

# The Vocation Lectures



Politics as a Vocation  
Science as a Vocation

POLITICS  
AS  
A VOCATION  
MAX WEBER



# POLITICS AS A VOCATION

BY

MAX WEBER

REPRINTED FROM MAX WEBER: ESSAYS IN SOCIOLOGY  
TRANSLATED, EDITED, AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
H. H. GERTH and C. WRIGHT MILLS



NEW YORK  
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS  
1946

moulin digital editions



2014

## Politics as a Vocation

(‘Politik als Beruf,’ *Gesammelte Politische Schriften* (München, 1921), pp. 396-450. Originally a speech at Munich University, 1918, published in 1919 by Duncker & Humblot, Munich.)

THIS lecture, which I give at your request, will necessarily disappoint you in a number of ways. You will naturally expect me to take a position on actual problems of the day. But that will be the case only in a purely formal way and toward the end, when I shall raise certain questions concerning the significance of political action in the whole way of life. In today’s lecture, all questions that refer to what policy and what content one should give one’s political activity must be eliminated. For such questions have nothing to do with the general question of what politics as a vocation means and what it can mean. Now to our subject matter.

What do we understand by politics? The concept is extremely broad and comprises any kind of *independent* leadership in action. One speaks of the currency policy of the banks, of the discounting policy of the Reichsbank, of the strike policy of a trade union; one may speak of the educational policy of a municipality or a township, of the policy of the president of a voluntary association, and, finally, even of the policy of a prudent wife who seeks to guide her husband. Tonight, our reflections are, of course, not based upon such a broad concept. We wish to understand by politics only the leadership, or the influencing of the leadership, of a *political* association, hence today, of a *state*.

But what is a ‘political’ association from the sociological point of view? What is a ‘state’? Sociologically, the state cannot be defined in terms of its ends. There is scarcely any task that some political association has not taken in hand, and there is no task that one could say has always been exclusive and peculiar to those associations which are designated as political ones: today the state, or historically, those associations which have been the predecessors of the modern state. Ultimately, one can define the modern state sociologically only in terms of the specific means peculiar to it, as to every political association, namely, the use of physical force.

‘Every state is founded on force,’ said Trotsky at Brest-Litovsk. That is indeed right. If no social institutions existed which knew the use of violence, then the concept of ‘state’ would be eliminated, and a condition would emerge that could be designated as ‘anarchy,’ in the specific sense of this word. Of course, force is certainly not the normal or the only means of the state—nobody says that—but force is a means specific to the state. Today the relation between the state and violence is an especially intimate one. In the past, the most varied institutions—beginning with the sib—have known the use of physical force as quite normal. Today, however, we have to say that

## POLITICS AS A VOCATION

a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory. Note that ‘territory’ is one of the characteristics of the state. Specifically, at the present time, the right to use physical force is ascribed to other institutions or to individuals only to the extent to which the state permits it. The state is considered the sole source of the ‘right’ to use violence. Hence, ‘politics’ for us means striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power, either among states or among groups within a state.

This corresponds essentially to ordinary usage. When a question is said to be a ‘political’ question, when a cabinet minister or an official is said to be a ‘political’ official, or when a decision is said to be ‘politically’ determined, what is always meant is that interests in the distribution, maintenance, or transfer of power are decisive for answering the questions and determining the decision or the official’s sphere of activity. He who is active in politics strives for power either as a means in serving other aims, ideal or egoistic, or as ‘power for power’s sake,’ that is, in order to enjoy the prestige-feeling that power gives.

Like the political institutions historically preceding it, the state is a relation of men dominating men, a relation supported by means of legitimate (i.e. considered to be legitimate) violence. If the state is to exist, the dominated must obey the authority claimed by the powers that be. When and why do men obey? Upon what inner justifications and upon what external means does this domination rest?

To begin with, in principle, there are three inner justifications, hence basic *legitimations* of domination.

First, the authority of the ‘eternal yesterday,’ i.e. of the mores sanctified through the unimaginably ancient recognition and habitual orientation to conform. This is ‘traditional’ domination exercised by the patriarch and the patrimonial prince of yore.

There is the authority of the extraordinary and personal *gift of grace* (charisma), the absolutely personal devotion and personal confidence in revelation, heroism, or other qualities of individual leadership. This is ‘charismatic’ domination, as exercised by the prophet or—in the field of politics—by the elected war lord, the plebiscitarian ruler, the great demagogue, or the political party leader.

Finally, there is domination by virtue of ‘legality,’ by virtue of the belief in the validity of legal statute and functional ‘competence’ based on rationally created *rules*. In this case, obedience is expected in discharging statutory obligations. This is domination as exercised by the modern ‘servant of the state’ and by all those bearers of power who in this respect resemble him.

It is understood that, in reality, obedience is determined by highly robust motives of fear and hope—fear of the vengeance of magical powers or of the power-holder, hope for reward in this world or in the beyond—and besides all this, by interests of the most varied sort.

## POLITICS AS A VOCATION

Of this we shall speak presently. However, in asking for the 'legitimations' of this obedience, one meets with these three 'pure' types: 'traditional,' 'charismatic,' and 'legal.'

These conceptions of legitimacy and their inner justifications are of very great significance for the structure of domination. To be sure, the pure types are rarely found in reality. But today we cannot deal with the highly complex variants, transitions, and combinations of these pure types, which problems belong to 'political science.' Here we are interested above all in the second of these types: domination by virtue of the devotion of those who obey the purely personal 'charisma' of the 'leader.' For this is the root of the idea of a calling in its highest expression.

Devotion to the charisma of the prophet, or the leader in war, or to the great demagogue in the *ecclesia* or in parliament, means that the leader is personally recognized as the innerly 'called' leader of men. Men do not obey him by virtue of tradition or statute, but because they believe in him. If he is more than a narrow and vain upstart of the moment, the leader lives for his cause and 'strives for his work.'<sup>1</sup> The devotion of his disciples, his followers, his personal party friends is oriented to his person and to its qualities.

Charismatic leadership has emerged in all places and in all historical epochs. Most importantly in the past, it has emerged in the two figures of the magician and the prophet on the one hand, and in the elected war lord, the gang leader and *condotierre* on the other hand. Political leadership in the form of the free 'demagogue' who grew from the soil of the city state is of greater concern to us; like the city state, the demagogue is peculiar to the Occident and especially to Mediterranean culture. Furthermore, political leadership in the form of the parliamentary 'party leader' has grown on the soil of the constitutional state, which is also indigenous only to the Occident.

