in practice, the "scientific justification" of an opinion is impossible—except when investigating the means of achieving a purpose that is accepted as *given*. It is meaningless, in principle, because the various value systems in the world are in unresolvable conflict with each other. I do not normally praise the old [John Stuart] Mill,<sup>211</sup> but I agree with him when he said that if we take pure experience as our starting point we arrive at polytheism.<sup>212</sup> This is a superficial statement and sounds paradoxical, and yet there is truth in it. Today, if we know anything, we know once again that something can be sacred not only *although* it is not beautiful but *because* and *to the extent that* it is not beautiful. Evidence for this can be found in the fifty-third chapter of the Book of Isaiah and in the twenty-first [twenty-second] Psalm— and Nietzsche has reminded us that something can be beautiful not only although it is not good but also in the way in which it is not good.<sup>213</sup> Earlier, you can find the same idea expressed in the *Fleurs du Mal*, as [Charles P.] Baudelaire<sup>214</sup> called his volume of poetry. And it is a commonplace that something can be true although, and in as much as, it is not beautiful and not sacred and not good. But these are only the most elementary cases of this struggle of the gods of the individual orders and values.

How one can distinguish "scientifically" between the *value* of French culture and that of German culture, I do not know. Here, what we see is the perpetual conflict of different gods with each other. This is how it was in the ancient world, before it was disenchanted with its gods and demons, only in a different sense. Just as it was when the Hellene sacrificed to Aphrodite,<sup>215</sup> and then to Apollo,<sup>216</sup> and, above all, when everyone sacrificed to the gods of his particular city, so it remains today, although the magical and mythical, though inwardly true, plasticity of those acts has been stripped away. It is fate that reigns over these gods and controls their struggle, certainly not "science." One can only understand *what* the divine is for this or that system, or *in* this or that system. That, however, is the end of the matter as far as any discussion in a lecture hall and by a professor

---

211 John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), British philosopher.

212 A reference to Mill's polytheism, "Essays on Ethics, Religion and Society." In *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, ed. John M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), Vol. X, p. 431.

213 Synopsis of an idea found in *The Birth of Tragedy*, translated by Shaun Whiteside (London: Penguin Books, 1993) and in other works.

214 Charles F. Baudelaire (1821-1867), *Les Fleurs du Mal* (Paris: Poulet-Malassis et de Broise, 1857).

215 Greek goddess of love.

216 Greek god of the sun.

is concerned, although this is not, of course, true of the immense problem of *life* contained within it.

Here, however, other powers speak more loudly than university professors. Who would be so arrogant as to try to “scientifically refute” the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount,<sup>217</sup> such as the injunction “resist not evil,”<sup>218</sup> or the image of turning the other cheek? And yet it is clear that, seen from the innerworldly perspective, it is an ethic of undignified conduct that is being preached here. The choice is between the religious dignity that this ethic brings, and manly dignity, which proclaims the quite different message: “Resist evil— otherwise you share the responsibility for its overbearing power.” Depending on one’s ultimate standpoint, for each individual one is the devil and the other the god; the individual must decide which one is the god *for him* and which the devil. And so it goes on through all the orders of life. The grandiose rationalism of the ethical and methodical conduct of life that flows from every religious prophecy dethroned this polytheism in favor of “the one thing that is needful”<sup>219</sup>— and then, in the light of the realities of the external and the inward life, found itself forced to accept those compromises and relativizations that we all know from the history of Christianity.<sup>220</sup>

Today, however, we have the religion of everyday life. The many gods of antiquity, disenchanting and hence assuming the form of impersonal powers, rise up out of their graves, reach out for power over our lives and begin their eternal struggle among themselves again. But what is so difficult for modern man in particular, and hardest of all for the youth, is to be able to cope with an *everyday life* like this. All the chasing after “experience” stems from this weakness. And weakness it is; it is the inability to face up to the fate of the age in all its gravity. However, our culture is destined to become more clearly conscious of this after the allegedly or supposedly exclusive dominance of the grandiose pathos of the Christian ethic had blinded us to it for a thousand years.

But enough of these far-reaching questions. The response of some of our young people to all this is: “Yes, but we come to lectures in order to experience something more than just analyses and factual statements.” The mistake they are making, however, is that they are looking to the professor to be something other than what he can be for them. They are looking for a *leader* and not a *teacher*. But

---

217 A collection of the teachings and sayings of Jesus Christ (c.6 B.C.-A.D.30), as found in Matthew 5-7.

218 A reference to Matthew 5:39: “Do not resist those who wrong you.”

219 A reference to Luke 10:42: “Only one thing is necessary.”

220 Religion based on the person and teachings of Jesus Christ, but with far more denominations and doctrinal arguments than are found in, for example, Islam.

we are only placed at the lectern as *teachers*. These are two different things, and the evidence for this is readily available.

Permit me to take you back once more to America, because there such things can often be observed in their most striking originality. The American boy learns vastly less than a German boy. Despite an incredible number of examinations, he has not yet, in terms of the *meaning* of his school life, become the absolute examination person that the young German has become. Bureaucracy, which requires the examination diploma as the entrance ticket into the realm of the rewards of office, is as yet in its earliest stages. The young American respects nothing and no one, no tradition and no office, other than the personal achievement of an individual. *This* is what the American calls "democracy." However distorted the reality may be when compared with this perception of its meaning, the perception remains, and that is what matters. His view of the teacher standing in front of him is: He sells me his knowledge and methods for my father's money, just as the retailer sells my mother the cabbage. That is all. To be sure, if the teacher is, for example, a champion footballer, then in this area he is his leader. If, however, he is not this (or something similar in another branch of sport), he is just a teacher and nothing more, and it would never occur to any young American to allow a teacher to sell him "world views" or authoritative rules for the conduct of life. Now, when formulated in this manner, we would reject this. But the question is whether or not there is a grain of truth in this way of looking at things, even if I have deliberately exaggerated somewhat here.

Fellow students! You come to our lectures with these demands on our leadership qualities and do not first tell yourselves that out of a hundred professors at least ninety-nine are not only not champion footballers of life, but do not claim and should not claim to be "leaders" in matters concerning the conduct of life. Reflect, a person's worth does not depend on whether or not he possesses leadership qualities. And in any case, the qualities that make someone an excellent scholar and academic teacher are not the same as those that make a leader in the sphere of practical life or, more particularly, in politics. It is pure chance if someone possesses these qualities too, and it would be a serious situation if everyone who stood at the lectern felt that he ought to claim to possess them. It would be even more serious if every academic teacher were to be allowed to behave like a leader in the lecture hall. Those who are most prone to regard themselves as leaders are often the least like leaders. More importantly, whether they are or not, delivering lectures offers absolutely no opportunity for them to *reveal their capabilities*. The professor who feels called to be a counselor of youth and enjoys their confidence may be able to show what he can do at a personal level. And if he feels called to intervene in the struggles of world views and party opinions,

let him do that out there in the market place of life: in the press, in meetings, in associations, or wherever he likes. But it is just too easy for him to demonstrate the courage of his convictions where those present, who may be of a different opinion, are condemned to silence.

You may ask, finally: If that is the case, what has science to offer for practical and personal “life?” This brings us back to the problem of the “vocation” of science. Firstly, of course, science can offer knowledge about techniques of calculated control over life— both external things, and human action. Fine, you will say, but that is only the American boy’s retailer. I agree entirely. Secondly, science can offer what this retailer cannot: methods of thinking, the tools, and the necessary schooling. You may say: Well, it is not vegetables, but it is no more than the means of obtaining vegetables. Fine, but let us leave that for today.

But fortunately, this is not all that science can do. We are able to offer you a third benefit: *clarity*. Presupposing, of course, that we possess it ourselves. Insofar as this is the case, we can explain to you that we can, in practice, take this or that attitude regarding whichever value problem we happen to be dealing with— for the sake of simplicity, I ask you to take social phenomena as examples. *If one takes this or that attitude, then according to the experience of science one must apply this or that means in order to put one’s beliefs into practice.* These may be means that, in themselves, you believe you must reject. Then one has simply to choose between the end and the means essential for achieving that end. Does the end “justify the means” or not? The teacher can place before you the necessity of making this choice. He cannot do more, as long as he remains a teacher and does not want to become a demagogue. He can, of course, go on to say: If you want to achieve this or that end, you must accept certain incidental consequences, which, experience tells us, will then occur. Here we have the same situation again.

These, though, are all still the sort of problems that can arise for any technician who, in numerous cases, has to make a decision according to the principle of the lesser evil or what is best in relative terms. What we can say is that for him the main thing is normally the *purpose*, and that is a given. But this is precisely what is *not* the case for us where we are concerned with “ultimate” problems. And that brings us to the final benefit that science, as such, can offer in the service of clarity, and at the same time we must point out its limitations. We can— and must— tell you also that, in practice, the *meaning* of this or that view can, with inner consistency, and thus honesty, be inferred from this or that ultimate fundamental world view— possibly from just one, or possibly from several— but not from certain other ones. Figuratively speaking, you serve this god and *offend that other one* if you decide in favor of this particular view, since, if you remain true to yourself, you inevitably draw this or that *conclusion* regarding an ultimate in-

ward meaning. This, in principle at least, is achievable. Philosophy, as a specialist discipline, and the discussions, which are essentially philosophical, conducted by the individual disciplines, attempt to achieve it. We can, in this way, if we understand the matter (which must be here presupposed), compel, or at least help, the individual to *give an account of the ultimate meaning of his own actions to himself*. It seems to me that this should not be underestimated, even for the purely personal life. At this point I am also tempted to say, if a teacher succeeds in this, that he is acting in the service of "moral" forces, performing his duty to create clarity and a sense of responsibility, and I believe that the more conscientiously he himself can refrain from imposing a view on his listeners, or suggesting one, the more likely he is to be capable of this achievement.

The assumption that I am presenting to you is based on the fundamental fact that life, as long as it exists in itself and is understood for what it is, knows only the eternal struggle of those gods with one another, or, in nonfigurative language, it is about the irreconcilability of the *possible* ultimate attitudes to life and the impossibility of any resolution of the conflicts among them. In other words, it is about the necessity of *deciding* among them. Whether or not under such circumstances science is worthy to become a "vocation," and whether or not it has an objectively worthwhile "calling" itself, is again a value judgment about which nothing can be said in the lecture hall, as an affirmative answer is *presupposed* if any teaching is to take place there. Personally, I answer the question in the affirmative through my own work. And I do it precisely from the standpoint that hates intellectualism and regards it as the worst devil, just as today's young people do, or— more often— imagine they do. There is a saying that applies to such people: "Reflect: the devil is old; grow old to understand him!"<sup>221</sup> This has nothing to do with a date on a birth certificate. Rather, the sense is that we must not flee from this devil if we want to get the better of him, as so many do today, but must first become thoroughly acquainted with his ways, in order to see what his power and his limitations are.

Science today is a "profession" practiced in *specialist* disciplines in the service of self-reflection and the knowledge of interrelated facts, and not a gift of grace from visionaries and prophets offering revelation and the benefits of salvation. Nor is it a constituent part of the meditation of sages and philosophers on the *meaning* of the world. This is an undeniable fact of our historical situation, from which, if we are to remain true to ourselves, we cannot escape. And if Tolstoy rises up in you once again and asks: "Who will answer, since science does not, the questions: What should we then do? And how should we organize our lives?"

---

221 Goethe, *Faust*, Part Two, translated by Philip Wayne (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1959), p. 99.

Or, in the language we have been using this evening: “Which of the warring gods shall we serve, or shall we perhaps serve a completely different one, and if so, who might that be?”— then the answer is: only a prophet or a savior. If there is none, or if his message is no longer believed, then you will certainly not be able to force him to come to earth by getting thousands of professors in their lecture halls to try to usurp his role by acting like privileged or state salaried petty prophets. If you attempt to do this you will ensure only that the knowledge of the decisive factor will never be brought home to our youth with the full force of its significance, and that is that the prophet for whom so many of them yearn is *not* there after all.

I do not believe it can be in the inward interests of a really religiously “musical” person, now or ever, if the basic fact that he is fated to live in a godless and prophetless age is concealed from him and from others by the presence of a surrogate, which is what all this academic prophecy is. The integrity of his religious sensibility must, it seems to me, rebel against this.

But you may be inclined to ask: What, then, can we say about the fact of the existence of “theology” and its claims to be a “science?” We must not shrink from answering. “Theology” and “dogmas” are indeed not universal, but they are certainly not unique to Christianity. On the contrary, they exist in a highly developed form in (starting with the most recent) Islam,<sup>222</sup> Manichaeism,<sup>223</sup> Gnosticism,<sup>224</sup> Orphism,<sup>225</sup> Parseeism,<sup>226</sup> Buddhism,<sup>227</sup> the Hindu<sup>228</sup> sects, Taoism,<sup>229</sup> and the Upanishads,<sup>230</sup> and, of course, also in Judaism.<sup>231</sup> The degree of systematic de-

---

222 The religion of the Muslims, a monotheistic faith regarded as revealed through Muhammad (c.570-632) as the prophet of Allah (God).

223 A dualistic religious system with Christian, Gnostic, and pagan elements, founded in Persia by Mani, also spelled Manes (c.216-c.276), and based on a supposed primeval conflict between light and darkness.

224 A heretical movement of the second century Christian Church, teaching that esoteric knowledge (gnosis) of the supreme divine being enables the redemption of the human spirit.

225 A mystic religion of ancient Greece, said to have been based on poems by Orpheus, a legendary hero, characterized by rites of purification, death, and rebirth.

226 An ancient pre-Islamic Persian religion founded by Zarathustra (c.628 B.C.–c.551 B.C.), containing both monotheistic and dualistic features, a single creator, but two opposing powers, one of light and one of darkness and evil.

227 A religion founded by Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha c.563 B.C.–c.460 B.C.), which teaches that enlightenment may be reached by elimination of earthly desires and of the idea of the self.

228 Based on Hinduism, religious and cultural tradition of the Indian subcontinent, believing in reincarnation and the worship of a large pantheon of deities.

229 Chinese religio-philosophical tradition based on the writings of Laozi, also spelled Lao-tzu and Lao-tse (604 B.C.–531 B.C.), including *Dao De Jing* (*The Way to Virtue*), advocating humility and piety.

230 Series of Hindu sacred treatises written in Sanskrit and expounding the Vedas, the most ancient scriptures.

231 The monotheistic religion of the Jews, based on the Old Testament and the Talmud.

velopment differs, admittedly. And it is no accident that not only has Western Christianity— in contrast, for example, to the theology of Judaism— developed its theology more systematically, or attempted to do so, but that its development here has had by far the greatest historical importance. It was the Hellenic spirit that produced this development, and all the theology of the West originated from it, whereas (obviously) all the theology of the East goes back to Indian thought.

All theology is intellectual *rationalization* of the religious experience of salvation. No science is totally presuppositionless, and none can justify its own worth to anyone who rejects its presuppositions. However, every theology adds some specific presuppositions of its own that are necessary for its work and thus for the justification of its own existence. It does this in various senses and to various degrees. For every theology, including, for example, the Hindu theology, there is a presupposition that the world must have a *meaning*— and the question is: “How must this meaning be interpreted in such a way that we can mentally grasp it? There is a similarity here with [Immanuel] Kant’s<sup>232</sup> epistemology, which started from the presupposition: “Scientific truth exists, and it is *valid*”— and went on to ask: Under what presuppositions of thought is this (meaningfully) possible?<sup>233</sup> There is also a similarity with modern philosophers of esthetics who take as their starting point (either explicitly— as in the case of, for example, Georg von Lukács<sup>234</sup>— or implicitly) from the presupposition: “works of art exist,” and go on to ask: How is that (meaningfully) possible? Theologies, however, do not normally content themselves with that presupposition (which is essentially based on the philosophy of religion). Instead, they regularly take as their starting point the further presupposition that certain “revelations” must be believed as facts that are important for salvation— that is to say, as facts without which no meaningful conduct of life is possible, and that certain conditions and actions possess the quality of holiness. In other words, they form the basis for a religiously meaningful conduct of life or at least its essential elements.

And then again the question theology asks is: How can these presuppositions, which have to be simply accepted, be meaningfully interpreted within a total view of the world? It must be remembered that for theology those presuppositions themselves lie beyond what “science” is. They are not “knowledge” in the sense usually understood by the term, but “having.” Theology— let alone any other science— can be no substitute for faith or the other conditions of holiness for anyone who does not “have” them. On the contrary, in every “positive” theo-

---

232 Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), major philosopher.

233 The quotation has not been identified, but see Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated by Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1996), pp. 43-68.

234 Georg, until 1918, von Lukács (1885-1971), Hungarian philosopher who formulated a Marxist system of esthetics.

gy, the believer reaches the point where St. Augustine's saying holds true: "Credo non quod, sed *quia* absurdum est"<sup>235</sup> ["I believe not what [is absurd], but *because* it is absurd"]. The capacity to achieve this virtuoso performance of the "sacrifice of the intellect" is the crucial characteristic of positively religious persons. And the fact that this is so demonstrates that despite (or rather as a result of) the theology (which, after all, reveals it), the tension between the value sphere of "science" and that of the holy is unresolvable.

The "sacrifice of the intellect" can properly only be made by the disciple to the prophet, and by the believer to the church. However, no new prophecy has ever arisen (and I deliberately repeat this metaphor, which has offended some) simply because some modern intellectuals feel the need, so to speak, to furnish their souls with things of guaranteed antiquity, and then, remembering that religion is one such thing that they do not have, prepare, by way of a substitute, a kind of chapel, playfully embellished with little images of saints from all over the world, or create a surrogate in the form of all kinds of experience, to which they attribute the status of a mystical sacred possession. They then proceed to hawk it around the book market. Quite simply, this is either fraud or self-deception. On the other hand, if some of those communities of young people that have quietly grown up in recent years give a religious, cosmic, or mystical interpretation to their own human relationships in the community, this may sometimes be a misinterpretation of their significance, but it is certainly not fraud. On the contrary, it is something very serious and genuine. However, although it is undoubtedly true that every genuinely fraternal act may be accompanied by the conviction that it somehow contributes to an enduring, suprapersonal realm, it still seems to me doubtful that the value of purely human community relationships is enhanced by such religious interpretations. But this is not relevant here.

It is the fate of our age, with the rationalization, intellectualization and, in particular, the disenchantment of the world, characteristic of it, that precisely the ultimate and most sublime values have faded from public life, entering either the obscure realm of mystical life or the fraternal feelings of direct relationships among individuals. It is no accident that our greatest art is intimate rather than monumental, and that today it is only within the smallest circles of the community, from person to person and pianissimo, that there is any stirring of the prophetic spirit that once spread through the great communities like a raging fire and welded them together. The attempt to force and "invent" a monumental conception of art leads only to such wretched monstrosities as many of the monuments of the last twenty years.

---

235 Misquote, now usually attributed to Quintus Tertullian (c.155/160–c.225).



Attempting to devise new forms of religion without new, genuine prophecy, will lead to the creation of something inwardly similar that is sure to be even worse in its effects. And academic prophecy will never do more than create fanatical sects. It will never create a genuine community. This is the fate of the age, and anyone who cannot accept it in a manly fashion must be told to remain silent and, without the customary public pronouncements of the renegade, simply return, without fuss, to the old churches, which will receive him back mercifully with open arms. They will not make it difficult for him. In returning, he will inevitably, one way or another, have to make the “sacrifice of the intellect.” We shall not criticize him for that, if he is really capable of it. For such a sacrifice of the intellect for the sake of an unconditional religious devotion is still not morally the same as evasion of the plain intellectual duty of integrity that occurs when one does not have the courage to be clear about one’s own ultimate standpoint, but instead makes this duty easier by feeble relativization. And for me, it also stands higher than any academic prophecy that does not clearly understand that within the confines of the lecture hall no other virtue exists but plain intellectual integrity. This, however, commands us to take cognizance of the fact that today, for the many who wait for new prophets and saviors, the situation is the same as that expressed in the lovely Edomite song of the watchman in the period of exile, from the oracles of Isaiah:

One calls to me from Seir:  
Watchman, what is left of the night?  
Watchman, what is left of it?  
The watchman answered:  
Morning comes, but still it is night.  
Ask if you must; then come back again.<sup>236</sup>

The people to whom this was said has been asking and waiting for well over two thousand years, and we know its calamitous fate. From this we must learn the lesson that it is not enough simply to yearn and wait. We must act differently. We must set to work and meet the “demands of the day”<sup>237</sup>—humanly and vocationally. These are plain and simple, however, if everyone finds and obeys the daemon who holds the threads of *his* life.

---

236 Isaiah 21: 11-12, slightly adapted. [Tr]

237 A reference to Goethe: “But what is your duty? The challenge of the day.” In *Gedenkausgabe der Werke, Briefe und Gespräche*, ed. Ernst Beutler, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Zürich and Stuttgart: Artemis Verlag, 1962), Vol. 9, p. 554.

## ARTICLES ON ACADEMIA

### I. THE BERNHARD CASE <sup>238</sup>

We have received the following from *academic circles*:

The investigations in the press into the much discussed “*Bernhard Case*” have by no means put an end to the interest the case has aroused. It is, of course, scandalous that the government (or, to be precise, the minister, acting entirely on his own personal initiative, although directly influenced by the government) has imposed a professor<sup>239</sup> on the largest university in Germany, and that the academic staff involved, who are among the most distinguished scholars in Germany, only learned of this fact through the press or when their new colleague paid them a visit. Such scandals are typical. Some other circumstances, however, are perhaps even more typical. Firstly, the behavior of the man who was so suddenly promoted. In the days when the writer of these lines was as young as Herr Ludwig Bernhard<sup>240</sup> himself is today, it was regarded as a fundamental requirement of academic decorum for someone who had been offered a chair by the ministry to satisfy himself, *before doing anything else, and before deciding whether or*

---

238 “Der Fall Bernhard,” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 1st morning edition, 18 June, 1908, p. 1. The editorial matter is in smaller print. Article 2 consists entirely of information provided by Max Weber to the newspaper.

239 Professors in Germany are civil servants normally appointed from a ranked shortlist of three candidates submitted by the higher education institution to each state’s Ministry of Education. The minister may change the order of candidates or even return the list.

240 Ludwig Bernhard (1875-1935), economist.

not to accept the offer, that he enjoyed the scientific confidence of the faculty, or at least of the most prominent of the colleagues with whom he would be working in his field; and this applied irrespective of whether or not he feared that it might create difficulties, even if these were only of a moral nature, for his appointment. Anyone who, merely because he was "in favor," chose to disregard these generally accepted rules, in order to "get on" in the academic world, was subject to exactly the same judgment and exactly the same treatment at the hands of his colleagues as that which is meted out to people who speculate on furthering their career by taking "inferior" professorships [*Strafprofessuren*] for denominational or political reasons.

Since it is clear that Herr Bernhard did *not* find it necessary to observe these rules, he has shown that he is not personally worthy of further consideration. Of more general importance, however, is the fact that this kind of attitude is evidently on the increase among a section of the new academic recruits and that moreover the Prussian Government is deliberately cultivating these types of "operators" [*Geschäftsleute*], as they say in academic circles. Indeed, there are professorial chairs that are regularly used as "way stations" for the sustenance of such elements.

As far as the University of Berlin itself is concerned, it is, of course, true that appointment to a professorship there is generally regarded as good business in financial terms even today. But the time has passed when it was thought of as a high scholarly honor. True, even now we are happy to recognize that there are many scientists in Berlin who are genuine leaders in their various fields and are absolutely independent personalities. And yet the number of "complacent" mediocrities there, who are sought after for their very mediocrity, seems to be growing, if anything, faster than elsewhere. And then there are the people like Herr Bernhard, people for whom, from the point of view of the government, membership of the university is essentially a *reward* in the pecuniary sense or in the sense of social prestige.

No doubt it is to some extent a welcome bonus to *provincial* universities that this practice enables them to retain a far greater number of outstanding scholars than would be the case if professors in Berlin were selected on solely scholarly criteria. Naturally, from the point of view of the University of Berlin, these matters are probably seen in a different light. There is a curious irony here. In a number of Berlin faculties, despite *increasing* numbers of students, there have been attempts, sometimes successful, sometimes not, to *limit* the number of professorships. Indeed, one faculty created a special statute restricting the securing of a *Habilitation* for academic teachers from other higher education institutions, and then promptly made use of this obstacle, which the faculty had itself created, to

exclude an outstanding academic teacher from appointment as an *adjunct lecturer* [*Privatdozent*], who was *acknowledged* as such, *against the votes of the faculty* [*Fachmänner*]. The irony is that this same university must now accept that its *university chairs* are used as rewards when some ministry happens to feel the need to have politically desirable research carried out by an able young man.<sup>241</sup>

The price to be paid for *any concessions* by the faculties to *inappropriate proposals*, and in particular for any deviation from the principle of gaining as many highly qualified academic staff as humanly possible, will *ultimately be the weakening of the moral authority* of the faculties themselves. And of course the consequences of this will not be limited to cases like the present one. After all, Herr Bernhard has written a book that, allowing for a certain scholarly immaturity, I, for one, find very impressive; it is important in its field and shows a distinctiveness of method. But everyone knows that in the field of economics, for example, at least two other people are waiting outside the door of the faculty who are “deserving” in different ways, in the case of one of them for services rendered back in the “Stumm era.”<sup>242</sup> Sooner or later, their time will undoubtedly come.

It seems quite unlikely that the eventual successors of men such as Adolf Wagner<sup>243</sup> and Gustav [von] Schmoller<sup>244</sup> will be important and scientifically unique personalities. The situation is similar at the other Prussian universities. None of them today are dealing with Herr [Friedrich T.] Althoff,<sup>245</sup> who despite the questionable nature of his “system” nevertheless had a certain impressiveness. Instead, for the foreseeable future their fate is likely to be in the hands of “operators,”<sup>246</sup> who may be friendly enough on a personal level, but are frighteningly ingratiating and petty. These are people through whose influence a “climate” is *constantly* created for the rise of academic “operators” that meet their requirements, in accordance with the law that *one* mediocrity in a faculty never fails to attract others. For the Berlin academic staff in particular, in “cases” such

---

241 Whether or not this is actually the sole decisive reason is another matter. Those who looked closely into the affairs of the *Ostmark* (Eastern Marches) apparatus could make difficulties outside the Prussian sphere of power. [Weber's footnote]. More broadly, this involved Prussia's policy of encouraging the settlement of German farmers in former Polish areas of East Prussia.

242 Karl von Stumm-Halberg (1836-1901), influential conservative politician.

243 Adolf Wagner (1835-1917), economist and cofounder of the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* (Association for Social Policy).

244 Gustav, since 1908, von Schmoller (1838-1917), economist and cofounder of the Association for Social Policy. Weber had earlier made some critical remarks about him. See Joachim Radkau, *Max Weber. Die Leidenschaft des Denkens* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2005), pp. 507-511.

245 Friedrich T. Althoff (1839-1908), jurist, from 1882 to 1897 reporting counselor and privy counselor in the Prussian Ministry of Education, and from 1897 to 1907 undersecretary and head of the University and Higher Education Department.

246 Weber uses the English expression “business men” (two words) in a critical sense. [Tr.]

as this the only choice they have will be the *form* in which they make the best of a bad situation. As a result of the weakening of their moral authority, for which they have only themselves to blame, they *cannot* offer any real resistance that would carry weight either with the public or the government. Another relevant factor is that more and more members of the universities are *perfectly happy* with this state of affairs.

We must, of course, recognize that at the University of Berlin, as at all universities, there are even today quite a few personalities with the strength of mind to continue the proud tradition of academic solidarity and independence vis-à-vis the higher authorities. We all know, however, that, for reasons not unconnected with the proximity of Berlin-based professors to the Ministry of Education, the numbers of such people are not increasing. Increasingly, “provincial” professors in Prussia are engaging in the dubious practice of approaching influential Berlin colleagues (or those reputed to be influential) with their concerns and complaints and asking them to put in a good word for them “in higher places.” These appointments to positions of power and influence obtained through personal connections with the ministry, which have developed to a greater or lesser extent in all kinds of academic fields, have often served a useful purpose in the hands of important and reputable Berlin scholars. However, even where there is an honest striving for objectivity, the risk of subjective feelings playing a part is ever present where powerful patronage is concentrated in the hands of one individual.

Today, however, the situation is beginning to undergo a *fundamental change*. As the “Bernhard Case” glaringly shows, at a time when “business” factors are increasingly calling the tune, influence based on such personal connections, even when exercised by important scholars, represents no more than a precarious *illusion* of power. Not only do the various personal influences frustrate each other’s purposes—it seems that in the present case the behavior of a certain well-known theologian<sup>247</sup> was not without involvement in the peculiar treatment of the actual experts—but where less weighty personalities are concerned the government gains a highly effective means of exploiting their vanity for its own purposes. And the more the University of Berlin is staffed by “operators,” the more we shall find that, for example, the government is quite happy to provide those professors with whom, in its own interest, it maintains constant “personal contact,” with all kinds of *low level* favors, such as lending a listening ear to their requests on behalf of their protégés. We shall find, then, that the *patronage* of Berlin professors on behalf of those from the “provinces” will become institutionalized in an

---

247 A reference to Adolf, since 1914, von Harnack (1851-1930).

unofficial but factually recognized manner, but that *for this very reason* in those *important* matters where the voice of the *expert* as such should count for something and the authority of the *faculty* as such should carry weight, *neither* of these things *will happen*. Anyone who is in the habit of using his *personal* connections for the purpose of *patronage* for *personal* protégés is thereby forfeiting the moral weight that is his due as an *expert* and a holder of *official* powers.

The development of the professorial body in Berlin in the direction indicated seems practically unstoppable. It is, of course, gravely prejudicial to academic *solidarity*. The high-handed way in which certain circles in Berlin took it upon themselves to lecture those higher education teachers who attempted to arrange discussions on matters affecting all higher education institutions, is no doubt still fresh in the minds of all of us. Even without the benefit of this lecturing, no one could doubt that the sphere of influence of a nationwide higher education organization, on whatever basis it might be created, is bound, in the nature of things, to have its limitations. But there can be no doubt that, quite apart from the important questions concerning the teaching at institutions of higher education, an organization of higher education teachers, *under wise leadership*, could be able to reawaken the *professional pride of the new recruits in the face of the business*<sup>248</sup> *approach*, and at the same time help gradually to restore the *diminishing moral authority of the higher education institutions*. The “Bernhard Case,” and others like it, should have shown that both are urgent tasks for *Prussia*. For the moment, we will leave aside the manner in which, under the influence of certain groups in Berlin, the ripples from the Prussian system have even begun to spread *beyond* Prussia itself, a development which can only exacerbate matters.

Finally, it is the more general considerations for the future that make the advance of the business approach and the infiltration of the professorial “fraternity” by the “hierarchy” of patronage worrying. Everyday political maneuvering is now having a far-reaching effect on the way our universities are treated. Events such as this “case” and the situation of which it is symptomatic cannot fail to damage the reputation of the university teachers *in the eyes of the student body*. Governments will have to make up their minds whether or not this is in their own *long-term* interests. Let us at least hope that events at Austrian universities<sup>249</sup> may serve as a warning to their German sister institutions not to allow what moral credit they still enjoy with public opinion and among their students to be destroyed without offering some resistance— and not be guilty of simply throwing it away.

---

248 In English [Tr.]

249 One such event occurred at the University of Innsbruck where a lecturer was dismissed after being accused of not respecting the Christian faith. See Peter Josephson, “Lehrfreiheit, Lernfreiheit, Wertfreiheit: Max Weber and the University Teachers Congress in Jena 1908,” *Max Weber Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (July, 2004), pp. 201-202.

2. [UNSIGNED]

Frankfurt [am Main], 23 June [1908]<sup>250</sup>

The author of the article on the *Bernhard Case* (18 June, 1908) informs us that Prof. [Adolf] *Harnack* has asserted categorically to him that he was just as surprised by the appointment of Herr Bernhard as everyone else, and has let it be known in no uncertain terms that he regards this kind of action in exactly the same way as others do. Accordingly, we can state two things: 1) The assumption, which is undoubtedly prevalent in the circles that are most closely involved and are the best informed, that Prof. Bernhard did at least ask those closest to him for advice, is both unfair to Prof. Harnack and too favorable to Prof. Bernhard. 2) The minister did not consult *any* academic representative, although subsequently it was falsely claimed that this *did* happen. In the age of the telephone and the streetcar, the minister's statement that there was insufficient time is, of course, as absurd as the declaration made by Herr Bernhard, which has only now, *after* the case has been prejudged, reached the Berlin faculty. This probably brings the case to an end.

3. MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS TO GUSTAV SCHMOLLER ON HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY (24 JUNE, 1908) <sup>251</sup>

Much though I had hoped and desired to do so, I am unable to be present in person to offer you my good wishes and congratulations as you celebrate your seventieth birthday. Let me assure you that whether or not they are personally close to you or share your politics and ideals, all those who value intellectual effort and are aware of the obstacles that stand in the way of success recognize your achievements and are united in their admiration and cannot fail to be so. Allow me to name some of the achievements of which *only* you would have been capable.

1) Within the sphere of your interests, you increased the influence of the universities on public life to a far higher level than at any time since the period between 1837 and 1848. And this was in an era that was as unfavorable to such influence as it could possibly be.

2) It is only thanks to your wisdom and moderation that the social and political idealism of scholars was able, in the shape of the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* (*As-*

---

<sup>250</sup> *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 2nd morning edition, 24 June, 1908, p. 1.

<sup>251</sup> "Glückwunschadresse zu Gustav Schmollers 70. Geburtstag," *Reden und Ansprachen gehalten am 24. Juni 1908 bei der Feier von Gustav Schmollers 70. Geburtstag* (Altenburg: Pierersche Hofbuchdruckerei Stephan Geibel & Co., 1908), pp. 67-68.

sociation for Social Policy),<sup>252</sup> to forge an instrument that had an impact not only on public opinion, but also on those who held the reins of power, in a way that would never have been possible without your leadership. And this was despite the fact that certain aspects of its ideals and aims were extremely diverse and often differed from your own— not, by the way, an unusual experience for you. Although your opinion has often been vehemently attacked, it has always been a moral impossibility for even those who held opposing views to launch a personal attack against you. For as long as I can remember, every kind of politician with a concern for social policy has been unwaveringly convinced of the absolute necessity of your leadership and has never for one moment ceased to have confidence in it.

3) At a time of the most arid economic rationalism, you have prepared a place in our science for historical thought such as to this day no other nation has enjoyed in the same way or to the same extent. As you yourself have frequently observed, within our discipline the scientific needs of each age swing back and forth between theoretical and historical knowledge. Even if the time has now come to devote more attention to theory, it is thanks above all to your decades long and incomparably successful work that the time is now ripe for such theoretical work. Before us there now stands a mighty edifice, permeated with historical knowledge and psychological analysis, and shaped by philosophy, to which we, the younger ones, can once again attempt to apply the conceptual tools of theory.

Hearty congratulations on your past achievements! May you long maintain the health and vigor you enjoy today, in order that you can continue your work for the benefit of science.

#### 4. THE “BERNHARD CASE” AND PROFESSOR DELBRÜCK<sup>253</sup>

By Professor Max Weber (Heidelberg)

An acquaintance has sent me the July number of the *Preussische Jahrbücher*,<sup>254</sup> in which Prof. [Hans] Delbrück writes, among other matters, about my article in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 18 June, 1908, (concerning the “Bernhard Case”) and I should like to comment as follows.

---

252 Founded in 1872 to promote social reforms.

253 “Der ‘Fall Bernhard’ und Professor Delbrück,” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 4th morning edition, 10 July, 1908, p. 1.

254 “Akademische Wirren,” *Preussische Jahrbücher*, Vol. CXXXIII, No. 1 (July, 1908), pp. 181-196. Hans Delbrück (1848-1929), historian. Weber wrote him a letter of apology in October, 1913. E-mail, 15 February, 2007 from Professor Joachim Radkau.



Firstly and most importantly I should like to say this. The press, with no voices being raised in dissent, made the confident assumption that Prof. *Harnack* bore a certain responsibility for the behavior of his close colleague Prof. *Bernhard*. Academic circles in Berlin—*not* merely individuals—shared this assumption, but I never attached much significance to it; in fact, it only came to my notice in a form that clearly marked it out as being *not* well authenticated. *Harnack* requested me “to take note” that he had been “just as surprised as I had” by what happened, and that he was not so “inexperienced” and “frivolous” “that he could be held responsible for this kind of action.” I naturally took this request as 1) more than just a private message to me, 2) as a categorical denial of the allegation, and 3) as a completely unambiguous condemnation of the event itself, and felt I had a duty to inform the *Frankfurter Zeitung* without delay.<sup>255</sup>

I am sure there will be general agreement that there was no other way I could reasonably have acted. In later correspondence from Prof. *Harnack* relating to the *Bernhard* Case there is, of course, not the faintest hint that he felt himself misrepresented by my report of his statement. It seems that *Delbrück* now, because it happens to suit him for the purposes of his article, has chosen to give the impression that Prof. *Harnack* would have preferred the public to be *kept in ignorance* of his position on the matter, and even goes as far as to assert that I have *inaccurately reported* this position (in its essential point!). This assertion, which in view of the letter in my possession is really rather laughable, is tantamount to an insinuation that Prof. *Harnack* is being disingenuous, something of which no decent person would consider him capable, however great the difference of opinion.

This single example of utterly thoughtless talk is probably enough to show how little credence should be given to the allegation that my article was “practically teeming with incorrect statements,” that it spewed out “a flood of abuse over the Berlin faculty,” or that it “was merely peddling gossip,” and so on—accusations that *Delbrück* has not, of course, attempted to demonstrate by quoting so much as a single incorrect fact, or a single instance of insulting, or even intemperate language. My critic is perfectly well aware that even where I expressed myself in general terms (e.g., about the *Ostmark* apparatus and “patronage”), I said nothing for which I should not be able to give plenty of examples if it were absolutely essential. It was merely his perfectly justified confidence that I would not deem it fitting to identify such examples by naming names that emboldened him to lower the tone in this way.

---

255 Published in the 2nd morning edition, 24 June, 1908, p. 1.

Regarding the person of Prof. Bernhard, I am happy to place on record that I have been assured by someone who is well disposed toward him that his *motives* were judged in an unduly unfavorable light. However, this assurance was given without the documentary evidence being available. If I had had this evidence, it would naturally have been my duty and pleasure to provide an explanation to the effect that appearances alone were against him in this matter. His subsequent behavior has done little to substantiate it. I know only too well that in Prussia, given the way people have been treated since Althoff, it is by no means easy to come out of the offices of the Ministry of Education “smelling of roses.” This is *far more important* than what one does and says afterwards, in the face of and under the glare of publicity. Prof. Bernhard, it must be said, still bears responsibility for a situation that has jeopardized the faculties in Prussia, whose position is far from secure anyway. The fact that the Prussian Ministry of Education, out of pure pique, declined to send a representative to the reception in honor of the man who has surely contributed more than any other living person to enhance the prestige of the Prussian monarchy, is ample illustration of the spiteful and mean-spirited pettiness of our “leaders.”

Toward the end of his article, Prof. Delbrück rather ostentatiously thrusts his protection on his “esteemed and dear colleague,” Prof. Schmoller, against any attacks on his impartiality— from whom, by the way? To illustrate what different branches of our discipline are represented in Berlin, he introduces us to a series of professors at the university, prefacing their names with titles such as “privy counselor to the Admiralty,” “sociologist,” “statistician,” “prospective agrarian member of *Reichstag*,” and so on. I suppose we should find it reassuring that alongside the “outlook” of the “sociologists,” the “outlooks” of the privy counselors to the Admiralty, of the “agrarians,” and of the “statisticians” are also represented. There is, however, from the logical point of view, one particular thing to note about this rather odd classification: grouped under the heading of “Political Science” [*Staatwissenschaften*] are the names of scholars whose true home is in quite *different* disciplines (such as philosophy or history), and— most importantly— whose *unworthy treatment* by the governing authorities in Berlin has for many years been *the exact antithesis of a badge of honor* for the German university system. Any mention of this in Delbrück’s article would, of course, have looked out of place.

These remarks bring me to the point that Delbrück dealt with not only at the greatest length but also, unfortunately, in a manner that simply obliges me, *much against my will*, to get “personal” myself. I have hinted at some cases of behavior that I regard as improper and *therefore* prejudicial to the authority of the faculties. If it would serve any useful purpose, I could expatiate further on this topic.

Delbrück picks out the case of the rejection of Prof. [Werner] Sombart's<sup>256</sup> application for *Habilitation* in Berlin. All the "factual" material he is able to assemble must surely be outweighed by the fact, which I repeat once more, that despite the faculty's "decision" (with which we are only too familiar), the *experts*, Adolf Wagner and Schmoller, who are surely more competent to judge the question of need than Delbrück, were enthusiastic *advocates* of the admission of Sombart. That ought to suffice for the rest of us, all the more because of the way in which opinion was stirred up *against* his admission at the time by the deplorable and well-known methods of personal gossip, which Delbrück should also know about, and which had to be challenged by outside intervention. As this situation shows, there was no question of a purely factual and formal difficulty: it was his *person* that was at issue.

It is true that, given the extent to which this event aroused *my* interest at the time, I was in part influenced by my own personal *experiences*. Not long previously, it had been strongly suggested *to me* that I should do exactly what Prof. Sombart was soon to be prevented from doing. The suggestion was made to me privately, it is true, but it came from quite influential circles in the Berlin faculty. I cannot help wondering how it came about that a need was found for *my* admission that did *not* exist for that of Prof. Sombart. Admittedly, I could not help noticing Delbrück's remark about the threat to the "light and air" of the "existing adjunct lecturers" from such new appointments. For health reasons, I myself have been seriously restricted for years in the teaching duties I can undertake. (This was why I refrained from making an application myself at the time.) For the same reason, however, I could not have been expected to deprive the Berlin colleagues of as much of what Delbrück politely described as "light and air," or, to speak plainly, of students and lecture fees, as Prof. Sombart. Consequently, according to those criteria that Delbrück has advocated specifically and publicly, I would be better qualified for an appointment at the University of Berlin than Prof. Sombart. I can hardly be blamed if, far from deriving any satisfaction from such considerations, my sense of decorum is offended by them. I suspect that the feelings of Delbrück's colleagues, who are supposedly in such need of protection, would be no different from mine. I also believe that the advocacy of "light and air arguments," which fall into the category of those academic *prudenda* [things of which one ought to be ashamed] that I had the temerity to hint at, will inevitably do more to *discredit* the state of our universities than a dozen articles from my pen would ever be capable of.

---

256 Werner Sombart (1863-1941), economist.

Enough of that. If they emanated from a different quarter, I would naturally characterize the interpretation with which Herr Delbrück, *in all seriousness*, presents his readers, namely, that my sober reflections in this newspaper on 18 June [1908] were driven by *personal motives*, as malicious. But, when they come from him, we should not— I am almost tempted to say: unfortunately!— take such statements *so seriously*. These statements and many others like them, which have long since earned his polemics a rather bad reputation, cannot really be considered *conscious and deliberate* discourtesy toward an opponent, but phenomena of a certain “lack of cultural sensibility” arising out of the particular character of his journalistic writings. In contrast to his rival Maximilian Harden,<sup>257</sup> for whom he harbors such bitter hatred, he is a dilettante in the field of journalism. The only element of the journalist’s craft that he has taught himself is that which these days every dilettante is most anxious to acquire, namely, the external routine. Moreover, he is not, heaven knows, the master of diplomacy that he prides himself on being. Yet, as a politician he is intelligent, has his own points of view and at times good ideas, or if not exactly good, at least amusingly paradoxical. On the other hand, he lacks the true professional journalist’s *sense of responsibility*, and we should not get agitated about things in him that would be unforgivable in a true journalist. He never worries too much about the odd word or assertion, no matter how important, as long as it suits the article he happens to be writing. Because he is a *dilettante*, he thinks this is the way things are done in journalism, especially his branch of “diplomatic” journalism— in much the same way as the peasant believes that a business deal can never be anything other than trickery. And on this thoroughly naïve lack of culture rests his complete, but at the same time (as personal experience has convinced me) *absolutely innocent, failure to understand the duty of keeping personal relationships separate from objective problems*. One with this attitude naturally sees nothing irresponsible in lightly accusing an opponent, who is representing an evidently quite serious concern, of seeking to do his “close friend” a favor (or even seeking to avenge him for a wrong done to him by the faculty?). Delbrück would probably not regard this sort of thing as a serious accusation. I, for one, take no particular pleasure from the knowledge *that* this is the way he thinks, as this way of thinking helps to undermine the value of his journalism, even if it does lend it a certain piquancy. This is how it is, and “ethical judgments” are *powerless* when confronted by such naïvety— for good or ill we should be prepared to overlook it (or, as [Heinrich von] Treitschke<sup>258</sup> once aptly put it, allow him a kind of *Narrenfreiheit*, or “jester’s license”).

---

257 Maximilian Harden (1848-1929), journalist and publisher of *Die Zukunft* (1892-1922), a weekly.

258 Heinrich von Treitschke (1834-1896), historian.

I conclude my discussion of this unedifying topic with a comment on the principle that is at stake here. Delbrück also addresses the question of the so-called “professors’ trade union,” which I had cited by way of example (and in which I have so far been unable actively to participate). Whether or not the academic teaching staff will succeed in forming an association in this or some other form seems to me to be beside the point. If Delbrück’s comrades, who share his beliefs [*Gesinnungsgenossen*], succeed in their aim of permanently obstructing every such organization of “public opinion” by the body of higher education teachers— and I would by no means discount the possibility of them succeeding in the short term at least— then the inevitable result will be that individuals, in their isolation, will have *no outlet* for the expression of their views other than the *press*.

I believe I have good grounds for saying that so far the serious press has treated academic matters with great restraint. This would then have to change radically. The “ideal” for Delbrück and some of his Berlin colleagues would be for the government to call upon outstanding *individuals* (the government will know where to look for them!), rather than properly constituted bodies and organizations. If this “ideal,” which has just been such a pitiful failure in the Bernhard Case, should after all eventually become a practical reality, one of the unflinching consequences would be that public criticism of conditions in the universities would, whether intentionally or not, increasingly take on the character of a *personalized campaign and character assassination*. This can surely be in *no one’s* interest. But it will be the unavoidable *consequence* of the views that Delbrück, among others, is in the habit of expressing, and, as the foregoing reflections have unfortunately shown, the consequence of his own unacceptable behavior.

## 5. THE ALLEGED “ACADEMIC FREEDOM” AT GERMAN UNIVERSITIES<sup>259</sup>

The second conference of German teachers<sup>260</sup> in institutions of higher education in Jena<sup>261</sup> proposes to discuss, among other things, the question of “*academic freedom*.” To judge from the “theses” that Professor [Karl] von Amira<sup>262</sup> has published in the supplement to the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, clericalism appears to him to be the exclusive (or the main) enemy of academic freedom—

---

259 “Die sogenannte ‘Lehrfreiheit’ an den deutschen Universitäten,” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 5th morning edition, 20 September, 1908, p. 1.

260 The reference is to their nationality, not the subject matter.

261 I am publishing these remarks in advance, since I am not absolutely sure that I shall be able to attend this conference and present them orally, as I wished to do [Weber’s note]. It took place 28–29 September, 1908.

262 Karl von Amira (1848–1930), jurist.

which is understandable enough in view of the situation in Bavaria<sup>263</sup>. We need to ask, however: 1) Is clericalism the *only* threat to academic freedom? 2) Most importantly, do we in any case *have* what can properly be described as “academic freedom,” and is there therefore anything essential in this area that clericalism could take away from us? At the jubilee celebration of the University of Jena, the rector, Professor [Berthold G. G.] Delbrück<sup>264</sup>, with reference to a well-known foundation, which specifically made its support for the university *conditional* on the preservation of academic freedom, gave the assurance that academic freedom *was* guaranteed by this provision. It must be assumed that this respected scholar either misjudged the true state of affairs, including that which obtains at the University of Jena, or that he *understands* something quite different by “academic freedom” from what is understood by many others— and I imagine that the benefactor who established the foundation, if he were still alive, would be included in their number. A practical example will reveal the true nature of the situation.

Dr. Robert Michels,<sup>265</sup> who was for many years a private scholar in Marburg, and who now has a number of excellent publications to his name, wished to secure a *Habilitation*. As a member of the *Sozialdemokratische Partei* (Social Democratic Party)<sup>266</sup> he had no chance of doing this in Prussia because of the application of the “lex Arons” [“law of Arons”].<sup>267</sup> Trusting to the “provision” referred to by Prof. Delbrück, he therefore decided to try Jena, after first taking the precaution of inquiring, privately in the first instance, whether or not membership of this party would be an obstacle to his plans. The subject specialist could only reply that he had been informed that under the prevailing circumstances he would regard it as “out of the question” that such an application for a *Habilitation* would get through the prescribed official channels (faculty, senate, government). The letter does not state (and there was not, of course, any obligation to reveal) *which*

---

263 A reference to an event at the University of Munich, similar to that at the University of Innsbruck. See Josephson, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

264 Berthold G. G. Delbrück (1842-1922), linguist who founded the study of comparative syntax of the Indo-European languages.

265 Robert Michels (1876-1922), German-Italian sociologist and author of a classic work on political parties, *Zur Soziologie des Parteiwesens. Untersuchungen über die oligarchischen Tendenzen des Gruppenlebens* (Leipzig: Julius Klinkhart Verlag, 1911); translated by Eden and Cedar Paul as *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy* (New York: Free Press, 1962).

266 Formed in 1875 by the merger of two workers' political parties, banned in 1878, and renamed in 1890 *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD).

267 Leo Arons (1860-1919), adjunct lecturer in physics at the University of Berlin, member of the SPD, and a Jew. The Ministry of Education brought charges against him for his political activities, but when the university ruled in his favor, legislation was enacted in 1898 which brought adjunct lecturers under government control in the expression of their political views.

particular body would be the obstacle, and whether or not the faculty would, if the case should arise, protest as vigorously as the Berlin faculty once did under Schmoller's leadership against the exclusion of political heretics from teaching positions, even, be it noted, if such a teaching position were *not* that of a state appointed professorship but of a freelance university lecturer. What is certain is that the situation in Jena, as well-informed sources admit, is the antithesis of "academic freedom," and that at the very least it is contrary to the spirit of the foundation in question.

These events were followed by a sequel that was even more significant. Dr. Michels, who was disinclined to face any more rejections of this kind, decided to take his *Habilitation* at the University of Turin, where he now holds a lectureship. Naturally, he remains a member of the Social Democratic Party there and makes no secret of the fact. Incidentally, several of the most radical leaders of that party hold official [*etatsmäßig*] professorships in Italy. I must stress, however, that the requirements for securing a *Habilitation* in Italy are subject to *more rigorous* scientific controls than here, because there it is *not* the case, as it is in Germany, that the vote of the academic representative in the individual university forms the (normally sole) basis for admission, opening the door to the possibility of favoring one's own students, friends or comrades who share one's beliefs [*Gesinnungsgenossen*]. In Italy, the decision of the individual university is subject to revision by a central commission, whose members include scholars from all over the country. For example, the rapporteur in Turin was Professor Achille Loria,<sup>268</sup> while the rapporteur of the Central Commission was a politically conservative scholar. The subject matter of the dissertation for the *Habilitation* related to Italy.

When, at last year's conference of teachers in institutions of higher education, Professor Alfred Weber<sup>269</sup> mentioned the incident (without actually naming the university), as an example of lack of academic freedom, Professor Theodor Fischer<sup>270</sup> from Marburg, evidently assuming that Prof. Weber was referring to his university, responded by saying that there were "quite different reasons" why the person concerned (Dr. Michels) "could never be considered for a *Habilitation*" and it was for these reasons that he had decided to "shake off the dust of his fatherland from his feet." When I read this remark in the minutes, which to me was quite incomprehensible, I thought it was perhaps referring to the uncompromising frankness with which Michels was in the habit of criticizing conditions in the ossified German Social Democratic movement, and that *this* was likely to cause problems for him. However, I was wrong. When Dr. Michels,

---

268 Achille Loria (1857-1943), economist and sociologist.

269 Alfred Weber (1868-1958), economist and brother of Max.

270 Theodor Fischer (1862-1938), architect.

with whom I had now become better acquainted, found out about this remark on the occasion of a visit to Heidelberg and demanded an explanation, he received the reply from Professor Fischer that the decisive reasons were: 1) Michels' Social Democratic convictions, which he "not only held, but (please note) put into practice in public in an extraordinarily conspicuous manner." 2) His family life: Prof. Fischer wondered whether Dr. Michels— and we should not forget the "important" point that he is an "Aryan"— could have doubted for a moment that a man *who does not have his children baptized* was "unthinkable in any higher position." He went on: "What a marvelous position you could have attained in Marburg, where you had good references and *several influential persons* (please note) were extremely well disposed toward you! These people felt it very keenly and called it a real shame that you threw all that away." The letter closed with the admonition that Dr. Michels had caused so much damage to his apartment (of which Professor Fischer was sub-landlord) that the house was still unfit to be sold!

It should not be thought that I make these revelations with the intention of reproaching the writer of the letter *personally*. On the contrary, I am unfortunately fairly sure that— with the possible exception of the last passage, which really has no place in these matters, unless the *Habilitation* requires a certificate of good behavior from the landlord— the majority of people will find its content *perfectly correct*. This is precisely why, as a "type," the sentiments expressed are so characteristic of our public affairs in general and especially of conditions in certain areas of the life of our universities. In all honesty, I cannot disguise the fact that it is *my* ("subjective") opinion that the existence and overriding importance of such views, precisely *because* they are honestly held, *reflect badly* on us as a nation of culture, and furthermore that as long as such views prevail I cannot act as though we possessed much in the way of "academic freedom" that could be taken away from us by anybody.

Finally— again in my "subjective" opinion— religious communities that deliberately and openly allow their sacraments to be used as a means for people to further their careers, almost as if they were the insignia of a student fraternity [*Corpsbänder*] or a reserve officer's commission [*Reserveoffiziers-Patent*], richly deserve the contempt in which they are held and about which they are so fond of complaining. I believe Professor von Amira, with his evident spirit of independence, will take the same view. We should at least have the right to request that in the interest of good taste and of *veracity* we should no longer have to listen to the incessant talk of the existence of "freedom of science and teaching" in Germany. The fact is that this supposed "academic freedom" is obviously conditional on 1) the holding of *views which are politically acceptable in court circles and polite society*, and 2) assent to a certain minimum level of *church beliefs* (whether genuine or



otherwise). In Germany *freedom of science* exists *within the boundaries of political and religious acceptability*— and not outside them. Perhaps this is indissolubly linked with the dynastic character of our polity [*Staatswesen*]. If that is the case, then it should be honestly admitted, but we should not delude ourselves that here in Germany we possess the same freedom of scholarship and teaching as is taken for granted in countries such as Italy.

Prof. Max Weber (Heidelberg)

## 6. SECOND GERMAN CONFERENCE OF TEACHERS IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Jena, 28 and 29 September, 1908<sup>271</sup>

### Extracts

M. Weber (Heidelberg) On a point of order: If you are in agreement with us in condemning these events, then my brother will be able to withdraw his resolution. But we must not restrict ourselves to those who are already teachers.

.....

M. Weber (Heidelberg): I cannot agree with [Heinrich E.] Ziegler<sup>272</sup> when he says that a person should be barred from *Habilitation* on the grounds of his party political opinion. Anyone, regardless of party orientation, must be allowed to *habilitate*.

.....

M. Weber (Heidelberg): When it comes to an appointment, the political beliefs of an academic teacher are quite irrelevant. We want no political snooping from any side; anyone who engages in that activity is a scoundrel.

## 7. SOCIAL DEMOCRATS IN ACADEMIC TEACHING POSITIONS <sup>273</sup>

In the previous number of this journal we remarked, under the heading of *Jena*, that the “Michels case” at that university had by no means been resolved, or rather, that to judge by the facts that had so far come to light there was no obvious danger to academic freedom. Prof. Max Weber, Heidelberg, now reports as follows:

---

271 “Zweiter deutscher Hochschullehrertag zu Jena am 28. und 29. September 1908,” supplement to the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 18 December, 1908, pp. 634-635.

272 Heinrich E. Ziegler (1858-1925), zoologist.

273 “Sozialdemokraten im akademischen Lehramt,” *Hochschul-Nachrichten*, Vol. XIX, No. 2 (November, 1908), p. 45.

The *Michels case* has been *entirely resolved* thanks to the facts that I have established and that no one has attempted to dispute. The objection that there was no *formal* resolution concerning a *formal* application for *Habilitation* that made *formal* reference to political motives has been shown to be nothing but a pretext. After weeks of hesitation and consultation, the *authorized* answer to my inquiry, given by the responsible person, concerning the *single* point of whether or not a certain kind of political activity was an obstacle to *Habilitation*, was that this was indeed the case.

Furthermore, Prof. Weber claims to have evidence “that in Jena political snooping in professorial appointments was not only carried out against Social Democrats but also, for example, against members of the *Zentrumspartei* (Center Party).”<sup>274</sup>

## 8. ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN THE UNIVERSITIES <sup>275</sup>

By Prof. Max Weber (Heidelberg)

The discussions at the second German conference of teachers in institutions of higher education in Jena on academic freedom were unable really to clarify this difficult and yet fundamental problem. As with so much that has been said on this topic in recent years, the views expressed by the assembled higher education teachers were far too strongly influenced by the “professional interests” of those who happen to be higher education teachers already. This is the only way to explain how, in all seriousness, they could assume that the discussion of the question of whether or not the expression of a particular conviction by the higher education teacher (e.g., a political or “radical” religious conviction) should exclude him from *occupation* of a chair— to which the answer was naturally in the negative— could be *separated* from the other question: whether or not the profession of the *same* conviction should be able to exclude such a person from being *appointed* to a chair.

Let us consider this view in conjunction with the following equally widely held view: On the one hand, the higher education teacher, since he is after all an “official,” has to “exercise restraint” in his *public* behavior (as a citizen, in elections, in statements to the press, and so on). On the other hand, he is entitled to expect that *none* of his pronouncements *in the lecture hall* should be disseminated in public. As we know, Professor Schmoller has successfully prosecuted a stu-

---

<sup>274</sup> *Deutsche Zentrumspartei* (German Center Party) founded 1870-1871, and drawing much of its support from Roman Catholics.

<sup>275</sup> “Die Lehrfreiheit der Universitäten,” *Hochschul-Nachrichten*, Vol. XIX, No. 4 (January, 1909), pp. 89-91.

dent who passed on the content of his lectures to others. If we accept these two principles, we arrive at the following curious concept of "academic freedom": 1) On *admission* to a chair, the professor can and should be examined not only for his scientific qualifications, but also for his loyalty toward the current political rulers and ecclesiastical custom. 2) Any *public* protest against the prevailing political system can cost the person occupying the chair his job. 3) In contrast, in the lecture hall, which is *closed* to the public and hence exempt from criticism, the teacher, once *appointed*, may express himself as he chooses, "independently of all authorities."

It is clear that *this* concept of academic freedom would be an ideal of "satisfied individuals," of the *beati possidentes* [happy possessors], to whom neither the freedom of scholarship as such, nor the rights and duties of academic teachers as citizens means anything, but who only want to be *left alone* in the enjoyment of the "position in life" in which they now find themselves. And at the same time, this "freedom" could, of course, serve as a fig leaf for the maintenance, if possible, of a particular *political* slant to higher education teaching in all those subjects to which such a slant can be applied. In addition, it is scarcely necessary to mention the extent to which the character of anyone aiming at *Habilitation* is endangered by this "freedom."

Against this, it must be said that the community has *no* interest of any kind in granting guaranteed tenure to a professorial body that has been carefully screened for its political and (formal) ecclesiastical "acceptability" before appointment. "Freedom of science and teaching" at the university certainly does *not* exist where appointments to teaching positions are made conditional on possession (or protestation) of particular politically or ecclesiastically "acceptable" opinions. If we wish to talk about such "freedom," then the *first* stipulation must, of course, be that appointment *to* and tenure *of* a teaching position should at the very least be subject to the *same* criteria. An *action* that according to existing laws entails the *dismissal* (on legal or disciplinary grounds) from a teaching position of someone who is currently a higher education teacher can undoubtedly justify a refusal to appoint him in the first place. However, where the one is not the case, then, of course, the other must not be the case either. It is perfectly possible for someone to take the view that a punishable action (e.g., one that is political in character) that disqualifies one from the office of *professor*, could still permit appointment to the position of an *adjunct lecturer*, which does not confer an "office." But the contrary principle, which was defended on many occasions in Jena: that someone could be disqualified from *Habilitation* as an adjunct lecturer for behavior that does *not* disqualify a professor for his office, is quite simply monstrous. Only *after* this totally self-evident principle is acknowledged can we proceed to

a discussion of the question of *what* behavior— public or private— should be classed as being incompatible with the position of a higher education teacher. On this point I merely have a few comments to make *here* with regard to a view according to which the formal and legal character of the universities as *state institutions* should provide a criterion for selection. Some of the full professorial chairs at foreign state universities are now held by, for example, socialists, including some of the most radical imaginable, and many of them are among the finest scientists to be found in those nations. In Germany, those who are regarded— by whatever political “cartel” or “bloc” happens to be in power at the time— as “enemies of the Reich” *eo ipso* [by that fact itself] find that the odds are heavily stacked against them, and a fortiori those who are classed by the *political police* as “enemies of the state” are barred from teaching in most [German] states after the authorities have carried out statutory checks, such as political certification of good character *before Habilitation* or confirmation of appointment by the political authorities *after Habilitation!* Not only that, but even when not required to do so, the *faculties* tend to act as agents of the political police. All this, it is argued, is *because* the universities are subsidized and granted privileges by the state, *although* the state regulates the examination of applicants for its offices in the way that *it* chooses and the education provided by the university is only a precondition of appointment (one among many) and confers *no right* to it. But let us leave aside this formalist approach entirely and treat the “question” as it deserves to be treated: as a problem of *culture!*

The fact that, alongside education in general, higher education has also become a *state* responsibility in our country is the result of a quite specific cultural development, the consequence in particular of secularization on the one hand, and on the other of the profound impoverishment of the nation over the past few centuries, which militated against the rise of powerful foundations like those that produced so many outstanding universities in the English-speaking countries. Today this development is a fact with which we have to reckon and to which highly significant positive values can undoubtedly be attributed— there is no need to explore this any further here— since as things stand the material means needed by the university and on the scale required could only have been provided by the state. The question of how this development of the material bases of our university system, in the totality of its effects, will ultimately be *evaluated* is, of course, still unanswered.

If “the state,” i.e., the bearers of political power ruling the nation at any particular time, were to adopt the standpoint: “I sing the tune of the one whose

bread I eat,"<sup>276</sup> if, in other words, the power vested in its hands through the material situation of the universities were not understood as the acceptance of *cultural* tasks, but as a means of achieving a certain *political regimentation* of the academic youth, scholarship would, in some respects, have been in a worse situation in such a "state" than in its previous dependence on the church. Even the finest institutes, the highest student numbers, or any number of dissertations, prize-winning essays and examination successes could not outweigh the consequences of such an emasculation of free and unrestricted university teaching, with their destructive effect on the development of individuals of strong character. The popular argumentation: "the state," which always means, be it noted, the political grouping that the current political constellation has put in power, "could not afford" to allow the universities to spread "teaching hostile to the state," suffers from a fundamental misunderstanding, which, it must be admitted, can even be found in university circles, of the whole meaning and essence of academic teaching. I should like to say a few words about this.

It is not the business of universities to teach a *world view* that is either "pro" or "anti" the state, or indeed any other *world view*. They are not institutions whose function is to teach ultimate beliefs [*Gesinnungsunterricht*]. They analyze facts and their real conditions, laws and connections, and they analyze concepts and their logical presupposition and contents. They do not and *cannot* teach what should happen, for this is a matter of ultimate personal value judgments, a *world view* that cannot be "demonstrated" like a scientific theorem. Of course, universities teach their students *about* these world views: they trace their psychological origins, analyze them for their thought content and their ultimate general presuppositions, what it is in each of them that can *no longer* be demonstrated but must be believed, but they would be overstepping the boundaries of science if they were to be arrogant enough to try to *teach* not merely knowledge, but also beliefs and "ideals." They leave it to the conscience of the individual to choose the ideals to whose service he wishes to devote himself— "which gods he serves." In doing so they sharpen his eye for the actual conditions of his striving. They teach him how to become clear about what he thinks: "to know what he wants." But they would not be the slightest bit above the level of a Jesuit school:<sup>277</sup> indeed, they would be below it, if they were to set before their students as science the personal ideals of their teachers, such as their political opinions— whether they happened to be "radical" (of the right or left) or "moderate." Here they must exercise the *duty of self-restraint*. There is *one* element of all "genuine" world views, the essence of

---

276 The equivalent English proverb is the following: "The one who pays the piper calls the tune."

277 Managed by a Roman Catholic order of priests.

which they must not fail to pass on to their students: they must teach them to become accustomed to the *duty of intellectual integrity*, and thus also to relentless clarity about themselves. The individual must conquer *everything* else, *all* that he is striving to achieve, by himself in the struggle with life.

It would be senseless arrogance for a university teacher to take it upon himself, for example, either to “demonstrate” that some social demand is “justified,” or, by scientific means, to “show” that it was “unjustified.” Both are *simply impossible* to do by means of science. What science can do here is to analyze those demands for their true content and thus for those ultimate, *no longer* verifiable or refutable, *beliefs* and value judgments that underlie them; next, explore their historical origin; then investigate the practical preconditions for and probable consequences of their realization; and finally establish whether current developments are moving in the right direction for these demands or not, and why. These are all really “scientific” questions. Whether or not the *individual* wants to approve or utilize these “ultimate” beliefs, whether or not he is prepared to accept these preconditions of their realization and the consequences that flow from them, and whether or not he finds the sacrifices too great in relation to the chances of success— it is *his* duty to decide *this*, and it is a duty from which his academic teacher cannot, indeed *must not*, relieve him, because nothing whatever about it can be “scientifically” determined.

It is, unfortunately, well known that some academic teachers do not practice this duty of self-restraint and believe they have the right, even the duty, to educate the academic youth in particular political beliefs [*Gesinnungen*] and world views. Their politics, far from being predominantly “radical,” is *mainly* conciliatory and supposedly “statesmanlike.” The universities can only find, in the long run, that they have made a rod for their own backs by permitting such arrogance. *This* conception of the tasks of education can only lead to demands from the person *closest* to the student, namely, the *father*, who has sent his son to university at his own expense, for a guarantee that it will also be *his* world view that is represented. Parties representing particular denominational, economic, social and political interests would then *all* have the right to their own universities or professorial chairs devoted to education according to their ideals. Then we should have to accept the principle of [Abraham] Kuyper’s<sup>278</sup> university “reform” in the Netherlands (which would need to be developed more systematically) and give everyone the right to found both full professorships at the universities and a board of trustees of which they could appoint the members. The *Zentralverband deutscher Industrieller* (Central Association of German Industrialists), the *Monisten-*

---

<sup>278</sup> Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), Dutch politician and Calvinist theologian who founded in 1880 the Free University of Amsterdam.

*bund* (Monist Union)<sup>279</sup> and the *Keplerbund* (Kepler Union),<sup>280</sup> the trade union cartel, the churches and the political parties, finances permitting, would all claim this right, just as the Catholic and other churches in the Netherlands are starting to do today. That would be “academic freedom” on the basis of “teaching ultimate beliefs.” Those who reject such consequences must in all honesty also reject both ultimate belief education [*Gesinnungsunterricht*] as the task of higher education teachers and the application of ultimate belief criteria to the selection of higher education teachers. They must regard the creation of chairs (e.g., in history or philosophy) that, for example, are expressly *designed* to advocate clerical *tendencies* as just as much a contemptuous violation of “academic freedom” as passing over a scientifically qualified candidate on political grounds, whether this is because he is a “man of the Center Party” or because he is a “socialist.”

Only on the basis of *strict scientific self-restraint* can today's cultural unity in the field of education be inwardly justified. If we want to preserve this unity, then *all* thought of teaching ultimate beliefs must be abandoned, and the academic teacher, *especially* in the secret chamber of his lecture hall, which is today so anxiously guarded, is under a particular obligation to avoid *any* expression of his own opinion in the struggle of ideals, and to make his lecture hall a place of historical and philosophical understanding of other world views that differ from his own, rather than a place where they come under attack.

Today, only the *theological* faculties present any apparent difficulty, one that is purely historically determined, in carrying out these requirements. It is not a difficulty of principle: in fact, it can be stated unequivocally which kinds of discussion and treatment of the phenomenon of the religious life should have a place in the universities (if they are to retain the character outlined above), and which should not. If these latter disciplines, those that can only be treated in terms of dogma and those dealing with apologetics and with practical specialisms, are today taught by higher education teachers who are employed by the state but whose academic freedom is restricted, this is not because of *any need of the religious life, but solely from the desire of the state to exercise cultural regulation*. It is becoming evident that strong church communities, especially the Catholic Church, are already beginning to render the purpose of this regulation completely illusory, and this, together with other aspects of cultural development, will bring about an inevitable separation. This will be in the interest of the religious life too, and hopefully it will not come too late.

---

279 *Deutsche Monistenbund* (German Monist Union) founded in 1906 to advance the doctrine that only one supreme being exists.

280 *Keplerbund zur Förderung der Naturkenntnis* (Kepler Union for the Advancement of Knowledge about Nature) founded in 1907, largely to oppose the German Monist Union.

---

9. TRANSACTIONS OF THE THIRD GERMAN CONFERENCE OF TEACHERS IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Leipzig, 12 and 13 October, 1909<sup>281</sup>

*M. Weber (Heidelberg)*: In response to the remarks of the previous speaker I ask: Why, after all, do we have a colloquium [for the *Habilitation*]? In the colloquium we should ask questions of the most irksome kind, and continue the questioning until such time as it is clear that the man can distinguish between his beliefs and the nature of his scientific work in a manner that leads us to say: This man is a thinker. His place is within the scientific community, however absurd his religious convictions may seem to us personally.

To what Herr [Adolf] Wach<sup>282</sup> has said about the theological faculty and its position in the university, I would say this: It is not the case that dogma is necessarily connected with the concept of the theological faculty. Some theological faculties are free of dogma, such as those in the Netherlands, where there is no requirement for any particular confession of faith. At these faculties only historical fields are studied— no apologetics or dogmatics. However, the ministry of Abraham Kuyper has bypassed this principle by introducing a system that has come close to being imitated here at the University of Leipzig. Anyone who donates a sum of money in the Netherlands today can demand that a university chair be established, on condition that the sum of money is sufficiently large. The first person to take advantage of this provision was the Bishop of Utrecht, and the first person to take advantage of a similar privilege here in Germany at the University of Leipzig would be Herr Henry A. Bueck,<sup>283</sup> the General Secretary of the *Zentralverband deutscher Industrieller* (Central Association of German Industrialists). It is well known that he was the first to approach the university with a request of this nature. It is also well known that at the same time the man he had in mind made an application to the professor who was head of the faculty concerned.

The only difference in principle between Wach and myself is over value judgments. Value judgments have absolutely no place in the lecture hall. The lecturer should confine himself to establishing the facts and their causal connections, and secondly to establishing the logical state of affairs; if the scientific investigation includes the achievement of a particular purpose that the state or some indi-

---

281 *Verhandlungen des III. Deutschen Hochschullehrtages zu Leipzig am 12. und 13. Oktober 1909* (Leipzig: Verlag des Literarischen Zentralblattes für Deutschland (Eduard Avenarius), 1910), pp. 16-17, 20-21, 41-42, 47.

282 Adolf Wach (1843-1926), jurist.

283 Henry A. Bueck (1830-1916).



vidual or party is also pursuing, I may only approach it through scientific means and say: To this end there is a need for this and this scientific means. Among these means are perhaps some about which I may ask myself: Do I want to accept these means for my purpose? All our value judgments are made up of such compromises concerning our aims; in this way I may be able to assist the listener to achieve clarity and may leave him to make his own decision.

It is not, however, permissible to deprive him of his decision and limit his freedom of choice. I have always refused to do that, and I am still proud that students from my seminars have held all conceivable standpoints, ranging from the extreme agrarian to the extreme left-wing. And the lawyer or the historian, for example, must proceed in the same manner. The cultural common ground that we share with our opponents is the straightforward science of facts. There is nothing more that we can give to our students, and anyone who has a genuine and strong conviction will agree that our students are not thereby being abandoned to all and sundry and will not lose their way. And if nationalists wish to criticize me in the press, alleging that I am trying to elevate Social Democrats to professorial chairs, let us give the Social Democrats<sup>284</sup> the chance to occupy the chairs of the German universities, and then we will see the disgrace that comes out of it. They simply do not have the power to offer anything comparable to what German science as a whole can offer.

*M. Weber (Heidelberg) (personal comment)*: One of the speakers commented that certain colleagues had once written to the *Hochschul-Nachrichten*. The speaker was referring to me. However, after I had seen the *judgment* and noted its content, and seen that this man, who I had assumed to be a gentleman,<sup>285</sup> did not appeal against this judgment, I take my stand on the principle that never again will a single line of mine appear in that journal! That is the first point.

The second concerns my personality. I must reiterate that I am capable of arriving at scientific conclusions without value judgments, and I am only proud of that part of my teaching activity in which I have been loyal to this ideal.

*M. Weber (Heidelberg)*: Every institute director who is asked in all seriousness whether or not his institute could be governed by some kind of constitution, as [Karl G.] Lamprecht<sup>286</sup> has proposed, will say: This is impossible. I am responsible for my institute and for its funding. It is utopian to imagine that we can suggest more than certain palliatives when faced with a refractory institute director. (The nature of such palliatives needs to be discussed, but this is not, I believe, the right forum for this.) Moreover, we have to be clear about the fact, which can

---

284 Social Democrats in their capacity as Social Democrats.

285 In English here and subsequently. [Tr.]

286 Karl G. Lamprecht (1856-1915), historian.

have tragic consequences for the livelihood of newly recruited assistants,<sup>287</sup> that the considerations of science demand the most ruthless selection.

With regard to the assistants in particular, the only way forward is for us to return to the old principle that it is not acceptable for an assistant to remain as assistant for longer than three years. I can well remember the time when it was resented if an assistant occupied a post for more than three years, as he was keeping someone else out. Today things are different, and in this connection I should like to say: Perhaps the assistants should beat their own breasts about this.

M. Weber (Heidelberg) now has the floor in the plenary debate:

There is one point that I miss in the Munich group's debate, and that is the question: Is the adjunct lecturer nothing more than one of the new academic recruits? Is he not a freelance teacher and researcher who has been given the opportunity of publishing his views on the strength of his *Habilitation*? He is not merely a kind of officer in waiting [*avantageur*]; that would be a bureaucratic and military concept. It must be written on the soul of every adjunct lecturer that under no circumstances does staying on in his post give him any special rights to employment. (Bravo!) I reject out of hand any suggestion based on bureaucracy or the military system whereby the corporal, sergeant, and so on, rises through the ranks, or any notion of equal rights and so on— in short, any bureaucratic standpoint. (Thunderous and prolonged applause.)

#### 10. THE CONFERENCE OF TEACHERS IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION<sup>288</sup>

Sir,

Allow me to add the following to the reports of proceedings at the Conference of Teachers in Institutions of Higher Education:

1) The attempt to buy the appointment of a professor of a certain political persuasion involved the scholar in question,<sup>289</sup> a man who after a promising start had resorted increasingly to rushing into print with mediocre work, to the extent that he requested a professor of the faculty concerned, *and indeed an outstanding Kathedersozialist* (academic socialist),<sup>290</sup> to consider using his influence to help secure his appointment. In Prussia, the gentleman concerned, who was once strictly anti-agrarian, will probably be looked after by the *Bund der Landwirte*

---

287 Although the assistants taught certain courses, they were answerable to the institute director.

288 "Zum Hochschullehrertage," *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 1st morning edition, 19 October, 1909, p.1.

289 Richard Ehrenberg (1857-1921), economist.

290 Although called such, they were more social reformers than socialists, advocating state intervention in the economy and society to mitigate class conflicts.

(Union of Farmers),<sup>291</sup> in accordance with the way he had behaved. One cannot help wondering whether the ministry there will see its way to show even the minimum of formal correctness that was shown in Saxony. The Junkers [Prussian landed aristocracy] do not act in such a naïve way as their counterparts in Saxony— as the [Gustav] Ruhland<sup>292</sup> case has shown— and the means they employ have the great advantage for them of not burdening their pockets with an expenditure amounting to 30,000 marks, whether this falls within taxation policy or not.

2) The attempt to twist the meaning of the Wach theses, after the *second Social Democratic spokesman had expressed his agreement with them*, will have little chance of convincing anyone other than the readership of the *Tägliche Rundschau*.

Respectfully yours,  
Max Weber

## II. PROFESSOR EHRENBERG <sup>293</sup>

We have received from Professor *Max Weber* the following reply to the comments of Professor *Ehrenberg*, which we published yesterday. Prof. Weber originally sent his reply to the editor of *Der Tag*.

Sir,

I have today, Tuesday, 19 October, received Professor Ehrenberg's statement of his position. He believes he is entitled to call upon me to admit that I have "unjustifiably insulted his honor."

Naturally, I see no reason to change a word of what I said about him (cf. *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 1st morning edition, 19 October, 1909), and would only add the following:

1) No reputable political economist who knows anything at all about methodology could accept that Professor Ehrenberg has discovered any new method.

2) Every political economist, even Professor Ehrenberg, knows that so-called *Kathedersozialismus* (academic socialism) today does not represent a "school of thought" in any sense of the words, but that the Association for Social Policy whose title was given to it some thirty-six years ago by liberals, has long been home to a range of sharply and widely differing views and ideals, and that these differences are far greater than those between members of the association and

---

291 Founded in 1893 to advance the interests of middle and large landowners in particular.

292 Gustav Ruhland (1860-1914), economist, farmer, and agricultural policy expert.

293 "Professor Ehrenberg," *Frankfurter Zeitung*, evening edition, 20 October, 1909, pp. 1-2.

outsiders. It is the practice of the association now, as is well known, to discuss scientifically all views, including, as people will probably recall, those of Herr [Emil] Kirdorf<sup>294</sup> and his comrades, at its meetings. The association has also endeavored to involve Prof. Ehrenberg in its work— but in vain. Finally, in view of the facts that are universally known, no one would take seriously the suggestion that being designated a “*Kathedersozialist*” brings improved prospects for an academic career.

3) No political economist of any consequence will believe Professor Ehrenberg when he asserts that any supposedly special “school of thought” [*Richtung*] that he follows stands or has ever stood in the way of his acceptance by the faculty. The truth is, as every serious specialist knows, that the increasing haste with which he rushes into print, and the corresponding inexorably *deteriorating quality* of his publications— despite some highly promising work— would make it extraordinarily difficult today for faculties that give careful thought to their decisions to propose him, quite apart from his current *behavior*, which is *unprecedented* in German academic life, and which alone would suffice to rule him out.

4) Herr Ehrenberg has never done anything to offend me personally. I have close friends from every conceivable socio-political camp. When I myself was involved in faculty decisions, I spoke in favor of people from the most heterogeneous camps, especially people who I regarded as having been unjustly overlooked. Herr Ehrenberg must admit to himself that I could have no conceivable motive to hurt him personally on the grounds of his alleged orientation, or to begrudge him the appointment that he seeks, *if, given his present attitude, he were to be worthy of it*. Herr Ehrenberg’s behavior, which was plain to see and which his own statements have merely confirmed as a fact, must have been publicly noted, even if he had not recently heaped abuse on “*Kathedersozialismus*” and airily accused it of the unjustified suppression of outsiders. No unbiased person in academic life can be in any doubt about how to judge his behavior. And *nothing* Herr Ehrenberg can say will change this, least of all the cautiously phrased account of his actions that he has given. All these things are, as the Romans would say, “*protestationes facto contrariae*” [“protestations that are contrary to the facts”].

There is nothing more I need say about this case or this individual.

Yours faithfully,

Max Weber

---

294 Emil Kirdorf (1847-1938), big industrialist and opponent of labor unions.

12. TRANSACTIONS OF THE FIRST GERMAN CONFERENCE OF SOCIOLOGISTS

19–22 October, 1910, Frankfurt am Main<sup>295</sup>

Professor Dr. Max Weber (Heidelberg):

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The annual report of our society that I have been asked to give will cover two main areas. 1. The changes to the constitution made by the society in the course of the past year, and 2. The concrete scientific tasks that the society has set itself for the near future. This is important because given the variable content of the concept “sociology,” a society with this name, which is so unpopular with us, is well advised to make clear what it wishes to be by means of concrete statements regarding its present constitution and its forthcoming tasks.

As far as the first of these areas is concerned, I should like to mention the following principles, which have only found their way into our statutes within the last year: Firstly— and this is a principle about which the previous speaker has already spoken— that the society rejects utterly the propagation of *practical* ideas in its midst. The society is not only “impartial” in the sense that it wishes to be fair to everyone, and to understand everyone, or that it seeks to favor the “happy medium” among different party views, and among political, social, ethical or esthetic or other values of whatever kind, it also has nothing whatever to do with these positions; it is simply *non-party* in all these areas. The existence, the nature, the demands and the success of political, esthetic, literary, religious and other party views can, of course, very well be the object of an *analysis*, but this analysis should be directed toward the *fact of the existence of these views*, the supposed and actual reasons for them, their success or chances of success, and their consequences “in principle” and “in practice,” and should be free of all personal judgment and be based purely on objective *analysis*. As §1 of our statute states, our society may never debate the pros and cons, or the merits and demerits of such views. If, for example, the society organizes an inquiry into the press— I shall discuss this later— then this, according to our principles, means that it will never contemplate sitting in judgment on the actual state of the object of its inquiry. It will not ask whether this state is desirable or undesirable. It will do nothing but answer the questions: What exists? Why, for what historical and social reasons, does it exist in precisely this way?

The second principle that we have laid down is that the society does not engage in “academicism.” The society is not a society of notables; it is the very

---

295 “Verhandlungen des Ersten Deutschen Soziologentages vom 19. – 22. Oktober 1910 Frankfurt a.M. (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1911), pp. 39–62.

opposite of anything like an academy; people should not, for example, feel offended if they happen not to be members of a committee of the society; it is no special "honor" to be a member of a committee of the society, paradoxical as it might sound; such membership means only that at the present moment the range of tasks of the society is such that the gentlemen who sit on this committee, partly because on their own initiative they have indicated their inclination to do so, partly because we have asked them to, are the appropriate colleagues for *these* concrete tasks. Membership of a committee also means that they meet the sole criterion for election to it, which is that they are already well known for their scientific, i.e., not practical, but purely sociological, achievements and want to work with us on a basis far removed from all party controversy. The society is a working body, but not— I repeat— anything resembling an "academy." Any persons who wish to join us in our endeavors should let us know: They will be warmly welcomed.

Thirdly, we have established the principle that the society does not engage in "departmental patriotism" [*Ressort-Patriotismus*]. It does not regard itself as an end in itself, and does not try to appropriate tasks to itself, and therefore to a large extent espouses the principle of decentralization of scientific work for itself as well as elsewhere.

This is expressed in our constitution. Firstly, in that the bulk of our work is carried on not in meetings of members as such, but in the committees that the society appoints for every concrete task. These committees, for which the society elects only the chairman and possibly some of the members— as few as possible— are each totally autonomous within their own sphere, especially in their ability to co-opt other members, including some from outside the society. In particular, representatives of trades and professions, such as, in the case of the press for example, newspaper editors and journalists, without whom we simply could not work, have a place on our committees. There they enjoy absolutely equal voting rights and work with us on a basis of parity in every respect, and from them we hope to find direct inspiration for our own work.

Secondly, the same principle of decentralization is expressed in the fact that the sociological society will probably never again appear before the public in the form it takes today and in the next few days: namely, as an undivided unity, dealing with a whole series of individual subjects one after another in lectures and discussions. The intention is rather to form sections. The formation of a statistics section has already been mooted from within the circle of statisticians. The society does not intend schematically to insist on the formation of sections, but rather to leave it to interested parties from within the society to come together in subject specialisms. The executive committee will then discuss with these sec-

tions what their position within the society should be, the intention being that they should be as autonomous within their spheres as they can possibly be. Thus, it will be up to them to invite experts, and *only* experts, in the relevant areas, excluding all those who cannot be so regarded; they will also decide on the work they wish to undertake and how they propose to do it.

At future sociology conferences— let us say, after two years or eighteen months— since other groups of specialists are likely to make similar proposals, we shall probably see several sections convening in parallel; perhaps one section in theoretical political economy, within which the theorists, and no one else, debate questions of theory; then perhaps a section for statistics, within which the statisticians, that is, the specialist statisticians and no one else, discuss their problems, naturally, if they so choose, including other people with an interest in the subject, but, if they prefer, limiting active participation in the discussion to those with a real understanding of the area. Then in addition to these, the main society would hold its sessions in a manner similar to this one, but probably on a restricted number of major topics that had already been the subject of publications and other work by the society, because the main emphasis of the society's activity will have to be on *publication*.

I should now like to indicate which topics the society proposes to tackle in the manner described. The aim will be to publish work by leading experts in the field, with the collaboration of a broad range of other contributors who wish to work with us and are prepared to devote themselves to the task. Naturally, ladies and gentlemen, the description I have given can do no more than give a rough approximation or overview of what is intended, as formulation of the precise *questions* that we propose to explore is the crucial scientific task before us.

Ladies and gentlemen, the first topic that the society has found to be suitable for purely scientific treatment is a *sociology of the press*. A vast topic, as we are fully aware, which will not only demand very significant material means for the preliminary work, but which is impossible to treat adequately unless leading circles of practitioners in the press have full confidence in our objectivity and give us their support. We could never achieve our purpose if newspaper publishers or journalists were to suspect that the society's aim was to criticize the present state of affairs from a moral point of view, since they would never make available to us the relevant material on which we depend and which they are best able to provide.

The committee that will have to be formed will shortly have the task of winning the cooperation of press specialists, including both practicing journalists and academic theorists. Many such theorists now exist, and there are already some brilliant theoretical publications in this field. In this connection, allow me

to mention the book by Emil Löbl,<sup>296</sup> which deserves to be far better known than it is. It is to be hoped, after the preliminary negotiations that have taken place, that if, as planned, we approach the major press enterprises and the associations of newspaper editors and publishers in the near future, we shall have the benefit of the cooperation that we seek. If this should not happen, the society would prefer to refrain from publication entirely, rather than embark on a project that would be likely to be fruitless.

Ladies and gentlemen, there would be no point in saying much here about just how tremendously important the press is. The gentlemen of the press here present would only suspect me of flattery, especially since what has already been said from other well-informed sources cannot be bettered. The press, at least the foreign press, has been compared to generals commanding their armies, but everyone knows that nothing on earth can truly compare with it; we would have to enter the realms of the supernatural to find suitable comparisons. I would merely ask you to consider what modern life would be like if there were no press, and none of the kind of public awareness [*Publizität*] that the press creates.

I would remind my audience that there was an openness about the ancient world too. Jakob Burckhardt<sup>297</sup> was horrified by the public character of Hellenic life, which embraced the whole life of the Athenian citizen right down to the most intimate details. Openness in this form no longer exists, and it would be interesting to investigate what kind of openness we have today, how it is likely to look in the future, what is made public through newspapers *and what is not*. When we recall that 150 years ago journalists were forced to make a groveling apology at the bar of the English Parliament<sup>298</sup> for breach of privilege, after they had reported parliamentary proceedings, and compare that with the situation today, where the press can force parliament to its knees by the mere threat of refusing to print the speeches of the deputies, we can see how much the parliamentary system and the status of the press has changed. And yet *local* differences still persist. Even today, for instance, there are American stock exchanges where the windows are fitted with opaque glass in order that market prices cannot be revealed to those outside. On the other hand, almost every aspect of the compilation of a newspaper is affected by the need to give priority to the publication of the latest share prices.

We do not ask, be it noted, what *should* be made public. On this question, views diverge widely, as we all know. It is, of course, interesting to investigate

---

296 *Kultur und Presse* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1903); Austrian journalist (1863-1942).

297 Jakob Burckhardt (1818-1897), Swiss art and culture historian.

298 Like many people, when Weber wrote about England, the English Parliament, or the English, he was referring to the whole country, at that time the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, not to England as a constituent part of it.



the question of *which* views are held today, and which views were held in the past and by whom. This too falls within our field of competence; but we should do no more than establish the facts. Everyone knows, for example, that the views held in England on the question of publication differ from those held in our country, and that when, let us say, an English Lord marries an American, the American press carries a description of the physical and psychological features of the American woman, listing every detail, right down to the size of the dowry, whereas here in Germany the widely held view is that no self-respecting newspaper would do anything of the kind. Why the difference? If we observe that in Germany today representatives of the serious press are making every effort to exclude purely personal matters from publication in the newspapers— although we may ask: for what reason? and with what results?— we must also admit that on the other hand a socialist writer such as Anton Menger<sup>299</sup> was of the view that in the state of the future it would be the duty of the press to be a forum where those matters that could not be brought before the courts could be investigated, in other words to assume a role like that of the censor in ancient times. It is worth examining the *world view* that ultimately underlies each tendency. But our task would be *no more* than this. We should not take a view on the matter.

We propose to investigate principally the *power* relationships that are created by newspaper publicity specifically. Newspaper publicity has, for example, a different and much more limited importance for scientific achievement than it does for a performance that is more short-lived, like that of an actor or conductor. In general, its importance is particularly great for anything that is discussed in the *feuilleton*. In a sense, it is the drama critic and the literary critic who can most easily create or destroy someone's livelihood. But this power relationship is quite different for each section, beginning with the political, of the newspaper. To examine the relationship of newspapers to the parties both in this country and elsewhere, their relationship to the business world, and to all the innumerable groups and interested parties that exercise influence in the public sphere and are themselves subject to influence, is an enormous area of sociological work, which has only just begun. But let us look at the starting point for our investigation.

If we examine the press sociologically, we find that what is fundamental for all our investigations is the fact that the press today is necessarily a capitalist, private business enterprise, but that the press in every way occupies a special position to the extent that in contrast to every other business it has two quite different kinds of "customers." On the one hand, there are the purchasers of the newspaper, and these subdivide into those who are predominantly subscribers

---

<sup>299</sup> Anton Menger (1841-1906), Austrian jurist and socialist politician.

and those who are predominantly occasional buyers— a difference whose consequences have profoundly affected the character of the press in various civilized countries. On the other hand, there are the advertisers. And between these groups of customers there are particular kinds of reciprocal relationships. For example, the number of subscribers a newspaper has is certainly important for the number of advertisers it has, and to a certain extent the number of advertisers can also affect the number of subscribers.

But not only is the importance of the advertisers for the finances of the press far more significant than that of the subscribers, it would also be true to say that a newspaper can never have too many advertisers, although— unlike every other commodity for sale— it can have too many buyers. This is the case when it is not in a position to increase the rate for advertisers enough to cover the cost of ever expanding sales. This can be a serious problem for certain kinds of papers and in general it leads to the consequence that from a certain level of circulation newspapers have no further interest in increasing their sales. At least, this *can* happen if a situation arises where it becomes difficult to increase the price of advertising. This is a peculiarity of the press, and is a purely commercial factor, but it does, of course, have a number of consequences. On an international comparison, the strength and nature of the connection between the desire of the press to instruct and inform the public politically and in other areas, and the needs of the business world to advertise, is highly variable, especially when we make the comparison with France. Why should this be? What, in general, are the consequences of this connection? Although they have often been written about, these are the questions that we must re-examine, as there is no general agreement on the answers.

Now we must go a step further. It is noticeable today that there has been a growth in the capital *needs* of press enterprises. The question that has still not been decided to this day and that the most well-informed experts argue about is to what degree these growing capital needs signify an expansion of the monopoly of the enterprises that already exist. This could vary according to the circumstances. Even apart from the influence of the growth in capital needs, the monopoly position of the existing newspapers probably varies in strength, depending on whether the press generally relies on subscriptions or on individual cash buying. This is the norm in other countries, where the individual can choose every day to buy a different paper from the day before. This could— at least, this is how it appears at first sight— make it easier for new papers to break into the market. It could do, but this is something that must be investigated and its influence considered in conjunction with the growth of capital needs as such.

These factors must be borne in mind when attempting to answer the question: Does this growing volume of available capital mean an increase in the pow-

er to influence public opinion in a chosen direction? Or could it mean the reverse (this has been claimed, but not definitely demonstrated); namely, a growing sensitivity of the individual enterprise toward changes in public opinion? It has been said that the obvious change of mind of certain French newspapers (the example of *Le Figaro* at the time of the [Alfred] Dreyfus Affair<sup>300</sup> is usually quoted) can be explained by the simple fact that capital investors in these modern press enterprises get nervous about any change of mood among the reading public that could be expressed in the form of cancellation of subscriptions. This makes them dependent on the public, as the business cannot bear many such cancellations. Added to this is the factor that the practice of cash buying, which is predominant in France, makes it easier for readers to change their newspaper. This would mean, then, that increasing dependence on daily purchasing habits is the consequence of growing capital needs. Is this true? This is a question that we must address. Press experts— of whom I am not one— make this claim. Others deny it.

We also need to look at the question of whether or not, perhaps as a result of the growth of available newspaper capital, we are seeing an increasing role for trusts in newspaper ownership? This frequently happens where there is a growth in capital needs. How likely is this? Ladies and gentlemen, this is disputed most energetically by leading press experts, both theorists and practitioners. However, the principal representative of this view, Lord [Alfred C. W.] Northcliffe,<sup>301</sup> might be better placed to know, as he is one of the biggest trust magnates of all in the field of newspapers. What, though, would be the consequences for the character of newspapers if this view were to be true? After all, the evidence of our eyes teaches us that many of the newspapers belonging to the great business concerns that exist today are different in character from others. But enough on that topic. I have merely cited these examples to illustrate how much the commercial character of press enterprises must be taken into consideration. The question is: What is the significance of capitalist development *within* the area of the press for the sociological position of the press in general, and for its role in the formation of public opinion?