These politicians by virtue of a 'calling,' in the most genuine sense of the word, are of course nowhere the only decisive figures in the crosscurrents of the political struggle for power. The sort of auxiliary means that are at their disposal is also highly decisive. How do the politically dominant powers manage to maintain their domination? The question pertains to any kind of domination, hence also to political domination in all its forms, traditional as well as legal and charismatic.

Organized domination, which calls for continuous administration, requires that human conduct be conditioned to obedience towards those masters who claim to be the bearers of legitimate power. On the other hand, by virtue of this obedience, organized domination requires the control of those material goods which in a given case are necessary for the use of physical violence. Thus, organized domination requires control of the personal executive staff and the material implements of administration.

## POLITICS AS A VOCATION

The administrative staff, which externally represents the organization of political domination, is, of course, like any other organization, bound by obedience to the power-holder and not alone by the concept of legitimacy, of which we have just spoken. There are two other means, both of which appeal to personal interests: material reward and social honor. The fiefs of vassals, the prebends of patrimonial officials, the salaries of modern civil servants, the honor of knights, the privileges of estates, and the honor of the civil servant comprise their respective wages. The fear of losing them is the final and decisive basis for solidarity between the executive staff and the power-holder. There is honor and booty for the followers in war; for the demagogue's following, there are 'spoils'—that is, exploitation of the dominated through the monopolization of office—and there are politically determined profits and premiums of vanity. All of these rewards are also derived from the domination exercised by a charismatic leader.

To maintain a dominion by force, certain material goods are required, just as with an economic organization. All states may be classified according to whether they rest on the principle that the staff of men themselves *own* the administrative means, or whether the staff is 'separated' from these means of administration. This distinction holds in the same sense in which today we say that the salaried employee and the proletarian in the capitalistic enterprise are 'separated' from the material means of production. The power-holder must be able to count on the obedience of the staff members, officials, or whoever else they may be. The administrative means may consist of money, building, war material, vehicles, horses, or what-not. The question is whether or not the power-holder himself directs and organizes the administration while delegating executive power to personal servants, hired officials, or personal favorites and confidants, who are non-owners, i.e. who do not use the material means of administration in their own right but are directed by the lord. The distinction runs through all administrative organizations of the past.

These political associations in which the material means of administration are autonomously controlled, wholly or partly, by the dependent administrative staff may be called associations organized in '*estates*.' The vassal in the feudal association, for instance, paid out of his own pocket for the administration and judicature of the district enfeoffed to him. He supplied his own equipment and provisions for war, and his subvassals did likewise. Of course, this had consequences for the lord's position of power, which only rested upon a relation of personal faith and upon the fact that the legitimacy of his possession of the fief and the social honor of the vassal were derived from the overlord.

However, everywhere, reaching back to the earliest political formations, we also find the lord himself directing the administra-

## POLITICS AS A VOCATION

tion. He seeks to take the administration into his own hands by having men personally dependent upon him: slaves, household officials, attendants, personal ‘favorites,’ and prebendaries enfeoffed in kind or in money from his magazines. He seeks to defray the expenses from his own pocket, from the revenues of his patrimonium; and he seeks to create an army which is dependent upon him personally because it is equipped and provisioned out of his granaries, magazines, and armories. In the association of ‘estates,’ the lord rules with the aid of an autonomous ‘aristocracy’ and hence shares his domination with it; the lord who personally administers is supported either by members of his household or by plebeians. These are propertyless strata having no social honor of their own; materially, they are completely chained to him and are not backed up by any competing power of their own. All forms of patriarchal and patrimonial domination, Sultanist despotism, and bureaucratic states belong to this latter type. The bureaucratic state order is especially important; in its most rational development, it is precisely characteristic of the modern state.

Everywhere the development of the modern state is initiated through the action of the prince. He paves the way for the expropriation of the autonomous and ‘private’ bearers of executive power who stand beside him, of those who in their own right possess the means of administration, warfare, and financial organization, as well as politically usable goods of all sorts. The whole process is a complete parallel to the development of the capitalist enterprise through gradual expropriation of the independent producers. In the end, the modern state controls the total means of political organization, which actually come together under a single head. No single official personally owns the money he pays out, or the buildings, stores, tools, and war machines he controls. In the contemporary ‘state’—and this is essential for the concept of state—the ‘separation’ of the administrative staff, of the administrative officials, and of the workers from the material means of administrative organization is completed. Here the most modern development begins, and we see with our own eyes the attempt to inaugurate the expropriation of this expropriator of the political means, and therewith of political power.

The revolution [of Germany, 1918] has accomplished, at least in so far as leaders have taken the place of the statutory authorities, this much: the leaders, through usurpation or election, have attained control over the political staff and the apparatus of material goods; and they deduce their legitimacy—no matter with what right—from the will of the governed. Whether the leaders, on the basis of this at least apparent success, can rightfully entertain the hope of also carrying through the expropriation within the capitalist enterprises is a different question. The direction of capitalist enterprises, despite far-reaching analogies, follows quite different laws than those of political administration.

## POLITICS AS A VOCATION

Today we do not take a stand on this question. I state only the purely *conceptual* aspect for our consideration: the modern state is a compulsory association which organizes domination. It has been successful in seeking to monopolize the legitimate use of physical force as a means of domination within a territory. To this end the state has combined the material means of organization in the hands of its leaders, and it has expropriated all autonomous functionaries of estates who formerly controlled these means in their own right. The state has taken their positions and now stands in the top place.

During this process of political expropriation, which has occurred with varying success in all countries on earth, 'professional politicians' in another sense have emerged. They arose first in the service of a prince. They have been men who, unlike the charismatic leader, have not wished to be lords themselves, but who have entered the service of political lords. In the struggle of expropriation, they placed themselves at the princes' disposal and by managing the princes' politics they earned, on the one hand, a living and, on the other hand, an ideal content of life. Again, it is only in the Occident that we find this kind of professional politician in the service of powers other than the princes. In the past, they have been the most important power instrument of the prince and his instrument of political expropriation.