Another problem is that the “institutional” character of the modern press is specifically expressed here in Germany in the anonymity of press reports. The pros and cons of anonymity in the press have been endlessly debated. We are impartial in the matter, and simply ask *how it comes about* that this phenomenon exists in a country such as Germany, whereas in other countries, e.g., France, things

---

300 Alfred Dreyfus (1859-1935), Jewish captain in the French Army sentenced in 1894 to life imprisonment for selling military secrets to the German military attaché. In 1904 he was re-tried and acquitted of all charges. The affair attracted widespread attention and divided French public opinion.

301 Lord Alfred C. W. Northcliffe (1865-1922).

are often done differently. England is closer to us in this respect. In France today it is really only *Le Temps* that has taken its stand on the principle of strict anonymity. In England, by contrast, a number of newspapers have adhered with the utmost strictness to the anonymity principle, foremost among them, *The Times*.

There may be a number of different reasons for this. It may be— and this seems to be the case for *The Times*, for example— that the persons from whom the newspaper has obtained information are so highly placed that it would not be possible for them to supply information under their own name. In other cases, however, anonymity may have a diametrically opposite reason. We must bear in mind that there is a conflict of interest— and there is no getting around this— between the interest of the individual journalist in becoming as well known as possible, and the interest of the newspaper in not becoming dependent on the collaboration of one single journalist. Of course, the commercial implications of this differ greatly, depending on whether cash purchasing or subscription is predominant. The most important factor of all, of course, is the political character of the nation: whether, for example, a nation is inclined, as the German nation is, to be impressed by institutional powers, by a “newspaper” acting as a “supra-individual” something, or is free from this kind of metaphysical inclination and is prepared to attach more weight to the opinion of an individual.

These are all questions that lead into the sphere of occasional, or part-time, journalism, where the situation in Germany differs greatly from that which exists in France, for example, where the part-time journalist is a common phenomenon, but also in England. And here we should have to ask the question: Who, as an outsider, still writes for the newspapers today anyway, and what do such people write? Who does not write and what is not written about? Why not? This leads to the general question: How does the press obtain the material that it offers to the reading public in the first place? And what, in general, does it have to offer? Is the continuous growth in the significance of the purely *factual* report a universal phenomenon? In England, America, and Germany it is the case, but things are not quite the same in France. What French readers want more than anything is a paper with a particular slant. But why? Americans, for example, want nothing from their newspapers but facts. Any opinions about these facts that they find in their press they regard as not worth the bother of reading, because as democrats they are convinced that they understand the facts as well, as if not better than, the author of the newspaper article. But the French also claim to be democrats. How, then, do we explain the difference? However that may be, in these two cases the societal function of the newspaper is quite different.

Since, however, despite these differences, the news agencies are not only an increasing burden on the budget of the press in every country in the world, but

are also becoming more and more prominent, the question arises as to who, in the end, are the actual sources of the news. In other words: What is the position of the great news agencies of the world, and how do they relate to each other[?]  
There is important work to be done here, and some of it has already begun. The assertions that have been made concerning the situation in this area are in part mutually contradictory, and the question will be whether we could not obtain more objective material on the subject than has so far been possible.

Most of the newspaper is filled with either the news itself or such other products of the printing trade as the mass-produced features—the sports section, the puzzle corner or the serial, to name but a few—all produced on a large scale by huge specialist business enterprises. The remainder is devoted to genuine journalism, which in Germany, at least, unlike some non-German countries, is still of fundamental importance when we come to evaluate a newspaper. We cannot, however, content ourselves with looking at the current product, but must assess its producers and inquire about the status and situation of journalists today. The status of German journalists, for example, is quite different from that of foreign journalists. In England, journalists and newspaper proprietors have occasionally been elevated to the House of Lords. These were men who, some of them, had no particular merit other than that as *businessmen*<sup>302</sup> they had created for their party a brilliant newspaper that undercut all the competition, “undercut” being nearer the mark than “surpassed” in this instance. In France, numerous journalists have become ministers. In Germany, on the other hand, this has been a rare occurrence. And, apart from these conspicuous external differences, we shall have to ask how the situation of professional journalists has changed in individual countries in the recent past.

What is the background and education of modern journalists, and what demands does their chosen career make upon them? What is the inward professional fate [*innerberufliches Schicksal*] of the German journalist, and how does it compare with that of foreign journalists? Finally, what are the chances of survival today as a journalist, whether professionally or otherwise, here and elsewhere? The general situation of journalists varies greatly, apart from anything else, according to the party, the character of the paper, and so on. We all know this. The socialist press, for example, is a special case, which has to be treated in a special way, and the position of socialist editors likewise; the same applies with even greater force to the Catholic press and its editors.

Finally, having investigated how the finished newspaper is created, we need to ask what *effect* it produces. There is a vast literature on this question, which is

---

302 In English [Tr.]

in part very useful, but which is also frequently self-contradictory, even when it emanates from prominent experts. Ladies and gentlemen, the attempt has been made to examine the effect of newspapers on the brain, and to understand the consequences of the habit of modern man, before going to work in the morning, to sit down to an indigestible mixture of journalistic offerings covering every aspect of our cultural life, all the way from politics to the theatre. Obviously, this is not without importance. It is very easy to make general comments about the extent to which it forms a pattern along with the other influences to which modern man is subjected. But it is not so easy to get beyond the earliest stages in understanding the problem.

Probably we should start by asking: To what kind of reading matter is modern man becoming accustomed by reading the newspaper? All kinds of theories have been put forward by way of an answer. It has been maintained that newspapers are taking the place of books. This is possible; German book production is certainly “flourishing” as never before, more than anywhere else in the world in fact; nowhere are so many books pouring on to the market, although the sales figures for these same books are in inverse proportion to this. In Russia, even before the introduction of press freedom, even books that could not be taken seriously, such as Anton Menger’s *Neue Sittenlehre* [Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1905], were being published in editions of between 20,000 and 30,000 copies— no disrespect to the character of the author is intended. There were widely read journals in that country that attempted consistently to establish an “ultimate” philosophical justification for their position.

This would be impossible in Germany, and it will also become impossible in Russia once the influence of the relative press freedom has made itself felt. The first signs of this are already evident. Undoubtedly, the press is aiming to bring about a huge shift of emphasis in reading habits, with consequent major shifts of emphasis in the manner and style of modern man’s reception of external influences. This continual change, and the recognition of the massive changes in public opinion and of the universal range and inexhaustible variety of opinions and interests is putting tremendous pressures on the character of modern man. But in what way? This we shall have to investigate. I cannot go into detail at this point and will conclude with the following comment.

After all is said and done, our task is, firstly, to investigate what it is that the press contributes to the molding and shaping of modern man. Secondly: How is our objective, supra-individual culture [*Kulturgüter*] being influenced by the press, what aspects of it are being altered, and what mass beliefs and hopes, “feelings about life” [*Lebensgefühlen*], in today’s parlance, and attitudes are being destroyed forever and recreated? These are the ultimate questions that we must

ask, and you will see at once, ladies and gentlemen, that we have an extraordinarily long way to go before we can answer such questions.

You will now ask: Where is the material to enable us to tackle this work[?]  
The material is none other than the newspapers themselves, and now, to speak plainly, we shall have to start from scratch, by measuring, with scissors and compasses, how the content of the newspapers has changed in terms of quantity in the course of the last few years, not least in the advertisement section and the feuilleton. And we must measure how the balance has shifted, between the feuilleton and the leading article, and between the leading article and the news. And we shall investigate what kind of news is now reported and what kind is no longer reported. In these areas there have been extraordinary changes. The first studies are starting to appear, but they are only the beginning. And then we shall move on from these quantitative studies to qualitative studies. We shall investigate the style of the newspaper, the manner in which the same problems are examined in the press and elsewhere, the apparent suppression of emotional aspects, even though these form the basis of its own economic survival, and similar matters. Thereafter we hope we shall at last be gradually coming closer to the broad question that we are aiming to answer.

Ladies and gentlemen, I must now turn much more briefly and cursorily to the two other problem areas that the society also intends to examine.

In order to characterize the first of these two areas, I have to say that it is a fundamental task of any sociological society to take as the object of its investigation those groupings that are conventionally known as “social” groupings, i.e., everything that is located in the middle between the politically organized or recognized powers— state, local authority and official church— on the one hand, and the organic community of the family on the other hand. Principally, then, a *sociology of the nature of associations* [*Vereinswesen*], in the broadest sense of the term, from something as commonplace as the skittles club at one end of the spectrum to the political party, the religious sect, and the artistic or literary society at the other end.

Ladies and gentlemen, such a vast subject can be divided up into the most varied aspects and questions. I propose briefly to outline a few of these.

The person of today is undoubtedly, alongside much else, an association person [*Vereinsmensch*] to a frightening, unimaginable, degree. There is no denying it. It is no exaggeration. There are now even organizations for terminating associations. In this regard, Germany is in the very front rank. If you look at any address list, you will find, for example, that in a town of 30,000 inhabitants there are around 300 different associations; that is, one association for every 100 inhabitants, or, if you like, for every twenty families. Incidentally, most listings are

nowhere near comprehensive, anyway. For instance, in Berlin they are far from complete, although in small towns they are often better.

Ladies and gentlemen, the quantitative incidence of associations is not always matched by a corresponding quality. What, in terms of quality, is the land of associations *par excellence*? America, beyond doubt, the reason being that for the middle classes in that country membership of an association confers legitimacy as a gentleman. To be exact, I should say “used to confer,” as now everything is becoming Europeanized. Here are a few striking examples. A German nasal specialist told me that his first client in Cincinnati said to him, before the start of the treatment: “I am a member of the First Baptist Church in such-and-such street.”<sup>303</sup> The doctor could not work out what that had to do with his nasal complaint. What it meant was, quite simply: I am a legitimate gentleman— and I pay promptly and in full. His second client began by showing him a kind of legion of honor rosette in his buttonhole. The doctor inquired about this and was told that it was a particular club in which one could only be elected to membership after thorough personal inquiries had been made into one’s character; if you were a member, then you were legitimized as a “gentleman.” There are vast numbers of these clubs and associations of every kind among the middle classes. These days, they are increasingly secular in character. But the prototype of the association [*Urtyp alles Vereinswesens*]— as we can see most clearly in America— is, in principle, and the purely historical origin of the term is unimportant, the *sect*, in the specific sense of the word. This is because the *sect* in its true sense is a union of specifically qualified people and not an “institution,” and because in accordance with its sociological structural principle it will not accept the sanction of the authoritarian compulsory organized groups — state, church — and *must* be an “association” [*Verein*]. This is why in America it still plays such an important role in providing a kind of ethical certificate of qualification for the businessman. For instance, before the Baptists<sup>304</sup> accept a person into membership, they subject him to a test similar to that taken by our reserve officers, and which covers the whole of his past life: drinking habits, relationships with the ladies, card playing, unpaid checks or other debts, and any shortcomings in his personal “conduct”— these are all scrutinized before he is admitted to baptism. Anyone who has been baptized is legitimized as absolutely creditworthy and will be successful in business.

Other traditional American associations, although not equally strict, act in a similar way, and with similar consequences. Freemasonry used to function in

---

303 “Street” is in English. [Tr.]

304 Members of a Protestant denomination advocating baptism only of adult believers by total immersion.



much the same way, as the records of the Freemasons show, and this used to apply in Germany too, although it was much more marked in America. As an American gentleman, who was lamenting the fact that for technical reasons he had never been installed as a master, once said to me when I asked him why this was important to him: When I am a master and can introduce myself as such with my secret sign on my business trips, I shall be able to win any customer and sell any goods, as everyone will assume that I supply only genuine goods at genuine prices; for if I had ever done otherwise, the Freemasons would not tolerate me as one of themselves. This is how things are in social life all over America. Anyone who does not gain an entrée, and the German-American, for instance, rarely does, will not get very far. Democracy in America is not a heap of sand but a maze of exclusive sects, associations and clubs. These all support the selection of those who conform to the American way of life in general, by smoothing their path to influential positions of all kinds in business, politics and social life. How are things in our own country, by comparison? Are there any analogies, and, if so, of what kind and to what extent? Where? With what consequences? Where are they absent and why? This is one, external, aspect of the matter.

A second question is: What effect does membership of a particular kind of association have, inwardly, on the personality as such? In general we can say: Anyone who belongs to an organized group [*Verband*], whether it be a fraternity [*Couleur*] in Germany or a Greek-Letter Society or other student society in America, has to “assert” himself among his comrades in the association in both external and inward ways. The question is: By what means does he assert himself? In the present example, for instance, this depends on what specific ideal of “manliness” is cultivated, consciously and deliberately or unconsciously and traditionally, within a German fraternity or an English sports club on the one hand, or an American student society on the other hand.

The conditions necessary to gain the *respect* of one's comrades are, of course, fundamentally diverse. This is true not only in general, not only among different nations, but also according to the different strata and categories of associations. The individual is, consciously or unconsciously, selected by reference to this ideal and molded accordingly. And it is not only a question of whether or not he gains the external respect of his comrades, but ultimately of how the individual who is now exposed to these influences can preserve his *own self-respect* and fulfill his need to be a “personality.” What inward realignments take place that may affect the balance of what we call “personality,” and may make it necessary to establish it on a new basis? After all, it is through grappling inwardly with such problems that the individual becomes receptive to the influences of the social groupings in which he finds himself, and achieves the integration of these influences in the

---

whole complex of the “self.” And the feeling of one’s own “worth” can be shifted, depending on the kind of grouping, to completely different foundations.

To continue. Any association that one belongs to represents an interpersonal *power* relationship [*Herrschaftsverhältnis*]. At first, at least normally, this is formally and officially a majority rule relationship. It is, then, the psychology of this majority rule over the individual that is ultimately at issue, and which is expressed and is effective in the area of these privately organized groups in a very specific way. This brings me to the crucial point I wish to make, namely, that in reality, within every such body, whatever it is called, party, association, club or whatever, the form of rule is always minority rule, at times the dictatorship of an individual, and the actual power within such an association lies in the hands of one person or a few persons, who are somehow qualified to exercise it by means of selection and adaptation to the tasks of leadership.

How, and under what conditions, one might even say “rules of the game,” this selection of leaders within the individual categories of associations, parties or whatever, is carried out, is decisive for the question of what kind of personalities gain power. And this question can only be answered in respect of each particular kind of association and according to its cultural surroundings. This is, however, a centrally important sociological question, and the question that arises out of it is no less so. It is this. By what means do the leading groups set about securing loyalty toward the associations, i.e., toward their own rule. Some important preliminary work has already been done on this question.<sup>305</sup>

Furthermore, what kind of relations exist between an association of any sort, whether it be a party or, paradoxical though it may sound, a skittles club, in other words, between any association, and something that we might call, in the broadest sense of the word, a “world view?” A connection is always somehow present, even where we should not suspect it at all. But there are many different kinds. The first point is that it is a common phenomenon that associations that were founded on great world view ideas become mechanisms that in practice become increasingly detached from them. This is simply due to the “tragic fate” that generally befalls any attempt to realize ideas in actuality. Every association has some machinery, however modest, and as soon as the association begins to make propaganda, this machinery becomes objectified in some way and taken over by the *professionals* [*Berufsmenschentum*]. To take an everyday example, consider the delicate and sensitive subject of the erotic life, and how even today the propagation of ideas in this area forms the *pecuniary* foundation of some people’s lives. I do not intend to make any moral criticism of the persons concerned, and would not

---

305 I am thinking here in particular of the work of Prof. Alexander G. Leist. [Weber’s note]; (1862-1918), jurist.

feel myself authorized to do so, in view of the fact that so many professors regard it as their mission to propagate their subjective political or other ideas from their lecterns. This is a fact, and of course the consequences are very far-reaching when we reach the specific stage in the objectification of ideas where the propaganda for these ideas becomes the foundation for a person's livelihood; once again the consequences vary, depending on the kind and nature of these ideals.

On the other hand, ladies and gentlemen, almost every association, even one that aims on principle to avoid doing so, attracts some content relating to a world view. In a certain sense we could even apply this to a German skittles club, and certainly to a German choral society. Incidentally, ladies and gentlemen, it could be said that choral societies in Germany are so popular that they exercise an influence in areas where one would not necessarily expect them to, e.g., in the area of politics. Someone who is accustomed on a daily basis to exude powerful inner emotions by way of his voice-box, with no connection of any kind to his actions, in other words, without any adequate abreaction for these powerful emotions in correspondingly powerful actions— and this is the nature of the art of the choral society— is someone who, to be brief, very easily becomes a “good citizen,” in the passive sense of the word. It is no wonder that monarchs are so fond of organizations like these. As the saying goes, “You can safely make your home where people sing.” There is an absence of powerful passions and purposeful action. It sounds paradoxical, and, I admit, it is rather one-sided and I do not wish to point the finger of blame. Some may take the view that this is the richness of the German people, that they are capable of this detachment and can create an artistic culture peculiar to themselves on this basis. It could be said also that *any* kind of culture is based on the introduction of inhibitions between feeling and abreaction. I leave aside all of that, as the question of evaluation does not concern *us* here at all. I only wish to establish that a connection such as the one I have indicated *may* be present, although I do not know how strongly, and I may have exaggerated it.

In such and similar cases we are talking essentially about the unconscious influence of the world view expressed by an association's activity on a person's whole outlook [*Gesamthabitus*]. But there are very many nuances of difference in the manner in which purely specialist communities, or those pursuing purely objective aims, also play a part in influencing and regulating the practical conduct of life. Such influence can also be exerted quite consciously, and from purely specialist and objective positions from which we should never have expected it to emanate. Bear in mind that certain theories of a medical nature, certain psychiatric theories, are today well on their way to forming the basis of embryonic sects, and that a certain theory created by a celebrated Viennese psychiatrist has

indeed led to the formation of a sect, and this sect has become so secretive that it rigorously excludes anyone who does not belong to it from attending its meetings. The object of the existence of this sect is the attainment of the ideal of the “complex-free” person, and a method of conducting one’s life by means of which such a complex-free state can be created and maintained. The most varied activities in life are regulated in the light of these ideals, in a way that would not occur to anyone looking at these theories purely as psychiatric and scientific theories, although in retrospect the connection is very easy to understand.

Similar developments can, for example, also occur in the sphere of esthetics, with the formation of artistic sects. Indeed, sects inspired by feelings about the world are, from the sociological point of view, and from other points of view too, often among the most interesting phenomena to occur. Even today, very much like religious sects, they have their incarnations of the divine (think of the sect surrounding Stefan George),<sup>306</sup> and the way in which they put their stamp on the practical conduct and the inward attitude to life of their followers can be very far-reaching.

We are finding the very same thing among racial theorists. Marriage according to aristocratic ancestry can, of course, be replaced by marriage according to ancestry based on racial hygiene, and everyone knows that a sect with this principal purpose will contain both esoteric and exoteric members [i.e., initiated and uninitiated]. It should be noted, by the way, that my use of the term “sect” is *completely value free*. The term has quite undeservedly fallen into disrepute in this country because it has become associated with the concept of “restrictiveness.” But there is no other way in which specific, clearly defined ideals can first come into being other than by the formation of sects of enthusiastic followers who are striving to realize their potential and therefore join together and *keep themselves separate* from others.

Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot pursue this matter further, as I have no wish to take up too much of your time. But I should like to end with two similar questions of principle, as I did when discussing the press. How, and by what means, do individual categories of societies and associations, such as the parties, exercise their influence in the two directions of, firstly, the molding of particular individuals, and secondly, the molding of objective, supra-individual aspects of culture [*Kulturgüter*]? Parties, after all, can be pure machines, like the American parties. Or they can supposedly represent a world view, and today’s Social Democratic Party honestly believes it is such a party, although it has long since ceased to be one. They can also be parties that really do represent a *world view*. The

---

306 Stefan George (1868-1933), lyric poet who founded a literary school called the *George Kreis* (George Circle).

Center Party is still to a large extent such a party today, although this element is beginning to dwindle even here, and there are the most varied links between the idea and the mechanism.

If you ask about the material with which such an investigation should be conducted, then I have to say that the material with which we must work is quite dry and trivial. But without such dry and trivial work, consuming much money and much energy, nothing can be achieved. First, it is worth making a systematic attempt to obtain information from the associations about the occupations of their members, and their geographical, ethnic and social provenance. I would not exclude the possibility, although it is by no means a certainty, that in the course of time we shall be able to compile a kind of register of the most important categories of association in this respect, and thus track down the principles of selection that the associations themselves often unconsciously apply, and which can only be deduced from quite a large and comprehensive amount of material. Alongside this we have to analyze the *means* by which the associations influence their own members and forcefully propagate their views externally. Finally, there is the content of the message it propagates, and this must all be subjected to a sophisticated analysis from a fresh sociological perspective. The work of many years!

Mention of "selection" brings me to the last major sphere of work that we envisage. As a topic for systematic study, Prof. [Franz] Eulenburg<sup>307</sup> in Leipzig has proposed the problem of selection within the leading occupations in modern society, "leading" in the sense in which the term is customarily understood, since sociology can only be based on the conventional understanding of such a term. The scope of the investigation would include leaders in the economic, political, scientific, literary, artistic and clerical fields, as well as civil servants, teachers, employers, and so on. We shall be asking where these people come from, who their fathers and grandfathers were, what are their ethnic origins and what are their personal biographies, i.e., how they achieved their present positions, what hurdles they had to surmount, and so on. In short, we shall ask why they alone (and we could, of course, only deduce this from a large sample) have been singled out by the selection process for these positions, and we shall ask what backgrounds— ethnic, occupational, social, material, and so on— provide the best chance of attaining these particular occupations and positions. Such a task could, perhaps, only be completed by means of a very broad survey over a period of time.

---

307 Franz Eulenburg (1867-1943), economist.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have attempted, in the time allotted to me, *purely by way of illustration* by random examples, to make clear to you that within the problem areas we propose to tackle there *are* questions that would repay further scientific analysis.

You can well imagine that even these particular tasks that I have mentioned are not of such a kind that could be expected to yield spectacular results in the next few years. The society will have to be patient, and so will the public. These tasks demand selfless devotion to a narrowly circumscribed task, and such devotion is rare these days, although it is occasionally found and will hopefully become more common. They also demand—and I say this with regret— *very considerable financial support*. Ladies and gentlemen, the cost of the inquiry into the press is estimated to be about 25,000 marks for the preliminary work alone. Of these 25,000 marks, we now have approximately 20,000 marks available thanks to an agreement with the *Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Heidelberg Academy of Sciences) and the *Institut für Gemeinwohl* (Institute for Public Welfare) here in Frankfurt and private foundations both within and outside our society. It is to be hoped that the remainder will also be provided from private sources, as we shall not under any circumstances commence our work until we are sure of the availability of at least those funds that are definitely necessary, and which will, hopefully, be sufficient. For other investigations there is still no money available other than the society's current funds, and these are almost insignificant given our current membership of not much more than 200— we are hoping it will increase, of course. The current funds of the society, or most of them, are earmarked for current business, and have to go toward the costs of conferences, which will be like the one now in progress but will, as I have mentioned, have new and much improved formats. We admit frankly, then, that we rely on patronage, and such patronage has already been manifested in a way that is unusual for Germany.

Ladies and gentlemen, in complete contrast to the situation in other countries, not only America, in Germany it is extremely rare for significant funds to be made available for purely scientific purposes. Funds are available for the purposes of technology, such as the problems of flight and things of that kind, or for purposes that might have curative benefits for the body, which we care so much about, e.g., radiotherapy, or things of that kind, if there is even the remotest possibility that something therapeutic might come out of it. Funds are also available to an increasing degree, I am glad to say, for artistic purposes. But if in Germany money is given for scientific purposes, we can generally be sure that it will be entrusted to state bodies, for reasons that I shall not further elaborate upon here, except to say that they are very varied, subjectively no doubt often justifiable, objectively however, in my opinion, not always to be welcomed. This will not

suffice, however, to ensure the progress of science, with the greatest respect to the state for what it does in these matters here in contrast to other countries.

At present there is only *one* city where patronage is practiced on a really large scale for scientific purposes *without* interference by the state, in a manner that is the norm in America, for instance, and that is Frankfurt am Main. But we should not be content for Frankfurt am Main to retain this monopoly indefinitely. Instead, and on this depends not only our special scientific work, but the progress of scientific work in general, we must cling to the hope that German patronage of science— and that means a form of patronage that has the patience to wait until the science that is pursued for its own sake eventually, at some point, “serves life”, that this patronage— I say, which has so far been linked with a few illustrious and well-known names, will spread beyond the confines of this city and increase in a way that has not been the case in Germany hitherto, not only in order to promote the special tasks of this society, but, as I have just indicated, to further the interests of scientific work as a whole. (Loud applause.)

### 13. THE GERMAN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY <sup>308</sup>

Until recently, the science of “sociology” was controversial as regards its range of tasks, its methodology, its future prospects and even its name. In other countries, both English-speaking and those where the Romance languages are spoken, there was already a considerable number, not only of journals and textbooks, but also of institutes, sometimes very well funded, and— something that impresses the German public most strongly— many full professorships in the subject in the universities. In Germany, at least under its own name, sociology is represented only in the literary sphere, and scholars find it hard to achieve recognition among their academic peers. Specialist journals of any significance are lacking, and even today there are no academic institutes. Within the academic curriculum, only a sub-category, namely, general political science [*Staatslehre*], has been a subject for doctoral studies and lectureships, and that only rarely. Other sociological areas or sociology as a whole have only recently found a place in the lecture timetable and then usually only sporadically. True, there was some much-publicized dilettantish activity that gave sociology such a bad name that until very recently some serious scholars were reluctant to publish work under that banner although it was indubitably sociological in character.

One of the things that has recently caused a change in this specifically German point of view is the growing appreciation that in order to investigate the

---

308 “Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie,” supplement to the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (1910), pp. 27-30.

structural relationships of our culture we are increasingly coming up against questions that feature, partly as more comprehensive problems, partly as overlapping or tangential areas, among the research aims of *individual* disciplines dealing with social life from specific individual perspectives. Examples of these areas are political economy, law, cultural history, historical and comparative religion, historical and systematic ethics, or social psychology. Then there is the appreciation that among the tasks common to these areas there are such that can only be achieved by *organized collective* work. After numerous past attempts we can now report the start of organized sociological work.

The *German Sociological Society*, which has existed since last year and has its headquarters in Berlin West 50, Spichernstraße 17, has recently adopted a definitive constitution. Standard (subscriber) membership entitles the member to participate actively in all scientific events organized by the society (especially conference debates) and includes the right to purchase publications at preferential rates. The annual subscription is ten marks. This amount can be paid to the Kommerz- und Diskontobank, Depositenkasse D, Berlin West 15, Kaiserallee 211. The society should be advised of payment at the above address. Each member is entitled to propose a personal presentation of scientific papers. Decisions on the approval of such proposals are made by the assembly of "full" [*ordentlich*] members, who must be *specialists* in the theory or practice of sociology, in keeping with the purpose of the society.

Currently, full membership stands at around 100, and we look forward to steady expansion. Signatories to the proposal for the foundation of the society include, among others: Prof. Bernheim (Greifswald), Prof. Breysig (Berlin), Prof. Cohen (Marburg), Dr. Eduard David (Berlin), Prof. E. Gothein (Heidelberg), Prof. H. Herkner (Charlottenburg), Prof. I. Jastrow (Berlin), Prof. G. Jellinek (Heidelberg), Prof. Paul Laband (Strasbourg), Prof. W. Lexis (Göttingen), Prof. F. von Liszt (Berlin), Dr. W.M. Meier (Berlin), Dr. A. Moll (Berlin), Prof. P. Natorp (Marburg), Prof. W. Ostwald (Leipzig), Prof. G. Simmel (Berlin), Prof. W. Sombart (Berlin), Dr. L.W. Stern (Breslau), Prof. F. Tönnies (Kiel), Prof. E. Troeltsch (Heidelberg), Prof. A. Vierkandt (Berlin), Prof. H. Waentig (Halle, at present Tokyo), Prof. Alfred Weber (Heidelberg), Prof. Max Weber (ditto). Preliminary consultation regarding projects for the society and responsibility for their completion is in the hands either of committees that are individually charged with this task by the full members' assembly, or of the executive committee, which consists of seven persons, currently the three chairmen: Prof. F. Tönnies (Kiel), Prof. G. Simmel (Berlin), Prof. W. Sombart (Berlin), with Dr. H. Beck (Berlin) as secretary, plus Dr. A. Plötz (Munich), Dr. A. Vierkandt (Berlin) and Prof. Max Weber (Heidelberg).



The constitution of the society gives the full members' assembly and all individual committees selected for special projects complete freedom of movement and a very liberal right of cooption, including the power to involve all suitable persons as consultants. In this way the constitution seeks to combine the consistency that is essential for scientific work with the flexibility that is equally necessary, and welcomes the cooperation of every serious thinker, of whatever persuasion, who wishes to work with us. On the one hand, the business of science, in its essence, can never be a matter of majority voting, election campaigns and the like, but on the other hand it must not be purely the concern of a small coterie.

Detailed financial control is in the hands of an accountant employed for that purpose; where funds for scientific work originate with third parties (academies or similar organizations or private sponsors), the involvement of the representatives of these bodies with the relevant committee guarantees a defined and purposeful application of the funds provided. For the purposes of projects that need to be organized on an international basis (and in the case of any international conferences) the society enters into contact with similar associations abroad.

Within Germany, the following events are currently being planned:

1. A *German Conference of Sociologists*, which is due to convene for the first time in *October* of this year [1910] (from 19 to 21 *October*) in *Frankfurt*. More details will be made available by special announcements and on request. All members of the society are entitled to take part in the discussions, alongside specially invited guests. The following lectures are provisionally planned:

1. Prof. Dr. Georg Simmel, *The Sociology of Sociability*
2. Prof. Dr. Ferdinand Tönnies, *The Paths and Aims of Sociology*
3. Prof. Dr. Werner Sombart, *Technology and Culture*
4. Dr. Alfred J. Plötz, *The Concept of Race and Sociology*
5. Prof. Dr. Ernst Troeltsch,<sup>309</sup> *Religious and Profane Natural Law*
6. a. Prof. Dr. Andreas Voigt, *Economy and Law*  
b. Privatdozent Dr. Hermann Kantorowicz, *Jurisprudence and Sociology*
7. Prof. Dr. Eberhard Gothein, *The Sociology of Panic*

2. *The scientific publications* of the society will be available through booksellers in a number of series of monographs, each series being devoted to a particular problem area, and will be distributed to all members at cost price.

Publications currently planned include, firstly:

---

<sup>309</sup>Original has "Prof. D. Troeltsch". [Tr.]

a) A comprehensive investigation into the *sociology of newspapers* in Germany, including a comparison with conditions in other major civilized countries (principally America, England and France).

Thanks to the Academy of Sciences in Heidelberg, the Institute for Public Welfare in Frankfurt am Main and certain private sponsors from both within and outside the society, who have promised to make available about four-fifths of the amount required, *on condition that the organization for carrying out the work* is put in place, the provision of the sum of money required for this enterprise, estimated to amount to at least 25,000 marks, which is concerned with analysis of one of the most important of modern cultural factors, has become a realistic prospect. This organization is currently the subject of negotiations with relevant representatives of the press, including both publishers and journalists. We hope that private donations will cover the outstanding amount. We especially hope that the cooperation between *practitioners* and suitable scientific specialists that is, of course, indispensable for the success of the investigation will be achieved, and that in this way a ground plan, which has so far been only provisionally drafted, will lead to the selection of precise themes, a decision on the materials required to address them, and suitable methods of work.

In accordance with the aims of the society, projects should if possible encompass the business and organizational basis of the modern press (publishing, editing, news, advertising, in all their aspects) insofar as they directly or indirectly determine its cultural and sociological character. They should also examine the nature of the influence of the press on the political and cultural situation of the civilized nations, which will also be compared with each other, and, in contrast, the dependence of the press and journalism in general on the prevailing political and cultural situation. Special attention will be paid to the most recent tendencies in the development of the press and of its cultural significance. Since one of the fundamental statutory principles of the German Sociological Society is the limitation of its activity to strictly scientific work, strictly rejecting *any* political, social, denominational, ethical or other particular standpoint, these and other projects must restrict themselves solely and exclusively to the objective establishment of facts and their causes. They should *never* engage in moralizing or critical debate *about* these facts.

The same applies to other proposed projects that have so far been considered only by the executive committee, but may be submitted to the society. These are likely to include:

b) An investigation of the *selection* of the *leading* economic, social, intellectual or artistic *strata* of the civilized nations according to their geographical, ethnic, professional, social and cultural provenance, as well as

c) A sociological analysis of the *social communities* that stand *between* the state of today, and other public or publicly recognized and privileged bodies, and the individual, whether they be local *associations* with a purely social function, communities sharing common ideals, who have set themselves the aim of preserving artistic, scientific, moral or other cultural possessions, or *political party organizations*, which now have an increasingly complex structure even in this country.

The extent of individual membership of such communities varies. But in our own country as well as others, in most cases its effects are very far-reaching and greatly exceed the intended, or at least officially admitted, purpose; indeed, they are often completely at variance with it. This is true of choral societies, veterans' associations, student fraternities, groups of artists and other associations. These numerous community groups to which individuals belong are always among the most important factors that mold both the character of the individual person and the objective cultural possessions. Here too, of course, achievement of objectively accurate results is conditional on strict abstinence from any and every kind of *partisanship*.

Like the intended work on the press, this investigation too would need *large funds* for the indispensable preliminary work, which in this case would be in part purely mechanical, and in part would involve extensive statistical calculation.

The society, which essentially has to meet the costs of the conferences as well as current expenditure, can only expect to obtain extra funding for ambitious projects if, in line with increasing prosperity, patronage of science in Germany, which so far is represented only by a few illustrious names familiar to everyone, ceases to be the rarity it largely still is at present in this country, quite unlike America and elsewhere.

Apart, of course, from expressing its thanks to them by name in its publications, the German Sociological Society can, admittedly, *only* honor patrons by nominating them as "friends" of the society, which gives them the permanent statutory right to participate in all its events. But the society dares to hope that an understanding of the importance of scientific work, especially in the fields of cultural and social science, is also gradually becoming more widespread in Germany. To date, private finance on a fairly generous scale has, in the main, been available in this country on the one hand for the solution of current technical problems, and on the other hand for specific esthetic purposes; also in some circumstances for certain projects in the field of the natural sciences, the promotion of which was thought likely to prove fruitful for therapeutic or technical purposes.

This was all very welcome, and we hope it will continue. But similar financial assistance has only been provided in exceptional cases for work for the advance-

ment of social scientific knowledge, whose practical importance, although naturally just as real, is not so immediately obvious. To the extent that we cease to be a nation of upstarts predominantly driven by utilitarian priorities and once again become a nation of culture, others will be inspired to follow the shining example of those exceptional persons who, without being *unduly* tempted to go for quick results of immediate practical value, promote scientific work for its own sake and so have the *patience* to wait for this work calmly to develop in such a way that it “serves life.”

One of the most important future tasks awaiting the “German Sociological Society,” in particular, is the creation of a *Sociological Institute*. This is clear from the example of other countries, as everyone acknowledges. We are currently considering taking the very first steps toward the establishment of such an institute, albeit on a very modest scale at first, possibly to coincide with the commencement of the investigation into the press. But, as foreign experience has shown, any really significant achievement along these lines will only be possible with the aid both of very considerable amounts of capital, and, on the other hand, of “mass patronage,” in which all those interested in the work of the society can play their part by joining the ranks of the “subscribing” members.

#### 14. CHALLENGE TO DUEL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG <sup>310</sup>

We have received the following denial from Prof. Dr. *Max Weber*, currently in Charlottenburg [since 1920 a part of Berlin]:

There is *not a word of truth* in the report in the *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*. The matter is closed in every sense as far as I personally am concerned, but I would not consider it right to discuss in *public* what actually happened without an absolutely compelling reason.

Aside from this, the manner in which the “case” has been represented is wrong on a number of points. For one thing, Dr. [Arnold] Ruge<sup>311</sup> did not demand satisfaction on account of the publication of what Frau Marianne Weber had written. In fact, Dr. Ruge received a letter from Professor Weber, the contents of which was felt by the recipient to offend his honor as a lecturer. Thus, it is a *gross distortion of the truth* to maintain that “Dr. Ruge asked Professor Weber whether or not he approved of his wife’s words and whether or not he would be prepared, if necessary, to *defend them by fighting a duel*.” On the contrary, Dr. Ruge employed the mediation of a member of the faculty to reach a *peaceful and discreet resolution of the matter*. Naturally, this was on condition that the remarks, which Ruge felt to be insulting, be withdrawn. However,

<sup>310</sup> “Eine Duellforderung an der Heidelberger Universität,” *Heidelberger Tageblatt*, 9 January, 1911, p. 4.

<sup>311</sup> Arnold Ruge (1881-1945), adjunct lecturer in philosophy at the University of Heidelberg.

the efforts made to settle the matter in this way ended in *complete failure*. At this point it would have been perfectly natural to settle the affair with pistols. However, this route was rejected on grounds of principle. The alternative solution of putting the case before the university disciplinary authority was not available either, as Professor Weber, who is on leave, is not subject to the disciplinary authority. For the same reason, the Philosophical Faculty could not be called on to adjudicate. Dr. Ruge was therefore left with no option other than to bring a *private action*, which is what he has in fact done. The reports in the press concerning *intervention by the university authorities* in this affair are also *not* entirely accurate.

## 15. ON THE AFFAIR OF DR. RUGE — PROFESSOR WEBER

We have received the following communication regarding the matter of Dr. Ruge and Professor Weber:<sup>312</sup>

Sir,

As your report of the 9th instant also contains some positive features, I feel *obliged* to comment as follows:

In order to forestall the impression that women need the protection of their husbands to defend themselves successfully from attacks in public of the kind in question here, I only informed Dr. Ruge of *my* view of his behavior in a private letter. I also waited until he had declared that his “discussion” with my wife was “concluded.” At the same time, I have requested some colleagues with whom I am in contact to hold back from any stringent disciplinary procedure against Dr. R. as far as possible. I should add that I am *not* a retired professor, but a lecturer like Dr. Ruge himself, and that I am the holder of a title, the practical significance of which consists solely in that it relieves me of the necessity of making a special application for sabbatical leave. Finally, I immediately informed the esteemed colleague who is attempting to mediate of the *precise* conditions, which are perfectly natural under the circumstances, that would need to be fulfilled before it would be *possible* for me to reconsider my private letter without compromising

---

<sup>312</sup> “Zur Affäre Dr. Ruge — Professor Weber,” *Heidelberger Tageblatt*, 13 January, 1911, p. 4. For the details of this case and its wider ramifications, see Marianne Weber, *Max Weber: A Biography*, translated and edited by Harry Zohn (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers, 1988), pp. 430-440. Weber further refers to this and other cases in Article 28. For the detailed documentation about these cases involving Ruge, *the Dresdner Neuesten Nachrichten* and Adolf Koch (1855-1922), associate professor of journalism at the University of Heidelberg, see “Max Weber Briefe 1911-1912.” In *Max Weber Gesamtausgabe*, eds. M. Rainer Lepsius and Wolfgang J. Mommsen (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1998), Vol. 7, pp. 816-988. A detailed analysis is found in Bernhard Obst, *Ein Heidelberger Professorenstreit. Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Adolf Koch und Max Weber 1910-1914* (Cologne: Studienverlag Hayit, 1987). As a result of Weber’s action, Koch was dismissed from his position in 1913.

my integrity. If a private legal action were to be brought, I foresee unpleasant consequences, for which I shall not be answerable, and such an action would be the very last thing that could cause me to change my view of the facts. This is all I have to say.

Yours faithfully,

Prof. Max Weber

## 16. AN OPINION ON THE UNIVERSITY QUESTION <sup>313</sup>

Dear Dr [Max] Quarck, <sup>314</sup>

It is impossible *not* to respond to an appeal that is so emphatically directed toward one's personal honor as yours is— and of course you are welcome to use my reply in any way you choose. I say this despite the fact that I do not feel specially qualified to express an opinion on these problems. Neither do I anticipate the slightest degree of success from the expression of *my* views in particular. Finally, I have to say that for *me* this is a somewhat sensitive matter. My intervention could easily be taken as an example of that depressing “fear of competition” from neighboring universities that has, I am sorry to say, made its appearance elsewhere. And it could run counter to the view of esteemed colleagues— the current teachers at the Frankfurt Academy<sup>315</sup>— who, as those primarily affected and concerned, really should be entitled to have *their* views considered first, but who for reasons of tact are strongly inhibited from making them public.

Among the reasons that favor, with almost irresistible force, the development toward becoming a “university” of the usual type, one of the most impressive is that the present “Academy” has already come *so* close, *in terms of content and method*, to the teaching carried on at the official universities— (indeed, it is essentially *identical* with it— that the ambition to achieve fully “equal rights” as far as the examinations are concerned will inevitably assert itself again and again and *must* do so. And since, *in and of itself*— leaving aside the general misgivings about the currently existing type of university— in view of the increasing student numbers and resulting overcrowding of the existing universities, the creation of more universities would be *highly* desirable, then those who oppose this merely on the grounds that Frankfurt am Main is *not* a suitable location are, of course, in a dif-

---

313 “Ein Votum zur Universitätsfrage,” *Volksstimme. Sozialdemokratisches Organ für Südwestdeutschland*, 26 June, 1911, p. 1.

314 (1880-1930), director of editorial staff.

315 *Frankfurter Akademie für Handels- und Sozialwissenschaften* (Frankfurt Academy of Commerce and Social Sciences), the predecessor of the University of Frankfurt founded in 1914.

ficult position. From the point of view of science, it may be a matter of regret that the large funds that are being made available here in Germany for the first time *have not been at least partially devoted to pure research purposes*, as the link between research and teaching, which is certainly a useful one, has been sufficiently maintained by the state universities, whereas the typical "Academies" are institutions that are essentially reliant on subsidy and wealthy patronage and have no independent function. However, that did not happen and it is hard to imagine that it will happen now (in fact, it is certain that it will *not*).

Protest against state control, insofar as it is based on the *particular* assumptions and preconditions of the current plan, should be primarily focused on the *funding*, which, even allowing for some magnificent private endowments, is quite inadequate. To be precise, the funds might suffice for a small "provincial" university, but *not* for an institution that— as the city council's submission claims— will be competing for students with the large *city* universities.

In addition, we must mention the changes in the position of the hospitals, both of their staff and of their equipment. These changes give cause for concern, although the majority report passed rather too lightly over them, and if these hospitals should become university institutes there would be *no* certain way of remedying the problem.

However, what must weigh *much* more heavily than all this for any party that does not back the Prussian bureaucracy unreservedly is whether or not it is desirable to *hand over* an institution that does after all owe its origin and development to public spirited action [*freiem Bürgersinn*], and in its present form has always done very estimable educational work, *to be governed by the Prussian Ministry of Education*, as long as the character of this ministry, and its practice as it has developed in the course of a tradition stretching back almost forty years, remains what it is today. I should like to emphasize that I am *not* now making any accusations against particular persons. The officials in this ministry, I am sure, have behaved no "worse" and no "better" than other people would in similar situations. They are simply slaves of a system that they did not create and that at least some of them would perhaps like to change, if it were in their power to do so. However, this system is *legally* enforced by the "lex Arons" ["law of Arons"] according to the *interpretation* that has been given to it by the highest disciplinary court, and absolutely *no* kind of adjustment of the proposals procedure can prevent this interpretation from applying to the lecturers in Frankfurt. Even the clause in the Zeiss Foundation's contract with the authorities, which was introduced by

---

[Ernst C.] Abbe<sup>316</sup> with the express purpose of excluding precisely this interpretation of the “official duties” of lecturers, only guarantees freedom of speech for lecturers who have already been appointed in Jena, but does *not* prevent the most odious political snooping in the case of external appointments and *Habilitation*.

It has to be admitted that under *every* kind of university constitution and in *every* country interested parties from the political, social and economic spheres can somehow find the means occasionally and behind the scenes to muddy the waters of the purely objective and strictly scientific selection of academic teachers, and that there is no political party or other social group that is not occasionally tempted to go down this route. I doubt whether there are any that have not occasionally *yielded* to the temptation either. No doubt this has also happened from time to time in countries like America. However the glib talk about the “rule of the dollar” in American universities that has been heard recently in Frankfurt is, I must emphasize, *utterly out of place*, particularly in view of the “beam” in our own eye. In the matter of admission to teaching positions, England, France, Scandinavia, Switzerland and even Italy may not be blameless when it comes to adherence to the principle of disregarding *anything* but purely *scientific* criteria. But it is *inconceivable* that any other “civilized state” [*Kulturstaat*] would engage in practices *even remotely* like those that are the norm in Prussia. Indeed, what would be regarded there by independent scholars as rare examples of arrogant abuse of office, are *official doctrine* in Prussia. In addition, there is the whole attitude [*Gesamthabitus*] of the Prussian Ministry of Education to its duties toward university lecturers. This is not to deny that today’s faculties, and the same would be true of others differently constituted, are fallible and therefore need to be subject to control and correction by some higher authority. But today’s Prussian educational bureaucracy could not be less well suited to this task. Not even the significant success of the late undersecretary Althoff (who must be mentioned in this context), who made funds available for education and achieved much else besides, can disguise the *corrupting influence*— and this is not too strong a word for it— exercised by his *system of dealing with people*, which there is no space to analyze more deeply here, on the new academic recruits.

Since then things have got no better, in fact— in the absence of this influential personality— they have got considerably worse. The so-called Bernhard Case, for example, with all its abhorrent features, is almost entirely the fault of the educational bureaucracy. The case began with an illegal act and, contrary to academic propriety, an attempt to swear people to secrecy. It continued with a breach of the peace that was partly instigated by the ministry. Among other

---

316 Ernst C. Abbe (1840-1905), physicist and social reformer.



developments, the ministry, which feeds semi-official higher educational journals with advertisements, tried to intimidate editors of journals who opposed it by withdrawing advertising, and officials of the ministry passed to sections of the press information that had been *officially* entrusted to them for their exclusive use. This information, which was taken out of context, helped these elements of the press to unleash a despicable campaign against respected scholars. There was more in the same vein, and it was all done for the benefit of a professor who enjoyed the patronage of the ministry. Now, after “achievements” like *this*, the Minister of Education thinks he has the right to propose a *strengthening* of the “powers” of the educational bureaucracy as a remedy. It is hard to imagine anything like this happening anywhere other than the present Prussian *Landtag* (state parliament).

Under these circumstances, it seems to me that an independent party must make it clear that a *wide-ranging reform* of the organization and, more importantly, the “spirit,” of the educational bureaucracy is absolutely vital if institutions, hardly any of whose funding comes from state aid, are to be handed over to the current Prussian state. If the handover should go ahead anyway, then provision must be made by means of the acceptance of an even more clearly defined and unambiguous regulation, like the clause included by Abbe in his foundation statute, for the *exclusion* in the case of Frankfurt of the vicious political *interpretation* of the *lex Arons* [law of Arons] that— *without* it being *formally* included in the law itself— the state *disciplinary authority* has adopted *despite* protest from the faculty.

I remain,

Respectfully yours,

Prof. Max Weber

Heidelberg, 24 June, 1911

#### 17. AMERICAN AND GERMAN UNIVERSITIES: HOW THEY DIFFER<sup>317</sup>

M. Weber (Heidelberg): The main feature that strikes one when considering American universities is the wide differentiation in both quality and quantity. We can find embryonic universities, which are in the first stages of development, and alongside them others with a varied and comprehensive curriculum that would put even our large universities to shame. But the American universities are differentiated also in their character [*Eigenart*], and we can safely say that this differentiation is brought about essentially by a gradual and slow Europeanization of the university system. The American universities will never be identical

---

<sup>317</sup> Untitled address in *Verhandlungen des IV. Deutschen Hochschullehrtages zu Dresden am 12. und 13. Oktober 1911* (Leipzig: Verlag des Literarischen Zentralblattes für Deutschland (Eduard Avenarius), 1912), pp. 66-77, 85-86.

with their European equivalents, but they are becoming more like them, just as in this country we can perhaps in many respects speak of an Americanization in the university area.

The classic old American university grew out of the college.<sup>318</sup> Colleges were not situated in the large cities, but wherever possible in the country, or at least in small towns; furthermore, the old colleges were predominantly founded by sects. There are reminders of them everywhere. Today, by contrast, American universities are to a certain extent on the way to becoming large city universities. Furthermore, there is no doubt that some at least of the universities, if they have not already done so, are in the process of throwing overboard the old college system, with its compulsory boarding requirement and its strict control over the manner of life of the students. On the other hand, American business circles have assured me that it is they themselves who are trying to secure the continued existence of the college and the special kind of education the college provides, the primary aim of which is not scientific training, but the development of self-confidence in social interaction with both fellow students and adults, and the formation of a mentality designed to serve as the foundation of the American state and American society. In the meantime we are founding schools of commerce. To be perfectly frank, the impetus behind these schools of commerce is always the fact that the clerks would like to acquire the capacity to give satisfaction in a duel and so qualify as reserve officer material; a few dueling scars, a touch of student life, a chance to get out of the habit of work— if this is the kind of thing our business students take away from their education I cannot help wondering whether or not we can hope to compete with the major productive nations of the world, especially America.

The difference between the essential nature of the American university and that of ours is to a large extent that the American university has not been officially charged with the obligation to provide the state with an appropriately educated and examined supply of young people for its bureaucracy, its schools, or whatever. The American university is thus in an enviable position. I am, however, convinced that with the advance of administrative reform in America, sooner or later the moment will come when a somewhat similar situation will arise in the American university, and my hope is that when that moment comes, it will be able to confront this situation, maintain its autonomy and preserve very many more of its most sacred possessions, than the German universities were able to do when faced by the superior power of the state, although they were not to blame for this.

---

318 In English here and subsequently. [Tr.]

I should like briefly to outline the teaching methodology employed; *Lamprecht* said with some justification that it would be difficult for us to adopt this or learn from it. In itself, it is certainly instructive. We have to distinguish between optional lectures and required lectures. The former are no different from our lectures, apart from the fact that they make far more extensive use of visual aids. In other respects I found the lectures I attended to be similar to ours: objective, precise, straightforward, and with no crowd-pleasing effects. The traditional, and specifically American, college lectures for beginners do differ from ours. The way these are conducted involves setting the student the task of learning a certain number of paragraphs in a textbook by a particular day; the student is then questioned on the content of these paragraphs. This can of course be an unbelievably soulless exercise. But on the other hand, I have seen this teaching method used at Columbia University and elsewhere in a way that, in contrast to our lectures and seminars, is simply an extensive method of teaching [*extensive Lehrmethode*]. One of the features of this teaching method is, of course, compulsory attendance at the college, which is normal in America.

Student life in America in general differs sharply from ours, although here too European, and especially German, influences— and not necessarily of the best kind— are gaining ground. When I was with American students, nothing in the whole wide world interested them so much as what a German academic fencing duel [*Mensur*] actually was. And at Columbia University I was invited to a regular ceremonial drinking party like those held by German fraternities, with sabers and all the rest of the paraphernalia, which was to take place in the main hall of the university and was organized by the German Department of the university as an introduction to German culture.

Like the German student, the American student has his fraternities. These are of a different kind from the German variety. The German fraternities today are increasingly insurance companies providing connections and advancement in one's career. It cannot be said that this aspect is entirely absent from the American fraternities. One need only look at the yachting books and the lists of alumni, where you can read that in such and such a year Mr. [Theodore] Roosevelt<sup>319</sup> was elected president, and so on. However, the fraternities today are organized very differently from ours, with their own houses, a bureaucratic system, and a military-style drill, which is all part of it. What all American fraternities have in common with the German ones is their educational character, which consists in the individual having to learn self-confidence in a sharply and unsparingly critical circle of his peers. The American ideal of virility differs from that of the

---

319 Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), American president, 1901-1909.

German student in important points, and it is difficult to measure one against the other.

That brings me to the constitutions of American universities. I hope you will permit me to expand a little on this subject, with particular reference to the German situation. The constitutions of American universities and much else about them reflect the fact that American universities, to a far greater extent than ours, are institutions that have to compete with each other. The fact that in the city of Chicago alone there are two universities, and in the state of Illinois a third, which is a state university, illustrates the situation, and in principle this competition is unrestricted. American universities compete with their sister institutions by fairly ruthless means. One mark of their competitive character is that, like a modern manufacturing business, they subject at least their younger teachers to a ruthless selection process for ability, infinitely more rigorous than anything practiced by a German university.

The crucial question about which we should like to speak is how to compare the American and the German universities with respect to their relationship to the bureaucracy. This, after all, is a question that is very close to our hearts in Germany today.

German universities have for a long time been caught up in a struggle, carried on in part beneath the surface and in part quite openly, between the old university authorities and the state bureaucracy over them. In Germany, this state bureaucracy is not formally unified; authority over the universities lies in the hands of the individual states, and is qualitatively different in each individual German state with responsibility for administering universities. The two university bureaucracies of Saxony and Baden are unmatched for being kindly disposed toward the universities and showing consideration for their wishes, even where they at first seem irrational and foolish, and indeed where they sometimes really are foolish. As I know from my own experience, these two administrations have for many years been quite unlike the Prussian administration, and, seemingly, unlike that of Bavaria— or so it is said. (Laughter.)

I admit frankly that when I was transferred from the Prussian administrative area to that of Baden, it felt like a breath of fresh air. The German educational administrations have formed a cartel among themselves that to a large extent has eliminated any competition among them. However, this cartel, rather like the German railway company that is being formed, has resulted in the other educational administrations becoming mere clients of the Prussian administration. It became clear whose brainchild this cartel was when I was called to Baden from Prussia and the undersecretary at the Prussian ministry, after showing me the entire correspondence that had passed between the two ministries,

asked me whether or not I would be inclined to accept an appointment from a chap— I soften the expression somewhat— who wrote letters like that about me. (Laughter.) I am sure, gentlemen, that this would never have happened in the opposite direction.

It is not possible to speak about these things without mentioning the person who created today's system of educational administration in Prussia, and with it the German educational administration in general. I am referring to the late undersecretary Althoff. It is very difficult to speak about this man. He was not only a genuinely good person in the specific sense of the word, but he was also a man of wide perspectives. He could truthfully say of himself: I can see farther than the gentlemen at the individual universities. Whether or not the present Prussian minister of education can seriously claim the same thing is a matter about which I shall not express an opinion. (Laughter.)

Althoff was, however, also a man to whom the German universities owe things that are in a certain sense immortal. He was inspired by a degree of departmental patriotism that was as ruthless as anyone could imagine. He once said to me: "In future, when I go to see Minister [Johannes von] Miquel,<sup>320</sup> I shall take a pistol with me, otherwise I shall get no money for the needs of the universities out of him." From a technical point of view, he raised the Prussian universities to an extraordinarily high level in everything concerning administrative resources and institutes. And from a personnel viewpoint it cannot be stressed enough that there too his departmental patriotism was decisive. There was no nepotism with him, at least not in the sense in which it is ordinarily understood. He was quite capable of making mistakes and did make mistakes. But he also made more outstanding choices than those made by the German universities.

There is, however, one important reservation. In his treatment of personnel issues his attitude was that everyone with whom he had anything to do was a scoundrel, or at least common and overambitious. Put yourself in the position of an impoverished, perhaps even married or engaged, young lecturer, who comes into contact with this superior intellect for the first time, and you will have to concede that there is a danger that the young man in question, if he remains exposed to this influence, will be forced into really becoming, even if only in part, what Althoff suspects him to be capable of being. The methods with which the Prussian educational administration worked were the most ruthless imaginable, and this system has created the danger that new academic recruits will emerge who no longer uphold the old university traditions, also no longer feel comfort-

---

<sup>320</sup> Johannes, since 1897, von Miquel (1828-1901), National Liberal Party politician and Prussian finance minister, 1890-1901.

able with them, but resemble instead a certain type of American— that of an American not at a university but at the stock exchange.

The influence of the Althoff system has had an undoubtedly corrupting effect. You will ask me to give you examples. Fine! I can oblige with several. I personally am extraordinarily grateful to Privy Counselor [*geheimer Rat*] Althoff for the way in which he encouraged me externally and internally in a manner that is out of all proportion to my merits. But my delight was tempered by the observation that this conspicuous protection was connected with the fact that my father held a parliamentary seat for the *Nationalliberale Partei* (National Liberal Party).<sup>321</sup> What happened was that on one occasion Althoff, the departmental head at the Ministry of Education, attempted to take advantage of this link in such a tactless and crass way that it led to my father resigning his position in the budget committee. This is a fact, and I am not the only one to be glad when he received recognition for his services from a source other than the Prussian state.

You will admit that this kind of practice could not fail to exercise a corrupting influence on parliament, and not only on parliament. Similar influences are at work from the same source in other ways too. You will no doubt recall a particular case that caused a tremendous stir at the University of Berlin last year. I do not propose to go into details but will merely touch on it. All of us, who undoubtedly stand as one man behind the Berlin colleagues who were the victims of the ministry's bullying tactics, regretted that a certain undertaking was demanded from these colleagues on behalf of another colleague, who was under the protection of the ministry. This was contrary to academic convention. But the system of undertakings originates from the Prussian ministry. I wish to say only a few words about it.

When university teachers from elsewhere were appointed to positions in Prussia under Althoff's administration, this never happened without some of the payment being made in promissory notes with an undertaking to provide promotion at another university, especially the University of Berlin. If the Berlin colleagues had reached the day when all these promissory notes were due to be realized, and all these undertakings that were dependent on their deaths were thrown in their faces with the question: Do you want to go on living for ever?— they would have been ashamed of still being alive. (Laughter.) These were undertakings that the ministry forced on people. I myself arrived at the astonishing position that when I was due to become an associate professor in Berlin and had had links with the faculty for a long time, the departmental head at the ministry insisted on pressing an undertaking into my hand. I had no idea why he did this

---

<sup>321</sup> Founded in 1867 and drawing most of its support from the middle class.

until, on my way home, I noticed that it contained a commitment that I had not agreed to; it had not been there when I first read it through, but had been added later. (Laughter.)<sup>322</sup>

Let us leave that to one side! The main point is that when he pressed this promissory note into my hand, the thought would have gone through his mind: He will be my man; he will be dependent on me. Undertakings from the ministry on one side and undertakings from the teacher on the other! Gentlemen, here too I have personal experience. I was asked to accept exactly the same kind of promissory note that caused my colleague, whose name created such a stir last year, to go astray and fall victim to weakness and indecision. When I was appointed to the post of *associate professor* I was asked to take on some extra lectures unofficially, and when I inquired as to the reason, I was told that it was because the two professors concerned would vote against my appointment. It was thus being suggested to me that I should do something improper. I told him that I had long since informed these two gentlemen. When a highly placed Prussian ministerial official asks a young man to do such a thing, I will not cast a stone at the young man who is entrapped and does something that, by objective criteria, offends against academic standards.

To conclude these remarks, I should like to ask: How does America compare in these matters? America has its Althoff in every university. The university president is the American Althoff. He administers the university, and all the things that in our country can seldom be accomplished without wirepulling by the education ministries, happen thanks to him. In practice, his powers are very much more than merely formal. By enlisting the support of the younger teaching staff, he is even, thanks to the democratic constitution of the university, capable of checkmating what we would call the faculty. I was told that this was particularly true of the large modern universities. For the moment, the difference is simply that there are innumerable Althoffs sitting alongside each other, and the president at one university looks quite different from his opposite number at another. We should remember, however, that appointments of young lecturers at a university other than their own are not exactly commonplace and are, if anything, on the decline, the ideal of university presidents being to retain the younger academic recruits for higher positions in their own institutions.

A few words about these new recruits! In America, the bureaucratization of the university constitution has been taken to extraordinary lengths, and this has been accompanied by an ideal that has, I regret to say, been embraced by a fairly large section of our new recruits: securing their own livelihood.

---

<sup>322</sup> For further details of this incident, see Marianne Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-200.

The universities in America have to be competitive. This is an inevitable consequence of the bureaucratization of the new recruits and of the fact that every young lecturer in America receives a salary, the level of which, by the way, would be regarded by our standards as generous for a first appointment. A further consequence is that universities have the right to terminate the employment of all new recruits, a right that they exercise with considerable frequency, although not as often as they could. Furthermore, in return for this salary the new recruits are given a teaching load that would be unthinkable in Germany. I sometimes ask myself, without ever arriving at an answer, how a young American lecturer, given the number of lectures that are often loaded on to him, can ever make any progress in his research, since the situation is that whereas the full professor gives three lectures a week, the junior lecturer gives many times that number.

The conditions, then, are precisely the reverse of our own. And there is a serious question, from the standpoint of the progress of science, as to which system is preferable, the American or the German. I have absolutely no desire to express an opinion on this question, especially since I have experience of only a few universities. We do not at present have to make a choice of whether we should do this or that in the American way. I have therefore restricted myself to drawing comparisons between the two countries. (Thunderous applause.)

[Later contribution to debate]

M. Weber (Heidelberg) (Concluding speech): I was very surprised to hear my colleague [Max] Pappenheim<sup>323</sup> say that here we have a man talking about the situation in Prussia who praises the situation in Saxony and in his own educational administration to the skies, and yet he is not himself a Prussian. And more in the same vein. He wouldn't, by any chance, be implying that I would not have said precisely the same thing if I had been in Prussia, would he? (Shout of No!) In that case, the matter is settled, as far as I am concerned. It is my honest opinion, and I repeat, that the situation in Saxony and Baden is better than elsewhere.

I should like to correct one other thing. Some people have very much resented what I said about the bad atmosphere in Prussia. Yes, gentlemen, I was very precise in specifying that when I spoke of Althoff, the then privy counselor and later undersecretary at the ministry, it was not his personality, but his system, that was spreading such a poisonous atmosphere among the new academic recruits, and that in the offices of the Prussian ministry methods were being employed at that time in personal relations of which I could not approve. I strongly maintain that I have every right to speak out about my feeling that I was indeed glad to find a better atmosphere when dealing with people other than the then Prussian

---

323 Max Pappenheim (1860-1934), jurist.



departmental head, despite the respect and gratitude I felt for his person. I repeat that it was all due to Althoff's system and the peculiarly cynical way he treated people. And it must be said that he was probably not the only one to be guilty of this.

I must also say something in response to the contribution from the representative of the schools of commerce. I wish to emphasize that, as far as I can judge, the German schools of commerce have achieved great things. I only wanted to express my regret that the decision has been made to go down the road of separate schools of commerce instead of linking them with the universities. The reason why that was done has to do, as I indicated, with the fact that certain gentlemen in the commercial world are keen to acquire a qualification that is peculiar to our feudal social order in Germany.

#### 18. GERMAN CONFERENCE OF TEACHERS IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION<sup>324</sup>

Prof. *Max Weber* writes to us regarding our report from the day before yesterday of his speech at the Conference of University Teachers in Institutions of Higher Education:

I attacked the late undersecretary *Althoff's* system for its treatment of people, while at the same time stressing that by any objective criterion he not only achieved superb results, but also that he was motivated by specialist "departmental patriotism," and that on a personal level, despite his rough exterior, he was a man of great kindness. I added that I personally am without question greatly indebted to him as a man, but that my delight at the strikingly favorable treatment I received from him had been soured by the discovery that my father's *parliamentary seat* was apparently linked to it in some way. What happened was that one evening, when parliament was sitting, Herr Althoff took the liberty of approaching my father, who was a budget rapporteur during the debate on the culture budget, and asking him whether or not he would be prepared to take steps to ensure that his parliamentary party did not reject a certain recently requested professorship of *political economy* [*Nationalökonomie*], which it was supposedly intending to do. He went on to ask him *whether or not he would ask me* (at that time I was an adjunct lecturer in Berlin) whether or not I was in favor of rejection. This highly dubious request led my father, after consultation with me, to resign from his position as rapporteur (or at least not to renew it). The way

---

324 "Deutscher Hochschullehrertag," *Heidelberger Zeitung*, 20 October, 1911, p.1.

Althoff's remarks were *phrased* (however unambiguous their import) was too oblique for us to "corner" him and take proceedings against him.

After this experience (*and numerous others*, only some of which I have mentioned), I remarked that *despite* all the kindness that Althoff had shown me, and for which I was very grateful, I felt that I could "breathe more freely" when I had accepted the appointment in Freiburg.

I should like to add that at the time I *never left Herr Althoff in any doubt* that I was extremely unhappy about certain aspects of his behavior. However, since an adjunct lecturer cannot very well give a minister a "ticking off," and by the way, I *never* had any personal contact with him *if I could help it*, my communication with him was through the mediation of the dean of the Law Faculty in Berlin, whom I had approached in this matter.

#### 19. PROFESSOR MAX WEBER (HEIDELBERG) ON HIS SPEECH AT THE GERMAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE IN DRESDEN<sup>325</sup>

Yesterday, in your issue dated 14 October, first supplement [1911], your report of a speech I made at the German Conference of Teachers in Institutions of Higher Education came to my notice. The report contains a number of errors, which, by the way, as I have since heard, are echoed by similar ones in reports published in other newspapers. Their presence can be partly explained as evident mishearings, but also in part by the fact that since my speech was reported in an abridged form, some sentences were necessarily omitted that may, understandably, have seemed insignificant to your reporter, but which for me have the utmost importance, as their omission could, for example, show some particularly eminent scholars from the *University of Berlin* in an unfavorable light, which is also something I could not tolerate *for one moment* without making my voice heard in protest. Permit me, therefore, to make the following comments in your journal, which is widely read in academic circles.

1) The following remark is attributed to me in your report:

When I was in Baden after being invited to move there from Prussia, I was shown the entire correspondence between Prussia and the Baden [Education] Ministry. In it I read what Prussia had written about me. The head of the department in Baden asked me how I could have once accepted an offer from a chap who wrote that sort of thing about me.

This is simply a case of getting things the wrong way round, no doubt due to a mishearing. The facts are precisely the *reverse*. What actually occurred was this:

---

325 "Professor Max Weber — Heidelberg über seine Rede auf dem Deutschen Hochschultag zu Dresden," *Tägliche Rundschau*, second supplement, 22 October, 1911, pp. 1-3.

Before my move to Baden, there was a correspondence between the then head of the department in Baden and the Prussian departmental head, Privy Counselor Althoff. The Baden head of department inquired whether or not certain statements about my *income* that I had made to the Freiburg faculty in response to a request, were in fact accurate. Privy Counselor Althoff informed me of this inquiry and followed it up with the question whether I thought I could honorably accept an appointment from a “chap” who *doubted* the truth of my statements.

On another occasion the Baden head of department stated that the government in Baden would probably find itself in a position of having to yield to the repeated urging of the Freiburg faculty to appoint me, but that there might be one or other (purely technical [*sachlichen*]) *concerns* about my appointment (I cannot very well go into more detail here.) Chief among these concerns was the question as to whether I would not do better to remain in Berlin. Privy Counselor Althoff then asked me whether I thought I could accept an appointment from a “person” who wrote letters to him about me in this manner and displayed an “*animus non possidendi*” [“absence of an intention to accept”] toward me.

In the first case I answered him that I did not *necessarily* find anything offensive in a request for official confirmation of statements of a private individual. In the second case I replied that there was nothing offensive in what was said—especially as they were essentially the same concerns that *I myself* had expressed to the Freiburg faculty when they informed me of their intention to propose me. Moreover, what was of primary concern to me was that I should have the confidence of the *colleagues* with whom I should be working. No further details are needed in order to clear up the misunderstandings.

At the Conference of Teachers in Institutions of Higher Education I did not speak about these details, and by the way, there is more I could say about them. What I did speak about was the fact that the Prussian head of the department showed me the original letters that his Baden colleague had written to him about me, with those disrespectful comments, (*and*: asked me what, in my opinion, his answer should be). I did so in order to illustrate the manner in which the other German university administrations *had themselves been treated by Prussia*, since, as your report made clear, they had, thanks to the well-known cartel relationship, been very strongly under the influence of Prussia, and, as far as I knew, still were.

The final passage of your report contains the statement that I “gave a solemn assurance” that I could provide evidence for these matters by means of *letters*. This was a *mishearing*. As those present would be able to confirm (assuming they

---

had been listening carefully), I said that there could be no question of any “documentary” evidence of this purely personal dialogue, except in the sense that I was able to reproduce the *general sense* of these letters fairly accurately. Whether the letters, which were handwritten on octavo paper by senior counselor [*Oberregierungsrat*] [Ludwig] Arnsperger,<sup>326</sup> are now in the official files or have been treated as private correspondence by Privy Counselor Althoff I have no way of knowing. (To my great regret I have learned— only recently— that the former Baden head of the department in question, who later took a different position, has also passed away.)

2) The *second* point concerns the following sentence in your report:

It has come to the point where as a result of the tactless and brusque manner in which the head of the department at the Ministry of Education referred to my personal dealings with my father (who was then a member of the House of Deputies), my father resigned his seat in the budget committee of the House of Deputies.

I should like to put the record straight. My father was a rapporteur responsible for parts of the budget. Privy Counselor Althoff, at an evening session of parliament, had suggested to my father that he might ask *me* (at that time an adjunct lecturer) whether or not I would favor the approval of a proposed professorship in *political economy* that had recently been called for (which is of no interest here) before he allowed the parliamentary National Liberal Party to reject it (which was believed to be its intention). After we had discussed the matter in detail, my father informed me that in future he no longer felt able to serve as a rapporteur, a decision with which I *strongly agreed*. Althoff’s words were phrased in such a way that it was not possible to proceed directly *against him*, although their underlying sense was unmistakable. I felt it was important to relate this incident here in some detail, in order to remove *any possible ambiguity*.

3) Your report then quotes me as saying the following:

It was also suggested to me that I should sign an undertaking to accept an additional teaching assignment, and that it must remain secret. When I inquired as to the reason for the secrecy, I was told that if Professors Brunner and Gierke knew about it they would vote against my nomination. In other words, it was being suggested that I do something that was clearly improper.

This version is incomplete and inexact. In my Dresden speech I added that I had refused to sign an undertaking *obliging* me to give some lectures in German studies unofficially, in addition to my regular lectures, and with regard to the secrecy and the reasons for it had pointed out to Herr Althoff that [Heinrich]

---

326 Ludwig Arnsperger (1837-1907), jurist.

Brunner<sup>327</sup> and [Otto F. von] Gierke,<sup>328</sup> the two professors of German studies, had already voted for my nomination in the faculty, *even though they* (as well as the dean) had been *clearly informed* by me that I had *every intention* of giving those lectures. Thereupon Privy Counselor Althoff declared that the matter was settled, and proceeded to make some notes in pencil.

I mentioned this incident in the debate to make clear that such a *contemptuous* attitude toward some of our most important scholars was likely to have a *corrupting* effect on the character of the new recruits, especially since these insinuations were made by the head of personnel matters to one of the young Berlin colleagues. My purpose was also to indicate how, for example, the so-called *Bernhard Case* arose. It originated when the suggestion was made to Prof. Bernhard that he should be pledged to silence about a government promise that was contrary to university law. It was *purely and simply* due to the fact that he initially failed to recognize the impropriety toward his colleagues of this suggestion that he ended up, by an inevitable sequence of events, in an external and internal situation for which *none of his colleagues will envy him*, however illustrious his position might externally appear.

Enough on that topic. But I hope you will permit me to make *two* further comments. As you can imagine, it was not pleasant to have to talk constantly about *myself* in a *public* meeting. But it is quite obvious that I could never, either in public or in private, under *any* circumstances, even at the risk of not being believed by people who do not know me, discuss the numerous similar experiences of *third parties*—experiences of which I have *confidential* knowledge. Indeed, I could not even put pressure on them to give me permission to do so.

The further question may be asked why I never mentioned these things *during Althoff's lifetime*. My response to that is as follows: On the occasion of the famous "*Althoff Dinner*," I discussed with a number of colleagues whether or not we should bring up these and many other related matters. The Althoff system had been the target of an attack by the late Prof. [Adolf] *Michaelis*<sup>329</sup> that Prof. *Schmoller* had labeled "outrageous."<sup>330</sup> We had wanted to rebut this epithet and lend our support to Prof. Michaelis' criticism. The attack, incidentally, missed the mark in some points, but in others was, in our opinion, right on target. I must stress at this point that I had never met Prof. Michaelis at that time. In the event, we came to the conclusion that, despite everything, Althoff was *preferable to his probable successors in office*, and that we should therefore let all these matters rest.

---

327 Heinrich Brunner (1840-1915), Austrian historian.

328 Otto F., since 1911, von Gierke (1841-1921), legal philosopher.

329 Adolf Michaelis (1835-1910), archeologist.

330 There appears to be a grammatical error in the German: "dem" should read "den." [Tr.]

I have *now* resolved to substantiate with some examples from my *own* experience the concerns I raised at the time in public about the transfer of the future *Frankfurt* University to the control of the Prussian bureaucracy. It was said at the time that these concerns should be backed up with evidence. The reason I am speaking out now is twofold: firstly, because the Prussian *Minister of Education*, who, it should not be forgotten, only *quite* recently took office, felt justified in Breslau in publicly *emphasizing* the importance of *his* bureaucracy at the expense of the universities, even after what had happened the previous year. The second reason is the way in which the Prussian educational administration acted against three outstanding colleagues in Berlin in the Bernhard Case.

It is a fact, which has *not*, as far as I am aware, been denied, that officials from the Ministry of Education passed material that was known to them *in their official capacity* to sections of the press, to conduct what they must have known was a most *disgraceful* campaign against those three colleagues. No one in Berlin with any knowledge of the events any longer has any doubt that the gentlemen from the Ministry of Education *incited* Prof. Bernhard to the actions that were described by the Arbitration Tribunal as perfidious, or at the very least *encouraged* him— *and that the same tribunal* took it upon itself to play the part of the *judge* in a matter in which it was one of the *parties*. It is *also* undisputed that the Prussian educational administration used state money to pay for *advertisements* for lectures that in the objective view of Vornflach [unknown] were *non-essential*, and then withdraw them, in order to *do material harm* to independent men who did not share the official opinion, and to *finance the compliant yes-men* who were determined to stab troublesome professors in the back. It was never my intention to attack either the Minister of Education and his officials as persons or their professional devotion to duty. My attack was directed solely against the continuation of a *system* that in their hands has *all* the weaknesses and *none* of the strengths that it possessed, as I have expressly acknowledged, in the hands of its *brilliant* originator, Privy Counselor Althoff. Your report rightly points out that I have paid tribute to Herr Althoff's human and professional qualities.

Herr Althoff— whom I never *deliberately* sought out— knew my personal view of his *system* *very well*. In direct comments on the occasion of our first extended conversation, I made it clear to him that certain of his remarks (concerning colleagues of the same age as myself), and his behavior in general, were absolutely unacceptable; I conveyed the same message to him indirectly through the dean of the Berlin Law Faculty, whom I had asked to speak to him even more forcefully than I had attempted to do myself; and finally, a *third* person who was closely acquainted with him spoke to him on my behalf in the same terms. I have often *amused* my friends by recounting his almost grotesque replies to these ap-

proaches— he was *never* offensive to me personally; I do not propose to repeat them here. On the *personal* level, one had to take him as he was, and on his retirement I personally thanked him warmly in writing for all his encouragement— although this did not alter the fact that I could not accept his *system*; as he well knew, I found it intolerable. His crucial shortcoming was his *uncompromising display* of absolute *contempt for other people*: this, as I stressed in my Dresden speech, *to warm applause from the audience*, was in part brought about by much of what had happened within the universities. At the same time I hastened to add: there was no need for the kind of “*mischievous duplicity*” to which practically everyone who had dealings with him was exposed, an example of which, not mentioned in your report and of no substantial importance, I cited and which I can honestly say could not *possibly* have a healthy influence on the character of the new recruits. Other [German] states, where personnel are equally well or better administered, are the evidence that there is a better way. This is why— to remove a misunderstanding on the part of my colleague [Alexander A.] Kaufmann<sup>331</sup>— in my dealings with *ministries*, and it was only of them that I was speaking, Baden was like “a breath of fresh air.”

## 20. MAX WEBER ON THE “ALTHOFF SYSTEM”<sup>332</sup>

Sir,

The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* [3rd morning edition, 24 October, 1911] has tried to present my attack on the *system of treatment of people*, which in significant ways continues today in the Prussian educational administration and which I regard as corrupting, as a *personal* attack on the late Privy Counselor Althoff, and thereby to shift the affair from the present to the past and from the current state of affairs to the purely personal sphere. To this end, it has published a letter from the gentleman in question to the former head of the Department of University Affairs in Baden. I was aware of the existence and *purpose* of this letter, but not of its particular content, and should like to say the following about it:

1. The letter contains the passage: “It would accord even less with customary practice here in Berlin to place any obstacles in the path of his (i.e., my) free decision.” And yet the practice in Berlin was and is to oblige newly appointed lecturers to sign an undertaking to reject any appointment offered from elsewhere, *and*, not so long before, Privy Counselor Althoff had explicitly tried to bind *me* by *precisely such* an undertaking. The fact that this attempt had been made must have been documented, as the letter that *withdrew* it had been officially *stamped*. The

---

331 Alexander A. Kaufmann (1864-1919), Russian economist.

332 “Max Weber über das ‘System Althoff,’” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, evening edition, 27 October, 1911, pp. 2-3.

handwritten postscript and my own letters, to which the postscript made reference, may well be missing from the files, as well as a (complete) statement of the content of the discussion to which the letter of withdrawal itself made reference. The details would not be relevant here.

2. The letter contains some flattering remarks about me. I cannot here go into the details of the background and purpose of this letter, and would only say that on numerous occasions Privy Counselor Althoff *resolutely refused to give credence* to my repeated assurances that by my acceptance of an appointment in Baden— which, as things stood, his letter made virtually inevitable, as it was meant to— I would not be entering into a “business arrangement” in the sense of a deal, which, as I foresaw, was what he had intended, but would either stay *without conditions* or go *without conditions*.

I wish to say further that I see absolutely *no* reason why a lecturer must *or even should* feel any personal gratitude for the manner in which he is *officially* assessed or treated, since these things occur not for reasons of personal friendship but in the *objective* interests of teaching. Likewise, Althoff’s *personally* friendly disposition toward me (and in my Dresden speech I explained in detail why the manner in which it was expressed and the motives that in part drove it were hurtful to me) could not possibly put me under any obligation to look favorably on his *system*. These two points, as Althoff (I repeat) *very well knew*, marked the limits of my gratitude. (Conservative!) scholars like G[ustav von] Schmoller and A[dolf] Wagner have truly done more for the glory of the Prussian Crown and the Prussian administration than all the officials of the Ministry of Education put together. Schmoller, for one, supported those officials for decades in the most difficult aspects of their work in such a way that one could almost say that he relieved them of their most significant worries. *Despite this*, the manner in which they have been treated by the present office holders in this ministry in the “Bernhard Case” should show clearly enough that “gratitude” is certainly *not* among the qualities of the Prussian educational administration. It is *untrue* to say that I have “sullied” the memory of Althoff’s merits, which I have acknowledged in public and in private as much as anyone else, or even of the purely human qualities that he possessed, by the things that I have *actually* said (as opposed to those that I am “supposed” to have said).

However, our primary concern is not with these matters, which I have only mentioned by way of illustration, but with the *system* that he created and which still exists today. The system worked through undertakings: (1) undertakings by lecturers on every imaginable subject, by no means limited to the acceptance or non-acceptance of appointments from other institutions. (2) Undertakings by the educational administration regarding such matters as prospects condi-



tional on the death of professors in Berlin and elsewhere. Other features are the imposition of the duty of silence, disruptive interference in relationships among colleagues, paying for advertisements or canceling them, depending on the views of the individual concerned, releasing official documents for the purpose of press campaigns, and all the things about which I actually *have* spoken.

This is a system that aims gradually to transform our new academic recruits into some kind of academic operators. It leads these people, who have quite innocently become involved in this machinery, into conflicts of conscience, or misleads them into taking false steps, with consequences that they may have to live with for the rest of their academic lives. An objective educational administration whose officials have the inner strength to cope with the dangers of the great power they wield should have no need of methods such as these and must not resort to them. In any case, just because Althoff's methods were tolerated again and again does not mean that the methods of his successors will also be similarly tolerated.

Finally, if I may, I should like to reiterate that large sections of the press have reported the content of my speech either inaccurately or in a misleading way, and that thereby, among other matters, both the Baden ministry and two outstanding Berlin scholars have been exposed to absolutely unfounded suspicion, as I have publicly stated elsewhere. As it is simply impossible to know how far these errors in particular have been disseminated in the press, but equally impossible to send corrections to the entire German press, I should like to request other organs of the press herewith to take note of these remarks.

In conclusion, may I take this opportunity to make one further point. Here and there in the press there has been talk— with unpleasant sideways glances at my colleagues— of the special “courage” on my part that open discussion of such matters demonstrates. This is quite wrong. By openly discussing these matters, which are in fact *generally known*, my colleagues, especially those in Prussia, would put in jeopardy not only their personal positions, but also in many cases the objective interests of their institutes, since when it comes to funding for teaching they are often dependent on the good will of the Ministry of Education. For me this is not the case, as my relationship with the University of Heidelberg, which I cherish in memory of earlier years, and which could conceivably be jeopardized, is no more than a formality at present and is likely to remain so. However, I do *not*, at least in the present matter, take the rather *complacent* view that “such de-

---

bates will probably not achieve anything anyway, and therefore we might as well not bother.”

Respectfully yours,  
Prof. Max Weber

## 21. THE SCHOOLS OF COMMERCE: A REPLY BY PROFESSOR MAX WEBER<sup>333</sup>

Heidelberg, 24 October [1911]

We have received, and published, three replies to Professor Max Weber’s well-known Heidelberg speech. Now that two representatives of the Berlin School of Commerce, namely, *the Rector, Professor [Arthur] Binz*,<sup>334</sup> and *Professor Paul Eltzbacher*,<sup>335</sup> and a representative of the University of Leipzig, *Professor Ludwig Beer*,<sup>336</sup> have each in turn commented on the speech, we here publish the following contribution sent to us by Professor Max Weber.

*The Editor of the Berliner Tageblatt*

*Without checking with me* whether or not something I said in a speech about the schools of commerce, which had been reported in many of the newspapers, had been accurately and *fully* reported, two professors, including, unfortunately, the *rector* of the School of Commerce in Berlin, have made an attack on me in the *Berliner Tageblatt*. Incidentally, I am happy to acknowledge that they did at least have the decency to send me a copy of the article, unlike some people in similar circumstances. I had been away for a long time and was extremely busy with numerous urgent matters. Thus, in view of the haste with which these gentlemen very “effectively” defended the schools of commerce, I saw no reason to rush to make a public correction, especially as I had informed *both* of the gentlemen that the report conveyed an inaccurate picture of what I had said. The reason for this inaccuracy lies chiefly in the fact that the reporter, evidently for reasons of space, felt obliged to compress several sentences, drawn from *two quite different speeches* of mine, into a single sentence, to convey what seemed to him to be their essential message.

At the conclusion of the debate I had spoken again from the floor, in response to an interjection by a colleague from a school of commerce. My express purpose

---

333 “Die Handelshochschulen. Eine Entgegnung,” *Berliner Tageblatt*, morning edition, 27 October, 1911, p.1.

334 Arthur Binz (1868-1943), chemist.

335 Paul Eltzbacher (1868-1928), jurist.

336 Ludwig Beer (1868-1935), jurist.

was to emphasize, specifically and forcefully, in a manner that made it crystal clear that I was not “denigrating” the schools of commerce, how well I knew what excellent work, in every respect, was being done by colleagues, many of whom are quite outstanding, at these schools. (I was able to do this with confidence, as I make a habit of studying any reports on the schools of commerce, especially the one in Cologne, to which I have access.) Moreover, since the *Berlin School of Commerce* owes its existence chiefly to the work of my former Berlin colleague *Ignaz Jastrow*,<sup>337</sup> and those in Cologne and Mannheim to that of my colleague here in Heidelberg, *Eberhard Gothein*,<sup>338</sup> and since (not to mention other gentlemen) my friend and fellow editor *Werner Sombart*, for example, teaches at the Berlin School of Commerce, even the least well-informed rector ought to have realized that it would have been fitting to raise a query with me first, at least before taking action *in public*. He would have found my reply on his desk on the day he sent his letter to the *Berliner Tageblatt* (16 October) if he had sent me the 14 October issue of the newspaper immediately. I now regard it as very important to be able to make my views known through the medium of this particular newspaper.

In Dresden, when discussing the *comparison* of the American and the German situation, the *main thrust*, and in part the exact wording, of what I *said* about the relevant point was as follows: In America, in relation to the institution of the “college,” with its focus on classical studies, a dual trend is becoming apparent. (I should explain that it is a boarding establishment for students with what we would call a strongly “humanistic” [“classical”] curriculum, rather like the upper forms of our *Gymnasien* [secondary schools preparatory to university] and the first semesters at university.) On the one hand, as a component of the ancient universities, the “college” is gradually being superseded by forms of specialist study, following the European pattern. (In Baltimore, for example, there is already a German style *Gymnasium* as a preparatory educational institution leading to university.)

On the other hand, there is also, as (to my astonishment) the American gentlemen concerned repeatedly assured me, a fairly strong contrary tendency that is especially evident in American *business* circles (although, admittedly, I was unable to verify the extent of this development or its duration). In preference to a specialized course of training, the college, with its specific formative influence on the personality (the model being the Anglo-Saxon [*angelsächsisch*] ideal of the “gentleman”) and the specific general education that goes with it, often seems to these circles, according to their experience, to be a particularly appropriate place for an education in self-confidence (and, I should add, in healthy

---

337 Ignaz Jastrow (1856-1937), economist.

338 Eberhard Gothein (1853-1923), economist.

civic pride) for the aspiring businessman, both personally and professionally. Certainly, (in those circles) the increasing value attached to “educational diplomas” (degrees)<sup>339</sup> is one of those *Europeanizing* phenomena that has taken hold of the whole of American life, including academic life, and is likely to continue to advance along with civil service reform<sup>340</sup> (although, I should like to add *at this point*, the manner of acquiring the various degrees and their practical significance in America is undoubtedly quite different in important ways from our system). *In this country*, I added, we aim to achieve something similar by founding schools of commerce. Please note that the reason for the creation of separate institutes [institutions] for this purpose is, on the one hand— as I emphasized very strongly—to be found in the pride of our traditional university professors.

Just think of the shudder that would run down the spine of an average privy counselor in law in, say, a faculty of legal studies or political science, if, in a faculty meeting, he should be asked to sit alongside a person who teaches a subject as unacceptable in polite society (I do not remember whether or not I used these exact words) as, for example, business management or commercial costing theory.

(I wish to say *here* that I regard it as a disaster that evidence of having thoroughly studied these subjects is not obligatory for every political economy examination candidate in our universities.) On the other hand, the “struggle” to create the special schools of commerce can very largely be explained by the striving that undeniably exists among our commercially and industrially trained young people (note that I did not say this striving was “universal” or even “widespread”) to acquire *feudal prestige*. They know that in our country dueling scars, wearing the colors and all the accoutrements of the traditional student life that are such a distraction from intensive work, confer the capacity to “give satisfaction and to become a reserve officer” [*Satisfaktions- und Reserveoffiziersfähigkeit*],<sup>341</sup> and that this in turn will give them the feudal prestige they seek. I added that *if* these trends and— as the notes I made just before the lecture tell me I *meant* to say but which I may, in the heat of the moment, have *forgotten* to say— if the general urge to create a proliferation of more and more new kinds of official educational certificates, Chinese style, in virtually every profession were to continue unchecked, this would not exactly be to our (I stress) *lasting* benefit in the economic struggle with the major industrial nations of the world. This is what I said. I was making

---

339 In English. [Tr.]

340 Weber uses the Anglicism *Zivildienst* for civil service. [Tr.]

341 Both are connected with the activities of the student fraternities. The former means to be qualified to give or demand satisfaction in a duel in order to defend one's honor. Nobles, officers, and students had the right to bear arms. Fraternity members had to submit to a code of behavior, based either on their academic status or the holding of a commission of a reserve officer.

a comparison and consequently was describing the *trends* in play on both sides, and also the *weaknesses* on both sides, something that I have done at length for the American higher education institutions (in other respects). I could not remain silent about these things and had to trust that in the circles in which I was speaking it was common knowledge that I was no more likely to maintain that students at the schools of commerce were *predominantly* or even *exclusively* people with that kind of feudal ambition, than I was to maintain that there were only fraternity students at the universities, when everyone knows that they are in a minority, albeit a very influential minority.

And now a little story. The office of an important firm dealing in manufactured articles received a visit from a representative of one of the firm's suppliers, a gentleman whose immaculate appearance matched the description on his visiting card: "X, Reserve Lieutenant, and so on. Below left: Firm of D. and Co. Below right: in Z. (Headquarters of the firm)." The joint proprietor of the factory, who was also present in the office, expressed his regret that the visit had not been pre-arranged by telephone, as the firm earnestly requested of all its suppliers, including the firm represented by the traveler, in order to ensure prompt service. His partner, whose responsibility it was to deal with these sales, was busy with some urgent work (he specified the nature of the work) and could not be simply called away from it. Would the traveler kindly come back later in the day. Furthermore, he himself had to call attention to two things: The latest consignment had been tested for quality and had failed to meet the required standard, and the asking price had unquestionably been beaten by the competition. In an urbane "nasal" drawl the visitor answered (and these are almost exactly the words he used): "Er— sooo sorry to hear that in your opinion your partner, who I believe has the rank of officer, does not consider it necessary to welcome a coomrade straight away. What is more, knowing that I am a reserve officer, you should know that I only offer quality goods at the best prices. Sooo sorry!" With immaculate decorum the representative proudly took his leave.

In case of any misunderstanding, I hasten to add that I would not dream of holding the existing schools of commerce responsible for this prime example of a traveling salesman, about whom the astonished factory owner chuckled for weeks to come, and with whom his firm was hardly likely to achieve brilliant results in the future. I should only like to comment that a gentleman from a quite different line of business, when I recounted the incident to him for his amusement, told me that this was not *exactly* an isolated incident; there were plenty of suppliers who believed in all seriousness that employing traveling salesmen like these would impress people; and *indeed, once, the first time* it happened to him, he

was so taken aback by this gentleman's unusual manner that in his efforts to get rid of him he ended up buying an assignment of (unusable) goods, a mistake he had no intention of repeating.

I would add that in an admittedly rather grotesque way this little anecdote *could* illustrate the kind of developmental *trends* that would be set in motion or reinforced in the character of our commercial and industrial youth *if* a class of persons equipped with higher educational qualifications and *therefore* regarding themselves as *socially superior* to their fellow workers were to begin to call the tune in our commercial firms, and especially if, on top of that, attention became focused on the characteristics fostered by student fraternity life, or, more significantly, on the current fashion for feudal pretension, all too easily boosted by military rank.

This is not the place to discuss the kind of "educational" effect exercised by membership of student fraternities (about which I did *not* speak, at least, not in the *way* it was alleged) and by the military. But neither the possession of a colored sash nor possession of an officer's commission are, as such, *in any sense* capable of demonstrating that their possessor is suited for the routine hard *work* without which our middle classes will not be able to defend Germany's position of power in the world in trade and business. I have been accused by a newspaper of arrogant disdain for the "clerks" [*Kommis*], but I myself bear a name that proclaims my descent from Westphalian cloth merchants and do *not* deny that I am proud of my middle class [*bürgerlich*] origins, unlike those circles of which I have been speaking.

I am aware of the decision to suppress the fraternities at the Berlin School of Commerce, and without wishing to give offense to the other schools of commerce in any way, I have to say that this is really a positive gain, since fraternities make no sense to businessmen and merely seem ridiculous. This action, the importance of which should not be exaggerated, is probably connected with the ethos, which was somewhat distinctive in other ways too, that characterized this foundation from the very start. It is no secret that it has caused *difficulties* both for the founders and, in its early days, for the institution itself. It has to be said that *some of these difficulties originated from feudal tendencies within German industry circles themselves.*

22. THE PRUSSIAN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND PROF. MAX WEBER (HEIDELBERG)<sup>342</sup>

University Professor Max *Weber*, who recently came under attack from the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* on account of his speech at the Dresden Conference of Higher Education Teachers, which was critical of the "Althoff System," has written the following letter to the editor:

Heidelberg, 22 October, 1911

Sir,

On Tuesday, on my return from a journey during which I had no access to newspapers, *five* different, very eminent, persons pointed out to me some obvious errors in the reports in Berlin newspapers of a speech I made at the *Dresden Conference of Teachers in Institutions of Higher Education*. These reports have since been widely circulated in the press. On Friday, when I finally managed to get hold of the *Tägliche Rundschau* [first supplement, 14 October, 1911], I sent to that newspaper the enclosed account, which the newspaper promised by telegraph to publish *today*. I respectfully request you to take note of it, particularly the *first* point. It relates to the fact that an action taken by the well-known Privy Counselor *Althoff* was attributed to the *Baden* Head of Personnel, the then senior counselor [*Oberregierungsrat*] *Arnsperger*, who, I have been greatly saddened to learn, has also died. No one who was acquainted with his refined and reserved personality could possibly fail to recognize the error made by the reporter. I am personally deeply indebted to this gentleman, as indeed I am to Privy Counselor *Althoff*, *despite* his (in my view) corrupting way of forming judgments about people, which in my dealings with him I constantly found extremely offensive, although I was never affected by it personally.