Before discussing 'professional politicians' in detail, let us clarify in all its aspects the state of affairs their existence presents. Politics, just as economic pursuits, may be a man's avocation or his vocation. One may engage in politics, and hence seek to influence the distribution of power within and between political structures, as an 'occasional' politician. We are all 'occasional' politicians when we cast our ballot or consummate a similar expression of intention, such as applauding or protesting in a 'political' meeting, or delivering a 'political' speech, etc. The whole relation of many people to politics is restricted to this. Politics as an avocation is today practiced by all those party agents and heads of voluntary political associations who, as a rule, are politically active only in case of need and for whom politics is, neither materially nor ideally, 'their life' in the first place. The same holds for those members of state counsels and similar deliberative bodies that function only when summoned. It also holds for rather broad strata of our members of parliament who are politically active only during sessions. In the past, such strata were found especially among the estates. Proprietors of military implements in their own right, or proprietors of goods important for the administration, or proprietors of personal prerogatives may be called 'estates.' A large portion of them were far from giving their lives wholly, or merely preferentially, or more than occasionally, to the service of politics. Rather, they exploited their prerogatives in the interest of gaining rent or even profits; and they became active in the service of political associations only when the overlord of their status-equals

especially demanded it. It was not different in the case of some of the auxiliary forces which the prince drew into the struggle for the creation of a political organization to be exclusively at his disposal. This was the nature of the *Räte von Haus aus* [councilors] and, still further back, of a considerable part of the councilors assembling in the 'Curia' and other deliberating bodies of the princes. But these merely occasional auxiliary forces engaging in politics on the side were naturally not sufficient for the prince. Of necessity, the prince sought to create a staff of helpers dedicated wholly and exclusively to serving him, hence making this their major vocation. The structure of the emerging dynastic political organization, and not only this but the whole articulation of the culture, depended to a considerable degree upon the question of where the prince recruited agents.

A staff was also necessary for those political associations whose members constituted themselves politically as (so-called) 'free' communes under the complete abolition or the far-going restriction of princely power.

They were 'free' not in the sense of freedom from domination by force, but in the sense that princely power legitimized by tradition (mostly religiously sanctified) as the exclusive source of all authority was absent. These communities have their historical home in the Occident. Their nucleus was the city as a body politic, the form in which the city first emerged in the Mediterranean culture area. In all these cases, what did the politicians who made politics their major vocation look like?

There are two ways of making politics one's vocation: Either one lives 'for' politics or one lives 'off' politics. By no means is this contrast an exclusive one. The rule is, rather, that man does both, at least in thought, and certainly he also does both in practice. He who lives 'for' politics makes politics his life, in an internal sense. Either he enjoys the naked possession of the power he exerts, or he nourishes his inner balance and self-feeling by the consciousness that his life has meaning in the service of a 'cause.' In this internal sense, every sincere man who lives for a cause also lives off this cause. The distinction hence refers to a much more substantial aspect of the matter, namely, to the economic. He who strives to make politics a permanent source of income lives 'off' politics as a vocation, whereas he who does not do this lives 'for' politics. Under the dominance of the private property order, some—if you wish—very trivial preconditions must exist in order for a person to be able to live 'for' politics in this economic sense. Under normal conditions, the politician must be economically independent of the income politics can bring him. This means, quite simply, that the politician must be wealthy or must have a personal position in life which yields a sufficient income.

This is the case, at least in normal circumstances. The war lord's following is just as little concerned about the conditions of a normal

economy as is the street crowd following of the revolutionary hero. Both live off booty, plunder, confiscations, contributions, and the imposition of worthless and compulsory means of tender, which in essence amounts to the same thing. But necessarily, these are extraordinary phenomena. In everyday economic life, only some wealth serves the purpose of making a man economically independent. Yet this alone does not suffice. The professional politician must also be economically 'dispensable,' that is, his income must not depend upon the fact that he constantly and personally places his ability and thinking entirely, or at least by far predominantly, in the service of economic acquisition. In the most unconditional way, the rentier is dispensable in this sense. Hence, he is a man who receives completely unearned income. He may be the territorial lord of the past or the large landowner and aristocrat of the present who receives ground rent. In Antiquity and the Middle Ages they who received slave or serf rents or in modern times rents from shares or bonds or similar sources—these are rentiers.

Neither the worker nor—and this has to be noted well—the entrepreneur, especially the modern, large-scale entrepreneur, is economically dispensable in this sense. For it is precisely the entrepreneur who is tied to his enterprise and is therefore not dispensable. This holds for the entrepreneur in industry far more than for the entrepreneur in agriculture, considering the seasonal character of agriculture. In the main, it is very difficult for the entrepreneur to be represented in his enterprise by someone else, even temporarily. He is as little dispensable as is the medical doctor, and the more eminent and busy he is the less dispensable he is. For purely organizational reasons, it is easier for the lawyer to be dispensable; and therefore the lawyer has played an incomparably greater, and often even a dominant, role as a professional politician. We shall not continue in this classification; rather let us clarify some of its ramifications.

The leadership of a state or of a party by men who (in the economic sense of the word) live exclusively for politics and not off politics means necessarily a 'plutocratic' recruitment of the leading political strata. To be sure, this does not mean that such plutocratic leadership signifies at the same time that the politically dominant strata will not also seek to live 'off' politics, and hence that the dominant stratum will not usually exploit their political domination in their own economic interest. All that is unquestionable, of course. There has never been such a stratum that has not somehow lived 'off' politics. Only this is meant: that the professional politician need not seek remuneration directly for his political work, whereas every politician without means must absolutely claim this. On the other hand, we do not mean to say that the propertyless politician will pursue private economic advantages through politics, exclusively, or even predominantly. Nor do we mean that he will not think, in the

first place, of 'the subject matter.' Nothing would be more incorrect. According to all experience, a care for the economic 'security' of his existence is consciously or unconsciously a cardinal point in the whole life orientation of the wealthy man. A quite reckless and unreserved political idealism is found if not exclusively at least predominantly among those strata who by virtue of their propertylessness stand entirely outside of the strata who are interested in maintaining the economic order of a given society. This holds especially for extraordinary and hence revolutionary epochs. A non-plutocratic recruitment of interested politicians, of leadership and following, is geared to the self-understood precondition that regular and reliable income will accrue to those who manage politics.

Either politics can be conducted 'honorifically' and then, as one usually says, by 'independent,' that is, by wealthy, men, and especially by rentiers. Or, political leadership is made accessible to propertyless men who must then be rewarded. The professional politician who lives 'off' politics may be a pure 'prebendary' or a salaried 'official.' Then the politician receives either income from fees and perquisites for specific services—tips and bribes are only an irregular and formally illegal variant of this category of income—or a fixed income in kind, a money salary, or both. He may assume the character of an 'entrepreneur,' like the *condottiere* or the holder of a farmed-out or purchased office, or like the American boss who considers his costs a capital investment which he brings to fruition through exploitation of his influence. Again, he may receive a fixed wage, like a journalist, a party secretary, a modern cabinet minister, or a political official. Feudal fiefs, land grants, and prebends of all sorts have been typical, in the past. With the development of the money economy, perquisites and prebends especially are the typical rewards for the following of princes, victorious conquerors, or successful party chiefs. For loyal services today, party leaders give offices of all sorts—in parties, newspapers, co-operative societies, health insurance, municipalities, as well as in the state. All party struggles are struggles for the patronage of office, as well as struggles for objective goals.