Since I am requesting the hospitality of a *Baden* newspaper, kindly permit me to add that it was not my intention at the conference to give the impression that in *Baden*, in contrast to *Prussia*, from the point of view of the interests of the university *all* was sweetness and light. It is a well-known fact that a wide range of people, including many of the most prominent figures in our universities, are watching with growing concern the *growing* boldness with which a small group of conservative-minded party and church politicians are *doing their best* to gain an influence on university affairs that is out of all proportion to either their numbers, or their intellectual significance, and is plainly not in the scientific or objective interests of the universities. We cannot know whether or not the responsible authorities, in their undoubted efforts to *hold fast* to *Baden's* old-estab-

---

342 "Die preußische Unterrichtsverwaltung und Prof. Max Weber — Heidelberg," *Badische Landeszeitung*, 28 October, 1911, p. 2.

lished tradition of asking, in a purely objective way, free of all party bias, what is in the best interests of science, are running into increasing *difficulties*.<sup>343</sup> Such difficulties, which *may* be present, had nothing to do with the matters discussed at the Conference of Teachers in Institutions of Higher Education. With regard to what was discussed there, especially the *objective* achievements of the university administration and the *impartial* (and yet humane and benevolent) treatment of staff, Baden, as everyone who has ever been capable of making comparisons well knows, remains unsurpassed by *any* other administration. I beg you to give favorable consideration to my request to take note of this correction and also to publish this letter.

I remain, Sir,  
Your humble servant,  
Professor Max Weber

### 23. MAX WEBER AND THE ALTHOFF SYSTEM <sup>344</sup>

Sir,

I should be grateful if you could find space in your columns for the following response to the report in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* of 28 October [1911]:

The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* has once again changed the subject in this discussion. The “declaration” to be signed by *all* professors, to which the newspaper referred in its report, is *not*, of course, an “undertaking” of the kind I was talking about. On my appointment to my position in Baden I had no hesitation in accepting the commitment contained in point 3 of this declaration as perfectly natural and unobjectionable. Points 1 and 2 are also quite normal and harmless. However, the undertaking I was *required* to give would have meant *declining any other offer* that might be made to me. Since *nothing of the kind* had been discussed in my interview, I made an objection in writing to this unreasonable demand (in terms that need not concern us here). The numerous colleagues who were requested to sign such an undertaking (whether or not they acceded to the request) would undoubtedly be extremely indignant if the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* were to assert that undertakings of *the same* kind were *unknown* under the late undersecretary Althoff’s system. If the comment means no more than that in “recent years” (the years of which the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* speaks) this practice has *ceased*, then we should point out that as university administrations have increasingly taken on the character of a cartel, there has been less need for

---

343 The German sentence is grammatically inaccurate: “fragte, war” should probably read “zu fragen war” and “stoßt” should read “stoßen.” [Tr.]

344 “Max Weber und das System Althoff,” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 1st morning edition, 2 November, 1911, pp. 2-3.



this method, which is, of course, seen as distasteful by administrations outside Prussia, for the achievement of the desired purpose.

However, I specifically spoke *not merely* of undertakings of the above mentioned kind, which are, after all, not directly offensive, but of undertakings compelling teachers to give lectures *additional to those stipulated in their contract* (I was requested to sign such an undertaking), of undertakings imposing the duty of silence (which I and others have been requested to sign recently, even though this was *in contravention of existing legal rights*), and others, for example, those that related to participation in public meetings (something that happened to me in a manner that I could describe precisely, even though it was quite a long time ago). There have also been undertakings by the educational administration to offer appointments to professorships that could be expected to fall vacant *in the future*, such as vacancies that could only be caused by the death or retirement of particular professors at major universities. The Althoff administration made generous use of these “promissory notes” to pay for academic appointments to Prussia, and I am waiting for a statement that this kind of thing has been *done away with* in recent years. In the cases known to me, these undertakings were given *in writing*.

In response to the statement by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* that it sees no reason for further exchanges with me, I say that from the start I have regarded such exchanges with this newspaper as necessarily fruitless and have felt no need for them. I merely *repeat*: my remarks clearly related to incidents from the recent past that are *publicly known*, and the mention of a few examples from further back in the past was merely to illustrate the workings of the “system.”

If I may perhaps be allowed to do so, I should like to request permission to add a comment about my remarks concerning the *schools of commerce*, which I *clarified in detail* elsewhere. Correspondence from private individuals and official letters from the principals of the schools of commerce have made me realize that despite what I wrote, my remarks are *still* being taken as belittling the activity of the schools of commerce. Furthermore, I get the impression that, at least in Cologne, my fears regarding the influence of the *fraternity system* [*Verbindungswesen*], which in my view is *completely inappropriate* for students at schools of commerce, are seen as unfounded. I propose, therefore, in the near future, to write a letter, to be used as they see fit, to the principals of the schools of commerce in question, setting out the *facts* on which I base my opinion— facts which have been communicated to me, both verbally and in writing, from circles whose impartiality and information are beyond question.

With highest regard,  
Professor Max Weber

24. PROFESSOR WEBER ON THE ALTHOFF SYSTEM <sup>345</sup>

Prof. Max Weber has now formulated his reply to the statement in the official party organ *Nationalliberale Korrespondenz* regarding his Dresden speech, as previously announced, and telegraphed it to us. We reprint it here exactly as it appeared in the *Nationalliberale Korrespondenz*:

1) *The professorship in question was not a position in Marburg but in Kiel. Whether it was requested in the budget as an associate professorship or as a full but temporary professorship, whether or not it was opposed by members of the parliamentary party [the National Liberal Party] (which I have never maintained: I merely said that “allegedly”, that is, in Althoff’s opinion, such a professorship could run into problems), or what it was designed to complement or replace— all this I do not know, and probably never knew, as it did not interest me. What I find dubious (and perhaps quite mistaken) is the idea that there had been any objective difficulties. If there had been any, they would have been of a purely internal nature and would have been already dealt with before the request was made. I should also like to say that this (Kiel) position (whether it had already been created or whether there was merely an intention to request it) on one occasion was verbally offered to me by Herr Althoff as an associate professorship, albeit one that was expected to become a full professorship in the very near future. It was offered to me as a choice among a number of others in the fields of law and political economy.*

Among these, incidentally, and offering the same chance of advancement, was the position mentioned by your correspondent, which, if memory serves, was still in the planning stage. However, this occurred at a later juncture than Althoff’s conversation with my father, and I dismissed all these offers there and then, with no further discussion, partly because of the events that had preceded them and partly because no negotiations of any kind relating to myself had taken place with the relevant faculties. There were other reasons too, but these were the chief ones. I should like to state also that, unless it was due to incorrect reporting of my speech, the origin of the erroneous assumption by your correspondent that the incident publicly described by myself concerned an associate professorship in Marburg, was that negotiations about whether or not I myself should be proposed for the Marburg position were indeed held at the instigation of Herr Althoff. This is probably recorded in the files. (I believe it was in the spring of 1893, but my memory of the exact date is very hazy.) At the time, only

345 “Professor Weber über das System Althoff,” *Tägliche Rundschau*, morning edition, first supplement, 4 November, 1911, pp. 1-2.

Professor [Ludwig] Enneccerus<sup>346</sup> gave me any information about the negotiations themselves, and I do not recall what he told me.

The position in question, however, was a supplementary associate professorship in constitutional law. I believe it was later filled by Prof. [Carl M.] Bergbohm.<sup>347</sup> I might add that Herr Althoff was undeterred by the fact, which I stressed to him, that I had no academic expertise in this area; I had made my acceptance conditional on the associate professorship being in the area of German studies. Any negotiations that did take place, if they ever enjoyed official status at all, probably did not even result in a proposal, and certainly not in an offer [Ruf]. On the other hand, I believe the Kiel professorship to which I referred was later held by Prof. [Wilhelm] Hasbach,<sup>348</sup> and as far as I can remember this was in the course of the year 1894 (although I cannot be sure of this); I do not know whether this was a full professorship from the start or (as was suggested to me) initially an associate professorship. It is certainly the case that this scholar was very soon a full professor, and continued as such for many years thereafter.

2) The incident in question did *not*, of course, (as your correspondent insists it must have done) occur *in the winter of 1893/94*, when I was already associate professor of commercial law in Berlin, but in the *winter* during which I was an *adjunct lecturer*. In all essentials, my *Habilitation* was completed by late autumn of 1891, and my inaugural lecture marked the conclusion of the external formalities early in 1892. There are only two winters when the incident could possibly have taken place, and it ought to be easy enough to establish from the files and from official minutes which one of these it was. To judge from his remarks so far, it could (for reasons about to be given) have occurred not only in the winter of 1892/93, but also in one of the preceding winters. Eighteen years on, I am no longer sure about this.

Concerning the question of timing, there is one other thing I still do not recall precisely: I believed, and still believe fairly strongly, that my father spoke specifically of his intention to “resign” from the position as budget rapporteur that he either already held or that had at least been promised to him and that he had agreed to take on. This means that he must have already been a member or at least a designated member of the committee. It is, however, also possible that he was speaking about his declining of the position as rapporteur [*Referat*] that was intended for him (or that he believed to be intended for him), but that he had not yet taken up, and I had misunderstood him on this point, which naturally did not seem important to me at the time.

---

346 Ludwig Enneccerus (1843-1928), jurist.

347 Carl M. Bergbohm (1849-1927), jurist.

348 Wilhelm Hasbach (1849-1920), economist.

I cannot be sure whether my father actually resigned from the position he already held (as the records alone can show), or simply declined to accept such a position for that particular session (although the records might not reveal this). After all, my father, especially in his later years, rarely revealed any details at all about the nature of his parliamentary activity within the family. He spoke to me only (as I have reported in the *Tägliche Rundschau*) of his intention to act in this way, and I do not know whether or not perhaps a consultation with one of his friends, in view of the fact that he did not hold a university position as rapporteur (which I have never asserted, as I was in no position to know), might have made him change his mind. By the way, early in 1890/91 (and I am able to recall this date with some degree of precision thanks to a co-incidental circumstance), when his period of office in the Berlin City Council was gradually nearing its end and his re-election seemed in doubt in view of the situation of the party, he was expecting to resume his interrupted activity in the *Landtag* (state parliament) committees.

As your correspondent might attach importance to this point, even though it is, in my view, unimportant for the question of the authenticity of the incident, which is all that matters, I should like to add that, when speaking about how my father may, in the end, have acted, a matter on which the evidence of my own eyes and ears was lacking, I should have chosen my words more carefully, as I shall state publicly if a suitable occasion arises. Of course, the records alone would be able to tell us what really happened. Incidentally, in all my quite detailed public remarks, covering the most varied points, this is the only aspect I have (so far) become aware of that could give rise to complaint.

3) As I was an adjunct lecturer in the Law Faculty, my father and I, as well as others, were aware that Privy Counselor Althoff had me in mind for a possible professorship in political economy. As it turned out later, the reason must have been that several scholars (whom I did not know personally) had called his attention to me, on account of the fact that my work was at the interface between these two disciplines. There is evidence that this occurred at a later date. Unfortunately, I am not in a position to give definite dates for the earlier correspondence, as these are no longer known.

Finally, I should like to state emphatically that I have obviously never asserted that the National Liberal Party as such had any interest in the approval or otherwise of the professorship in question, let alone in the question of who should be appointed to it. Neither have I publicly or privately asserted that this party or individual members of it have, on their own initiative, ever felt it right to interfere in these personnel matters. Thus, it is certain that absolutely no shadow of suspicion falls on the National Liberal Party in this matter. The key point

remains that the conversation reported to me by my father between Althoff and himself is an established fact, acknowledged by anyone even moderately well acquainted with my father or me (and also, by the way, with Althoff's ruthless and contemptuous treatment of other people [*Menschenverachtung*]).

25. MAX WEBER, STATEMENT (MEMORANDUM TO THE SCHOOLS OF COMMERCE)<sup>349</sup>

Heidelberg, 7 November, 1911

Even after my letter to the *Berliner Tageblatt*, 27 October, there have been many more public attacks and more private correspondence arising from my comments on the schools of commerce at the Conference of Teachers in Institutions of Higher Education. I therefore feel obliged to make the following statement, and give permission for it to be freely used. I shall refrain from publication, because I could thereby possibly give the impression, at least among the uninformed, that I wished to make some kind of accusations against the schools of commerce, since I cannot avoid casting a critical eye on certain matters concerning them.

Before I come to the point, I have some preliminary remarks to make. Before the matter was made public, *no one* came to me to ask whether or not the newspaper reports were accurate and complete, although it could hardly be assumed that I would have the opportunity, the time or even the inclination, without a concrete reason, to sift through north German newspapers looking for reports of my own speeches. I am told that the *Frankfurter Zeitung* had no part in the general sensationalism that greeted my speech. I myself cannot verify this, as a twelve hour court appointment on 15 and a whole day's journey on 16 October made it impossible for me to read any press reports, least of all this one. As soon as I heard about the press reports (17 October), I privately informed Berlin and Cologne that, of course, I would issue a correction of any errors. I have learned that in Cologne, owing to a chance event that could not have been foreseen, this information never reached the director of studies. I did not receive the first Berlin newspaper until the evening of Thursday, 19 October. My very detailed correction of a considerable number of other inaccurate reports dates from 21 and appeared in the *Tägliche Rundschau*, 22 October. My detailed statement regarding the schools of commerce that I wrote for the *Berliner Tageblatt* on 24 was delayed by a query from the newspaper and did not appear until 27 October.

---

349 Max Weber, "Erklärung (Denkschrift an die Handelshochschulen) vom 7. November 1911," Universitätsarchiv der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Wirtschaftshochschule Berlin 1906-1945, No. 989, pp. 139 - 149. Personally corrected by the author.

In fulfilling my promise, which I made in public, to specify the reasons and facts on which I base my case, I refer to the previously mentioned statement, which I enclose, and point out that, after careful consideration, I have decided not to name names or indirectly to identify sources, even where express permission to do so was given, as it was, for instance, in a long letter I recently received. To do otherwise would only give cause for sterile recriminations and all kinds of attempts to discover the identity of the persons concerned. I have made an exception in only one case, which I have named in the enclosed letter to the heads of the universities of Cologne and Berlin. I have given reasons for the disclosure in the letter itself, which must be regarded as absolutely confidential.

The expressions of opinion that came to my notice, some by word of mouth, others in writing, related in part (by far the lesser part) to the effect of the diplomas<sup>350</sup> awarded by the schools of commerce as such, but mainly, and more importantly, to the effect of the fraternity system; they originated from 1. firms, 2. employees, and 3.— in one case from among the teachers of commercial subjects with a background in higher education. I shall omit all those, such as category 3 and most of those listed under 2, that give cause to doubt their objectivity by reason of the tone they adopt. The following points then remain:

The rector of the Berlin School of Commerce rejects as offensive the suggestion that a fraternity system exists in Berlin. The director of studies at the School of Commerce in Cologne, by contrast, is happy to acknowledge the presence of fraternity students and regards the system as at least harmless, if not exactly a positive asset, as we can see from comments in the annual reports and in his latest speech at the matriculation ceremony.

In fact, however, fraternities exist *in Berlin too*, according to the detailed reports of a gentleman who has been personally associated with the fraternity students there, although evidently on a more modest scale and in a less well developed social form. In Cologne it seems to be primarily the well bred offspring of wealthy families who can afford the luxury of fraternity life in the university manner, or at least these are the ones who set the tone, whereas these elements are almost completely absent among the Berlin fraternity students, and the prevailing tone there is sometimes described as extremely inferior for that reason. The quality of the membership seems to be particularly low, and the ban on the fraternities has at least had the effect of preventing the more able students from getting involved in them.

As regards the Cologne fraternities, their social stratification is the exact reverse, and their influence is, I am informed, correspondingly strong. I do not

---

350 A German diploma had a higher status than a diploma in Britain or the United States.

know their precise number and membership strength, but their practical significance, even in comparison with the university fraternities, is certainly by no means small, since the fact that, even at the universities, they are a minority, does not crucially affect their role. This would be perfectly in accordance with my own experience. When I was a fraternity student in Heidelberg, the number of all fraternity students together did not even amount to one seventh of the student body (today it is significantly more, which could be an important predictor for the schools of commerce); nevertheless, if only because their presence was regarded as vital for the external image of the student body, they played a crucial role in student affairs. And I clearly recall that one could not help noticing that even those students who were not members of fraternities, and might even have been hostile toward them, were unconsciously influenced by the forms of behavior fostered by them.

The existence, recognition and public commendation of the fraternity system at the schools of commerce is alleged by some—perhaps wrongly—to be already having a similar influence, while others—in my view, not without reason—fear it in the future. I refer to the style of behavior found among fraternity students and certain strata within the circles officially recognized as socially acceptable in Prussia. It is practiced both among equals and when dealing with subordinates and those who move in different circles. Wherever it makes its appearance it seems ridiculous to every other nationality. Consequently, these things, while no doubt trivial in themselves, are not without practical importance where trade is being pioneered. They do great harm to the popularity and reputation abroad of Germany and the Germans. I am able to assert this with full confidence, after a year spent in Italy, and from observations made on personal visits to the Netherlands, England, and North America, and especially from what I have been told by many of my relatives in these countries and in Belgium and Norway.

Of course, such ridicule is quite different in character from, for example, the amusement tinged with private respect that is occasionally aroused in us by the English or the Americans, and if we ourselves were of the opinion that it was unjustified, we should have to endure it. This, however, in my opinion at least, is by no means the case. Whereas at one time the lack of a proper sense of dignity and bearing, especially among German commercial travelers, undermined our reputation abroad, the danger now exists that our merchant class may be starting to show signs of the bombastic manner that, certainly not without exception, but to a very large degree, tends to be fostered by the fraternity system. It is simply not good enough to pass this off with the comment that vulgarity is found everywhere. I do not mind admitting quite frankly, however much it might amuse some people, that I have personally experienced the difficulty of,

so to speak, shaking off these “mannerisms” that I involuntarily acquired as an immature young man at the university.

I could say the same, in all seriousness, from my own experience, about the effect of the fraternity student’s regular intake of alcohol on working ability, and especially on one’s ability to sustain one’s efforts in later years. What is worrying is not our nation’s historic love of drinking, which expresses itself in *occasional excesses*, however extreme, but the obligation, which forms part of the *training* of the fraternity student, to drink regularly and according to a prescribed plan. It makes no difference that in the fraternities today the quantities drunk are far smaller than they were when I was a student— pathetically small by the standards of those days. The fact that there are today some quite reputable dueling fraternities that permit lemonade to be served at the bar is another symptom of the way the physical and mental capacity for alcohol has fallen as the pressures of work have intensified. Whereas, however, a fraternity life that was based on lemonade but which retained the social forms that were originally based on alcohol would be a tasteless absurdity and a sign that its time had passed, any attempt to transfer the inevitable drinking culture to students who must expect to enter a very much tougher and more strenuous working life than (speaking from my own experience in legal practice) the average Prussian lawyer, would be a serious danger to their interests. Recently, however, I have again been emphatically assured, this time by someone in Cologne itself, who states that he knows it to be true from his personal contacts with fraternity students there, that for Cologne this drinking culture and all the other features of a traditional style of student fraternity life also characterizes fraternities at the schools of commerce.

I have been informed of the following fairly typical examples of particularly serious damage caused by fraternity life, some of which have been the subject of letters to me in recent weeks reporting specific instances: Firstly, the participation of the less well-off in fraternity life, which is not unusual despite the fact that, in its very nature and in my own experience, this lifestyle is affordable only by the wealthier students. At the schools of commerce, as at the universities these days, the real or imagined romance of this lifestyle seems no longer, in most cases, to be the decisive motive for participation. Instead, it is reported, and this would accord precisely with my own experience at the time when I was being “recruited,” that the expectation, fostered by the fraternities themselves, of obtaining connections in this way, often tips the balance for the less well-off in particular. For this class of person, however, membership of a fraternity means not only the risk of incurring debts for the sake of the chance of tangible benefits in the future, but also bitter disappointment and increased difficulty in coming to terms with their actual situation in later years, when the contrast between



the inevitable restrictions of routine office work and the freedom of student life makes itself felt.

As far as employees in commercial firms are concerned—to the extent that we are dealing with credible and plausible factual statements—they are voicing the fear that, in future, employers of office workers could give less consideration to performance than to the connections formed through fraternities, and to the social conventions that are acquired in the same way. I have occasionally heard comments from employers to the effect that the boss can find himself in an unenviable position if some of his employees feel able to use their supposed superior social position arising from their previous membership of a fraternity to give them an advantage over other employees or even over the boss himself. I should therefore like to emphasize even more strongly the suspicions, voiced by employers too, that references from former fellow fraternity members (and this could apply to the referee as well as the person being recommended) are beginning to have an influence on matters of appointment or dismissal. From my personal experience in the Prussian bureaucracy I can by no means regard these fears as groundless.

Continuing this theme, I have frequently heard the general fear expressed by both employers and employees that the very existence of a “diploma aristocracy” could disrupt the harmonious working atmosphere in an office. This trend would of course only be exacerbated if the fraternity ethos were to begin to take a hold and create new strata which— however much this might be officially denied— would in fact claim a specific prestige, and this would be for reasons unconnected with the position in the firm held by the individuals in question or any qualities of leadership they might display. In an extremely objective and detailed letter I received recently, this is illustrated by a whole series of authentic examples of incidents that in every case— and I want to stress this— have actually occurred in firms personally well known to me and involving employees who are also personally well known to me.

Firstly, there are a number of cases in which higher education fraternity students have actually had to be dismissed because of their manner and general behavior, which was instilled in them by their fraternities. There are also reports concerning a very important firm that, according to its own account, felt compelled, having appointed an academic candidate, to keep a close eye on his behavior toward the other employees for a certain period of time, having reserved the right to terminate his employment if he should give cause for complaint. A number of other cases reported to me should perhaps be left out of consideration, as they raise the question in my mind as to whether or not alongside the consequences of fraternity training individual characteristics might have had a part

to play in them. But the examples that *are* soundly based still seem adequate to justify the suspicions that I have expressed.

These suspicions relate primarily to the benevolent view of the fraternity system as the home of nothing more than harmless student jollity, a view that has been emphatically and publicly proclaimed on many occasions by the director of studies at the Cologne School of Commerce, a man I hold in particularly high esteem, as he well knows. Here, however, my opinion is diametrically opposed to his, and the aspects of the fraternity system about which he has expressed reservations and issued warnings actually form part of the innermost essence of the fraternity system, a matter in which, as a former fraternity student, I can claim some expertise.

Today, fraternity life is aiming for exclusivity and rigorous regimentation of a kind that was unknown in an earlier time: membership of a student fraternity now *cuts students off* from membership of other associations of a scientific, sporting or social nature and to an increasing extent prevents them from mixing with other students, or at least from those that think differently; the fraternity student is integrated into the circle of his brothers in the fraternity; he is subject to their control alone and his intellectual horizons are drastically narrowed.

I should like to make the observation that the oral and written information on which I have drawn has been totally free of any animosity toward the schools of commerce as such. Regarding the performance of school of commerce students with diplomas employed in offices, I have *not* met with any generally unfavorable judgment that tended directly to contradict the very favorable statements by the Cologne School of Commerce in its annual reports, whereas the same cannot be said for other employees; on the other hand, I have not come across any direct claims that a higher education led to enhanced employability *either*. Personally, I have always been firmly convinced of the usefulness of any intellectual work, especially the work of the schools of commerce, if it is carried out with thoroughness and integrity, as it undoubtedly is in the case of numerous schools of commerce students. And I would add that at least two commercial employees have assured me that they learnt something worthwhile at a school of commerce.

What I, personally, find problematical (and here I find myself at one with the views of many very experienced practitioners) is the idea that it is beneficial to create a class of officially approved business people. What I actually (not allegedly) said about the significance of the pursuit of the giving of satisfaction [*Satisfaktionsfähigkeit*], with its military and other implications, has been corroborated by specific statements from absolutely impartial sources relating to precisely this point. Since, moreover, I expressed the same misgivings seven years ago in a

published article,<sup>351</sup> it can clearly not be said that these misgivings were a product of a momentary whim or that they were not based on a great deal of thought, still less that I wanted to point the finger at those students, of whom I hope there are very many, who attend schools of commerce simply in order to work. That the views of higher education students on the aim and purpose of attendance at a school of commerce are at present in many cases still extraordinarily vague, as far as the work that is done there is concerned, has been confirmed to me by a prominent benefactor of the Mannheim School of Commerce, who knows a great deal about it. According to him, the most hardworking and most focused students tend to join the ranks of teachers of commercial subjects, while otherwise a certain aimlessness is a fairly common phenomenon.

It seems quite probable that, as in the case of other strata, expectation of social benefits, the wish to raise one's status and thus indirectly also to boost one's claim to appropriate remuneration, often play a bigger part than the desire to further one's knowledge. In this context we might mention the *Bund der Diplomingenieure* (Union of Diploma Engineers) as an example, or the eagerness, from which even journalists are not immune, to study at recognized specialist schools [*Fachschulen*] offering courses leading to appropriate qualifications.

As far as the Mannheim School of Commerce is concerned, I should like to mention specifically, in response to some rather unkind hints in the press, that I am particularly ill-equipped to pass judgment on the conditions there. When I was still in office, I was no supporter of the establishment of separate schools of commerce, and made no secret of the fact. This was why, in addition to health reasons, I took no part in the creation of the school of commerce there, which was initiated by some quite outstanding colleagues, who are friends of mine. The extraordinary proliferation of examinations, and their introduction to every kind of profession, seems to me very dubious at a time when, as I happen to know, outstanding administrators in Prussia are gradually coming round to the view that it could be time to create a counterweight to this constantly expanding examination bureaucracy by making it possible to attain positions of genuine leadership without following the prescribed educational route, if a feasible way could be found to do this. Unfortunately, it seems to me more than doubtful that such a way could be found, and the universities certainly have no cause whatever to take a superior attitude toward the schools of commerce. After all, nine tenths of their students are in exactly the same position as that in which I have hypothetically assumed an unknown percentage of school of commerce students to be.

---

351 "Agrarstatistische und sozialpolitische Betrachtungen zur Fideikommissfrage in Preußen," *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (1904), pp. 503-574.

However, in a speech such as the one I gave in Dresden, when making a comparison with developments in America, I could not fail to mention the developments occurring in our own country, with consequences that in my view are far from desirable, even if— and this is indeed the case— I felt that they could probably not be prevented. Naturally, none of this alters the fact that what I most desire for the existing schools of commerce is for their absolutely outstanding teaching staff to enjoy the rewarding experience of teaching as many students as possible of the highest possible caliber.

26. ONCE AGAIN WEBER — ALTHOFF <sup>352</sup>

Professor *Max Weber*— Heidelberg, writes:

Sir,

May I once more— hopefully for the last time— beg the hospitality of your columns.

I had neither demanded, nor wished to provoke, any response to my speech on the present Prussian educational administration, which was firmly based on facts. However, two such replies *have* appeared in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, and their publication has caused such *confusion* that now an *official organ of a great political party* which, despite all the differences in our standpoints, I greatly respect, has accused me of bringing up things from the distant past into the light of day with the aim of attacking present day Prussian ministerial officials. I for my part would have the strongest misgivings about bringing parliamentary personalities or political parties, who, by their very nature, are inevitably obliged to view such matters from a political perspective and for political ends, into university affairs concerning myself, or, worse still, of doing so by means of private information that is impossible to verify. I cannot, however, let this accusation rest. I am weary of the endless misunderstandings and am therefore obliged to make this public statement:

The following facts, which incriminate the *present* university administration, are well known and are *demonstrable in a court of law*:

1) *Contrary to the denials of the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, there has been no break with the customary practice of offering, *as a reward* for declining an appointment or for other services, the “*expectation*” of “*major*” *academic positions if and when they become vacant*. Such a procedure contravenes the spirit of the university statutes and is liable to breed *subservience*. It will inevitably lead to a *system of “un-*

---

352 “Nochmals Weber — Althoff,” *Tägliche Rundschau*, evening edition, second supplement, 9 November, 1911, p. 1.

derhand dealings" ["Schiebungen"], which encourages the growth among the new academic recruits of a type of person who feels himself to be a "creature" of which ever ministerial officials happen to hold the reins of power, and who believes he must demonstrate his worth as such. The practical effect for the universities will inevitably be to put scientific nobodies with a practical "utility value" into academic positions that should rightly belong exclusively to outstanding scholars. (I must stress that this expression is in no way applicable to Professor Bernhard, whose most serious mistake was merely that he failed to recognize the nature of what the educational administration was offering and the demands it was making before it was too late.) The practical effect of the system on the support for projects and practical political investigations, on the other hand, can only be that the latter are selected not for their objective [*sachlichen*] usefulness, but to provide opportunities for academic advancement.

2) Ministerial officials have imposed the *duty of silence* regarding written undertakings, requiring a statement from those concerned equivalent to their *word of honor*, thus deliberately contravening the established practice of obtaining expert opinions from the faculties, a practice established by law or custom and serving the long-term interests of the university. The imposition of such a duty of silence, under these circumstances, must be regarded as an improper demand; moreover, the way in which it was imposed flies in the face of official custom and practice and is inappropriate for an official body.

3) A professor was incited by officials of the educational administration to engage in behavior toward much more senior colleagues, some of whom enjoy world renown, that placed him in a moral dilemma (as the officials must have known it would), led to a tribunal comprising impartial colleagues, scholars of world renown to a man, declaring that he had behaved in an immature fashion and had broken his word, and earned him the unanimous official disapproval of his faculty.

By their interference in relationships among academic staff, officials have caused a serious breach of the academic peace and have thwarted attempts to restore it through a peaceful agreement and other collegial means. Moreover, they have even attempted to hinder the work of the academic tribunal recognized by the parties concerned. Finally, the same officials then set themselves up as judges in the very dispute in which they were one of the parties. This kind of behavior is in no way appropriate for an impartial educational administration: it is incompatible with the duties of an official body and not in the interests of the institutions of higher education or conducive to their reputation at home or abroad.

4) Following the conflict for which the educational administration was principally to blame and which was entirely responsible for allowing it to escalate in

the way it has done, a section of the press started a systematic campaign of vilification of the worst kind against scholars of outstanding merit, some of whom are world renowned. Officials of the educational administration passed on selected facts supportive of their case, known to them *in their official capacity*, to this section of the press in order to support this press campaign, which was designed to do serious damage to the reputation of the universities at home and abroad. Such behavior is incompatible with the duties of an official body, with the impartiality expected of an educational administration and, finally, with the most elementary duty of personal chivalry.

5) Officials of the educational administration have used official funds earmarked for advertising either to leave lucrative advertisements in place or to withdraw them, in a manner calculated materially to reward or harm the private proprietors of unofficial periodicals according to their personal stance in relation to the personal (not even public) views of the officials in question. This behavior was of a kind liable seriously to undermine public confidence in the impartiality of the educational administration, is incompatible with the best ethical standards of a state administration and is inappropriate for an official body.

If it is the case that we must now— *regretfully!*— maintain that officials of the educational administration thought they had every right to resort to the described methods and that they had grounds for the belief that this would not be met with stringent sanctions from their superiors, and if— as was indeed the case— their behavior was not publicly censured in official quarters, then we are entitled to make the *judgment* that we are confronted with *a system of conduct in the educational administration that is in urgent need of reform*. Since the Prussian Minister of Education nevertheless thought he could publicly praise the administration and the vision of his bureaucracy, and do so specifically at the expense of the universities, then it was only to be expected that *after a long angry silence there would be a protest from within the ranks of higher education teachers, the overwhelming majority of whom are united in their judgment on those events*.

It was exclusively for this purpose, rather than any political or personal end, that I spoke out. I repeat, I was motivated neither by any promptings from anyone else, nor by information from affected university colleagues, nor by any other arrangements. I wish to stress once more that by quoting examples from the period of Herr Althoff's administration I was merely illustrating the continuity of his system. I must also emphasize again that the outstanding achievements of this unquestionably brilliant man should not be overshadowed by the fact that some of the *means* he employed, in particular his treatment of other people, had to be firmly repudiated— and with regard to this latter point, I have good reason to

believe that plenty of other people will come forward and tell of similar experiences to my own.

I trust this will be my last word on this matter.

With highest regard,

Professor Max Weber

27. ONCE MORE THE STATEMENTS BY PROFESSOR DR. MAX WEBER (HEIDELBERG) <sup>353</sup>

Once again Professor Max Weber (Heidelberg) has sent us a reply to the article by our parliamentary colleague in issue no. 236 [5 or 6 November, 1911]. Professor Weber deals only with point 11 of the article, which reads: "On the other hand, one can only be astonished that Professor W. has waited until now to bring to light an alleged attempt to exercise influence that took place eighteen years ago, in order to attack the *present* ministry officials in the Prussian educational administration." Here is Professor Weber's response:

The assertion that one can only be "astonished" that I have waited until now to "bring to light" this incident from eighteen years ago "in order to attack the present ministry officials in the Prussian educational administration," is not only inaccurate, but also hurtful, and is without factual basis. There is nothing in my speech in Dresden or later to suggest that any such attack was being made or was intended. I must stress that I only referred to these past events in order to confirm (as I repeatedly explained afterwards in order to make it quite clear) that those events were remnants of a tradition that had been created by Herr Althoff and did cast a shadow when he was in office, but were more than compensated for during his administration by the great benefits of his organizational achievement, which I gratefully acknowledged.

It is true, though, as the overwhelming majority of German higher education teachers certainly agree, that the events to which I referred *really do* have relevance for accusations (and rather serious accusations at that) *in the present*. As I specifically stated, it is clear that in presenting my evidence I could not, despite knowing of many different examples, cite the experiences of third parties, as they must remain strictly confidential. As I have had no official connections with the Prussian educational administration for seventeen years, I obviously did not have more recent experience of my own to draw on.

---

353 "Noch einmal die Erklärungen des Herrn Professor Dr. Max Weber — Heidelberg," *Nationalliberale Correspondenz*, 10 November, 1911, p. 1.

Your correspondent's remarks concerning point II show that he has fallen victim to the reporting in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, which avoided any reference to the present situation, was at times quite disingenuous, and was likely, and evidently also intended, to distract attention away from the specific accusations that I had *actually* and explicitly made in public against the *current* ministry officials. I refer in this context to the comments of the editor in the *Kölnische Zeitung* of 29 October.

Very much against my inclination, I must take this opportunity *unambiguously and publicly* to state my complaints *once more* against the *current* educational administration. This time I propose to do so in a form that enables the facts to be judicially established. I am not inclined to allow an attack from such an influential source to go unanswered. On the other hand, however, for *these* purposes I do not propose to go down the path of seeking *private* information from parliamentary politicians. (No doubt your correspondent will be pleased to hear this.) My reason is that political parties, by their very nature, are compelled to subordinate even matters of this kind to political purposes and considerations. What I said was not intended as a political or personal attack but as a defense against what was, under the circumstances, particularly uncalled for criticism of the universities by the Minister of Education, nor, I must stress, was it occasioned by promptings or information from the university colleagues concerned. As before, I shall try, if at all possible, to avoid personally involving third parties.

## 28. REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE GERMAN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS<sup>354</sup>

20-22 October, 1912, Berlin

Firstly, it gives me great pleasure to announce the establishment of the German Statistical Society, under the chairmanship of the doyen of German statistics, Herr [Georg] von Mayr,<sup>355</sup> as a subsidiary group within the German Sociological Society. In due course, this society will report on its internal arrangements, organization, and activities. I merely wish to say, at this point, that, in accordance with our principles, this subsidiary society will enjoy absolute autonomy. It has merely been agreed that conferences involving both societies will, if possible, take place at the same time or immediately one after the other, and that joint projects will be specially encouraged. Furthermore, the first chairman of the subsidiary society will have a seat and a vote in this capacity on the executive committee of

---

<sup>354</sup> "Rechenschaftsbericht für die abgelaufenen beiden Jahre (über die Tätigkeit der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Soziologie)," *Verhandlungen des zweiten Deutschen Soziologentages vom 20.-22. Oktober 1912 in Berlin* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1913), pp. 75-79.

<sup>355</sup> Georg von Mayr (1841-1925), economist and statistician.



the German Sociological Society, and in turn, the German Statistical Society will accept a statutory member of the executive committee of the German Sociological Society with a seat and a vote on its own executive committee. In this way, ongoing contact between the two societies will be ensured. Negotiations are in progress on the establishment of a Society for Social Biology.

Currently, membership of our society is 334, which means that annual membership subscriptions amount to 2,311 marks, of which, however, the German Statistical Society receives a share agreed between the two executive committees, since its members are automatically members of the German Sociological Society. The funds of our society, including the external branches, currently total 3,223.38 marks.

So far, unfortunately, owing to completely fortuitous and personal circumstances, I can only give a preliminary indication of the projects that the German Sociological Society is planning. The first project that the German Sociological Society had planned to put into effect, the *Investigation into the Press*, has proved to be particularly ill-fated. Here, my own personal circumstances have unfortunately been decisive, as I personally took on the responsibility of setting this project, which I had proposed, in motion. In December, 1910 the relevant committee, with the right to coopt members, was constituted, and numerous respected press experts and practicing journalists promised their collaboration. Members of the executive committee of the *Verein deutscher Zeitungsverleger* (Association of German Newspaper Publishers) and of the *Reichsverband der Presse* (Reich Press Association) agreed to join our committee or to cooperate in other ways. Major newspapers agreed to give us an insight into their business methods by disclosing the significance of their principal items of income and expenditure and their percentage growth.

Everything was going well. Early in 1911, however, I found myself in a conflict that led by an inevitable chain of events to court proceedings involving the press and subsequently to proceedings involving another gentleman.<sup>356</sup> The first of these cases concerned the attempt to discover the source of an anonymous attack, despite the right of press confidentiality, which no honorable journalist will breach. The attempt finally succeeded. However, the whole affair dragged on for more than a year and a half, and proceedings were only concluded a few days ago. It was obvious that as things stood this quite unavoidable attempt to breach press confidentiality could turn the German press against me, which would have rendered the cooperation with working journalists that was indispensable for this project extraordinarily difficult. As the person responsible, I could not pos-

---

356 See Footnote 312 for the details.

sibly put at risk the very considerable funds for the project, which had been underwritten partly by the Heidelberg Academy, partly by the Institute for Public Welfare in Frankfurt am Main and partly by private individuals— 20,000 marks all together. When it became clear that court proceedings with the press were inevitable, I ceased my work on this project and the voluminous correspondence it entailed.

At that moment there was no other project to take its place. And until the affair is finally settled, I myself shall have to impose some restraint on my activity. To my great regret, everything has thus come to a temporary halt, although I certainly hope this will not be for very much longer. To the extent that it has been possible, I have continued to promote a few projects that had already been in progress for a long time. There is a project close to completion on the importance of “classified advertisements” for the German press, by a press business executive, and one on the press in Württemberg, by a practicing journalist. There is also work in progress on the West Prussian local press. In addition there are plans for a fairly large-scale project to examine, essentially, the development of the coverage of the arts and related questions. It is a fair assumption, therefore, that once my current purely personal difficulties have been resolved— whether because someone else takes over from me, or because it turns out that my fears that the press will now be suspicious of me will turn out to be groundless— the project we have planned will eventually come to fruition. Whatever happens, if the society wishes and it does not turn out to be ill-advised or impossible, I shall continue to offer my services, although I shall have to resign from my position as the society’s treasurer. That is essentially what I have to report to you.

For a mixture of practical and personal reasons, our association has run into considerable difficulties and is still not free of them. This is not unexpected in an association such as ours. In particular, in attempting to achieve our goals, we have not yet succeeded in matching the organization that in more than one respect has served as a model for us to follow, the fine, old-established Association for Social Policy, which was so splendidly led and endowed with such plentiful funding. In our work, unlike the Association for Social Policy, we do not have at our disposal the majority of the older widely renowned scholars, and thus the assistance of the great university institutes. Our members, who for the most part, like myself, are also keen members of the Association for Social Policy— although we also have members who are unhappy with or even downright hostile toward that organization— are predominantly professors who are active outside university institutes, or will only have the opportunity to move into them at a later stage. Furthermore, in contrast to the Association for Social Policy, whose

purpose consists precisely in the propagation of certain ideals, we have no interest in propaganda; our purpose is exclusively to pursue research.

It is, however, clear that discussion of the great contemporary questions of social policy in which the Association for Social Policy engages will do more to attract public attention and to arouse the personal emotions of those participating in the discussions than the calm investigation of questions of fact. Even the opponents of the ideals it represents do not dispute that the Association for Social Policy has been a magnificent association, and those of us who are also members of it will hope that it continues to be such. At the same time, however, they will also hope and desire that an organization will exist that caters for the different kind of work that we wish to undertake, and hope that our society will succeed in finally achieving the place for the science of sociology in Germany that it has long occupied in other countries, and of which, thanks to its current performance, this discipline is undoubtedly worthy, even if at one time it was viewed, not without some justification, with scorn. In conclusion, I should like to mention in this connection that the executive committee, in response to a suggestion by Professor Dr. Ferdinand Schmid<sup>357</sup> in Leipzig, has decided to consider the question of how best to ensure that sociology, which is now totally unrepresented at academic institutions, achieves its rightful status as a recognized teaching subject.

## 29. A CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN SALZBURG <sup>358</sup>

From academic circles:

The press recently reported that a new *university* is to be founded in *Salzburg*. This is true to the extent that efforts are being made to establish, in association with the existing theological faculty in Salzburg, a *denominationally controlled* institution of higher education in which even some of the secular professorships would be subject to denominational control.<sup>359</sup> It is not merely that a particular denominational *allegiance* would be required before appointment to certain professorships. Until recently, German universities also retained such relics of an earlier age in the shape of a few old-style foundation professorships, and here

---

<sup>357</sup> Ferdinand Schmid (1862-1925), Austrian statistician.

<sup>358</sup> "Eine katholische Universität in Salzburg," *Frankfurter Zeitung*, morning edition, 10 May, 1917, p. 1.

<sup>359</sup> The University of Salzburg was founded in 1622, but was closed in 1810. However, a Roman Catholic theological and philosophical section and a medical school remained within a lyceum (college) until 1850, when the lyceum was closed and the theological and philosophical section was raised to the rank of a university faculty. In 1962 the university was reconstituted.

and there this practice may still continue. Where it does still exist, it should be rejected as totally incompatible with a purely scientific selection of applicants, and indeed abolition is in progress everywhere. But such regulations do not guarantee any *inward* denominational attachment on the part of the teacher.

In Salzburg, however, for no fewer than *five* of the *secular* professorships, the Imperial nomination is to be made conditional on prior *approval by the archbishop*. In other words, this is a fully fledged “*missio canonica*” [“canonical mission”]. Such a university would not, of course, have the slightest prospect of being regarded and treated by academic bodies as a full and equal partner institution. Apparently a Salzburg Catholic association is supposed to provide funds and the present German university of *Czernowitz* is supposed to be relocated there. This university would, however, be in danger of suffering a severe loss of status. The plan is the product of the commercial interests of local Salzburg groups. The claim of these interested parties that a ministry of a south German federal state, and even a state secretary of the German Reich, were approached with a request for recognition of equality of rights and that approval was granted is somewhat at variance with the facts. In any case, such approval could never enable the younger students of such a denominational institution to be recognized as qualified to take a doctorate [*Promotion*], or their graduates to achieve a *Habilitation*, at a full university. Extra-academic bodies have no say in these matters.

### 30. DECLARATION OF WITHDRAWAL FROM THE ALLEMANNIA FRATERNITY <sup>360</sup>

17 October, 1918, Heidelberg

Dear [Friedrich] Keller,<sup>361</sup>

Would you please delete my name from the register of former Allemannia senior members.

I recall with gratitude what the fraternity [*Couleur*] meant to me as a young man, and am glad to know that its members— without hesitation— did their duty in the war. But I take the view that after the war the time for fraternities should be past, even if they actually continue to exist. The situation will not be conducive to the old “conviviality” typical of fraternity student life, and the ideal of manliness, for which the fraternities have earned praise, will have to look for other means of expression. I do not believe the existing fraternities can be “reformed” as long as the tradition of the fraternity house is continued, some-

---

<sup>360</sup> “Austrittserklärung aus der Burschenschaft Allemannia vom 17. Oktober 1918,” *12. Kriegsbericht der Burschenschaft Allemannia zu Heidelberg*, February, 1919.

<sup>361</sup> Friedrich Keller (1875-1926), jurist who also represented Weber in his case against Koch in 1912.

thing that I have always instinctively rejected as inappropriate for students as it requires a great deal of money, which in turn involves continued reliance on the "traditional" financial support of former members. In particular, I do not believe that the ever narrower intellectual inbreeding that has occurred over the course of time, brought about by the restrictions on one's circle of acquaintance, is likely to diminish. I do not regard exclusivity as an evil in itself by any means, but in view of the tasks awaiting Germany in the future I am concerned about the manner in which it manifests itself in the fraternities.

My views have come to differ so sharply from those of the fraternity that the fraternity itself will surely feel it right that in all friendship and with my best wishes I should now sever my links with it.

With my very best wishes to yourself,

Yours,

Max Weber

### 31. PROFESSOR MAX WEBER AND THE FRATERNITY STUDENTS <sup>362</sup>

We have received the following *letter*:

I should like to make these comments on the protest from various fraternities in our newspapers of 21 January [1919]:

It is highly regrettable that having ceased their public appearances in 1914, the fraternities decided to resume them in the *fourth* year of the war. In the light of the increasing severity of our situation, this was unjustifiable. Even apart from the completely inexcusable conduct of a number of members of a local fraternity in the late autumn of last year, and I believe they have since seen the error of their ways, for a fraternity to hold a foundation celebration *with all flags flying* just as news was arriving from the front of our *first defeat* (end of July last year) demonstrated *blatant disregard for the imperative need for the nation to show tact*, and fully deserved the sharp rebuke that I felt it right to administer.

It is not at all clear that the present state of the nation is appropriate for this kind of thing. The gentlemen behind this protest need to be told that while we know that fraternity students did their duty in the field, other people of every background did so as well, including those who, at least from the traditional standpoint of dueling fraternities, were regarded as "*incapable of giving satisfaction*" and were treated accordingly. The current tendency to focus on the service rendered by fraternity students is therefore rather unwelcome. Those who, at a time

---

362 "Professor Max Weber und die Couleurstudenten," *Heidelberger Neueste Nachrichten*, 27 January, 1919, p. 2.

of national disgrace, think that their special insignia gives them a claim to some kind of *special honor*, and who thereby at a time of the nation's terrible economic ruin ostentatiously proclaim that their parents' wealth is sufficient to meet the necessary extra expense, would need to take upon themselves special service to the nation of quite extraordinary magnitude to make this appear justified or even humanly tolerable. And the somewhat sentimental claim made by the *fraternities* to be serving the "spiritual interests" of the *citizens*, does not represent such special service to the nation, either now or in the future, nor can it be valued particularly highly. The acknowledgement of the duty to do *more "political"* work (to do more of other kinds of work as well?) does not count for much either. Debating academic philistinism like this is unprofitable.

On the other hand, I am happy to stress that the mentality that speaks out of private letters I have received from other fraternity sources here in Heidelberg conveys a significantly different, and more manly, impression, however great our differences of opinion might be. And, as I said in my answering letters, I am happy to discuss with the writers what I think about these matters in principle, if they wish me to do so. And, naturally, it matters to me what the continuation of the fraternity life *means to them*, if for no other reason than because I can scarcely avoid returning to this subject when the occasion arises.

Yours faithfully,

Max Weber

## 32. THE DEMONSTRATIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY <sup>363</sup>

Following our report on a cancelled lecture in issue no. 29, Professor Dr. Max Weber has sent us a letter to provide a fuller understanding of the facts. We publish extracts below:

1) There was no question of the rector's words being "twisted" by the student, who, I gather, was a socialist and had a blameless reputation. Had I been present, my understanding would have been *the same*, even after hearing the rector repeat his own words, although, from an objective point of view, this would have been a misunderstanding. An apology for the error was made.

2) The expression "gang" was used, by a *member of the student committee*, not only in relation to that gentleman, but to a whole *group* of students. On learning of the incident, I immediately made an urgent plea, which I later repeated both verbally and in writing, to the rector to remedy the situation (together with a

---

<sup>363</sup> "Die Demonstrationen in der Universität." *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, evening edition, 23 January, 1920, p.4. These events occurred at the University of Munich, middle January, 1920. See Marianne Weber, *op.cit.*, pp. 672-673.

request “not to underestimate my determination to bring about the desired result”), but by Monday evening this had *still* not been done. Faced with the choice of going to the press with this matter, which was a question of *academic propriety*, I naturally preferred to go back to the place where the incident occurred (the main lecture hall) to demand that such cases of insulting language against powerless minorities should be settled in a chivalrous manner by unconditional withdrawal, adding: “Anyone who refuses to do so is a scoundrel.”

Naturally, I would not change a word of this *general* remark, and would say exactly the same in any similar case in the future, whether the minority concerned were Catholic, liberal, conservative or socialist, and I should certainly not let any undignified childish behavior prevent me. This particular case was settled in a thoroughly satisfactory manner at the last minute on Wednesday, which gave me a welcome opportunity to withdraw the remark that gave offense to the student— even though any offense was merely hypothetical— totally and unconditionally.

3) It was (and still is) my view that it is the self-evident duty of an academic teacher— especially one who believes that the university and the army should be completely nonpolitical— to call ridiculous, though perhaps not inconsequential, actions such as the proclamation of an (alleged) agreement between politically inspired students and sections of the *Reichswehr* (Imperial Army) by their true name— student follies.

## POLITICS AS A VOCATION<sup>364</sup>

The lecture you have asked me to give will necessarily disappoint you in a number of ways. In a speech on politics as a vocation<sup>365</sup> you will inevitably expect me to express a view on questions of the day. This, however, will only be done at the end in a purely formal manner in relation to certain questions concerning the importance of political activity within the totality of the conduct of life. Today's lecture will have to exclude all questions relating to what *kind* of politics we *should* engage in, in other words, what our political activity *should* consist of. This is because such questions have nothing to do with the general question of what politics as a vocation is and what it can mean. Now to the subject matter!

What do we understand by politics? The concept is extraordinarily broad and embraces every kind of independent *leadership*. One speaks of the exchange policy [*Politik*]<sup>366</sup> of the banks, the discount policy of the *Reichsbank* (German National Bank), or the policy of a labor union in a strike. One can speak of the schools policy of a municipal or rural community, of the policy of the committee of an association under a particular leadership, and even of the policy of an astute wife who wishes to guide her husband. Naturally, such a broad concept does not underlie this evening's reflections. Our understanding of it today is only: the

---

364 "Politik als Beruf." In Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Wolfgang Schluchter in collaboration with Birgitt Morgenbrod, eds., *Wissenschaft als Beruf 1917/1919—Politik als Beruf 1919* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1994, pp. 35-88. Originally given as a lecture on 28 January, 1919 at the University of Munich to the *Freistudentische Bund. Landesverband Bayern* (Free Student Association. Bavarian branch).

365 See the glossary.

366 *Politik* can be translated as either "politics" or "policy." [Tr.]



leadership, or the influence exerted on the leadership, of a *political* association, hence today a *state*.

What, though, from the sociological point of view, is a *political* association? What is a “state?” This cannot be defined sociologically on the basis of what it does. There is almost no task that has not at some time been taken on by a political association. At the same time, there is also no task of which it could be said that it is always and *exclusively* to be performed by those associations that are termed political, or by states, in today’s language, or by the historical precursors of the modern state. Rather, one can ultimately only define the modern state sociologically by reference to a specific *means* that is proper to it, as it is to every political association, namely, physical force. “Every state is founded on force,” as [Leon D.] Trotsky<sup>367</sup> once said in Brest-Litovsk.<sup>368</sup> That is indeed true. If there had existed social structures for which force as a means was unknown, *then* the concept of the “state” would have lapsed; *then* something that would be called “anarchy,” in this particular sense of the word, would have emerged.

Force is not the normal or sole means available to the state. There can be no question of that. It is, however, specific to it. Today, the relationship of the state to force is a particularly intimate one.<sup>369</sup> In the past, many different associations, from the clan onward, have regarded force as a quite normal means. Today, by contrast, we must say: The state is the human community that, within a defined territory— and the key word here is “territory”— (successfully) claims the *monopoly of legitimate force* for itself. The specific characteristic of the present is that the right to use physical force is only granted to any other associations or individuals to the extent that the *state* itself permits this. The state is seen as the sole source of the “right” to use force. For us, therefore, “politics” means the attempt to gain a share of power or to influence the distribution of power, whether it be among states or among groups of people living within a state.

Essentially, this definition corresponds to current usage. When a question is said to be a “political” question, or a minister or official a “political” official, or a decision “politically” conditioned, what is always meant is that interests concerned with the distribution of power, the preservation of power, or shifts in power, are critical factors in the answer to that question, or that they condition this decision, or determine the activity of the official concerned. Anyone who engages in politics is seeking power, whether it be power as a means to

---

367 Leon D. Trotsky (1879-1940), Communist theorist and Commissar of Foreign Affairs in Soviet Russia 1917-1918.

368 The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Central Powers was signed on 3 March, 1918, ending military hostilities.

369 A reference to the German Revolution, November, 1918 – February, 1919, which resulted in the proclamation of a republic on 9 November, 1918 and further conflicts.

achieve other goals — idealistic or egoistic — or power “for its own sake,” in other words, in order to enjoy the feeling of prestige that it gives.

Like the political associations that historically precede it, the state is a relationship of *rule* by people over people based on the means of legitimate force (i.e., force that is regarded as legitimate). In order for the state to prevail, the people ruled over must therefore *submit* to the authority claimed by those ruling at the time. When do they do this and why do they do it? On what inward grounds of justification and on what external means is this rule based?

In principle, the inward justifications, i.e., the grounds of *legitimacy* of rule, to start with them, are three in number. Firstly, the authority of the “eternal yesterday,” the authority of *custom*, which is sanctified by validity from time immemorial and by habitual observation. This is “traditional” rule, such as that exercised by the old-style patriarch and patrimonial prince. Then there is the authority of the special personal *gift of grace* (charisma), absolutely personal devotion, and personal trust in revelation, in heroism or in other leadership qualities of an individual. This is “charismatic” authority, such as that exercised by the prophet or— in the political sphere— by the elected warlord or the plebiscitary ruler, the great demagogue and the party leader. Finally, there is rule by virtue of “legality,” by virtue of the belief in the validity of a legal *statute* and the validity of “competence” that is based on rationally created rules. This means an attitude of obedience in the fulfillment of statutory duties: the kind of rule exercised by the modern “servant of the state” and all those bearers of power who resemble him in this regard.

It is obvious that in reality absolutely massive motives of fear and hope— fear of the revenge of magical powers or the revenge of the ruler, hope of reward in this world or the next— as well as interests of the most various kinds, affect compliance. More on this shortly. But if one asks about the reasons for this compliance in terms of “legitimacy,” then one encounters these three “pure” types. And these conceptions of legitimacy and their inward justification are of very considerable importance for the structure of rule. Admittedly, the pure types are rarely found in reality, but today it is impossible to go into the extremely complex variations, transitional forms, and combinations of these pure types. This is a matter for “general political science.”

What interests us here particularly is the second of those types: that which arises from the devotion of those obeying the purely personal “charisma” of the “leader.” It is here that the roots of the idea of the *vocation* in its supreme manifestation are to be found. Devotion to the charisma of the prophet or the leader

in war, or to that of the really great demagogue in the *ekklesia*<sup>370</sup> or in parliament, means, after all, that he personally is regarded as the leader of people who has been inwardly “called,” and they do not submit to him for reasons of custom or statute, but because they believe in him. He himself, if he is more than a narrow-minded and vain upstart, here today and gone tomorrow, lives for his cause, and “is dedicated to his work.”<sup>371</sup> However, his disciples, his liegemen, and his quite personal, partisan supporters, are devoted to his person and qualities. In both of the most important figures of the past, the magician and the prophet on the one hand, and the chosen warlord, the gang leader, the *condottiere*,<sup>372</sup> on the other, leadership has emerged in all regions and historical epochs. However, the kind that concerns us more closely is peculiar to the West, namely, *political* leadership. This kind of leadership first appeared in the shape of the free “demagogue,” originating from the territory of the individual city state, found only in the West, and especially within the Mediterranean culture. It then appeared in the shape of the parliamentary “party leader,” who came from the background of the constitutional state, which is indigenous to the West alone.

These politicians by “vocation,” in the truest meaning of the word, are, of course, never the sole determining figures in the mechanism of the political power struggle. What is absolutely decisive is the resources that they have at their disposal. How do the politically ruling powers manage to assert their rule? The question needs to be asked for every kind of rule, including political rule in all its forms— traditional, legal and charismatic.

Any system of rule that demands continuous administration requires the adaptation of human action to obedience toward those rulers who lay claim to being the bearers of legitimate force. The system further requires, through this obedience, control of such material resources as may be necessary for the application of physical force, i.e., administrative personnel and the material means of administration.

The administrative staff, which outwardly represents the system of political rule, as well as any other system, is not, naturally, bound to obedience to the holder of power through the idea of legitimacy which has just been mentioned. It is also bound by two means that appeal to personal interest: material reward and social honor. Fiefdoms for vassals, sinecures for patrimonial officials, salaries for modern civil servants, knightly honor, the privileges of the estates, and the

---

370 In the ancient Greek city states, especially in Athens, a regularly convoked assembly of citizens.

371 A reference to Nietzsche: “I aspire after my work!,” *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, translated by R.J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 336.

372 A leader or a member of a troop of mercenaries, originally engaged to fight in numerous wars among the Italian states.

honor of the official— these constitute the rewards. The fear of losing them is the final decisive basis for the solidarity of the administrative staff with the holder of power. The principle also applies in the case of rule by a charismatic leader: war honors and booty for the military, and, for the demagogue's followers, "spoils":<sup>373</sup> the exploitation of the ruled through a monopoly of office holding, politically determined profits and vanity rewards.

To maintain any rule by force requires certain external material resources, just as it does for an economic enterprise. All state orders can be classified according to whether they are based on the principle that the staff— officials or whoever they may be— on whose obedience the ruler must be able to count, have in their *own* possession the means of administration, whether these consist of money, buildings, war material, fleets of carriages, horses, or whatever, or whether the administrative staff is "separated" from the means of administration, in the same sense that within the capitalist enterprise today the employees and the proletariat are "separated" from the material means of production.<sup>374</sup> The question is whether the administration is under the *direction* of the ruler, who organizes it himself and has it administered by personal servants, officials in his employment or personal favorites and confidants, none of whom are owners, i.e., not owners in their own right, of the material resources, but are directed in these matters by the ruler, or whether the opposite is the case. This distinction runs through all the administrative organizations of the past.

We shall call a political association in which the material means of administration are wholly or partly under the control of the dependent administrative staff an association structured according to "*estates*" [*ständisch*]. For example, the vassal in the feudal system met the administration and judicial costs of the fief granted to him out of his own pocket, and had to supply his own equipment and provisions for war; his subvassals did the same. This, naturally, had consequences for the power position of the lord, which rested solely on personal allegiance and on the fact that the fiefdom and the social honor of the vassal derived their "legitimacy" from the lord.

Everywhere, however, right back to the earliest political formations, we also find that the lord exercised direct control through those who were personally dependent on him: slaves, domestic officials, servants, personal "favorites," and beneficiaries, who he rewarded with an allowance in kind or money. Using these people he aimed to gain control of the administration, and to find the funds from his own pocket and from the revenues of his patrimonial estates to create a purely personal army that was dependent on him, because it was equipped and

---

373 In English [Tr.]

374 See Footnote 176 in *Science as a Vocation*.

provisioned from his stores, magazines, and armories. Whereas in an association based on “estates” [*ständisch*], the lord ruled with the aid of an autonomous “aristocracy,” thus sharing rule with it, here he relied on either domestic bond servants or on plebeians, strata with no property and lacking any social honor of their own, who were totally bound to him in material terms and had no power of their own with which to compete with him. All forms of patriarchal and patrimonial rule, sultanic despotism,<sup>375</sup> and the bureaucratic state order, are of this type, especially the latter, the most rational form of which is particularly characteristic of the modern state.

In every case, the development of the modern state gathered momentum when the prince set in motion the expropriation of the independent “private” bearers of administrative power, who existed alongside him: the owners of administrative, military and financial resources and politically useful assets of all kinds. The whole process exactly parallels the development of the capitalist enterprise through the gradual expropriation of independent producers. In the end, we see that in the modern state control over all political resources comes together to a single pinnacle, and that no individual official any longer personally owns the money that he spends, or the buildings, stores, tools, or machines of war at his disposal. Thus, in the “state” of today— and this is essential to the concept— the “separation” of the administrative staff, i.e., of the administrative officials and workers, from the material resources has been completed. This is where the most modern development begins. We are witnessing an attempt to usher in the expropriation of these expropriators<sup>376</sup> of the political resources and thus of the political power. What the revolution has at least achieved is that its leaders have taken the place of the legally established authorities, have established themselves, through usurpation or election, in positions of executive power over the political personnel and the administrative apparatus and derive their legitimacy, whether justifiably or not, from the will of the governed. Another question is whether this— at least apparent— success entitles it to cherish the hope of being able to carry out this expropriation within the capitalist economic enterprises when the leadership, although closely analogous, is governed in its innermost core by quite different laws from those of the political administration. We shall express no view on this today. I wish to state for our consideration merely the purely *conceptual* fact that the modern state is an institutional association of rule, which within a given territory has succeeded in gaining a monopoly

---

375 Absolute rule by a Muslim sovereign.

376 A reference to Marx: “The expropriators are expropriated,” “Capital: A Critique of Political Economy.” In *Karl Marx/Frederick Engels Collected Works* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1996), Vol. 35, p. 763.

of legitimate physical force as a means of ruling, and to this end has united material resources in the hands of its leaders, after expropriating all the autonomous estate functionaries who previously controlled them in their own name. It then established itself in the person of its supreme head in their place.

In the course of this process of political expropriation, which has been played out in every country in the world with varying degrees of success, “professional politicians” in a *second* sense appeared, firstly in the service of the prince. These were people who did not desire to be lords themselves, like charismatic leaders, but entered the *service* of political lords. In this struggle they placed themselves at the disposal of the prince, earning a living from helping him to achieve his political aims, while at the same time gaining an ideal [*ideell*] purpose for their lives. Again, it is *only* in the West that we find *this* kind of professional politician in the service of powers others than merely the princes. In the past they were their most important instrument of power and of political expropriation.

Before we discuss them in greater detail, let us be completely clear about exactly what the existence of such “professional politicians” involves in all its aspects. It is possible to engage in “politics”— which means to attempt to influence the distribution of power among and within political groupings— both as an “occasional” politician and as a part-time or full-time politician, just as in an economic activity. We are all “occasional” politicians whenever we hand in our ballot paper or express our will in a similar way, such as by expressing approval or protest at a “political” meeting, by making a “political” speech, and so on, and for many people this is their total connection with politics. Today, “part-time” politicians are, for example, all the local agents and executive committee members of party political associations who, as is the norm, only engage in this activity when necessary and do not *primarily* “make it their life” in either a material or an ideal [*ideell*] sense. The same applies to the members of state councils and similar advisory bodies, which only act when called upon, as well as to those quite sizeable groups of our parliamentarians who only engage in politics when parliament is actually in session. In the past, such groups were commonly found among the estates. By the “estates” we mean those people who, in their own right, held military resources or material resources that were important for administration, or held personal prerogatives. A high proportion of them were very far from devoting their entire life, by choice or otherwise, to the service of politics, or even doing so on an occasional basis. Rather, they used their lordly power for the purpose of securing an income or even making a profit, and only became politically active in the service of the political association when their lord or fellow members of the estate specially demanded this. It was no different for some of the auxiliary staff that the prince engaged to help him in the struggle

to create a political enterprise of his own that would be at his sole disposal. The “home-based counselors” [*Räte von Haus aus*]<sup>377</sup> and, even further back in the past, a considerable proportion of the advisers who gathered in the “*curia*” [court]<sup>378</sup> and the prince’s other advisory bodies, were of this type.

But the prince could not manage with just these occasional or part-time auxiliaries. He had to assemble a staff of auxiliaries who were totally and exclusively devoted to his service as their *principal* profession. The provenance of these staff determined to a very large degree the make-up of the dynastic political structure that came into being, and indeed the whole profile of the relevant culture. This was even more certainly true of those political associations that totally dispensed with, or at least very greatly restricted, the power of the prince and constituted themselves politically as (so-called) “free” communities— not “free” in the sense of freedom from the rule of force, but in the sense of an absence of the power of princes, a power that was legitimated by tradition and mostly religiously sanctified, and was the exclusive source of all authority. Historically, these communities had their home in the West. The seed from which they grew was the city as a political association, and this was the form in which they first made their appearance in the Mediterranean cultural sphere. What, in all these cases, were politicians who made politics their *principal* profession like?

There are two ways of making a vocation out of politics. Either one lives “for” politics, or one lives “from” politics. These are by no means mutually exclusive alternatives. As a rule, at least ideally [*ideell*], but mostly materially as well, one does both. Whoever lives “for” politics “makes it his life,” in the *inward* sense. He either enjoys the naked possession of the power he exercises, or he nourishes his inward equilibrium and self-esteem with the consciousness of giving *meaning* to his life by serving a “cause”. Probably every serious person who lives for a cause, also lives from this cause. The distinction therefore refers to a far more weighty aspect of the matter: the economic. Whoever strives to make politics a permanent source of *income* lives “from” politics— “for” politics, he for whom this is not the case. Under the dominance of private ownership, some, if you will, very trivial conditions must be met in order for someone to be able to live “for” politics in this economic sense. He must, under normal circumstances, be economically independent of the income that politics brings. This means quite simply: either he must be wealthy or his situation must at least be one that provides a sufficient income to live on. This, at least, applies in normal circumstances. Admittedly, the warlord’s followers are not affected by the normal economic conditions any more

---

377 Advisors who did not live at the court and only participated in the monarch’s council when it met in their area.

378 The king’s court that met wherever the king was in residence.

than the followers of a revolutionary hero of the street. Both live from booty, robbery, confiscation, levies, and the imposition of worthless currency— all of which amount to much the same thing. But these are necessarily exceptional phenomena. In the normal economy only a person's own wealth serves this purpose. But this alone is not enough. He must, in addition, be economically "available"; that is, his income must not depend on his personally always devoting his energy and his thinking fully or at least overwhelmingly to his work.

The person who is most unquestionably available in this sense is the *rentier*; that is, the person who draws an income without doing any work whatever. This income could come from ground rent, as in the case of the landlords of the past or the large-scale landowners and highly placed aristocrats of the present— in ancient times and in the Middle Ages it included income from slaves or bond servants— or from securities or similar modern sources of investment income. Neither the worker *nor*— and this is particularly noteworthy— the employer, including, and indeed *especially*, the modern large employer, is in this sense available. This is because the employer in particular— the industrial employer very much more than the agricultural employer, given the seasonal character of agriculture— is tied to his business and is *not* available. It is usually very difficult for him to find someone to take his place even temporarily. It is the same for the physician, for example, and the more eminent and busy he is, the less available he is. For purely technical reasons, this is easier for the lawyer, which is why lawyers have often had a disproportionately significant, and indeed dominant, representation among professional politicians. We shall not pursue this analysis any further, but draw some conclusions from it.

Leadership of a state or a party by people who (in the economic sense of the word) live exclusively for politics and not from politics necessarily implies a "plutocratic" recruitment of the leading political strata. Admittedly, this does not mean that the converse is true; that the existence of such a plutocratic leadership implies, equally, that the politically dominant stratum would *not* also aim to live "from" politics, in other words, make use of its political dominance for its private economic interests. That is quite obvious. There has never been a stratum that did not do that in some way or other. It only means: professional politicians are not obliged to seek remuneration directly *for* their political performance in the way that someone with no financial means would be. And neither does it mean that politicians without independent means merely or even primarily have the provision of their private economic needs by means of politics in view, and are not, or not primarily, thinking of the "cause." Nothing could be further from the truth. For a wealthy man, concern about the "security" of his economic situation is, whether consciously or unconsciously, a cardinal point in his entire



orientation of life. The political idealism that is totally unrestrained and unconditional is found, if not exclusively, then certainly especially, among those strata who own nothing, standing right outside the circle of those with an interest in preserving the economic order of a particular society. This applies especially in exceptional, revolutionary eras.

What a plutocratic leadership actually implies is that a *non*-plutocratic recruitment of politically interested persons, the leaders and their followers, is naturally bound to the condition that these interested persons are supplied with a regular and reliable income from the practice of politics. Politics can either be practiced in an "honorary" capacity by, as the saying goes, "independent," i.e., wealthy people, especially *rentiers*, or the leadership is opened up to those who own nothing, and then they must be remunerated. The professional politician who lives *from* politics may be purely a "beneficiary" or a salaried "official." In this case he either draws an income from fees and gifts of money for certain services—tips and bribes are merely an unregulated and formally illegal version of this category of income—or he draws a regular payment in kind or monetary salary, or both alongside each other. He can take on the character of an "entrepreneur," like the *condottieri* or those who leased or purchased an office in the past, or like the American boss,<sup>379</sup> who looks upon his expenses as capital investment that he can use to make his influence felt and so generate an income. Or he can draw a regular wage, like an editor or party secretary or modern minister or political officer.

In the past, fiefdoms, gifts of land, benefits of all kinds, and particularly, with the development of the money economy, rewards in the form of gifts of money, were the typical remuneration dispensed by princes, victorious conquerors or successful party leaders, to their followers. Today, in parties, newspapers, co-operatives, sickness insurance schemes, local communities and states, it is offices of all kinds that are being awarded by the party leaders for faithful service. All party struggles are not only fought out for specific goals, but also, and especially, for office patronage. All the struggles between particularist and centralist tendencies in Germany revolve especially around the question of which authorities—those of Berlin or Munich, Karlsruhe or Dresden—hold the patronage of office in their hands. Any reductions in their share of offices are felt by the parties as a more severe blow than action taken against their objective goals. A party political reshuffle of prefects<sup>380</sup> in France was regarded as a greater upheaval and

---

<sup>379</sup> In English [Tr.]

<sup>380</sup> Administrators of the departments (districts) appointed by the central government. One of their principal functions was to ensure the government a safe parliamentary majority.

always aroused more consternation than a modification of the government program, which had little more than rhetorical significance.

Some parties have become nothing more than parties for position hunters. This is especially the case in America, ever since the old conflicts over the interpretation of the constitution died down. Such parties are quite prepared to alter their substantive program in order to bring them more votes. In Spain, until recently the two major parties agreed to alternate in a roster by means of “elections” rigged by the authorities. This was done in order to provide their supporters with offices. In the Spanish colonies, both the so-called “elections” and the so-called “revolutions” were always about the victors wanting to get their snouts in the trough provided by the state. In Switzerland, the parties divide up the offices among themselves on the basis of the proportionality principle without animosity, and a good many of our “revolutionary” constitutional drafts, as, for example, the one that was first drawn up for Baden, aimed to extend the system to the ministerial positions, and so treated the state and its offices as nothing more than an institution for the provision of benefits. The Center Party,<sup>381</sup> in particular, was enthusiastic about it, and even included the proportional distribution of offices according to religious denomination, that is to say, without regard to performance, in its program. With the rising number of offices, owing to the general bureaucratization and an increasingly widespread desire to hold them as a form of *reliable* provision, this tendency is now on the increase in all parties, and for their followers such parties are coming to be seen more and more as merely serving the purpose of securing this kind of provision.

Contrasting with this, we have the development of modern officialdom, through many years of special training, into an expert and highly qualified intellectual workforce with a sense of *honor* reflecting their status [*ständisch*] that has been highly developed in the interests of integrity. Without such a sense of honor, the danger of dreadful corruption and despicable philistinism would hover over us, and would also threaten the purely technical performance of the state apparatus, whose importance for the economy, especially in view of increasing socialization, has constantly risen and will continue to rise. The amateurish administration by the booty politicians, who in the United States changed hundreds of thousands of officials, right down to the mailman, depending on the outcome of the presidential election, has long since been undermined by the civil service reform.<sup>382</sup> This development has been brought about by purely technical, inescapable requirements of the administration. In Europe, specialist officialdom,

---

<sup>381</sup> See Footnote 214 in the articles on academia.

<sup>382</sup> In English here and subsequently. [Tr.] The Pendleton Act of 1883 created the United States Civil Service Commission and a merit system of recruitment for the federal government.

with division of labor, gradually developed over a period of half a thousand years. The Italian cities and *signorie*<sup>383</sup> first started this development, whereas among the monarchies it was the conquering Norman states that led the way.

The decisive step was taken in the case of the *finances* of the princes. With the administrative reforms of Emperor Maximilian I,<sup>384</sup> it can be seen how difficult it was for the officials, even under the pressure of extreme hardship and Turkish<sup>385</sup> rule, to oust the prince in this sphere, which, after all, was the least able to bear the amateurism of a prince who at that period was above all a knight. The development of the techniques of warfare was responsible for the emergence of the specialist officer, while the refinement of the judicial process necessitated the trained lawyer. In these three areas specialized officialdom finally triumphed in the more developed states in the sixteenth century. Thus, alongside the rise of the absolutism of the princes at the expense of the estates, the princes' autocratic rule began to be ceded to the specialist officials who had made possible this victory over the estates in the first place. Simultaneously with the rise of the specially trained *officialdom*, the development of the "leading *politicians*" occurred, although this took place through a far less noticeable transition. Of course, such influential advisers of the princes had actually existed since earliest times and all over the world. In the Orient, the need as far as possible to relieve the sultan from personal responsibility for the success of the government led to the creation of the typical figure of the "Grand Vizier."<sup>386</sup>

In the West, in the age of Charles V,<sup>387</sup> the period of [Niccolò] Machiavelli,<sup>388</sup> especially under the influence of the Venetian ambassadors' reports, which were read with passionate enthusiasm in diplomatic circles, diplomacy first became a *consciously* cultivated art, most of whose classically educated devotees treated each other as a trained stratum of initiates, similar to the classical Chinese statesmen of the last period of the Warring States.<sup>389</sup> It was constitutional development that finally and emphatically led to the need for a formally unified leadership of the *entire* policy of government, including domestic policy, under a leading statesman. Until then obviously such individuals had always been present to act as advisers to the princes, or rather, in reality, their leaders. But the

---

383 Governing authorities in the Italian cities in the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries run by a lord or despot.

384 Maximilian I (1459-1519), Holy Roman Emperor, 1493-1519.

385 It reached its westernmost limits with the conquest of a large part of Hungary and the siege of Vienna in 1529.

386 Historically, the chief minister of the sovereign in some Muslim countries, especially in Turkey under Ottoman rule.

387 Charles V (1500-1558), Holy Roman Emperor, 1530-1556.

388 Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), Italian statesman and political theorist.

389 It lasted from 475 B.C. to 221 B.C. when China was divided into a number of kingdoms.

organization of officialdom had at first, even in the most advanced states, gone in a different direction. *Collegial* supreme administrative authorities had arisen. In theory, and, to a gradually diminishing degree, in fact, they met under the chairmanship of the prince in person, who took the decision. This collegial system involved reports reflecting differing viewpoints, and the casting of votes, resulting in a majority and a minority view. Alongside the official highest authorities, the ruler therefore surrounded himself with purely personal confidants— the “cabinet”— and through these passed on his decisions, after consideration of the resolutions of the state council— or whatever the supreme state authority was called. In this way, the prince, whose position was increasingly becoming that of a dilettante, tried to distance himself from the inevitably growing importance of the officials with their specialist training while still retaining supreme control in his own hands. This latent struggle between specialist officialdom and autocratic rule went on everywhere.

The situation only changed with the rise of parliaments and the aspirations of the party leaders to gain power. Very different conditions led to a result that was outwardly the same, although there were certain differences. Wherever the dynasties held real power in their hands— as in Germany in particular— the princes shared a common interest with the officials in *opposing* parliament and its claims to power. The officials had an interest in ensuring that holders of the top positions, in other words, the ministerial positions, were drawn from their ranks, thus providing opportunities for the promotion of officials. For his part, the monarch had an interest in being able to use his own judgment to appoint ministers from among those who were loyal to him. Both parties, however, were interested that the political leadership should face parliament as a united front, and that the collegial system should therefore be replaced by a single head of cabinet. In addition, the monarch needed, in a purely formal sense, if only to remain detached from the party struggle and from party attacks, a single individual who was responsible for shielding him; that is, he needed someone to be answerable to and engage with parliament, and to negotiate with the parties. All these interests worked in the same direction here: a position was created for a single minister to direct the officialdom.

The development of parliamentary power worked even more strongly in the direction of unification in countries where, as in England, parliament gained the upper hand over the monarch. Here the “cabinet,” with the single parliamentary “leader”<sup>390</sup> at its head, developed as a committee of what was the only really decisive power, even though this was not officially recognized in law: the

---

390 In English here and subsequently. [Tr.]

party with the majority at any given time. The official collegial bodies were not organs of the real ruling power: the party, and could not therefore be the bearers of real government. In order to assert power internally and pursue grand policy externally, a ruling party needed an effective instrument, comprising solely its truly leading men, which would participate in confidential negotiations and be able to communicate with the public, and especially the public's representatives in parliament. The cabinet was such an instrument. The party also particularly needed a cabinet head, who would be a leader responsible for all decisions. This English system was then adopted on the Continent in the shape of parliamentary ministries, and only in America, and the democracies influenced by America, did a different system prevail. This system placed the leader of the victorious party, who had been chosen by direct popular vote,<sup>391</sup> at the head of an apparatus of officials nominated by him. He needed the approval of parliament only in budgetary and legislative matters.

The development of politics into an "organization," requiring training in the struggle for power and the methods to be employed, the kind that the modern party system has developed, brought about the division of public servants into two categories, which were clearly, though by no means totally, distinct: specialist officials on the one hand, "political" officials on the other. The "political" officials, in the true sense of the word, are generally externally recognizable by the fact that they can be moved or given notice at any time, or "suspended," like the French prefects and comparable officials in other countries. This is in sharp contrast to the "independence" of officials with a judicial function. In England, this category includes those who are required by established convention to leave office when there is a change of parliamentary majority and thus a change of cabinet. In particular, those whose area of competence includes the provision of general "internal administration" normally fall into the same category. The "political" component in this is above all the task of preserving "order" in the country, i.e., the existing system of rule.

In Prussia, after the Puttkamer Decree,<sup>392</sup> one of the duties of these officials, was "to represent government policy." Failure to fulfill this duty rendered them liable to disciplinary action. The officials were used, like the prefects in France,

---

391 It is a common misconception that in the United States, unlike in Central and South American countries, the president is popularly elected. The election is a two-stage process in which the people vote for electors pledged to various presidential candidates. They in turn make the selection, but are not bound to vote for the candidates to which they are pledged, although nearly all of them do.

392 Robert von Puttkamer (1828-1900) in 1882 introduced civil service reform in Prussia, known as the Puttkamer system, which required civil servants, by their oath of allegiance to the emperor who was responsible for the direction of government, to support government policy.

as part of the official apparatus for influencing elections. Most “political” officials within the German system— unlike those of other countries— were comparable to all the other officials to the extent that appointment to these offices was made conditional on academic study, technical examinations and some previous preparatory service. In Germany, the only people to whom this specific feature of modern specialist officialdom did not apply were the heads of the political apparatus: the ministers. Under the old regime [Imperial Germany], it was possible to become Prussian Minister of Education without ever having attended an institution of higher education oneself, whereas the only way one could become a reporting counselor was by passing the prescribed examinations. The specially trained head of department and the reporting counselor were naturally — for example, under [Friedrich T.] Althoff<sup>393</sup> in the Prussian Ministry of Education— infinitely better informed about the actual technical problems of his department than their chief was. It was the same in England. When it came to routine matters, he was consequently the more powerful of the two. There was really nothing absurd about this. The minister was, after all, the representative of the *political* power constellation, and had to follow political criteria and test the proposals made by his subordinate specialist officials against these criteria, or give them appropriate political directives.

It is very similar in a private business organization. The actual “sovereign,” the shareholders’ meeting, is as lacking in influence on the management of the business as a “nation” governed by expert officials. The personalities that are decisive for the policy of the business, those on the “supervisory board,” which is dominated by banks, only give economic directives and select the administrative staff, without being technically capable of managing the business themselves. To that extent there is nothing new about the current structure of the revolutionary state, which hands power over the administration to absolute dilettantes, simply because they can handle machine guns, and prefers to use the trained specialist officials merely as executive heads and hands.<sup>394</sup> The difficulties of this present system lie elsewhere, but are not our concern today.

Our task is to inquire instead about the typical character of professional politicians, both the “leaders” and their followers. This has undergone a change and even today is very varied. In the past, as we have seen, in the struggle of the princes with the estates, “professional politicians” developed in the service of the former. Let us take a brief look at the main types.

---

<sup>393</sup> See Footnote 245 in the articles on academia.

<sup>394</sup> A reference to the Workers’ and Soldiers’ Councils that appeared in November, 1918 and oversaw the work of the traditional government authorities. They were defeated in spring, 1919 by government troops and the right-wing *Freikorps* (Free Corps).

In his opposition to the estates, the prince relied on politically useful strata of a non-estate character. In both the nearer and more remote parts of India, in Buddhist China and Japan, and in Lamaist<sup>395</sup> Mongolia, as well as in medieval Christian regions, these strata consisted primarily of clerics. Technically, this was because they were literate. Brahmins,<sup>396</sup> Buddhist priests, and lamas were brought in, and bishops and priests were used as political advisers, with the aim of obtaining literate administrative staff who could be utilized in the struggle being waged by the emperor or the princes or the *khan*<sup>397</sup> against the aristocracy. The cleric, especially the unmarried cleric, was outside of the bustle of normal political and economic interests, and was not likely to be tempted to aspire to political power to pass on to his descendants to use against his lord, as a liege-man would. He was "separated" from the resources of the princely administration by the nature of his own estate.

A second such stratum was formed by the classically trained literati. There was a time when people learned to write Latin speeches and Greek verse in order to become political advisers and especially writers of political memoranda for a prince. This was the time of the first flowering of the humanist schools and princely endowments of professorships of "poetics": a short-lived era in our country, but one that had a lasting influence on our school system, although it had no profound political consequences. Things were different in East Asia. The Chinese mandarin<sup>398</sup> is, or rather, originally was, approximately what the humanist of our Renaissance period was: a literary man trained and examined in humanism through the medium of the literary monuments of the distant past. When you read the diaries of Li Hongzhang,<sup>399</sup> you find that he is most proud of the fact that he wrote poems and was a good calligrapher. This stratum, with its conventions developed from Chinese antiquity, set the course for China's entire destiny, and our destiny might have been similar if the humanists had been given the slightest chance to impose themselves with equal success at the time.

The third stratum was the court nobility. After the princes had succeeded in depriving the nobility, as an estate, of political power, they brought them to the court and employed them in their political and diplomatic service. The change of

---

395 A Tibetan or Mongolian Buddhist monk.

396 A variant spelling of Brahmins, the group of priestly people belonging to the highest Hindu caste or social class.

397 Historically, the supreme ruler of the Turkish, Tartar, and Mongol peoples, and emperors of China in the Middle Ages.

398 In Imperial China, a public official of any of the nine grades or classes that were filled by individuals from the ranks of lesser office holders who passed examinations in Chinese literary classics.

399 Li Hongzhang, also spelled Li Hung-chang (1823-1901), leading Chinese politician who made strenuous efforts to modernize the country.

direction in our educational system in the seventeenth century was in part due to the courtly and noble professional politicians entering the service of the princes in place of the humanist literati.

The fourth category was a specifically English group, a patrician order that embraced the lesser nobility and the urban *rentier* class, technically called the “gentry.”<sup>400</sup> It was a stratum that the prince had originally recruited for the struggle against the barons and to whom he had given offices of “self-government,”<sup>401</sup> only to become increasingly dependent on it later. It maintained possession of all the offices of local administration, having taken them over without payment in the interests of gaining power in society. The gentry preserved England from bureaucratization, which was the fate of every continental state.

A fifth stratum was peculiar to the West, especially on the European continent, and was of crucial importance for its whole political structure: the university-trained lawyers. The most striking illustration of the huge and lasting influence of Roman law, as reformed by the late Roman bureaucratic state, is that everywhere trained lawyers were the driving force behind the revolution in the organization of politics that led eventually to the rational state. This also applied to England, although there the great national lawyers’ guilds prevented the acceptance of Roman law. There is no analogy to this to be found in any area of the world. Neither the beginnings of rational legal thinking in the Indian Mimamsa School,<sup>402</sup> nor the further cultivation of ancient legal thought in Islam were able to prevent rational legal thinking being stifled by theological forms of thought. Above all, trial procedure was not fully rationalized.

This was only achieved when Roman jurisprudence, the product of a political entity of quite unique character that rose from city state to world domination, was adopted by Italian lawyers, the “*usus modernus*” [“modern use”] of the pandectists<sup>403</sup> and canonists was introduced, and the theories of natural law emerged, which grew out of juridical and Christian thought and were later secularized. This legal rationalism found its great representatives in the Italian *podestà*,<sup>404</sup> in the French royal jurists, who created the formal means by which the royal power could undermine the rule of the *seigneurs*,<sup>405</sup> in the canonists and natural

---

400 In English [Tr.]

401 *Ibid.*

402 One of the six major components of the Hindu philosophical system.

403 The *pandects* or digests were a collection of passages from the writings of Roman jurists. In A.D. 533 they were published and given statutory force. Later lawyers interpreted the law and adapted it to modern needs.

404 An elected local official in medieval Italian states.

405 Feudal lords.



law consiliar theologians,<sup>406</sup> in the court lawyers and learned judges of the continental princes, in the teachers of natural law and the monarchomachs<sup>407</sup> of the Netherlands, in the English lawyers of crown and parliament, in the *noblesse de robe*<sup>408</sup> of the French parliaments, and finally in the advocates of the revolutionary period.<sup>409</sup>

Without legal rationalism, the rise of the absolute state is as unthinkable as the Revolution. If you consider the remonstrances of the French parliaments or the *cahiers de doléances* [memoranda of complaints] of the French Estates-General from the sixteenth century through to the year 1789, you will find the spirit of the lawyers everywhere. And if you study the occupations of the members of the French Convention, you will find there— although it was elected by equal franchise— only one proletarian member, and a very small number of middle class entrepreneurs, but a great many lawyers of all kinds. Without them, the specific mentality that inspired these radical intellectuals and their plans would have been quite unimaginable. Since then, the modern lawyer and modern democracy have been inseparable. Lawyers as we understand them, as an autonomous estate, are found only in the West, where they have existed since the Middle Ages, developing out of the “spokesman” [“*Fürsprecher*”] of the formal Germanic trial procedure under the influence of the rationalization of the proceedings.

The importance of lawyers in the politics of the West since the rise of parties is no accident. Political activity through parties means activity on behalf of special interests. We shall soon see what this implies. And presenting a case for interested parties effectively is the work of the trained lawyer. In this he is superior to any “official,” as the superiority of enemy propaganda<sup>410</sup> has taught us. Certainly, he has the ability to present a “bad” case, in the sense that it is supported by logically weak arguments, successfully; that is, technically “well.” But he is also the only one who can present a “good” case, in the sense that it is supported by logically “strong” arguments, successfully; that is, in this sense, “well.” The official, as a politician, all too often makes a case that is “good” in this sense into a “bad” one through technically “bad” presentation. This is something that we have experienced. Politics today is predominantly conducted in public by means of the spoken or written word. Assessing the effect of words is at the heart

---

406 The councils and the pope in the Christian Church who had the authority to establish church doctrine.

407 A fighter against the monarch, a term coined by William Barclay (1543-1608) in 1600 to describe a group of French political thinkers who upheld the right of resistance to the monarch.

408 In seventeenth and eighteenth century France a class of hereditary nobles who acquired their rank through holding a high state office.

409 The French Revolution of 1789 and its aftermath until 1799.

410 A reference to the Allied propaganda against Germany in World War I (1914-1918).

of the work of the lawyer, but not by any means of the specialist official, who is no demagogue. His function does not demand it, and if he nevertheless sets out to become a demagogue he will usually turn out to be a very poor one.

It is most important that the genuine official does not engage in politics, but “administers,” above all *impartially*, as this is what his true vocation demands. It is crucial to remember this when assessing our former regime. The same principle applies to so-called “political” administrative officials as well. This, at least, is what his office requires, except where “reasons of state,” i.e., the vital interests of the ruling order, are at stake. He should discharge his duties *sine ira et studio*, “without anger and partiality.” He should not, then, do the very thing that politicians, leaders, or their followers, constantly and necessarily do: *fight*. Partisanship, struggle, passion— *ira et studium* [with anger and partiality]— are the element of the politician, and above all of the political *leader*. His conduct is governed by a principle of *responsibility* that is totally contrary to that of the official. If an official’s superior, who bears the responsibility, despite representations made by his subordinate, insists on giving an order that seems to the official to be wrong, it is his honor to carry it out conscientiously just as if it was in accordance with his own conviction. Without this discipline and self-denial, which is ethical in the highest sense, the whole apparatus would collapse. By contrast, the honor of the political leader, i.e., of the leading statesman, is to accept the exclusive *personal* responsibility for what he does, which he cannot and must not refuse, or shift it to someone else. Precisely officials of high ethical standing are bad politicians and, especially in the political sense of the word, irresponsible, and therefore morally inferior, politicians, like those that we have unfortunately had in leading positions on frequent occasions. This is what we call the “rule by civil servants” [“*Beamtenherrschaft*”]. And there is absolutely no stain on the honor of our body of officials if we expose what is wrong about this system, judged from the point of view of its efficacy. But let us return once more to the types of political figures.

Ever since the establishment of the constitutional state, and even more since the rise of democracy, the “demagogue” has been the type of the leading politician in the West. The unpleasant connotations of this word should not make us forget that Pericles,<sup>411</sup> not Cleon,<sup>412</sup> was the first to bear this name. Without office, or rather, entrusted with the office of supreme strategist [*Oberstratege*]— an elective office, in contrast to the offices of ancient democracy, which were filled by drawing lots— he led the sovereign *ekklesia* of the *demos* [common people] of Athens. Modern demagoguery also uses speeches— enormous numbers of them

---

<sup>411</sup> Pericles (c.495 B.C.–429 B.C.), the politician largely responsible for the development of Athenian democracy.

<sup>412</sup> Cleon (died 422 B.C.), successor to Pericles.

when one thinks of the election speeches that a modern candidate has to give. But with more lasting effect it uses the printed word. The political writer, and above all the *journalist*, is the most important representative of the species.

Even to outline the sociology of modern political journalism would be quite impossible within the constraints of this lecture; it is a quite separate topic in every respect. A few things must be said, however. The journalist shares the fate of all demagogues and moreover also that of the lawyer (and the artist) in that he lacks any fixed social classification. This is at least true of the Continent, in contrast with the situation in England and, by the way, the former Prussian situation too. He belongs to a kind of pariah caste that "society" always judges by those of its representatives with the lowest ethical standing. The strangest ideas about journalists and their work are therefore current. Not everyone realizes that a really *good* piece of journalism requires at least as much "intellect" as any work of scholarship, especially because of the need to produce it there and then, on demand, and to achieve an immediate *effect*, even though the conditions under which it is created are quite different. That the responsibility is far greater, and that the *feeling* of responsibility of every honorable journalist is, on average, not in the least lower than that of the scholar—indeed, higher, as the war has taught us—is hardly ever appreciated, because, not surprisingly, it is precisely the *irresponsible* journalistic products that stick in the memory, on account of the terrible effects they have. No one at all believes that competent journalists are, on the average, more discreet than other people, and yet it is so. The quite incomparably greater temptations that this profession brings with it, and the other conditions of the journalist's work today, have produced results that have accustomed the public to regard the press with a mixture of contempt and—pathetic cowardice. To speak about what should be done is impossible today. What interests us here is the question of the professional destiny of journalists in the *political* sphere, and of their chances of attaining political positions of leadership. Hitherto these have only been favorable in the Social Democratic Party. But editorial positions have been predominantly in the nature of positions for officials. They have not been the basis of a *leadership* position.

Compared with the earlier situation, the chances of coming to political power by this route in the non-socialist [*bürgerlich*]<sup>43</sup> parties have, as a whole, deteriorated. Naturally, every politician of any significance has always needed influence with the press and has therefore needed a relationship with the press. But it has been quite exceptional for party *leaders* to emerge from the ranks of the press, and this could not be expected. The reason for this lies in the greatly

---

<sup>43</sup>This can mean bourgeois, but Weber is using it in a non-Marxist sense and therefore it has been translated as non-socialist parties.

increased “unavailability” of the journalist, due to the tremendous increase in the intensity and tempo of journalistic work. This applies particularly to journalists who are without private means and consequently fully professionally committed. The necessity of earning a living by writing articles daily or at least weekly is like a ball and chain around politicians’ feet, and I know of instances where natural leaders have been almost permanently handicapped by it, outwardly and above all inwardly, in their efforts to rise to power. The way in which the relationship of the press to the ruling powers in the state and the parties under the old regime was so detrimental to journalistic standards is a chapter in itself. The situation was different in the countries fighting against us.<sup>414</sup> But there too, and in all modern states, the principle seems to have held good that journalists are losing political influence, while capitalist press magnates, such as Lord [Alfred C. W.] Northcliffe,<sup>415</sup> are increasingly gaining it.