In Germany, all struggles between the proponents of local and of central government are focused upon the question of which powers shall control the patronage of office, whether they are of Berlin, Munich, Karlsruhe, or Dresden. Setbacks in-participating in offices are felt more severely by parties than is action against their objective goals. In France, a turnover of prefects because of party politics has always been considered a greater transformation and has always caused a greater uproar than a modification in the government's program—the latter almost having the significance of mere verbiage. Some parties, especially those in America since the disappearance of the old conflicts concerning the interpretation of the constitution, have become pure patronage parties handing out jobs and changing

their material program according to the chances of grabbing votes.

In Spain, up to recent years, the two great parties, in a conventionally fixed manner, took turns in office by means of 'elections,' fabricated from above, in order to provide their followers with offices. In the Spanish colonial territories, in the so-called 'elections,' as well as in the so-called 'revolutions,' what was at stake was always the state bread-basket from which the victors wished to be fed.

In Switzerland, the parties peacefully divided the offices among themselves proportionately, and some of our 'revolutionary' constitutional drafts, for instance the first draft of the Badenian constitution, sought to extend this system to ministerial positions. Thus, the state and state offices were considered as pure institutions for the provision of spoilsmen.

Above all, the Catholic Center party was enthusiastically for this draft. In Badenia, the party, as part of the party platform, made the distribution of offices proportional to confessions and hence without regard to achievement. This tendency becomes stronger for all parties when the number of offices increase as a result of general bureaucratization and when the demand for offices increases because they represent specifically secure livelihoods. For their followings, the parties become more and more a means to the end of being provided for in this manner.

The development of modern officialdom into a highly qualified, professional labor force, specialized in expertness through long years of preparatory training, stands opposed to all these arrangements. Modern bureaucracy in the interest of integrity has developed a high sense of status honor; without this sense the danger of an awful corruption and a vulgar Philistinism threatens fatally. And without such integrity, even the purely technical functions of the state apparatus would be endangered. The significance of the state apparatus for the economy has been steadily rising, especially with increasing socialization, and its significance will be further augmented.

In the United States, amateur administration through booty politicians in accordance with the outcome of presidential elections resulted in the exchange of hundreds of thousands of officials, even down to the mail carrier. The administration knew nothing of the professional civil-servant-for-life, but this amateur administration has long since been punctured by the Civil Service Reform. Purely technical, irrefragable needs of the administration have determined this development.

In Europe, expert officialdom, based on the division of labor, has emerged in a gradual development of half a thousand years. The Italian cities and seignories were the beginning, among the monarchies, and the states of the Norman conquerors. But the decisive step was taken in connection with the administration of the finances of the prince. With the administrative reforms of Emperor Max, it

can be seen how hard it was for the officials to depose successfully of the prince in this field, even under the pressure of extreme emergency and of Turkish rule. The sphere of finance could afford least of all a ruler's dilettantism—a ruler who at that time was still above all a knight. The development of war technique called forth the expert and specialized officer; the differentiation of legal procedure called forth the trained jurist. In these three areas—finance, war, and law—expert officialdom in the more advanced states was definitely triumphant during the sixteenth century. With the ascendancy of princely absolutism over the estates, there was simultaneously a gradual abdication of the prince's autocratic rule in favor of an expert officialdom. These very officials had only facilitated the prince's victory over the estates.

The development of the 'leading politicians' was realized along with the ascendancy of the specially trained officialdom, even if in far less noticeable transitions. Of course, such really decisive advisers of the princes have existed at all times and all over the world. In the Orient, the need for relieving the Sultan as far as possible from personal responsibility for the success of the government has created the typical figure of the 'Grand Vizier.' In the Occident, influenced above all by the reports of the Venetian legates, diplomacy first became a *consciously* cultivated art in the age of Charles V, in Machiavelli's time. The reports of the Venetian legates were read with passionate zeal in expert diplomatic circles. The adepts of this art, who were in the main educated humanistically, treated one another as trained initiates, similar to the humanist Chinese statesmen in the last period of the warring states. The necessity of a formally unified guidance of the whole policy, including that of home affairs, by a leading statesman finally and compellingly arose only through constitutional development. Of course, individual personalities, such as advisers of the princes, or rather, in fact, leaders, had again and again existed before then. But the organization of administrative agencies even in the most advanced states first proceeded along other avenues. Top collegial administrative agencies had emerged. In theory, and to a gradually decreasing extent in fact, they met under the personal chairmanship of the prince who rendered the decision. This collegial system led to memoranda, counter-memoranda, and reasoned votes of the majority and the minority. In addition to the official and highest authorities, the prince surrounded himself with purely personal confidants—the 'cabinet'—and through them rendered his decisions, after considering the resolutions of the state counsel, or whatever else the highest state agency was called. The prince, coming more and more into the position of a dilettante, sought to extricate himself from the unavoidably increasing weight of the expertly trained officials through the collegial system and the cabinet. He sought to retain the highest leadership in his own hands. This latent struggle between expert officialdom and autocratic rule

existed everywhere. Only in the face of parliaments and the power aspirations of party leaders did the situation change. Very different conditions led to the externally identical result, though to be sure with certain differences. Wherever the dynasties retained actual power in their hands—as was especially the case in Germany—the interests of the prince were joined with those of officialdom *against* parliament and its claims for power. The officials were also interested in having leading positions, that is, ministerial positions, occupied by their own ranks, thus making these positions an object of the official career. The monarch, on his part, was interested in being able to appoint the ministers from the ranks of devoted officials according to his own discretion. Both parties, however, were interested in seeing the political leadership confront parliament in a unified and solidary fashion, and hence in seeing the collegial system replaced by a single cabinet head. Furthermore, in order to be removed in a purely formal way from the struggle of parties and from party attacks, the monarch needed a single personality to cover him and to assume responsibility, that is, to answer to parliament and to negotiate with the parties. All these interests worked together and in the same direction: a minister emerged to direct the officialdom in a unified way.