In our own country, however, the great capitalist concerns, which mainly took control of “small advertisement” newspapers, known as *Generalanzeiger*, tended to breed political indifference. There were no profits to be made from promoting an independent policy, and, above all, the goodwill of the ruling political powers, so useful for business, could not be gained in this way. The advertising business was also a means by which during the war serious attempts were made to influence the press politically, and there now seems to be a desire to continue along these lines. Although the major newspapers can be expected to be able to withstand such attempts to influence them, the situation is far more serious for the small ones. At any rate, in this country at present the career of journalist, despite its attractions and the degree of influence and opportunities for effective action it offers, is no longer (or perhaps not yet) a route that future political leaders will normally take. It is hard to say whether or not this would change if the anonymity principle were abandoned. Many, though not all, journalists are in favor of this course of action. Unfortunately, what we experienced during the war in the German press of newspapers being “headed” by talented writers who had been specially recruited and who always wrote under their own name as a matter of principle, showed, in a few of the more well-known cases, that this method may *not* be so sure to encourage an enhanced feeling of responsibility as might be expected. Irrespective of party allegiance, it was to some extent precisely the worst and most notorious of the popular newspapers that succeeded in achieving a higher circulation by this method. The gentlemen concerned, the publishers and journalists of the sensationalist press, have undoubtedly earned a

---

414 A reference to the Allies fighting against Germany in World War I.

415 See Footnote 301.

fortune— honor certainly not. This is not to say anything against the principle; the question is very complex, and this phenomenon is not general.

*So far*, however, it has not been the path to genuine leadership or the *responsible* practice of politics. It remains to be seen how circumstances will develop. Whatever happens, the journalistic career remains one of the most important paths for professional political activity, although it is not the path for everyone, least of all for people of weak character, in particular for people who need a secure social status to maintain their inward equilibrium. The life of the young scholar may be a hazard, but he is surrounded by a wall of firm social conventions, which protect him from coming off the rails. The life of the journalist, however, is in every respect a matter of pure hazard, and is lived under conditions that test his self assurance in a manner that almost no other situation would do. The frequently bitter experiences of professional life are perhaps not even the worst aspects of it.

Particularly great inner demands are made of successful journalists. It is no small thing to go in and out of the drawing rooms of the mighty of the earth on terms of apparent parity, often subject to flattery because one is feared, while all the time knowing that no sooner is one out of the door than the host may have to justify himself to his guests for having dealings with the “rogues from the press.” It is also no small thing to have to express oneself readily and yet convincingly on anything and everything that the “market” happens to demand, which could be all imaginable problems of life, without falling into absolute banality or, more likely, suffering the indignity of self-exposure, with the inevitable consequences. The surprise is not that so many journalists have lost their way or value as human beings, but that despite everything this particular stratum includes a far larger number of worthwhile and quite genuine people than outsiders would imagine.

If the journalist, as a type of the professional politician, can look back on what is, after all, quite a lengthy history, the figure of the *party official* is one that has only developed in recent decades, and in some cases in recent years. In order to comprehend the place of this type in the context of its historical development, we must now turn to a consideration of the party system and party organization.

In all political associations of any size with periodic elections of the holders of power, i.e., associations that extend beyond the area and range of tasks of small rural cantons, political activity is necessarily *activity by interested parties*. That is to say, a relatively small number of persons with a primary interest in political life, in other words, in having a share of political power, create a following by freely engaging in recruitment, present themselves or those under their protection as candidates for election, collect money and go out to win votes. Without this

organization, it is inconceivable that elections in large associations could ever be properly conducted at all. In practice it means the division of the enfranchised citizens into politically active and politically passive elements. Since this distinction is of a voluntary nature, it cannot be eliminated by any measures, such as compulsory voting or “representation according to occupational status,” or similar proposals expressly or actually opposing this situation and thus opposing the rule of the professional politicians.

Leadership and followers are vitally necessary elements of any party. They are active elements engaged in the free recruitment of the followers as well as, through these, of the passive electorate, for the election of the leader. The structure of the parties varies, however. The “parties” of the medieval cities, such as the Guelphs and the Ghibellines,<sup>416</sup> were purely personal bands of followers. If we consider the Guelphs, for example, and consider the *Statuto della parte Guelfa* [Statute of the Guelph Party],<sup>417</sup> the confiscation of the goods of the *nobili*—which originally meant those families that lived the chivalric life, i.e., held feudal rights— and their exclusion from offices and the franchise, the regional party committees, the strictly military organizations and the rewarding of informers, one is reminded of Bolshevism,<sup>418</sup> with its soviets, its strict screening of military personnel, its organizations of informers, mainly in Russia, its confiscations, and the disarming and political disenfranchising of members of the “bourgeoisie,” i.e., businessmen, traders, *rentiers*, clergy, descendants of the dynastic family, and police agents.

The analogy is even more striking if one considers, on the one hand, that the military arm of the party was a purely knightly army formed according to a register of the estates, and that the nobility took almost all the positions of leadership, and, on the other hand, that the soviets are keeping, or rather, reintroducing, high pay for the factory owners, piece work, the Taylor system,<sup>419</sup> military and factory discipline, and are on the lookout for foreign capital; in a word, in order to preserve the state and keep the economy going at all they have been obliged to revert to absolutely *all* the things they had attacked as bourgeois class institutions. In addition they have reactivated the agents of the old *Okhrana*<sup>420</sup> as the

---

416 Members of two opposing factions in German and Italian politics in the Middle Ages.

417 It was published in 1335.

418 The Bolsheviks were the majority in the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party prior to 1918. It was through the soviets (councils) of soldiers' and peasants' deputies that the October, 1917 Revolution, also called Bolshevik or the Great October Socialist Revolution, seized power in Russia.

419 Named after Frederick W. Taylor (1856-1915) who introduced time and motion study as an aid to industrial management.

420 Also spelled *Okhranka* (1881-1917), acronym for pre-revolutionary Russian secret police that was founded to combat political terrorism and left-wing revolutionary activity.

principal instrument of their state power. However, we are not here dealing with such organizations concerned with force, but with professional politicians, who aim to come to power through sober “peaceful” party canvassing in the electoral market.

Even parties as we understand them were first of all, e.g., in England, purely the followers of the aristocracy. Every time a peer changed sides for any reason, everyone that was dependent on him accompanied him and joined the opposing party. Until the Reform Bill,<sup>421</sup> the great families of the nobility, including the royal family, controlled the patronage of a vast number of constituencies. The parties of notables, which developed everywhere as the middle classes [*Bürger-tum*] came to power, were comparable to these aristocratic parties. “Educated and property-owning” circles under the spiritual leadership of the intellectual strata characteristic of the West formed parties based on either class interests, family tradition or purely ideology. Clergymen, teachers, professors, lawyers, doctors, pharmacists, wealthy farmers, manufacturers— in the case of England the whole stratum of those that described themselves as gentlemen<sup>422</sup>— first formed ad hoc associations, or at most, local political clubs. In turbulent times the petty bourgeoisie made its voice heard, and even the proletariat got involved when, as occasionally happened, a leader emerged, although as a rule such leaders did not come from the ranks of the proletariat itself. At this stage there were as yet no regionally organized permanent associations out in the country. The parliamentarians alone held them together, the local notables being responsible for drawing up lists of candidates. The programs were based partly on the campaign appeals of the candidates, and partly on discussions of notables at their congresses, or on decisions of the parliamentary parties.

The clubs were run as a secondary and honorary activity. Where no clubs existed (as was mostly the case), politics was practiced in a completely informal way by the few that took a lasting interest in it during normal times. Only the journalist was a paid professional politician, and only the newspaper carried on continuously as a political organization. Apart from that there were only the parliamentary sessions. The parliamentarians and parliamentary party leaders knew precisely which local notables they should turn to if political action seemed desirable. But party associations existed only in large cities. These had modest membership subscriptions and met regularly as well as holding public meetings where the member of parliament could be held to account. Things only came to life at election time.

---

<sup>421</sup> The Reform Act of 1832 redistributed parliamentary seats more equitably and also extended the franchise.

<sup>422</sup> In English here and subsequently. [Tr.]

The motive force for the ever tighter integration of the parties was the interest of parliamentarians in the possibility of regional electoral compromises and the impact that could be made by unified programs with wide support across the country and by coordinated agitation in the country generally. But even if the country was covered by a network of local party associations, including medium sized towns, as well as by a network of “agents,” with whom a member of the parliamentary party, as leader of the central party office, remained in constant correspondence, the character of the party apparatus as that of an association of notables remained in principle unchanged. There was still an absence of paid officials outside the central office. There were, of course, “respected” people who, on the basis of the esteem in which they were already held, led the local associations. These were the extraparliamentary “notables,” who exercised influence alongside the political stratum of notables from which the current sitting members of parliament were drawn. The intellectual nourishment for the press and local meetings was, however, provided increasingly by the party correspondence, published by the party. Regular members’ subscriptions became indispensable; a certain proportion of these had to cover the expenses of the central office. Not long ago, most German party organizations were at this stage of development. In France, in fact, there is no doubt that many were still at the first stage: a very loose grouping of parliamentarians and a small number of local notables throughout the country, with programs produced by the candidates or drawn up for them by their patrons, in some cases at the time of recruitment, although they were more or less based on decisions and programs issued by the parliamentarians.

This system was only partially modified. The number of fully professional politicians was still small. They were made up essentially of the elected members of parliament, the few employees of the central office, the journalists and in France those position hunters that held “political office” or were currently seeking it. In a formal sense, politics was overwhelmingly a part-time profession. The number of deputies with “ministerial qualities” was also very limited, and so indeed was the number of candidates for election, since only notables were considered. The number of those with an indirect interest in political activity, especially a material interest, was, however, very great. This was because all the measures a ministry might take and especially all personnel questions were viewed with an eye to their influence on electoral chances. And people tried to achieve any and every kind of wish through the mediation of the local member of parliament, who the minister was obliged to listen to, whether he liked it or not, if the member concerned was one of his majority— and naturally each one tried to make sure that he was. The individual deputy controlled the patronage



of office and indeed every kind of patronage in all matters within his constituency, and in the interests of his re-election, kept up connections with the local notables.

This idyllic state, characterized by the rule of notables and especially of parliamentarians, now contrasts sharply with the most modern forms of party organization. These are the product of democracy, the mass franchise, the necessity of mass publicity and mass organization, and the development of the most united leadership and the strictest discipline. The rule of the notables and the direction exercised by the parliamentarians is coming to an end. "Full-time" politicians *outside* parliament are taking the operation in their own hands, either as "entrepreneurs," which is what the American boss<sup>423</sup> or the English "election agent"<sup>424</sup> were in practice, or as officials on a fixed salary. In formal terms, a far-reaching democratization is taking place. It is no longer the parliamentary party that produces the authoritative programs, and it is no longer the local notables that have the nomination of candidates in hand. Rather, meetings of the organized party members elect the candidates and delegate members to the meetings at a higher level, of which there may be several up to the general "party conference."

The fact is, however, that the reins of power are naturally held by those who do the *continuous* work within the organization, or by those on whom the organization is financially or personally dependent if it is to progress—for example, as patrons or leaders of powerful political interest clubs (Tammany Hall).<sup>425</sup> The decisive point is that this whole human apparatus, or, as it is significantly called in Anglo-Saxon countries, the "machine," or those who head this apparatus, can keep the parliamentarians in check and to a fairly large extent can enforce their will on them. And this has particular significance for the selection of the *leadership* of the party. The one who becomes the leader is the one whom the machine will follow, even over the heads of parliament. In other words, the creation of such machines means the introduction of *plebiscitary* democracy.

The party followers, above all the party officials and the party managers, naturally expect a personal reward from the victory of their leader in the form of offices or other benefits. The decisive point is that they expect it from him, and not, or at least not only, from the individual parliamentarians. Above all, they expect that the demagogic effect of the *personality* of the leader in the election campaign will bring votes and seats, and with them power, to the party, and thus increase as much as possible the supporters' chances of receiving the hoped-for rewards.

---

423 In English here and subsequently. [Tr.]

424 *Ibid.*

425 Democratic Party organization that dominated New York City politics until the early 1930s.

Ideally [*ideell*], one of the motive forces is the satisfaction felt by someone who is working for a person he believes in and is personally devoted to, rather than for an abstract program of a party made up of mediocrities. This is the “charismatic” element of all leadership.

To very varying degrees and in constant latent struggle with the notables and parliamentarians, who were making great efforts to maintain their influence, this form of democracy has won through, first in the non-socialist parties in the United States, then in the Social Democratic Party, in Germany in particular. There are continual setbacks whenever there is no generally recognized leader, and even when there is one, concessions of all kinds have to be made to the vanity and self-interest of the party notables. Above all, though, the machine itself can find itself ruled by the party *officials*, who do the regular work. In the view of some Social Democratic circles their party has fallen victim to this “bureaucratization.” However, “officials” are rather prone to conform to the demands of a leader with a strong demagogic personality. Their material and ideal interests are, after all, intimately linked with the exercise of power by the party, which they hope the leader will bring them, and working for a leader is in itself inwardly more satisfying.

It is far more difficult for leaders to arise where, as is mostly the case in the non-socialist parties, the “notables” exercise influence on the party alongside the officials. From an *ideal* point of view, the humble positions they hold as members of the executive board or the committee are enough to “make their life.” Resentment against the demagogue as a *homo novus* [an upstart], a firm belief in the superiority of party political “experience,” which really is of considerable importance, and an ideological concern that old party traditions could be destroyed— these things determine their actions. And in the party all the traditionalist elements are on their side. Rural voters especially, but petty bourgeois voters too, look to the familiar names of the notables and mistrust the man they do not know. Admittedly, *if* this man once proves successful, these voters will become even more unshakable in their support for him. Let us take a look at some of the principal instances of this struggle between the two structures and the rise of the plebiscitary form described by [Moisei J.] Ostrogorski.<sup>426</sup>

First of all: England. Up to 1868, the party organization was almost exclusively an organization of notables. In the countryside, the Tories [Conservatives] relied on the Anglican<sup>427</sup> parson, and in addition usually the schoolmaster and above all the big landowners of the relevant county. The Whigs [Liberals] usual-

---

426 Moisei J. Ostrogorski (1854-1919), *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties*, translated from French by Frederick Clarke (London: Macmillan, 1902), two volumes.

427 Church of England, the established church.

ly relied on people such as the nonconformist preacher<sup>428</sup> (where there was one), the postmaster, the blacksmith, the tailor, or the ropemaker, in other words the tradesmen who, because they were the men people chatted to most, had political influence. In the city, the parties differed, partly according to economic opinion, partly according to religious opinion, partly simply according to the party opinion that was traditional in local families. But political organization was always in the hands of the notables. Above them was parliament and the parties with the cabinet and the "leader," who either chaired the council of ministers or led the opposition. Next to the leader, the most important professional politician in the party organization was the whip.<sup>429</sup> In his hands was the patronage of office; he was therefore the one that position hunters had to approach. He in turn would consult the deputies in the individual constituencies.

In each constituency, a stratum of professional politicians was gradually beginning to develop, as local agents were recruited. These were at first unpaid and occupied roughly the position of our "*Vertrauensmänner*" ("local party representatives"). Alongside these, however, developed in the constituencies a capitalist entrepreneur figure, the "election agent," whose existence was made inevitable by England's modern legislation for ensuring the fairness of elections. This legislation was designed to control election expenses and to reduce the importance of money by requiring the candidates to state how much the election had cost. This was because the candidate, to a far greater extent than used to be the case in our country, apart from enduring the strain on his voice also had the pleasure of getting his purse out. The election agent charged him a lump sum, and usually did well out of it. In the division of power between the "leader" and the party notables, in parliament and in the country, the position of the leader was always very important, the reason being the urgent need to enable him to pursue an extensive yet consistent policy. The influence of the parliamentarians and party notables was, however, still considerable.

This, then, was roughly what the old party organization looked like, half run by notables and half already operated as a business with entrepreneurs and employees. From 1868, however, the "caucus"<sup>430</sup> system developed, making its first appearance in local elections in Birmingham, and then spreading throughout the country. The system was introduced by a nonconformist minister<sup>431</sup> together

---

428 A member of a Protestant church which dissents from the established Church of England.

429 In English [Tr.]

430 *Ibid.*

431 A reference to Francis Schnadhorst (1840-1900), a nonconformist merchant active in the Liberal Party in Birmingham and the secretary of the National Liberal Association, 1877-1893.

with Joseph Chamberlain,<sup>432</sup> following the democratization of the franchise.<sup>433</sup> In order to win the support of the masses, it was necessary to create a vast apparatus of seemingly democratic associations, with an electoral association in every city district, to run the operation without interruption, and to bureaucratize everything strictly. This meant employing an increasing number of paid officials. Principal administrators with the right to co-opt were formally responsible for party policy. They were elected by local electoral committees in which perhaps some 10 percent of the electorate were soon to be organized. They had the right to co-opt others. Local groups, especially those with an interest in municipal politics—always the source of the most lucrative opportunities—were the driving force, and also provided the financial funds in the first instance.

This newly emerging machine, no longer led by members of parliament, was soon involved in struggles with the former holders of power, especially with the whip. However, it emerged as such a convincing winner in the struggle that the whip was forced to comply and come to an agreement with it. The result was the centralization of all power in the hands of a few people, and ultimately of a single person, who was at the head of the party. In the Liberal Party, the whole system had arisen in connection with the rise to power of [William E.] Gladstone.<sup>434</sup> What brought about such a rapid victory for this machine over the notables was the fascination with Gladstone's "grand" demagogy, and the firm belief of the masses in the moral rightness of his policy and especially in the man's own moral qualities. A Caesarist, plebiscitary, element had appeared on the political scene: the dictator of the election battlefield. The effects were soon apparent. In 1877, the caucus became active for the first time in general elections. It was a triumphant success: the fall of [Benjamin] Disraeli<sup>435</sup> when at the height of his great success was the result. In 1886, the machine was already so completely oriented toward the charisma of the person that when the Home Rule<sup>436</sup> question came up for debate, instead of asking: Do we agree with Gladstone's policy?, the entire political machine simply trusted to Gladstone's word and went along with him, saying: We will follow him in whatever he does— and deserted its own creator, Chamberlain.

---

432 Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914), reformist politician in Birmingham and a Liberal member of the House of Commons, and later also as a Conservative.

433 A reference to the Reform Act of 1867, which further extended the franchise and greatly increased the number of constituencies.

434 William E. Gladstone (1809-1898), four times prime minister.

435 Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), Conservative Party leader and twice prime minister.

436 Gladstone's Home Rule Bills of 1886 and 1893, providing for an Irish Parliament responsible for internal affairs, were rejected.

This machinery makes considerable demands in terms of personnel. There are some 2,000 people in England who make a living directly from party politics. There are very many more who are purely position hunters or who have an interest in politics— particularly local politics. Besides economic opportunities there are opportunities that appeal to the vanity of a competent caucus politician. To become a “J.P.,”<sup>437</sup> or even an “M.P.,”<sup>438</sup> is a natural goal for anyone with the highest (and normal) ambitions, and well bred people, “gentlemen,” are so rewarded. The highest honor that beckoned was a peerage, especially for wealthy patrons. Perhaps 50 percent of the finances of the parties came from contributions by anonymous donors.

What, then, has been the effect of the system as a whole? Today the English parliamentarians, with the exception of the few cabinet members (and the odd maverick), are normally nothing but well-disciplined voting fodder. In our *Reichstag*, it used to be customary for deputies at least to sit at their desks and deal with their private correspondence, as a way of showing that they were working for the good of the country. This kind of gesture is not required in England; the member of parliament has only to vote and remain loyal to his party; he has to appear when the whips call, and do whatever either the cabinet or the leader of the opposition directs. And out there in the country, when there is a strong leader, the caucus machine is almost devoid of convictions and completely in the hands of the leader. Above parliament, then, there stands the de facto plebiscitary dictator, who gets the masses behind him by means of the “machine,” and for whom parliamentarians are merely beneficiaries of the political system who give him their support.

Now, how is selection for this leadership carried out? First of all: On what abilities is it based? Here, naturally, the power of the demagogic speech is the critical factor— alongside the qualities of willpower that are decisive all over the world. Its nature has changed from the time of [Richard] Cobden,<sup>439</sup> when the importance of reason was stressed, through that of Gladstone, who was a master of the technique of “letting the facts speak for themselves” in an apparently straightforward manner, up to the present, when purely emotional means are often employed in the manner of the Salvation Army<sup>440</sup> in order to appeal to the masses. The existing situation could well be called a “dictatorship dependent on the exploitation of the emotionality of the masses.” But the highly developed system of committees in the English parliament gives every politician the op-

---

437 Justice of the Peace, a minor magistrate in England and Wales.

438 Member of Parliament.

439 Richard Cobden (1804-1865), Liberal politician and a proponent of free trade and disarmament.

440 A global Christian evangelical and social service organization founded in London in 1865.

portunity to participate in the *work* of these committees. Indeed, any politician with leadership ambitions is obliged to do so. All ministers of any significance in recent decades have gone through this very real and effective training and the practice of reporting and public criticism of these consultations has ensured that this training guarantees genuine selection, and eliminates mere demagogues.

Thus it is in England. But the English caucus system was weak compared with party organization in America, where the plebiscitary principle came to the fore particularly early and in a particularly pure form. Washington's<sup>441</sup> idea was that America should be a commonwealth administered by "gentlemen." A gentleman at that time, in America too, was a landowner or a man who had had a college education. This is how things were at first. When parties were formed, initially the members of the House of Representatives asserted the right to take the lead, as in England at the time of the rule of notables. Party organization was quite loose. This lasted until 1824. Even before the 1820s, the party machine was beginning to take shape in some municipalities, which is where the first modern developments took place here too.

But it was the election of President Andrew Jackson,<sup>442</sup> the candidate of the farmers of the West, that caused the first real break with the old traditions. The formal end of the leadership of the parties by leading parliamentarians came soon after 1840, when great parliamentarians— [John C.] Calhoun<sup>443</sup> and [Daniel] Webster<sup>444</sup>— left political life, because out there in the country parliament had lost almost all its power to the party machine. The reason why the plebiscitary "machine" developed so early in America was that there and only there the head of the executive and (importantly) the head of office patronage was a president elected by plebiscite,<sup>445</sup> and because, as a result of the "separation of powers" he was almost independent of parliament in his conduct of office. Thus, there was a real prospect of booty in the form of the benefits of office as a reward for victory in presidential elections in particular. Through Andrew Jackson the "spoils system"<sup>446</sup> was now quite systematically raised to the level of a principle and the conclusions were drawn.

---

441 George Washington (1732-1799), American military leader and first president, 1789-1797.

442 Andrew Jackson (1767-1845), elected in 1828 and served 1829-1837.

443 John C. Calhoun (1782-1850), politician, orator, and proponent of states' rights against the federal government.

444 Daniel Webster (1782-1852), politician, orator, and proponent of the interests of the federal government.

445 This is not the case. It can even happen and sometimes does that the candidate with the plurality of the popular vote in the first stage is defeated in the Electoral College in the second and decisive stage. See also Footnote 391.

446 In English [Tr.]

What is the meaning for the formation of parties today of this spoils system, whereby all federal offices are allocated to the victorious candidate? It means that parties with no convictions oppose each other as organizations existing purely for position hunters. To a degree that is unmatched anywhere else, although there are analogies, they change their programs for individual election campaigns in whatever way is likely to catch the most votes. The parties are simply designed in every way for the election campaign that is most important for office patronage: the election of the president of the union and the governors of the individual states. Programs are drawn up and candidates selected, without the participation of the parliamentarians, in the "national conventions" of the parties— party congresses to which representatives have been sent in a formally very democratic way by meetings of delegates who themselves owe their mandate to the "primaries,"<sup>447</sup> the fundamental voting assemblies. Even in the primaries, the delegates are chosen in the name of the candidates for the highest office in the land; *within* the individual parties the most bitter struggle rages around the question of the "nomination."<sup>448</sup> The president holds 300,000-400,000 official appointments in his hand to be dispensed only upon consulting the senators of the individual states. Thus, the senators are powerful politicians. The House of Representatives, on the other hand, is politically very weak, relatively speaking, because it lacks the power of office patronage. The ministers can carry out their official duties without regard to the confidence or lack of it of parliament, the ministers being no more than assistants to the president, whose legitimacy derives from the people, and no one else, not even parliament: a consequence of the "separation of powers."

The spoils system maintained in this way was technically *possible* in America, because American civilization was still young enough to support an economy built on pure dilettantism. A system that rewarded 300,000-400,000 party people, whose only qualification was that they had served their party well, could not, obviously, exist without tremendous abuses: corruption and waste on an unprecedented scale, such that only a land of still unlimited economic opportunity could bear.

The figure that now appears on the scene in this system of plebiscitary party machine is the "boss." What is the boss? He is a capitalist entrepreneur of politics, who gathers votes for his profit and at his own risk. He may have been a lawyer or a saloon keeper, or the proprietor of some similar business, or perhaps a moneylender, where he would have been able to make his first contacts. From there he casts his net more widely until he is able to "control" a certain number

---

447 *Ibid.*

448 *Ibid.*

of votes. Once he has reached this stage, he makes contact with other bosses in the neighborhood, and through his zeal, his skill and, above all, by his discretion, attracts the attention of those who have advanced further in their careers, and he now begins to rise.

The boss is indispensable for party organization, which is centralized in his hands. He essentially procures the funds. How does he get them? Partly through membership subscriptions, but mainly through taxing the salaries of the officials who secured their positions through him and his party. Then through bribery and tips. Anyone hoping to infringe one of the numerous laws with impunity needs the connivance of the boss and has to pay for it, otherwise there are sure to be unpleasant consequences. But this alone is still insufficient to raise the necessary working capital. The boss is indispensable as the direct recipient of money from the major financial magnates. They would never consider entrusting money for election purposes to any paid party official or anyone who was publicly accountable. The boss, with his prudent discretion in money matters, is quite naturally the right man for those capitalist circles that finance the election. The typical boss is an absolutely level-headed man. He does not strive for social esteem; the “professional”<sup>449</sup> is despised in “respectable society.” He seeks exclusively power, power as a source of money, but also for its own sake. He works in obscurity, and that is where he differs from the English leader. One will not hear him speaking in public himself; he gives speakers hints as to what they would be well advised to say, but he himself remains silent. He generally accepts no office, other than that of senator in the federal Senate, for since the senators participate in office patronage by virtue of the constitution, the leading bosses often have a seat in this body in person. Offices are handed out primarily according to services rendered to the party. But positions have often been awarded in return for an offer of money, and there were certain rates for particular offices— a system of selling offices like those that were common under the monarchies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including the papal states.<sup>450</sup>

The boss has no firm political “principles.” He is completely without convictions and asks only: What will win votes? It is not unusual for him to be a rather poorly educated man. In his private life, however, he normally behaves correctly and irreproachably, though in his political ethics he naturally conforms to the standards prevailing in political life, in much the same way that many of us probably did in the sphere of economic ethics when hoarding was common.<sup>451</sup> He is

---

449 *Ibid.*

450 The dominions belonging to the pope in central Italy from 756 to 1870.

451 A reference to the evasion of rationing and the appearance of black markets in Germany during World War I.



unconcerned that socially he is despised as a “professional” politician. The fact that he himself does not hold any of the offices of the union and has no desire to do so, has the advantage that not infrequently, if the bosses see them as vote winners in the elections, persons of real ability from outside the party become candidates— distinguished figures, not always again the old party notables, as it is with us. It is precisely the structure of these parties, lacking all conviction, and with their socially despised controllers, that has so far helped able men to win the presidency who would never have reached the top in our country. Certainly, the bosses resist an outsider<sup>452</sup> who could be a threat to their sources of money and power. But in the struggle for the favor of the voters, they have not infrequently finally had to come round to admitting such candidates if they were seen as opponents of corruption.

Here, then, we find a method of running the parties on strictly capitalist principles, with a high level of organization throughout, and the support of powerful clubs, such as Tammany Hall, which are organized like a religious order, and whose aim is exclusively to make profits through political control of chiefly municipal government, which is the most significant object of exploitation here too. This structure of party life was made possible by the high level of democracy in the United States, which was a “new country.” This combination of circumstances is the reason why the system is now slowly dying out. America can no longer afford to be governed only by dilettantes. As recently as fifteen years ago American workers still answered the question of why they allowed themselves to be ruled by politicians that they professed to despise by saying: “We would rather have officials that we spit at than have an official caste that spits at us, as you have.” That was the old point of view held by American “democrats,” although at that time the socialists already took a completely different view. The situation is no longer tolerated. Dilettante administration is no longer adequate, and the civil service reform has created lifelong pensionable positions in ever increasing numbers, ensuring that university trained officials, every bit as incorruptible and able as ours, are taking office. Some 100,000 official positions have already ceased to be mere objects of booty to be handed out after an election, but are pensionable and linked to proof of qualification. This will gradually weaken the spoils system, and the nature of the party leadership will probably undergo a transformation too. We just do not yet know in what way.

In *Germany*, the decisive conditions governing the operation of politics have previously been as follows. Firstly, the powerlessness of parliaments. The result of this was that no person with leadership qualities would enter [parliament] on

---

452 In English [Tr.]

a permanent basis. Assuming that one wanted to enter, what could one do there? If a chancellery position became vacant, he could say to the relevant head of administration: I have a very able man in my constituency who would be suitable; take him. And this often happened. But that was about all a German parliamentarian could achieve to satisfy his instincts for power— if he had any.

Secondly— and this is a causal factor of the first condition— the tremendous importance of trained officialdom in Germany. In this respect, we were the first in the world. This importance resulted in officialdom laying claim not only to the specialist positions for officials, but also the ministerial positions. It was said in the Bavarian *Landtag* (state parliament) last year, when parliamentary affairs were being debated, that talented people would no longer want to be officials if parliamentarians were given ministerial positions. Furthermore, official administrators systematically refused to accept the kind of controls that the English committees carry out through their discussions, and thus made it impossible— with rare exceptions— for parliaments to train really effective administrative heads from among their number.

The third condition was that we in Germany, unlike America, have parties based on political conviction that claim, in good faith, subjectively at least, that their members hold “world views.” The two most important of these parties: the Center Party on the one hand, and the Social Democratic Party<sup>453</sup> on the other, were, however, since their creation, minority parties and were intended to be so. Leading circles in the Center Party never made any secret of the fact that the reason why they were opposed to the parliamentary system was that they were afraid they would be in a minority and that this would make it more difficult for them to find employment for position hunters by bringing pressure on the government, as they had done before. The Social Democratic Party was a minority party on principle and a hindrance to the parliamentary system, because the party did not want to sully itself with the existing bourgeois political order. The fact that both parties excluded themselves from the parliamentary system made this system impossible.

What became of the German professional politicians in all this? They had no power, no responsibility, and could only play a subordinate role as notables. Consequently they became motivated by the instincts common to guild members everywhere. Unless one was a person of their sort, it was impossible to rise to a higher position in this circle of notables, for whom the modest position they held was their life. I could name a great number of people from every party, including the Social Democratic Party of course, whose political careers ended in

---

<sup>453</sup> See Footnote 266 in the articles on academia.

tragedy because the persons in question had leadership qualities and were not accepted by the notables for that very reason. All our parties have developed into guilds of notables in this way. [August] Bebel,<sup>454</sup> for example, was still a leader, as his temperament and the sincerity of his character showed, even if his intellectual powers were limited. Because he was a martyr and never betrayed their confidence (as they saw it), the masses gave him their complete backing. There was no power within the party that could have seriously opposed him. After his death, all this came to an end, and the rule of officialdom began. The influence of labor union officials, party secretaries, and journalists increased and the party was controlled by the instincts of officialdom. It has to be said that this officialdom was extremely honorable by comparison with the situation in other countries, especially in the light of the prevalence of corruption among labor union officials in America. But this did not prevent the party from being affected by the aforementioned consequences of rule by officials.

Since the 1880s, the non-socialist parties have without exception been guilds of notables. Occasionally, the parties were obliged for advertising purposes to engage persons of intellectual ability from outside the party, in order to be able to say: "We have this and that name." As far as possible, they have refrained from allowing these persons to stand for election. This has only happened where it was unavoidable, because the person in question absolutely insisted on it.

The same spirit prevails in parliament. Our parliamentary parties were and remain guilds. Every speech that is given in the plenary sessions of the *Reichstag* has been thoroughly reviewed beforehand by the party. This is obvious from the appalling tedium of the speeches. Only those who have been appointed to speak are permitted to do so. A starker contrast to the customary English, but also— for completely opposite reasons— French practice, is scarcely imaginable.

Now, as a result of the tremendous collapse that is usually known as revolution,<sup>455</sup> a transformation may be in progress, although this is not certain. The first beginnings of new kinds of party apparatus have begun to appear. Firstly, there is the amateur kind. This is exemplified particularly often by students of the various institutions of higher education who say to a man to whom they attribute leadership qualities: We will prepare the ground for you; you must carry it out. Secondly, the commercial apparatuses. It has happened that people have engaged men they believed to have leadership qualities and offered to take on the work of canvassing in return for a fixed payment for every vote cast. If you were to ask me which of these two types of apparatus I would regard as the more

---

454 August Bebel (1840-1913), cofounder of the Social Democratic Party of Germany and its leader, 1875-1913.

455 See Footnote 369.

reliable from the purely technical political point of view, I would have to say, in all honesty, that I would choose the latter. But both were bubbles that quickly floated up in the air and were soon gone. The workings of the existing apparatuses were rearranged, but continued to function. These phenomena were no more than a symptom of the fact that the new apparatuses might perhaps take shape if only the leaders were there. But the technical characteristics of proportional representation alone made it certain that they would not become established. Only a few street dictators appeared, and soon faded away again.<sup>456</sup> And only the followers of such street dictators are organized in a disciplined way: whence the power of these disappearing minorities.

Assuming that this were to change, then bearing in mind what has been said earlier, we should be clear that for the parties to be headed by plebiscitary leaders would mean their followers “losing their soul,” or, as one might say, becoming a spiritual proletariat. In order to be usable as an apparatus they must obey blindly, be a machine in the American sense, and not be distracted by the vanity characteristic of notables or by pretensions to hold views of their own. [Abraham] Lincoln’s<sup>457</sup> election was possible only through this character of party organization, and with Gladstone, as mentioned, the caucus achieved the same result. This is the price that must be paid for having leaders. But there is only the choice between leadership democracy with a “machine,” or leaderless democracy. That means: rule by “professional politicians” with no vocation, without the inward, charismatic qualities that go to make the leader. And that in turn means having what the rebel faction within the party usually calls the rule of the “clique.”

For the time being, we have only the latter in Germany. And for the future, its continuance is favored, within the German Reich at least, by the probable revival of the *Bundesrat* [Federal Council], which will necessarily limit the power of the *Reichstag* and thus its importance as a place where leaders are selected. Furthermore, proportional representation in its present form is a phenomenon typical of leaderless democracy, not only because it encourages horse trading by notables in order to gain positions, but also because it will give interest groups the opportunity to enforce the inclusion of their officials on the relevant lists, and thus create an unpolitical parliament in which there is no place for genuine leadership. The only safety valve that might satisfy the need for leadership could be the Reich president, if he were to be elected by plebiscite, not by parliament. A leader who could demonstrate that he was capable of doing the work could come to the fore and be selected. In this way, in the larger municipalities, the

---

<sup>456</sup> Weber’s marginal note indicates that the reference is to the revolutionary socialist leaders Karl Liebknecht (1871-1919) and Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919).

<sup>457</sup> Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), elected president in 1860.

plebiscitary city dictator would appear on the scene with power to staff his bureau independently. This is what happens in the United States, whenever they want to make a serious attempt to tackle corruption. It would necessitate a form of party organization designed for such elections. But the thoroughly petty bourgeois antagonism to leadership shown by all parties, above all the Social Democratic Party, which is one of the worst offenders, leaves the future shape of the parties and therewith all of these opportunities very much in doubt.

It is therefore still quite impossible to foresee what the external shape of the management of politics as a "vocation" will be, and consequently even more difficult to know how opportunities could open up for the politically talented to be given a satisfying political task. Someone who, owing to his material circumstances, is obliged to live "from" politics, will probably always be able to consider the alternative: journalism or a position as a party official as the typical direct avenues, or as a representative of one of the interest groups: labor union, a chamber of commerce, an agricultural, craft or labor association, an employers' organization, and so on, or an appropriate municipal government position. There is no more to be said about the outward aspect other than only this: the party official shares with the journalist the odium of being "declassed." The words "hack writer" in the one case or "speaker for hire" in the other will, unfortunately, always ring in his ears, even when unspoken; anyone who is inwardly vulnerable to this and is unable to find the right response within himself, let him stay clear of this career, which in any case, as well as severe temptations, can bring with it continual disappointments. What, though, can this career offer by way of inward joy, and what personal attributes are required in the one who embarks on it?

Well, first of all: a feeling of power. Even in formally modest positions, the consciousness of having influence on people and a share in power over them, but above all, the feeling of being among those at the nerve center of historically important events, can raise the professional politician above the mundane level. But the question for him is now: Through which qualities can he hope to make the right use of this power (however narrowly circumscribed it might be in individual cases), and thus to exercise the responsibility that it lays upon him in the proper way? Here we enter the ethical sphere, for it is a question of ethics to ask: what sort of person one must be if one is to be allowed to take hold of the spokes of the wheel of history.

One can say that three qualities are chiefly decisive for the politician: passion, responsibility, and a sense of proportion. Passion in the sense of *concentration on the object of concern* [*Sachlichkeit*]: passionate devotion to a "cause" [*Sache*], and to

the god or demon who is lord over it. Not in the sense of that state of mind that my late friend Georg Simmel<sup>458</sup> used to term “sterile excitement,” which is particularly characteristic of certain Russian intellectuals (though not all of them, by any means!), and which is so prevalent among our intellectuals too, in the present farce that has been glorified with the proud name of “revolution.”<sup>459</sup> This state of mind is a “romanticizing of what is intellectually interesting,” heading for the void, without any objective [*sachlich*] sense of responsibility for any cause. For nothing can be achieved with mere passion, however genuinely felt. It does not make a politician unless, in the service of a “cause,” it also makes *responsibility* toward this same cause the decisive guiding star of his action. And for this there is a need for a *sense of proportion*, which is the decisive psychological quality of the politician, the ability, with inward calmness and composure, to allow the realities to work on one, in other words: *distance* from things and people. “A lack of distance,” pure and simple, is a deadly sin that besets every politician and is one of those qualities whose cultivation among our future intellectuals will condemn them to political ineffectiveness.

The problem is: How do we force burning passion and a cool sense of proportion to come together in the same soul? Politics is made with the head, not with other parts of the body or the soul. And yet devotion to politics, if it is to be genuine human action, and not a frivolous intellectual game, can only be born of passion and nourished by passion. The strength to subdue the soul, however, that marks out the passionate politician and distinguishes him from the political dilettante animated by nothing more than “sterile excitement,” is only possible through becoming accustomed to distance— in every sense of the word. The “strength” of a political “personality” means primarily possession of these qualities.

Thus, the politician must daily and hourly overcome an all-too-human enemy within himself: common *vanity*, the mortal foe of all objective devotion and all distance, in this case, distance from oneself. Vanity is a very widespread characteristic, and perhaps no one is entirely free of it. And in academic and scholarly circles it is a kind of occupational disease. But precisely for the scholar, however disagreeable it may be, it is relatively harmless in the sense that as a rule it does not interfere with the enterprise of scientific research. It is quite different for the politician. The striving for *power* is the inescapable means by which he practices his profession. The “power instinct,” as it is usually known, is therefore in fact one of his normal qualities. In his profession, the sin against the holy spirit of his profession begins where this striving for power loses its *objectivity* and becomes

---

458 Georg Simmel (1858-1918), sociologist.

459 See Footnote 369.

a matter of purely personal self-intoxication, instead of being employed solely in the service of the "cause."

Ultimately, there are only two kinds of deadly sin in the field of politics: lack of objectivity and—often, although not invariably, identical with it—irresponsibility. Vanity: the need to push oneself into the foreground as prominently as possible, leads the politician most strongly into the temptation of committing one or both of these sins, all the more as the demagogue is forced to depend on "effect," and is therefore constantly in danger both of becoming a play-actor and of failing to take seriously his responsibility for the consequences of his actions and considering only the "impression" he is making. His lack of objectivity leads him to strive for the glittering appearance of power instead of real power, while his lack of a sense of responsibility leads him to enjoy power merely for its own sake, ignoring its content and purpose.

Although, or rather, precisely *because*, power is the inevitable means, and the striving for power is one of the driving forces, of all politics, there is no more pernicious distortion of political strength than bragging about one's power like some vain upstart, while admiring one's own self-reflection and enjoying a feeling of power, or indeed worshiping power itself. The mere "power politician," of the type that is often also glorified by a zealously supported cult in our country, may appear strong, but in reality his effect is empty and meaningless. In this, the critics of "power politics" are quite right. The sudden inner collapse of typical representatives of this outlook has shown us what inward weakness and powerlessness are concealed behind this showy but completely empty gesture. It is the product of an extremely shallow and superficial arrogance toward the *meaning* of human action that is far removed from an understanding of the tragedy with which all activity, especially political activity, is in reality intertwined.

It is perfectly true and a fundamental fact of all history— not to be explored any further here— that the ultimate outcome of political action is often, indeed regularly, at variance with its original purpose, or indeed bears an almost paradoxical relationship to it. But therefore this purpose: the service of a *cause*, must not be lacking, if the action is to have a firm foundation inwardly. The *nature* of the cause, in the service of which the politician seeks power and uses it, is a matter of belief. He may serve national or humanitarian, social and ethical, or cultural, innerworldly, or religious goals. He may be inspired by a strong belief in "progress"— in whatever sense— or coolly reject this kind of belief. He may claim to act in the service of an "idea," or he may refuse to make any such claim on principle and may desire to serve external purposes of everyday life. But always some belief must be *present*. Otherwise, it is quite true to say that even the

outwardly greatest political successes will be subject to the curse of creaturely nullity.

This brings us already to a discussion of the final problem that concerns us this evening: the *ethos* of politics as a “cause.” What vocation can politics itself fulfill, quite apart from its aims, within the total ethical economy of the conduct of life? What, so to speak, is the ethical location in which it resides? Here, ultimate world views are in conflict and a *choice* must be finally made among them. Let us resolutely tackle the problem, which has recently— and in my view in quite the wrong way— been re-examined.

But we must first free it from a rather trivial falsification, for ethics can make an appearance in a morally quite disastrous guise. Let us consider some examples. It is rare for a man who withdraws his love from one woman and transfers it to another not to feel the need to legitimize this to himself by saying: She was not worthy of my love, or she disappointed me, or by citing some other “reason.” This is unchivalrous conduct that adds, in a profoundly unchivalrous manner, to the bare fact that he no longer loves her, and that the woman must accept this, a “legitimacy” that supposedly puts him in the right, and adds to her misery by putting the blame on her. The successful rival in love proceeds in exactly the same way: the other rival must be less worthy, otherwise he would not have been defeated.

It is no different, of course, when after victory in a war the victor claims, with undignified self-justification: I won, because I was right. The same is true if someone suffers a mental breakdown as a result of the horrors of war, and now, instead of simply saying: It was just too much for me, feels the need to legitimize his war weariness to himself by substituting the explanation: I could not bear it, because I was forced to fight for an immoral cause. It is the same for those defeated in war. Instead of behaving like old women and looking for someone to “blame” at the end of the war— when the war was actually generated by the structure of society— anyone who takes a manly and dispassionate attitude will say to the enemy: “We lost the war and you won it. That is now in the past. Let us now talk about it with regard to the *objective* interests that were at stake, and, above all, in the face of the responsibility for the *future*, which above all burdens the victor.” Everything else lacks dignity and will exact its own retribution. A nation will forgive an infringement of its interests, but not a slur on its honor, especially one caused by pious self-justification.

Every new document that comes to light decades later revives the undignified clamor, the hatred and the anger, instead of allowing the war to be at least *morally* buried after it has ended. This can only be done by means of objectivity and chivalry, and above all by means of *dignity*. But never through an “ethic” that



in reality means both sides being deprived of their dignity. Instead of dealing with the concerns of the politician: the future, and responsibility for the future, such an ethic concerns itself with politically sterile, because unresolvable, questions of past guilt. The use of ethics in *this* way is politically culpable, if anything is. And at the same time it overlooks the unavoidable falsification of the whole problem through very material interests, i.e., the interests of the victor in making the greatest possible profits— both moral and material— and the hopes of the defeated of gaining advantages in exchange for confessions of guilt. If anything is “*despicable*,” then this is, and it is the result of using “ethics” as a means of “being in the right.”

What, then, is the real relationship between ethics and politics? Do they, as has occasionally been said, have nothing to do with each other? Or is the opposite true, namely, that the ethics that applies to political action is “the same” as that which applies to every other kind of action? These two assertions have sometimes been thought to be mutually exclusive; either the one or the other is right. But is it then true that essentially the *same* imperatives drawn from any ethical system in the world could be applied to situations as diverse as erotic and business, familial and official relationships, or to relationships with one’s wife, vegetable retailer, son, rival, friend, or defendant in court? Should it really matter so little that politics operates with a very specific means, namely, power, behind which stands *force*? Do we not see that the Bolshevik<sup>460</sup> and Spartacist<sup>461</sup> ideologists, precisely because they employ these political means, produce exactly the *same* results as any military dictator? What distinguishes the rule of the Workers’ and Soldiers’ Councils<sup>462</sup> from that of any holder of power in the old regime, other than the identity of the persons exercising the power and the dilettantism they employ? What distinguishes the polemics directed by the majority of representatives of the supposedly new ethics against the opponents they criticize from that of any other demagogues? Some would say: “The noble intention!” Fine. But the matter being discussed here concerns the means, and both of the warring adversaries are equally forceful in asserting, with complete subjective honesty, the nobility of their ultimate intentions. “All they that take the sword shall perish by the sword,”<sup>463</sup> and a fight is a fight everywhere.

---

460 See Footnote 418.

461 The *Spartakusbund* (Spartacus Union), a revolutionary socialist organization, was founded in 1916 by Liebknecht, Luxemburg, and others. At the end of December, 1918 and the beginning of January, 1919 it transformed itself into the *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands* (Communist Party of Germany) and staged a revolt in Berlin.

462 See Footnote 394.

463 A reference to Matthew 5:39: “All who take the sword die by the sword.”

What, then, of the ethic of the *Sermon on the Mount*?<sup>464</sup> The Sermon on the Mount— what is meant is the absolutist ethic of the gospel— is a more serious matter than those who are fond of quoting its commands today might believe. It is no joking matter. What has been said of causality in science holds for this ethic: it is not a cab that can be stopped at any time to get in or out.<sup>465</sup> Where this ethic is concerned, it is a case of *all or nothing* if anything other than trivialities is to come out of it. For example, the rich young man, of whom we read that he “went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.”<sup>466</sup> The gospel’s command is unconditional and unambiguous: give what you have— *everything*, quite simply. The politician will say: a socially senseless demand so long as it does not apply to *everyone*. Hence: taxation, punitive taxation, confiscation— in short, coercion and order, *for all*. However, the nature of the ethical command is that it *does not ask* about this at all. Or: “Turn the other cheek!”<sup>467</sup> The command is unconditional, and does not ask what gives the other person the right to strike one. An ethic of indignity— except for a saint. That is the point. One must be a saint in *all things*, or at least intend to be; must live like Jesus,<sup>468</sup> the apostles,<sup>469</sup> Saint Francis<sup>470</sup> and others like him. *Then* this ethic is meaningful and the expression of dignity; *not otherwise*.