Where parliament gained supremacy over the monarch—as in England—the development of parliamentary power worked even more strongly in the direction of a unification of the state apparatus. In England, the ‘cabinet,’ with the single head of Parliament as its ‘leader,’ developed as a committee of the party which at the time controlled the majority. This party power was ignored by official law but, in fact, it alone was politically decisive. The official collegial bodies as such were not organs of the actual ruling power, the party, and hence could not be the bearers of real government. The ruling party required an ever-ready organization composed *only* of its actually leading men, who would confidentially discuss matters in order to maintain power within and be capable of engaging in grand politics outside. The cabinet is simply this organization. However, in relation to the public, especially the parliamentary public, the party needed a leader responsible for all decisions—the cabinet head. The English system has been taken over on the Continent in the form of parliamentary ministries. In America alone, and in the democracies influenced by America, a quite heterogeneous system was placed into opposition with this system. The American system placed the directly and popularly elected leader of the victorious party at the head of the apparatus of officials appointed by him and bound him to the consent of ‘parliament’ only in budgetary and legislative matters.

The development of politics into an organization which demanded training in the struggle for power, and in the methods of this struggle as developed by modern party policies, determined the

separation of public functionaries into two categories, which, however, are by no means rigidly but nevertheless distinctly separated. These categories are 'administrative' officials on the one hand, and 'political' officials on the other. The 'political' officials, in the genuine sense of the word, can regularly and externally be recognized by the fact that they can be transferred any time at will, that they can be dismissed, or at least temporarily withdrawn. They are like the French prefects and the comparable officials of other countries, and this is in sharp contrast to the 'independence' of officials with judicial functions. In England, officials who, according to fixed convention, retire from office when there is a change in the parliamentary majority, and hence a change in the cabinet, belong to this category. There are usually among them some whose competence includes the management of the general 'inner administration.' The political element consists, above all, in the task of maintaining 'law and order' in the country, hence maintaining the existing power relations. In Prussia these officials, in accordance with Puttkamer's decree and in order to avoid censure, were obliged to 'represent the policy of the government.' And, like the prefects in France, they were used as an official apparatus for influencing elections. Most of the 'political' officials of the German system—in contrast to other countries—were equally qualified in so far as access to these offices required a university education, special examinations, and special preparatory service. In Germany, only the heads of the political apparatus, the ministers, lack this specific characteristic of modern civil service. Even under the old regime, one could be the Prussian minister of education without ever having attended an institution of higher learning; whereas one could become *Vortragender Rat*,<sup>2</sup> in principle, only on the basis of a prescribed examination. The specialist and trained *Dezernent*<sup>3</sup> and *Vortragender Rat* were of course infinitely better informed about the real technical problems of the division than was their respective chief—for instance, under Althoff in the Prussian ministry of education. In England it was not different. Consequently, in all routine demands the divisional head was more powerful than the minister, which was not without reason. The minister was simply the representative of the political power constellation; he had to represent these powerful political staffs and he had to take measure of the proposals of his subordinate expert officials or give them directive orders of a political nature.

After all, things in a private economic enterprise are quite similar: the real 'sovereign,' the assembled shareholders, is just as little influential in the business management as is a 'people' ruled by expert officials. And the personages who decide the policy of the enterprise, the bank-controlled 'directorates,' give only directive economic orders and select persons for the management without themselves being capable of technically directing the enterprise. Thus the present structure of the revolutionary state signifies nothing new in

principle. It places power over the administration into the hands of absolute dilettantes, who, by virtue of their control of the machine-guns, would like to use expert officials only as executive heads and hands. The difficulties of the present system lie elsewhere than here, but today these difficulties shall not concern us. We shall, rather, ask for the typical peculiarity of the professional politicians, of the 'leaders' as well as their followings. Their nature has changed and today varies greatly from one case to another.

We have seen that in the past 'professional politicians' developed through the struggle of the princes with the estates and that they served the princes. Let us briefly review the major types of these professional politicians.

Confronting the estates, the prince found support in politically exploitable strata outside of the order of the estates. Among the latter, there was, first, the clergy in Western and Eastern India, in Buddhist China and Japan, and in Lamaist Mongolia, just as in the Christian territories of the Middle Ages. The clergy were technically useful because they were literate. The importation of Brahmins, Buddhist priests, Lamas, and the employment of bishops and priests as political counselors, occurred with an eye to obtaining administrative forces who could read and write and who could be used in the struggle of the emperor, prince, or Khan against the aristocracy. Unlike the vassal who confronted his overlord, the cleric, especially the celibate cleric, stood outside the machinery of normal political and economic interests and was not tempted by the struggle for political power, for himself or for his descendants. By virtue of his own status, the cleric was 'separated' from the managerial implements of princely administration.

The humanistically educated literati comprised a second such stratum. There was a time when one learned to produce Latin speeches and Greek verses in order to become a political adviser to a prince and, above all things, to become a memorialist. This was the time of the first flowering of the humanist schools and of the princely foundations of professorships for 'poetics.' This was for us a transitory epoch, which has had a quite persistent influence upon our educational system, yet no deeper results politically. In East Asia, it has been different. The Chinese mandarin is, or rather originally was, what the humanist of our Renaissance period approximately was: a literator humanistically trained and tested in the language monuments of the remote past. When you read the diaries of Li Hung Chang you will find that he is most proud of having composed poems and of being a good calligrapher. This stratum, with its conventions developed and modeled after Chinese Antiquity, has determined the whole destiny of China; and perhaps our fate would have been similar if the humanists in their time had had the slightest chance of gaining a similar influence.

The third stratum was the court nobility. After the princes had

succeeded in expropriating political power from the nobility as an estate, they drew the nobles to the court and used them in their political and diplomatic service. The transformation of our educational system in the seventeenth century was partly determined by the fact that court nobles as professional politicians displaced the humanist literati and entered the service of the princes.

The fourth category was a specifically English institution. A patrician stratum developed there which was comprised of the petty nobility and the urban rentiers; technically they are called the 'gentry.' The English gentry represents a stratum that the prince originally attracted in order to counter the barons. The prince placed the stratum in possession of the offices of 'self-government,' and later he himself became increasingly dependent upon them. The gentry maintained the possession of all offices of local administration by taking them over without compensation in the interest of their own social power. The gentry has saved England from the bureaucratization which has been the fate of all continental states.

A fifth stratum, the university-trained jurist, is peculiar to the Occident, especially to the European continent, and has been of decisive significance for the Continent's whole political structure. The tremendous after-effect of Roman law, as transformed by the late Roman bureaucratic state, stands out in nothing more clearly than the fact that everywhere the revolution of political management in the direction of the evolving rational state has been borne by trained jurists. This also occurred in England, although there the great national guilds of jurists hindered the reception of Roman law. There is no analogy to this process to be found in any area of the world.

All beginnings of rational juristic thinking in the Indian Mimamsa School and all further cultivation of the ancient juristic thinking in Islam have been unable to prevent the idea of rational law from being overgrown by theological forms of thought. Above all, legal trial procedure has not been fully rationalized in the cases of India and of Islamism. Such rationalization has been brought about on the Continent only through the borrowing of ancient Roman jurisprudence by the Italian jurists. Roman jurisprudence is the product of a political structure arising from the city state to world domination—a product of quite unique nature. The *usus modernus* of the late medieval pandect jurists and canonists was blended with theories of natural law, which were born from juristic and Christian thought and which were later secularized. This juristic rationalism has had its great representatives among the Italian Podesta, the French crown jurists (who created the formal means for the undermining of the rule of seigneurs by royal power), among the canonists and the theologians of the ecclesiastic councils (thinking in terms of natural law), among the court jurists and academic judges of the continental princes, among the Netherland teachers of natural law and the mo-

narchomachists, among the English crown and parliamentary jurists, among the *noblesse de robe* of the French Parliament, and finally, among the lawyers of the age of the French Revolution.

Without this juristic rationalism, the rise of the absolute state is just as little imaginable as is the Revolution. If you look through the remonstrances of the French Parliaments or through the cahiers of the French Estates-General from the sixteenth century to the year 1789, you will find everywhere the spirit of the jurists. And if you go over the occupational composition of the members of the French Assembly, you will find there—although the members of the Assembly were elected through equal franchise—a single proletarian, very few bourgeois enterprisers, but jurists of all sorts, en masse. Without them, the specific mentality that inspired these radical intellectuals and their projects would be quite inconceivable. Since the French Revolution, the modern lawyer and modern democracy absolutely belong together. And lawyers, in our sense of an independent status group, also exist only in the Occident. They have developed since the Middle Ages from the *Fürsprech* of the formalistic Germanic legal procedure under the impact of the rationalization of the trial.

The significance of the lawyer in Occidental politics since the rise of parties is not accidental. The management of politics through parties simply means management through interest groups. We shall soon see what that means. The craft of the trained lawyer is to plead effectively the cause of interested clients. In this, the lawyer is superior to any ‘official,’ as the superiority of enemy propaganda [Allied propaganda 1914-18] could teach us. Certainly he can advocate and win a cause supported by logically weak arguments and one which, in this sense, is a ‘weak’ cause. Yet he wins it because technically he makes a ‘strong case’ for it. But only the lawyer successfully pleads a cause that can be supported by logically strong arguments, thus handling a ‘good’ cause ‘well.’ All too often the civil servant as a politician turns a cause that is good in every sense into a ‘weak’ cause, through technically ‘weak’ pleading. This is what we have had to experience. To an outstanding degree, politics today is in fact conducted in public by means of the spoken or written word. To weigh the effect of the word properly falls within the range of the lawyer’s tasks; but not at all into that of the civil servant. The latter is no demagogue, nor is it his purpose to be one. If he nevertheless tries to become a demagogue, he usually becomes a very poor one.

According to his proper vocation, the genuine official—and this is decisive for the evaluation of our former regime—will not engage in politics. Rather, he should engage in impartial ‘administration.’ This also holds for the so-called ‘political’ administrator, at least officially, in so far as the *raison d’etat*, that is, the vital interests of the ruling order, are not in question. *Sine ira et studio*, ‘without scorn and bias,’ he shall administer his office. Hence, he shall not do precisely what the politician, the leader as well as his following, must

always and necessarily do, namely, fight.

To take a stand, to be passionate—*ira et studium*—is the politician's element, and above all the element of the political leader. His conduct is subject to quite a different, indeed, exactly the opposite, principle of responsibility from that of the civil servant. The honor of the civil servant is vested in his ability to execute conscientiously the order of the superior authorities, exactly as if the order agreed with his own conviction. This holds even if the order appears wrong to him and if, despite the civil servant's remonstrances, the authority insists on the order. Without this moral discipline and self-denial, in the highest sense, the whole apparatus would fall to pieces. The honor of the political leader, of the leading statesman, however, lies precisely in an exclusive personal responsibility for what he does, a responsibility he cannot and must not reject or transfer. It is in the nature of officials of high moral standing to be poor politicians, and above all, in the political sense of the word, to be irresponsible politicians. In this sense, they are politicians of low moral standing, such as we unfortunately have had again and again in leading positions. This is what we have called *Beamtenherrschaft* [civil-service rule], and truly no spot soils the honor of our officialdom if we reveal what is politically wrong with the system from the standpoint of success. But let us return once more to the types of political figures.

Since the time of the constitutional state, and definitely since democracy has been established, the 'demagogue' has been the typical political leader in the Occident. The distasteful flavor of the word must not make us forget that not Cleon but Pericles was the first to bear the name of demagogue. In contrast to the offices of ancient democracy that were filled by lot, Pericles led the sovereign *Ecclesia* of the demos of Athens as a supreme strategist holding the only elective office or without holding any office at all. Modern demagoguery also makes use of oratory, even to a tremendous extent, if one considers the election speeches a modern candidate has to deliver. But the use of the printed word is more enduring. The political publicist, and above all the journalist, is nowadays the most important representative of the demagogic species.

Within the limits of this lecture, it is quite impossible even to sketch the sociology of modern political journalism, which in every respect constitutes a chapter in itself. Certainly, only a few things concerning it are in place here. In common with all demagogues and, by the way, with the lawyer (and the artist), the journalist shares the fate of lacking a fixed social classification. At least, this is the case on the Continent, in contrast to the English, and, by the way, also to former conditions in Prussia. The journalist belongs to a sort of pariah caste, which is always estimated by 'society' in terms of its ethically lowest representative. Hence, the strangest notions about journalists and their work are abroad. Not everybody realizes that a really good journalistic accomplishment requires at least as much 'ge-

## POLITICS AS A VOCATION

nious' as any scholarly accomplishment, especially because of the necessity of producing at once and 'on order,' and because of the necessity of being effective, to be sure, under quite different conditions of production. It is almost never acknowledged that the responsibility of the journalist is far greater, and that the sense of responsibility of every honorable journalist is, on the average, not a bit lower than that of the scholar, but rather, as the war has shown, higher. This is because, in the very nature of the case, irresponsible journalistic accomplishments and their often terrible effects are remembered.