For while it is a consequence of the ethic of unworldly love to say: “Do not resist evil with violence,”<sup>471</sup> the politician is governed by the principle: You *shall* resist evil by force, otherwise you will be *responsible* for its spread. Whoever wants to act in accordance with the gospel should refuse to go on strike, since strikes are a form of coercion— and join the liberal labor unions [*gelben Gewerkschaften*].<sup>472</sup> He should, above all, not talk about “revolution,” since this ethic surely does not teach that the civil war is the only legitimate war. The pacifist who acts in accordance with the gospel will refuse to bear arms or will cast them aside, as was recommended in Germany, as an ethical duty, in order to put an end to the war and thereby to all wars. The politician will say: the only means of discrediting war for the entire *foreseeable* future would have been a peace that preserved the

---

464 See Footnote 217 in *Science as a Vocation*.

465 The metaphor is derived from Schopenhauer, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Julius Frauenstadt (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1898), Vol. 1, p. 38.

466 A reference to Matthew 19:22: “He went away with a heavy heart; for he was a man of great wealth.”

467 A reference to Matthew 5:39: “turn and offer him the other [cheek] also.”

468 See Footnote 220 in *Science as a Vocation*.

469 The twelve disciples chosen by Jesus Christ.

470 Saint Francis (1181/1182-1226), founder of the mendicant Franciscan order Friars Minor.

471 A reference to Matthew 5:39: “Do not resist those who wrong you.”

472 The labor unions were known by their political colors – red for the socialist and communist ones and yellow for the liberal ones. The latter ones were based on the idea of interest harmony between capital and labor.

status quo. The nations would then have asked themselves: What was the purpose of the war? It would have been waged *to the point of absurdity*— which is now impossible. For the victors, or at least some of them, it has paid off politically. The responsibility for this lies with those who acted in a way that made any opposition impossible for us. When the period of exhaustion is past, *the peace will be discredited, not the war*, a consequence of the absolutist ethic.

Finally, the duty of truth. For the absolutist ethic it is unconditional. Some have concluded from this that all documents, especially those that incriminate our own country, should be published, and on the basis of these one-sided publications we should make a confession of guilt, unilaterally and unconditionally, without regard to the consequences. The politician will take the view that this will not serve the cause of truth, but will only obscure the truth through misuse of the documents and the unleashing of passions; that only a planned multilateral appraisal by impartial observers can be fruitful, whereas the consequences for the nation that proceeds in any other way could not be put right for decades. But the absolutist ethic *does not inquire about* “consequences.”

This is the crucial point. We have to understand clearly that all ethically oriented action can follow *two* totally different principles that are irreconcilably opposed to each other: an ethic of “ultimate ends” or an ethic of “responsibility.” This is not to say that the ethic of ultimate ends is identical with a lack of responsibility, or that the ethic of responsibility is identical with lack of conviction. There is naturally no question of that. But there is an immeasurably profound contrast between acting according to the maxim of the ethic of ultimate ends—to speak in religious terms: “The Christian does the right thing and leaves the outcome in God’s hands,”<sup>473</sup> and acting according to the ethic of responsibility: that one must answer for the (foreseeable) *consequences* of one’s actions. However persuasively you explain to a syndicalist who adheres strongly to the ethic of ultimate ends that the consequences of his actions will be increased opportunities for the forces of reaction, greater oppression of his class, and the frustration of its aspirations, none of this will make any impression on him. If the consequences of an action that flow from pure conviction are evil, then for him the responsibility lies not with the actor but with the world, the stupidity of other people, or the will of God, who created them like that.

The follower of the ethic of responsibility, on the other hand, is prepared for precisely those average defects in people. As [Johann G.] Fichte<sup>474</sup> rightly said, he

---

473 A reference to Martin Luther’s remark: “*Fac tuum officium et eventum Deo permitte.*” (“Do your duty, and leave the outcome to God.”). In *D. Martin Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimar: Böhlhau-Nachfolger, 1915), Vol. 44, p. 78.

474 Johann G. Fichte (1762-1814), historian and philosopher.

has no right to assume their goodness and perfection. He does not feel himself to be in a position to shift the responsibility for the consequences of his actions, as far as he can foresee them, on to others. He will say: These consequences are attributable to my actions. The follower of the ethic of ultimate ends only feels himself “responsible” for ensuring that the flame of pure conviction, the flame, for example, of protest against the injustice of the social order, is not extinguished. The purpose of his deeds, which, judged by the likelihood of their success, are quite irrational, and can and should have no more than exemplary value, can only be to rekindle the flame of conviction. But even there the problem is not yet at an end. No ethic in the world can get around the fact that in many cases the achievement of “good” ends is linked with the necessity of accepting ethically dubious, or at least risky means and the possibility or even the probability of evil side effects. And no ethic in the world can predict when and to what extent the ethically good end “justifies” the ethically risky means and side effects.

For politics the decisive means is force. We can see how significant is the tension between the means and the end, from the ethical point of view, when we consider the well-known attitude of the revolutionary socialists (of the Zimmerwald<sup>475</sup> tendency). Already during the war they held to the principle that was succinctly expressed: “If we have to choose between a few more years of war and then revolution, or peace now and no revolution, we choose: a few more years of war!” In answer to the further question: “What can this revolution achieve?,” any scientifically trained socialist would have replied that there could be no question of a transition to an economy that could be called socialist in the sense that *he* understood it. Rather, a bourgeois<sup>476</sup> economy would once again emerge that would merely have shed its feudal elements and the remnants of the dynastic period. Thus, for this modest result: “a few more years of war!” It could well be said that even someone with very firm socialist convictions might reject the end that requires means like this. With Bolshevism and Spartacism— indeed, every kind of revolutionary socialism— this is exactly the situation, and it is naturally highly ridiculous to condemn the “politicians of force” of the old regime on *ethical grounds* for their use of the same means, however well justified the rejection of their *aims* might be.

Here, with this problem of the end justifying the means, the ethic of ultimate ends seems inevitably to founder. And logically, indeed, it can only *reject every* action that employs ethically risky means. Logically. In the world of realities, what constantly happens is that the follower of the ethic of ultimate ends is suddenly

---

475 This faction, supported by Vladimir I. Lenin (1870-1924) at a conference of European left-wing socialists in Zimmerwald, near Bern, Switzerland was defeated in September, 1915.

476 Weber uses the word *Bourgeoiswirtschaft* with its connotations of Marxist usage. [Tr.]

transformed into the millenarian prophet, and that those, for example, who have just been preaching “love as the answer to force” call for force the very next moment— one *last* use of force, which would then bring about the destruction of *all* force, just as our military leaders tell the soldiers before every attack that this will be the final one, and that it will bring victory and then peace. The follower of the ethic of ultimate ends cannot bear the ethical irrationality of the world. He is a cosmic-ethical “rationalist.” You who know the work of [Fyodor M.] Dostoevsky<sup>477</sup> will recall the scene with the Grand Inquisitor,<sup>478</sup> where the problem is aptly set out. Once one begins to make any concessions at all to the principle of the end justifying the means, it is not possible to reconcile the ethic of ultimate ends with the ethic of responsibility, or to decree on the basis of ethics which end should justify *which* means.

My colleague, [Friedrich W.] Förster,<sup>479</sup> whom I cannot accept at all as a politician, although as a person I respect him highly for the undoubted integrity of his convictions, tries to get around the difficulty in his book by appealing to the simple thesis: from good only good can come, and from evil only evil can come. If that were true, these problems would, admittedly, not exist. But it is amazing that 2,500 years after the Upanishads<sup>480</sup> such a thesis could still see the light of day. Not only the entire course of world history, but any rigorous examination of everyday experience tells the opposite. The development of every religion on earth is based on the fact that the opposite is true. The ancient problem of theodicy is the question: How is it that a power that is supposed to be simultaneously omnipotent and benevolent could create an irrational world of unmerited suffering, unpunished wrongdoing and incorrigible stupidity [?] Either it is not the one or not the other, or completely different principles of compensation and retribution govern life— principles that we may interpret metaphysically, or that may be for ever beyond our interpretation.

This problem: the experience of the irrationality of the world, has indeed been the driving force of all religious development. The Indian doctrine of *karma*,<sup>481</sup> Persian dualism,<sup>482</sup> original sin, predestination, and the *deus absconditus* [hidden God], all originate from this experience. The early Christians also knew very well that the world was governed by demons, and that those who threw in their lot

---

477 Fyodor M. Dostoevsky (1821-1881), major Russian novelist.

478 *The Brothers Karamazov*, translated by Constance Garnett (London: William Heinemann, 1912), Book V, Chapter V, pp. 259-279.

479 See Footnote 207 in *Science as a Vocation*.

480 *Ibid.*, Footnote 230.

481 In Buddhism and Hinduism the sum of a person's actions in this and previous existence, viewed as affecting one's future existence.

482 See Footnote 226 in *Science as a Vocation*.

with power and force as means were making a pact with diabolical powers, and that as far as one's actions are concerned it is *not* true that "from good only good comes, and from evil only evil comes," but that the opposite is often the case. Indeed, anyone who does not see this is a child where politics is concerned.

Religious ethics have found different ways of adapting to the fact that we have been placed in different life orders, subject to distinct laws. Hellenic polytheism required sacrifices to Aphrodite,<sup>483</sup> as well as Hera,<sup>484</sup> Dionysos,<sup>485</sup> as well as Apollo,<sup>486</sup> knowing that they were frequently at odds with each other. The Hindu life order subjected each of the various professions to a particular ethical law, a *dharma*,<sup>487</sup> and assigned them to different castes, in which they were to remain for ever. In doing so, it placed them in a fixed hierarchy of rank from which there was no escape for those born into them, other than through reincarnation in their next life, thus putting them at varying distances away from the supreme religious benefits of salvation. Thus, it was able to construct the *dharma* of each individual caste, from the ascetics and the Brahmins to the rogues and prostitutes, according to the immanent laws proper to each profession, including war and politics. The *Bhagavad Gītā*,<sup>488</sup> in the dialog between Krishna<sup>489</sup> and Arjuna,<sup>490</sup> numbers war among the full range of life orders. The words "Do what is necessary," refer to work that, according to the *dharma* of the warrior caste and its rules, is the duty of the warrior and is objectively necessary for the purpose of waging war. According to this belief, such work does not endanger religious salvation but rather helps to achieve it. After a heroic death, Indra's<sup>491</sup> heaven was as certain for the Indian warrior as Valhalla<sup>492</sup> was for the Germanic warrior. But the Indian warrior would have scorned nirvana<sup>493</sup> as much as the Germanic warrior would have scorned the Christian paradise with its angelic choirs. This ethical specialization enabled Indian ethics to achieve a continuous development of the royal art of politics, one that followed only the laws proper to politics and indeed enhanced them radically. The classical example of a truly radical

---

483 *Ibid.*, Footnote 215.

484 In ancient Greek religion the queen of Olympian gods.

485 Greek god of fruitful vegetation, wine, and ecstasy.

486 See Footnote 216 in *Science as a Vocation*.

487 A compilation of the rules and regulations which govern one's life.

488 Also spelled *Bhagavadgītā* (*Sacred Song of God*), the most important text of Hinduism.

489 Mythologically, he is an incarnation of Vishnu, the Lord of Protection.

490 One of the five Pandava brothers who are heroes of the Indian epic, *Māhābhārata* (*Great Epic of the Bharata Dynasty*).

491 The king of all gods.

492 In Scandinavian mythology, a palace in which slain warriors live blissfully under the leadership of the god Odin.

493 In Buddhism a transcendent state in which there is no suffering or desire, and no sense of self.

“Machiavellianism,”<sup>494</sup> in the popular sense of this word, in Indian literature is found in Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra*,<sup>495</sup> which dates back to very early pre-Christian times, and is said to be from the time of “Candra Gupta.”<sup>496</sup> Compared to this, Machiavelli's *Il Principe*<sup>497</sup> [*The Prince*] is innocuous.

As is known, in Catholic ethics, to which otherwise Professor Förster stands close, the *consilia evangelica* [evangelical counsels]<sup>498</sup> are a special ethics for those who have been given the charisma of a holy life. Alongside the monk, who is not allowed to shed blood or ply a trade, there stand the pious knight and the burgher, who are each permitted one of these activities. The gradations of ethics and their introduction into an organic doctrine of salvation are less consistent than in India, as was to be expected, in accordance with the requirements of Christian belief. The depravity of the world caused by original sin allowed the introduction of force into ethics as a chastisement for sin and for heretics who could endanger the soul relatively easily. But the purely unworldly ethics of ultimate ends of the Sermon on the Mount, and the absolute demands of the religious natural law founded upon them, never lost their revolutionary power and have played their part in almost all periods of social upheaval with elemental force. In particular, they created the radical, pacifist sects, one of which, in Pennsylvania, experimented with a polity that renounced force in its external affairs—tragic in so far as the Quakers<sup>499</sup> were unable to take up arms in the War of Independence,<sup>500</sup> although it was waged in the name of their ideals.

Normal Protestantism, on the other hand, legitimated the state and thereby the use of force, as a divine institution absolutely, and legitimated the authoritarian state in particular. [Martin] Luther<sup>501</sup> removed the ethical responsibility for war from the individual and shifted it onto the authorities, obedience to whom

---

494 Usually equated with unethical political conduct.

495 *The Arthaśāstra (Handbook of [the King's] Profit)* (Delhi: Penguin India, 1992), an accretion of earlier texts, dates at the earliest from the second century A.D., not written in the fourth or third centuries B.C. as believed previously. See John Keay, *India: A History* (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 2000), p. 81.

496 Candra Gupta, also spelled Chandra Gupta, was a Mauryan emperor who reigned from c. 321 B.C. to 297 B.C. and unified most of India under one administration.

497 *The Prince*, edited and translated by Peter Bondanella (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

498 A body of instructions for living a Christian life.

499 Also called the Society of Friends, a Christian group founded in seventeenth century England and the American colonies, that rejects outward rites and an ordained ministry, and has a long tradition of opposing war.

500 From 1775 to 1783, which resulted in independence from Britain.

501 Martin Luther (1483-1546), religious reformer and writer whose criticisms of the Roman Catholic Church precipitated the Protestant Reformation.

in matters other than those concerning faith could never be wrong. Calvinism<sup>502</sup> also recognized force as a means of defending the faith, in other words, sanctioned the religious war, which for Islam was a natural element from the very beginning. Evidently, the problem of political ethics is by *no* means a product of modern unbelief born of the Renaissance cult of the hero. All religions have wrestled with it, with highly varying degrees of success; and in view of what has been said, this could not have been otherwise. It is the specific means of *legitimate force*, purely as such, in the hands of human associations, that determines the special character of all the ethical problems of politics.

Whoever makes a pact with this means, for whatever purpose— and every politician does this— is at the mercy of its specific consequences, particularly one who is fighting for a belief, whether religious or revolutionary. Let us confidently take the present as an example. Whoever wants to establish absolute justice on earth by *force* needs supporters: a human “apparatus.” He must offer this apparatus the prospect of the necessary inward and external rewards— heavenly or earthly in character— otherwise it will not function. Inward, then: under the conditions of the modern class struggle, the satisfaction of hatred and of the thirst for revenge, above all, resentment and the need for pseudo ethical self-justification: therefore, the need to denigrate one’s enemies and call them heretics. External: adventure, victory, booty, power and office. For success, the leader is totally dependent on the functioning of his apparatus, and consequently also on *its*— not his own— motives; that is, on *continually* providing rewards for the Red Guard,<sup>503</sup> the informers, and the agitators that he needs. What he actually achieves when operating under such conditions is not, therefore, in his own hands, but is dictated by the ethically predominantly base motives that drive the actions of his followers, who can only be kept under control as long as at least some of the comrades are inspired by an honest belief in his person and his cause, although probably never on this earth will they all, or even the majority of them, be so inspired.

In very many cases this belief, even when it is subjectively honest, is actually no more than the ethical “legitimation” of a desire for revenge, power, booty and rewards. About this we should be under no illusions, since the materialist interpretation of history is not like a cab to be entered at will and does not stop when it gets to the agents of revolution! What happens is that the emotional revolution is followed by the traditional *everyday routine*, and the hero of belief

---

502 In Protestant Christianity the theology developed by John Calvin (1509-1564) in which the doctrine of predestination is central.

503 Basic form of organization of the armed forces of the proletariat during the preparation and execution of the October, 1917 Revolution and during the initial period of the civil war (1918-1920). It already appeared in the 1905 and February, 1917 revolutions.



fades, and, above all, belief itself fades away, or, with even greater effect, becomes part of the conventional phraseology of political philistines and technicians. This development proceeds particularly rapidly in the case of a war of belief, because it is usually led or inspired by genuine *leaders*, prophets of the revolution. This is because as in every apparatus of leadership, here also an emptying and routinization, a spiritual proletarianization in the interests of “discipline,” is one of the conditions of success. The followers of a fighter who is inspired by his beliefs are therefore at particular risk of degenerating into a quite ordinary stratum of office holders.

Whoever intends to engage in politics at all, and particularly in politics as a vocation, must be aware of these ethical paradoxes and of his responsibility for what can happen to *him himself* under pressure from them. He is, I repeat, becoming involved with the diabolical powers that lurk in all force. The great virtuosi of the unworldly love of humanity and goodness, whether they come from Nazareth or from Assisi<sup>504</sup> or from the royal palaces of India, did not work with the political means of force. Their kingdom was “not of this world,” and yet they operated in this world and continue to do so, and the figures of Platon Kratayev<sup>505</sup> and of Dostoevsky’s saints are still the closest approximation to them. Whoever seeks the salvation of his own soul and the rescue of other souls does not do so by means of politics, which has quite different tasks: those that can only be solved by force. The genius or demon of politics lives in a state of inner tension with the God of love, also with the Christian God as the church represents him, that can erupt into unresolvable conflict at any time. The people also knew this in the era of church rule. Again and again Florence was placed under an interdict— and at that time this was a far more serious matter for the people and their souls’ salvation than the ethical judgment of Kant’s “cool approbation” (as Fichte called it)<sup>506</sup>— but the citizens continued to fight against the papal states. With reference to such situations, Machiavelli, in a fine passage in, if I am not mistaken, the *Florentine Histories*,<sup>507</sup> has one of his heroes praise those citizens who valued the glory of the city of their birth more highly than the salvation of their souls.

If instead of talking about the native city, or “the fatherland”, which are, admittedly, values to which at present by no means everyone would subscribe without reservation, they are replaced with “the future of socialism” or “the fu-

---

504 Locations associated with the careers of Jesus Christ and Saint Francis, respectively.

505 A character in Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1932), three volumes.

506 Fichte, “Das System der Sittenlehre nach den Principien der Wissenschaftslehre.” In *Johann Gottlieb Fichtes Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. Immanuel H. von Fichte (Berlin: Veit, 1845-1846), Vol. IV, p. 167.

507 A reference to the phrase: “did those citizens then esteem their fatherland so much more than their souls.” In *Florentine Histories*, translated by Laura F. Banfield and Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), Book III, Chapter 7, p. 114.

ture of international peace”, then you have the problem confronting us. All these things endanger the “salvation of the soul,” since the means of their achievement is *political* action, which is guided by the ethic of responsibility and employs force. But if, motivated by a pure ethic of ultimate ends, it is pursued as part of a war of belief, the cause can suffer harm and be discredited for an epoch, since responsibility for the *consequences* is lacking. Then the participant remains unaware of the diabolical powers at work. They are remorseless and ensure that his actions have consequences, also for him inwardly, and he will be completely at their mercy if he fails to see them: “Reflect: the devil is old; grow old to understand him!”<sup>508</sup> And not the years, not the age are meant here. I have never allowed myself to be outdone in a discussion by the date on a birth certificate; but equally, the mere fact that whereas I am over fifty and someone else is twenty cannot, after all, make me believe that this in itself is an achievement at which I should be overawed. Age is not decisive, but the trained ability to gaze relentlessly on the realities of life, and the ability to bear them and have the inward strength to be equal to them.

Truly: politics is made with the head, but not *only* with the head. In this the advocates of the ethic of ultimate ends are quite right. No one can tell anyone whether one *should* act according to the ethic of ultimate ends or according to the ethic of responsibility, or when one should act according to either. Only one thing can be said: If now in these times of excitement— you believe the excitement is *not* sterile, but excitement is not by any means always identical with genuine passion— the politicians of ultimate ends all band together and *suddenly* start proclaiming: “It is not I, but the world that is stupid and base. The responsibility for the consequences rests not with me but with the others, in whose service I am working, and whose stupidity or baseness I shall eradicate,” then, frankly, I begin by questioning the degree of *inward gravity* that underlies this ethic of ultimate ends, and have the impression that in nine out of ten cases I am dealing with windbags who have no real feeling for what they have taken on but are intoxicated with romantic sensations. Humanly, this does not interest me unduly, and I am not in the least shocked by it. However, it is profoundly moving when a *mature* person, whether old or young in years is immaterial, who really feels this responsibility for the consequences and acts in accordance with the ethic of responsibility, at some point says: “Here I stand. I can do no other.”<sup>509</sup> This is something that is genuinely human and moving. It is a situation, moreover, that *could* at some time happen to *any* one of us that is not dead inside. To that extent, the ethic of ultimate ends and the ethic of responsibility are not

---

508 See Footnote 221 in *Science as a Vocation*.

509 Attributed to Luther at the Diet of Worms on 18 April, 1521, when asked to recant his criticisms of the Roman Catholic Church.

absolute antitheses, but complementary, and only together constitute a genuine human being who *can* have a “vocation for politics.”

And now, ladies and gentlemen, I suggest we come back to this matter in *ten years time*. Sadly, I fear that by then for a whole variety of reasons it is highly likely that a period of reaction will long since have set in. Little, at least apparently little if not exactly nothing at all, will have come to pass of that which certainly many of you, including myself, as I openly admit, have wished and hoped for. It will not break me, but the knowledge of it is certainly an inward burden. In ten years time I should really like to see what, in your innermost being, has “become” of those of you who now feel yourselves to be genuine “ultimate ends politicians” and have been caught up in the intoxication of this revolution. It would be lovely if things turned out in the way that [William] Shakespeare’s<sup>510</sup> 102nd Sonnet depicts:

Our love was new, and then but in the spring,  
When I was wont to greet it with my lays;  
As Philomel in summer’s front doth sing,  
And stops her pipe in growth of riper days:

But such is not the case. It is not summer’s flowering that now lies before us, but a polar night of icy darkness and hardness, whichever group may outwardly be victorious now. For where there is nothing, not only is the *Kaiser* (emperor) deprived of his rights, but so too is the proletarian. When this night slowly draws to a close, who will still be alive from among those whose springtime has seemed to blossom so luxuriantly? And what will have become of all of you inwardly? Will there be bitterness or philistinism, or perhaps a simple, unthinking acceptance of the world and of one’s profession or, the third and not the most unusual alternative: withdrawal from the world into mysticism by those who either have a gift for it, or— frequently and damagingly— impose it upon themselves because it is fashionable? In every such case, I shall draw the conclusion: they were *not* equal to the chosen task, *not* to the world as it really is and to their everyday life. Objectively and in fact they did not, in the most inward sense, have the vocation for politics that they believed they had. They would have done better simply to cultivate brotherliness between one human being and another and apart from that to devote themselves in a practical way to their daily work.

---

510 William Shakespeare (1564-1616), *The Sonnets*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 83.

Politics means strong, slow drilling through hard boards with both passion and a sense of proportion. It is completely true, and all historical experience confirms it, that what is possible could never have been achieved if one had not constantly reached for the impossible in the world. But to do that one must be a leader, and not only a leader but also— quite literally— a hero. And also those who are neither of these things must now, without delay, arm themselves with the steadfastness of heart that is strong enough to stand firm even when all their hopes are dashed, as they will otherwise be unable to achieve even what is possible today. Only someone who is sure that it will not destroy him if the world, as he sees it, is too stupid or too base for what he wants to offer it, and that he is capable of saying, in the face of all this, “nevertheless!” only such a one has the “vocation” for politics.



## GLOSSARY

*Beruf* means both vocation and profession and both meanings are used as appropriate. It has also a strong connotation of *rufen* (to call). A call is widely used to refer to an unsolicited offer from another higher education institution, as well as an offer in general. Weber also talks about the “inward calling for science.”

*Habilitation* means a postdoctoral lecturing qualification, a second doctorate secured upon the presentation of a more substantial dissertation, which is usually required for an academic career. Since 2002 it is also possible to become a junior professor and later a professor without the *Habilitation*.

*Lehrfreiheit*, literally the freedom to teach, means academic freedom as understood in English, but it also includes the right to teach what one sees fit.

*Lernfreiheit*, literally the freedom to study, means the freedom of students to pursue their desired course of studies, especially in the arts and the humanities and the social sciences, and to advance largely at their own pace.

*Privatdozent* means literally a private lecturer, an adjunct lecturer, as opposed to a *Dozent* (lecturer) and other higher ranking academics who are civil servants. An adjunct lecturer must offer courses for a certain period of time without pay, or must be paid on an hourly basis in order to retain his or her lecturing qualification.

*Wissenschaft* means a body of objective and organized knowledge and includes all academic disciplines from anthropology to zoology. In the Anglophone world science has been more narrowly defined as empirical study, the aim being to establish general laws; its definition is therefore usually restricted to the life and physical sciences. “Science,” “scholarship,” “academic,” and their derivatives are used as appropriate.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barbagli, Marzio. *Educating for Unemployment: Politics, Labour Markets, and the School System — Italy 1859-1973*, translated by Robert H. Ross. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.
- Beebe, John. "Psychological Types." In Renos K. Papadopoulos, ed. *The Handbook of Jungian Psychology: Theory, Practice and Applications*, pp. 131-152. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Understanding Consciousness through the Theory of Psychological Types." In Joseph Cambrey and Linda Carter, eds. *Analytical Psychology: Contemporary Perspectives in Jungian Analysis*, pp. 83-115. Hove and New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2004.
- Bendix, Reinhard. *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1960.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and Guenther Roth. *Scholarship and Partisanship: Essays on Max Weber*. Berkeley and Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1971.
- Bruun, Hans H. *Science, Values and Politics in Max Weber's Methodology*, new expanded edition. Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2007.
- Caplow, Theodore and Reece J. McGee. *The Academic Marketplace*. New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers, 2001 [1958].
- Carter, Allan M. *Ph.D.s and the Academic Labor Market*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976.
- Dreijmanis, John. "Weimar, Washington, and Beyond: The Plight of the Intelligentsia." *Educational Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Fall, 1978), pp. 255-265.



- \_\_\_\_\_. "Higher Education and Employment: A Problematic Relationship." *Higher Education in Europe*, Vol. XXII, No. 4 (December, 1997), pp. 485-493.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Is Graduate Employment a Right?" *Higher Education Review*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (Summer, 2004), pp. 54-60.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "An Institute for the Study of Academia?" *Higher Education Review*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Autumn, 2004), pp. 59-66.
- Eliaeson, Sven. *Max Weber's Methodologies: Interpretation and Critique*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002.
- Ellenberger, Henri F. *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry*. New York: Basic Books, 1970.
- Frommer, Jörg and Sabine Frommer. "Max Weber's Krankheit — soziologische Aspekte der depressiven Struktur." *Fortschritte der Neurologie-Psychiatrie*, Vol. 61, No. 5 (May, 1993), pp. 161-171.
- Jaspers, Karl. *Max Weber. Gesammelte Schriften*. Munich and Zürich: Piper, 1988.
- Jung, Carl G. "Psychological Types" [1921]. In *Collected Works of C.G. Jung*, revision by R.F.C. Hull of translation by H.G. Baynes. Vol. 6. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976.
- Kaufman, H.G. *Professionals in Search of Work: Coping with the Stress of Job Loss and Underemployment*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1982.
- Kirkbright, Suzanne. *Karl Jaspers, A Biography: Navigations in Truth*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004.
- Loewenstein, Karl. *Max Weber's Political Ideas in the Perspective of Our Time*, translated by Richard and Clara Winston. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1966.
- Manasse, Ernst M. "Jaspers' Relation to Max Weber." In Paul A. Schilpp, ed. *The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 369-391. La Salle, IL: Open Court Publishing, 1981.
- Maslow, Abraham H. *Motivation and Personality*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York: Harper Collins, 1987.
- McCaulley, Mary H. "The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Leadership." In Kenneth E. Clark and Miriam B. Clark, eds. *Measures of Leadership*, pp. 381-418. West Orange, NJ: Leadership Library of America, 1990.
- Myers, Isabel B. *Introduction to Type*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1993.
- \_\_\_\_\_ and Peter B. Myers. *Gifts Differing: Understanding Personality Type*. Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black Publishing, 1995.

- Mommsen, Wolfgang J. *Max Weber and German Politics, 1890-1920*, translated by Michael S. Steinberg. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Radkau, Joachim. *Max Weber. Die Leidenschaft des Denkens*. Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Die Heldenekstase der betrunkenen Elefanten: Das Natursubstrat bei Max Weber." *Berliner Zeitschrift für Sozialwissenschaft*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (December, 2006), pp. 533-559.
- Sica, Allan. *Max Weber: A Comprehensive Bibliography*. New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers, 2004.
- Swedberg, Richard. *The Max Weber Dictionary: Key Words and Central Concepts*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.
- Weber, Alfred. *Die Not der geistigen Arbeiter*. Munich and Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1923.
- Weber, Marianne. *Max Weber: A Biography*, edited and translated by Harry Zohn. New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers, 1988.



## INDEX OF SUBJECTS

- Academia, academic, academics, 1, 5-6, 9, 14-23, 25-26, 29-30, 42-43, 46, 49, 52-58, 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, 72, 74, 77, 82, 98, 107, 110, 112, 114-115, 124, 126-127, 134, 140, 143-144, 150-151, 153-154, 165, 169, 189, 209  
adjunct lecturer, 25-28, 55, 62, 65, 70, 103, 116-117, 119, 134-135, 209  
adjunct professor, 10, 17  
appointments, 22, 26, 29, 54-55, 58, 62, 68-71, 77, 79, 107, 111, 114-115, 117-118, 122-123, 131-132, 136, 140, 143, 150  
career in America, 26  
career in Germany, 25-26, 28-29, 54, 79, 209  
chance, 19, 28-30, 32, 46, 136  
circles, 53-54, 57-58, 60, 62, 72, 117, 132, 150, 193  
freedom, 27, 64-70, 74, 106, 209  
lecturer, 20, 22, 26-27, 30, 41, 57, 66, 75, 103-104, 106-107, 112, 114-115, 122-123, 209  
lectures, 4-5, 11, 14, 19-20, 25-27, 29-30, 41-46, 57, 62, 70, 81, 98, 100, 110, 114-115, 119-121, 127, 132, 134, 153, 155, 174  
operators, 54-56, 124  
scandals, 53  
socialists, 71, 74, 77, 153-154  
underemployment, 18-19, 22  
unemployment, 18-19, 22  
vanity, 56, 193
- America, American, 3, 10, 19-20, 22, 25-29, 46-47, 83-84, 87, 91-92, 95, 97-98, 100, 102, 110, 112, 114, 126-128, 137-138, 143, 164-165, 168, 180-181, 185-186, 188-192, 202  
universities, 20, 107-109, 111, 115
- Aristocracy, aristocrats, 78, 140, 160, 163, 170, 178
- Associations, 6, 10, 17, 25, 42, 47, 55, 64, 73, 75, 78-79, 83, 90-96, 100-102, 141, 148-151, 155-157, 159-162, 176-179, 182-183, 192, 203
- Authority, 22, 55-57, 61, 104, 107-108, 111, 157, 162, 167, 172  
charismatic, 7, 157  
legal, 157  
traditional, 157
- Britain, see England, English
- Bureaucracy, 46, 77, 106-109, 111, 120-121, 140, 142, 145
- Capitalism, 12
- Center Party, 69, 74, 96, 165, 189
- China, Chinese, 49, 127, 166, 170
- Christianity, 43, 45, 49-50, 203
- Daemon, demon, 44, 52, 193, 200, 204
- Democracy, 22-23, 30, 42, 46, 65, 92, 172-173, 180-181, 188  
leaderless, 22, 191  
leadership, 14, 22, 191

- plebiscitary, 14, 22, 180
- Dilettante, dilettantism, 63, 167, 169, 186, 188, 193, 196
- Disenchantment of the world, 35, 51
- Elections, 14, 28-29, 69, 81, 100, 160, 165, 168-169, 174, 176-180, 182-183, 185-188, 190-192
- England, English, 6, 12, 14, 19, 36, 38, 44, 55, 71-72, 83-84, 87-88, 92, 98, 100, 107, 137-138, 167-169, 171-172, 174, 178, 180-182, 184-185, 187, 189-190, 202, 209
- ENTP type, 3, 5, 7, 13  
career options, 13  
defined, 3  
problems, 7-9, 17
- Ethic, ethics, 12, 15, 22, 44-45, 99, 187, 192, 195-203  
of responsibility, 22, 198, 200, 205  
of ultimate ends, 15, 22, 198-200, 202, 205
- Extraversion, extravert, 1-5, 7-8, 13-14, 17, 20  
among lecturers, 20  
among students, 20  
defined, 2  
in Western civilization, 20
- Force, 156-159, 161-162, 178, 196-197, 199-205
- France, French, 4, 30, 44, 46, 85-88, 100, 107, 164, 168, 171-172, 179, 181, 190
- Germany, German, 4, 6, 11, 14-16, 19-20, 22-23, 25-30, 33, 38, 44, 46, 53, 55, 57, 61, 64-69, 71, 73-76, 79-80, 84, 86-92, 94, 97-103, 105, 108-112, 115-120, 122, 124, 126, 129-130, 134, 136-138, 146-152, 155-156, 164, 167, 169, 172, 175, 177, 179, 181, 187-191, 196-197  
civil servants, 53, 96, 158, 168, 173, 209  
culture, 35, 41-42, 44-45, 63, 67, 71, 83, 89, 94-95, 99-100, 103, 110, 116, 139, 162  
Imperial, 23, 151, 154, 169  
revolution, 156, 160, 190, 193, 199, 206  
schools of commerce, xii, 109, 116, 125, 127-129, 132, 136-139, 141-143  
Third Reich, 22  
universities, 27-30, 108-116
- German Democratic Party, 14
- Greece, Greek, 37, 44, 49, 92, 158, 170, 201
- Habilitation, 6, 25-26, 30, 54, 62, 65-71, 75, 77, 107, 134, 151, 209
- Honor, 21, 30, 54, 61, 78, 81, 91, 102-103, 105, 127, 144, 153, 158-160, 165, 173, 176, 184, 195
- India, Indian, 37, 49-50, 170-171, 200-202, 204
- Intellectualization, 35, 51
- Intellectuals, 18, 21, 51, 165, 172, 193
- Introversion, introvert, 1, 3, 7, 9, 20-21
- Italy, Italian, 4, 19, 38, 65-66, 68, 107, 138, 158, 166, 171, 177, 187
- Justice, 15, 17, 21-22, 203
- Lawyers, 10, 76, 139, 163, 166, 171-174, 178, 186
- Leaders, 21-23, 29, 45-46, 54, 61, 66, 93, 96, 157-161, 164, 166-169, 173-175, 177-185, 187, 190-191, 200, 203-204, 207
- Leadership, 3, 46, 57, 59, 66, 93, 140, 142, 155-158, 160, 163-164, 166-167, 174, 176-178, 180-181, 184-185, 188, 190-192, 201, 204
- Legitimacy, 91, 157-160, 186, 195
- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), 1-3, 7
- National Liberal Party, 112-113, 119, 133, 135
- Netherlands, Dutch, 38, 73-75, 138, 172
- Nobility, 170-171, 177-178, 196
- Nobles, 127, 172
- Notables, 80, 178-183, 185, 188-191
- Parliament, parliamentary, 29, 83, 108, 113, 116, 119, 133, 135, 143, 146-147, 158, 161, 164, 167-168, 172, 178-180, 182-186, 188-191
- Political economist, 25, 78-79
- Political economy, 6, 9, 27-28, 35, 41, 82, 99, 116, 119, 127, 133, 135, 160
- Political parties, 65, 74, 90, 102, 107, 143, 147, 181  
non-socialist, 174, 181, 190
- Political science, 10, 41, 61, 98, 127, 157
- Politicians, 4, 7, 13-15, 23, 38, 55, 59, 63, 73, 84, 112, 130, 147, 158, 161-166, 169-180, 182-186, 188-189, 191-194, 196-200, 203, 205-206
- Politics, 6, 15, 19, 21, 23, 33, 41-42, 46, 58, 73, 89, 92, 94, 155-156, 161-164, 168, 171-173,

- 176-180, 183-184, 186, 188, 192-196, 199, 201, 203-207
- Power, 11, 15, 21, 23, 39, 45, 48-49, 55-57, 59, 71-72, 76, 84, 87, 90, 93, 100, 106, 108-109, 114, 124, 127, 129, 144, 156-162, 167-171, 174-178, 180-194, 196, 200-205
- Profession, 15, 18-19, 23, 26, 34, 48, 69, 81, 142, 162, 164, 179, 193, 201, 206, 209
- Postdoctoral lecturing qualification, see *Habilitation*
- Protestant, Protestantism, 12, 38, 91, 182, 202-203
- Prussia, Prussian, 21, 54-57, 61, 65, 77-78, 106-108, 111-115, 117-118, 120-124, 129-132, 138-140, 142-143, 145-146, 149, 168-169, 174  
Ministry of Education, 55-56, 61, 65, 106-107, 113, 119, 121, 123-124, 145, 169
- Psychological types, 1, 2, 20  
auxiliary function, 2, 3, 9  
inferior function, 2, 3, 9  
superior function, 2, 3, 9  
tertiary function, 2, 3
- Rationalization, 35, 50-51, 172
- Reichstag*, 61, 184, 190-191
- Religion, 6, 39, 43-45, 49-52, 99, 200-201, 203
- Renaissance, 37-38, 170, 203
- Revolution, 165, 171-172, 177, 197, 199, 203-204
- Roman Catholic Church, 38, 202, 205  
Catholic, 43, 72, 74, 88, 150-151, 154, 202, 205
- Rule, 15, 93, 107, 157-160, 162, 166-168, 171, 173, 177, 180, 183, 185, 190-191, 196, 204
- Russia, Russian, 6, 36, 89, 122, 156, 177, 193, 200  
Bolshevik, Bolshevism, 177, 196, 199  
revolution of 1905, 6, 203  
soviets, 177
- Scholarship, 4, 13, 23, 68, 70, 72, 174, 209
- Science, 16, 18, 21, 23, 25-27, 30-41, 43-44, 47-51, 59, 61, 67-68, 70, 72-73, 76-77, 98, 100, 102, 105, 115, 127, 130, 150, 157, 159, 197, 200-201, 205, 209  
calling for, 18, 30, 209  
defined, 18, 209  
meaning of, 34, 39,  
personality in, 13, 30, 33, 76  
progress of, 98  
scientific work being surpassed, 18, 34  
specialization, 21, 31  
value of, 31, 36, 51
- Social Democratic Party of Germany, 65, 95, 174, 181, 189-190, 192
- Social Democrats, xi, 68-69, 76
- Socialism, 78, 199, 204
- Social sciences, 7, 10, 18, 23, 102, 105, 209
- Sociologist, 11, 31, 61, 65-66, 80, 100, 193
- Sociology, 1, 6, 11, 23, 41, 80, 82, 90, 96, 98-100, 150  
of the press, 82, 148, 174
- Spain, Spanish, 165
- State, 5, 22-23, 27, 41, 43, 49, 66, 71-72, 74-75, 77, 84, 90-91, 97-98, 101, 106-109, 111, 113, 121, 145, 151, 156-161, 163-167, 169, 171-173, 175, 177-178, 202
- Student fraternities, xii, 57, 67, 92, 102, 110, 127-129, 132, 137-141, 151-153
- Switzerland, Swiss, 11-12, 83, 107, 165, 199
- Truth, 10, 12-13, 17, 21-22, 37, 43-44, 50, 198
- United States, see America
- Universities, 4, 9-10, 13, 15, 17, 19-20, 25, 27-30, 38-39, 45, 53-58, 61-62, 64-76, 98, 103-118, 120-122, 124-132, 135, 137-139, 142-145, 147, 149-151, 153-155, 171, 188  
higher education, 18-19, 21-22, 53-55, 57, 64, 66, 68-71, 74-75, 77, 107, 116-118, 128-131, 136-137, 140-142, 144-146, 150, 169, 190, 209
- Values, 7, 9, 30-31, 36, 40, 42-44, 47-48, 51, 58, 63, 71-73, 75-76, 80, 95, 103, 126, 144, 153, 176, 199, 204  
conflict, 19, 44, 48-49, 87, 124, 144, 148, 165, 195, 204  
place in lectures, 42
- Vocation, 1, 6-7, 9, 13, 16-18, 21-23, 25, 30-31, 36, 39-40, 47-48, 52, 155, 157-159, 162, 173, 191-192, 195, 197, 200-201, 204-207, 209  
for politics, qualities, 21, 23, 192-193  
for science, prerequisites, 21
- Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, 169, 196
- World War I, 16, 172, 175, 187
- Youth, 45-46, 49, 72-73, 129



## INDEX OF NAMES

### A

Abbe, Ernst C., 106, 108  
Althoff, Friedrich T., 21, 55, 61, 107, 112-124,  
130-136, 143, 145-146, 169  
Amira, Karl von, 64, 67  
Aristotle, 37  
Arnsperger, Ludwig, 119, 130  
Arons, Leo, 65, 106, 108  
Augustine, Saint, 51

### B

Bacon, Francis, 38  
Baudelaire, Charles F., 44  
Baumgarten, Eduard, 11-12  
Baumgarten, Hermann, 13  
Bebel, August, 190  
Beer, Ludwig, 125  
Bendix, Reinhard, 4, 8, 16  
Bergbohm, Carl M., 134  
Bernhard, Ludwig, 21-22, 53-61, 107, 120-121,  
123, 144  
Binz, Arthur, 125  
Brunner, Heinrich, 119  
Bueck, Henry A., 75  
Burckhardt, Jakob, 83

### C

Calhoun, John C., 185  
Chamberlain, Joseph, 183  
Charles V, Emperor, 166  
Cleon, 173  
Cobden, Richard, 184

### D

Da Vinci, Leonardo, 38  
Delbrück, Berthold G.G., 65  
Delbrück, Hans, 59-64  
Disraeli, Benjamin, 183  
Dostoevsky, Fyodor M., 200, 204  
Dreyfus, Alfred, 86

### E

Ehrenberg, Richard, 21, 77-79  
Ellenberger, Henri F., 11  
Eltzbacher, Paul, 125  
Enneccerus, Ludwig, 134  
Eulenburg, Franz, 96

### F

Fichte, Johann G., 198, 204  
Fischer, Theodor, 66-67



Förster, Friedrich W., 41, 200, 202  
Francis, Saint, 197, 204

## G

Galilei, Galileo, 5, 38  
George, Stefan, 95  
Gierke, Otto F. von, 119  
Gladstone, William E., 183-184, 191  
Goethe, Johann W. von, 27, 33, 48, 52  
Gothein, Eberhard, 99-100, 126  
Gundolf, Friedrich, ix  
Gupta, Candra, 202

## H

Harden, Maximilian, 63  
Harnack, Adolf von, 56, 58, 60  
Hasbach, Wilhelm, 134  
Hegel, Georg W.F., 20  
Helmholtz, Hermann von, 19, 29, 32

## I

Ihering, Rudolf von, 32

## J

Jackson, Andrew, 185  
Jaffé, Else, 12  
Jaspers, Karl, 4-5, 7-17  
Jastrow, Ignaz, 99, 126  
Jung, Carl G., 1-3, 7, 11, 19-20

## K

Kant, Immanuel, 20, 50, 204  
Kaufmann, Alexander A., 122  
Kautilya, King, 202  
Keller, Friedrich, 151  
Kirdorf, Emil, 79  
Koch, Adolf, 104, 151  
Kuyper, Abraham, 73, 75

## L

Lamprecht, Karl G., 76, 109  
Leist, Alexander G., 93

Li, Hongzhang, 170  
Liebknecht, Karl, 191, 196  
Lincoln, Abraham, 191  
Löbl, Emil, 83  
Loewenstein, Karl, 4, 8, 10, 15-16, 21-22  
Loria, Achille, 66  
Ludendorff, Erich F.W., 22-23  
Lukács, Georg von, 50  
Luther, Martin, 198, 202, 205  
Luxemburg, Rosa, 191, 196

## M

Machiavelli, Niccolò, 166, 202, 204  
Manasse, Ernst M., 5  
Maslow, Abraham H., 18  
Maximilian I, Emperor, 166  
Mayer, Robert von, 32  
Mayr, Georg von, 147  
Menger, Anton, 84, 89  
Michaelis, Adolf, 120  
Michels, Robert, 6, 21, 65-69  
Mill, John Stuart, 44  
Miquel, Johannes von, 112  
Mitzman, Arthur, 11, 15  
Molière, Jean-Baptiste, 21

## N

Nietzsche, Friedrich W., 20, 39, 44, 158  
Northcliffe, Alfred C.W., 86, 175

## O

Ostrogorski, Moisei J., 181

## P

Pappenheim, Max, 115  
Pericles, 173  
Plato, 33, 36-37  
Puttkamer, Robert von, 168

## Q

Quarck, Max, 105

R

Radkau, Joachim, 5-6, 8-10, 12, 21, 55, 59  
Ranke, Leopold von, 20, 29  
Roosevelt, Theodore, 110  
Ruge, Arnold, 103-104  
Ruhland, Gustav, 78

S

Schäfer, Dietrich, 41  
Schmid, Ferdinand, 150  
Schmoller, Gustav von, 21, 55, 58, 61-62, 66,  
69, 120, 123  
Schnadhorst, Francis, 182  
Schopenhauer, Arthur, 20, 197  
Shakespeare, William, 206  
Simmel, Georg, 99-100, 193  
Socrates, 37  
Somary, Felix, 15-16, 22  
Sombart, Werner, 15, 62, 99-100, 126  
Spann, Othmar, 5  
Spener, Philip J., 38  
Stumm-Halberg, Karl von, 55  
Swammerdam, Jan, 38

T

Taylor, Frederick W., 177  
Tobler, Mina, 12  
Tolstoy, Leo N., 36, 39, 48, 204  
Treitschke, Heinrich von, 63  
Trotsky, Leon D., 156

U

Uhland, Ludwig, 27

W

Wach, Adolf, 75, 78  
Wagner, Adolf, 55, 62, 123  
Washington, George, 185  
Weber, Alfred, 12, 14, 18-19, 66, 99  
Webster, Daniel, 185  
Weierstraß, Karl T.W., 33

Z

Ziegler, Heinrich E., 68