Nobody believes that the discretion of any able journalist ranks above the average of other people, and yet that is the case. The quite incomparably graver temptations, and the other conditions that accompany journalistic work at the present time, produce those results which have conditioned the public to regard the press with a mixture of disdain and pitiful cowardice. Today we cannot discuss what is to be done. Here we are interested in the question of the occupational destiny of the political journalist and of his chance to attain a position of political leadership. Thus far, the journalist has had favorable chances only in the Social Democratic party. Within the party, editorial positions have been predominantly in the nature of official positions, but editorial positions, have not been the basis for positions of leadership.

In the bourgeois parties, on the whole, the chances for ascent to political power along this avenue have rather become worse, as compared with those of the previous generation. Naturally every politician of consequence has needed influence over the press and hence has needed relations with the press. But that party leaders would emerge from the ranks of the press has been an absolute exception and one should not have expected it. The reason for this lies in the strongly increased 'indispensability' of the journalist, above all, of the propertyless and hence professionally bound journalist, an indispensability which is determined by the tremendously increased intensity and tempo of journalistic operations. The necessity of gaining one's livelihood by the writing of daily or at least weekly articles is like lead on the feet of the politicians. I know of cases in which natural leaders have been permanently paralyzed in their ascent to power, externally and above all internally, by this compulsion. The relations of the press to the ruling powers in the state and in the parties, under the old regime [of the Kaiser], were as detrimental as they could be to the level of journalism; but that is a chapter in itself. These conditions were different in the countries of our opponents [the Allies]. But there also, and for all modern states, apparently the journalist worker gains less and less as the capitalist lord of the press, of the sort of 'Lord' Northcliffe, for instance, gains more and more political influence.

Thus far, however, our great capitalist newspaper concerns,

which attained control, especially over the 'chain newspapers,' with 'want ads,' have been regularly and typically the breeders of political indifference. For no profits could be made in an independent policy; especially no profitable benevolence of the politically dominant powers could be obtained. The advertising business is also the avenue along which, during the war, the attempt was made to influence the press politically in a grand style—an attempt which apparently it is regarded as desirable to continue now. Although one may expect the great papers to escape this pressure, the situation of the small ones will be far more difficult. In any case, for the time being, the journalist career is not among us, a normal avenue for the ascent of political leaders, whatever attraction journalism may otherwise have and whatever measure of influence, range of activity, and especially political responsibility it may yield. One has to wait and see. Perhaps journalism does not have this function any longer, or perhaps journalism does not yet have it. Whether the renunciation of the principle of anonymity would mean a change in this is difficult to say. Some journalists—not all—believe in dropping principled anonymity. What we have experienced during the war in the German press, and in the 'management' of newspapers by especially hired personages and talented writers who always expressly figured under their names, has unfortunately shown, in some of the better known cases, that an increased awareness of responsibility is not so certain to be bred as might be believed. Some of the papers were, without regard to party, precisely the notoriously worst boulevard sheets; by dropping anonymity they strove for and attained greater sales. The publishers as well as the journalists of sensationalism have gained fortunes but certainly not honor. Nothing is here being said against the principle of promoting sales; the question is indeed an intricate one, and the phenomenon of irresponsible sensationalism does not hold in general. But thus far, sensationalism has not been the road to genuine leadership or to the responsible management of politics. How conditions will further develop remains to be seen. Yet the journalist career remains under all circumstances one of the most important avenues of professional political activity. It is not a road for everybody, least of all for weak characters, especially for people who can maintain their inner balance only with a secure status position. If the life of a young scholar is a gamble, still he is walled in by firm status conventions, which prevent him from slipping. But the journalist's life is an absolute gamble in every respect and under conditions that test one's inner security in a way that scarcely occurs in any other situation. The often bitter experiences in occupational life are perhaps not even the worst. The inner demands that are directed precisely at the successful journalist are especially difficult. It is, indeed, no small matter to frequent the salons of the powerful on this earth on a seemingly equal footing and often to be flattered by all because one is feared, yet knowing all the time that having hardly closed the

door the host has perhaps to justify before his guests his association with the 'scavengers from the press.' Moreover, it is no small matter that one must express oneself promptly and convincingly about this and that, on all conceivable problems of life—whatever the 'market' happens to demand—and this without becoming absolutely shallow and above all without losing one's dignity by baring oneself, a thing which has merciless results. It is not astonishing that there are many journalists who have become human failures and worthless men. Rather, it is astonishing that, despite all this, this very stratum includes such a great number of valuable and quite genuine men, a fact that outsiders would not so easily guess.

If the journalist as a type of professional politician harks back to a rather considerable past, the figure of the party official belongs only to the development of the last decades and, in part, only to recent years. In order to comprehend the position of this figure in historical evolution, we shall have to turn to a consideration of parties and party organizations.

In all political associations which are somehow extensive, that is, associations going beyond the sphere and range of the tasks of small rural districts where power-holders are periodically elected, political organization is necessarily managed by men interested in the management of politics. This is to say that a relatively small number of men are primarily interested in political life and hence interested in sharing political power. They provide themselves with a following through free recruitment, present themselves or their protégés as candidates for election, collect the financial means, and go out for vote-grabbing. It is unimaginable how in large associations elections could function at all without this managerial pattern. In practice this means the division of the citizens with the right to vote into politically active and politically passive elements. This difference is based on voluntary attitudes, hence it cannot be abolished through measures like obligatory voting, or 'occupational status group' representation, or similar measures that are expressly or actually directed against this state of affairs and the rule of professional politicians. The active leadership and their freely recruited following are the necessary elements in the life of any party. The following, and through it the passive electorate, are necessary for the election of the leader. But the structure of parties varies. For instance, the 'parties' of the medieval cities, such as those of the Guelfs and the Ghibellines, were purely personal followings. If one considers various things about these medieval parties, one is reminded of Bolshevism and its Soviets. Consider the *Statuta della perta Guelfa*, the confiscations of the Nobili's estates—which originally meant all those families who lived a chivalrous life and who thus qualified for fiefs—consider the exclusion from office-holding and the denial of the right to vote, the inter-local party committees, the strictly military organizations and the premiums for informers. Then consider Bolshevism with its

strictly sieved military and, in Russia especially, informer organizations, the disarmament and denial of the political rights of the 'bourgeois,' that is, of the entrepreneur, trader, rentier, clergyman, descendants of the dynasty, police agents, as well as the confiscation policy.

This analogy is still more striking when one considers that, on the one hand, the military organization of the medieval party constituted a pure army of knights organized on the basis of the registered feudal estates and that nobles occupied almost all leading positions, and, on the other hand, that the Soviets have preserved, or rather reintroduced, the highly paid enterpriser, the group wage, the Taylor system, military and workshop discipline, and a search for foreign capital. Hence, in a word, the Soviets have had to accept again absolutely all the things that Bolshevism had been fighting as bourgeois class institutions. They have had to do this in order to keep the state and the economy going at all. Moreover, the Soviets have reinstituted the agents of the former Ochrana [Tsarist Secret Police] as the main instrument of their state power. But here we do not have to deal with such organizations for violence, but rather with professional politicians who strive for power through sober and 'peaceful' party campaigns in the market of election votes.

Parties, in the sense usual with us, were at first, for instance in England, pure followings of the aristocracy. If, for any reason whatever, a peer changed his party, everybody dependent upon him likewise changed. Up to the Reform Bill [of 1832], the great noble families and, last but not least, the king controlled the patronage of an immense number of election boroughs. Close to these aristocratic parties were the parties of notables, which develop everywhere with the rising power of the bourgeois. Under the spiritual leadership of the typical intellectual strata of the Occident, the propertied and cultured circles differentiated themselves into parties and followed them. These parties were formed partly according to class interest, partly according to family traditions, and partly for ideological reasons. Clergymen, teachers, professors, lawyers, doctors, apothecaries, prosperous farmers, manufacturers—in England the whole stratum that considered itself as belonging to the class of gentlemen—formed, at first, occasional associations at most local political clubs. In times of unrest the petty bourgeoisie raised its voice, and once in a while the proletariat, if leaders arose who, however, as a rule did not stem from their midst. In this phase, parties organized as permanent associations between localities do not yet exist in the open country. Only the parliamentary delegates create the cohesion; and the local notables are decisive for the selection of candidates. The election programs originate partly in the election appeals of the candidates and partly in the meetings of the notables; or, they originate as resolutions of the parliamentary party. Leadership of the clubs is an avocation and an honorific pursuit, as demanded by the

## POLITICS AS A VOCATION

occasion.

Where clubs are absent (as is mostly the case), the quite formless management of politics in normal times lies in the hands of the few people constantly interested in it. Only the journalist is a paid professional politician; only the management of the newspaper is a continuous political organization. Besides the newspaper, there is only the parliamentary session. The parliamentary delegates and the parliamentary party leaders know to which local notables one turns if a political action seems desirable. But permanent associations of the parties exist only in the large cities with moderate contributions of the members and periodical conferences and public meetings where the delegate gives account of the parliamentary activities. The party is alive only during election periods.

The members of parliament are interested in the possibility of interlocal electoral compromises, in vigorous and unified programs endorsed by broad circles and in a unified agitation throughout the country. In general these interests form the driving force of a party organization which becomes more and more strict. In principle, however, the nature of a party apparatus as an association of notables remains unchanged. This is so, even though a network of local party affiliations and agents is spread over the whole country, including middle-sized cities. A member of the parliamentary party acts as the leader of the central party office and maintains constant correspondence with the local organizations. Outside of the central bureau, paid officials are still absent; thoroughly 'respectable' people head the local organizations for the sake of the deference which they enjoy anyway. They form the extra-parliamentary 'notables' who exert influence alongside the stratum of political notables who happen to sit in parliament. However, the party correspondence, edited by the party, increasingly provides intellectual nourishment for the press and for the local meetings. Regular contributions of the members become indispensable; a part of these must cover the expenses of headquarters.

Not so long ago most of the German party organizations were still in this stage of development. In France, the first stage of party development was, at least in part, still predominant, and the organization of the members of parliament was quite unstable. In the open country, we find a small number of local notables and programs drafted by the candidates or set up for them by their patrons in specific campaigns for office. To be sure, these platforms constitute more or less local adaptations to the resolutions and programs of the members of parliament. This system was only partially punctured. The number of full-time professional politicians was small, consisting in the main of the elected deputies, the few employees of headquarters, and the journalists. In France, the system has also included those job hunters who held 'political office' or, at the moment, strove for one. Politics was formally and by far predominantly

an avocation. The number of delegates qualifying for ministerial office was also very restricted and, because of their position as notables, so was the number of election candidates.

However, the number of those who indirectly had a stake in the management of politics, especially a material one, was very large. For, all administrative measures of a ministerial department, and especially all decisions in matters of personnel, were made partly with a view to their influence upon electoral chances. The realization of each and every kind of wish was sought through the local delegate's mediation. For better or for worse the minister had to lend his ear to this delegate, especially if the delegate belonged to the minister's majority. Hence everybody strove for such influence. The single deputy controlled the patronage of office and, in general, any kind of patronage in his election district. In order to be re-elected the deputy, in turn, maintained connections with the local notables.

Now then, the most modern forms of party organizations stand in sharp contrast to this idyllic state in which circles of notables and, above all, members of parliament rule. These modern forms are the children of democracy, of mass franchise, of the necessity to woo and organize the masses, and develop the utmost unity of direction and the strictest discipline. The rule of notables and guidance by members of parliament ceases. 'Professional' politicians outside the parliaments take the organization in hand. They do so either as 'entrepreneurs'—the American boss and the English election agent are, in fact, such entrepreneurs—or as officials with a fixed salary. Formally, a fargoing democratization takes place. The parliamentary party no longer creates the authoritative programs, and the local notables no longer decide the selection of candidates. Rather assemblies of the organized party members select the candidates and delegate members to the assemblies of a higher order. Possibly there are several such conventions leading up to the national convention of the party. Naturally power actually rests in the hands of those who, within the organization, handle the work *continuously*. Otherwise, power rests in the hands of those on whom the organization in its processes depends financially or personally—for instance, on the Maecenases or the directors of powerful political clubs of interested persons (Tammany Hall). It is decisive that this whole apparatus of people—characteristically called a 'machine' in Anglo-Saxon countries—or rather those who direct the machine, keep the members of the parliament in check. They are in a position to impose their will to a rather far-reaching extent, and that is of special significance for the selection of the party leader. The man whom the machine follows now becomes the leader, even over the head of the parliamentary party. In other words, the creation of such machines signifies the advent of *plebiscitarian* democracy.

The party following, above all the party official and party entre-

preneur, naturally expect personal compensation from the victory of their leader—that is, offices or other advantages. It is decisive that they expect such advantages from their leader and not merely from the individual member of parliament. They expect that the demagogic effect of the leader's *personality* during the election fight of the party will increase votes and mandates and thereby power, and, thereby, as far as possible, will extend opportunities to their followers to find the compensation for which they hope. Ideally, one of their mainsprings is the satisfaction of working with loyal personal devotion for a man, and not merely for an abstract program of a party consisting of mediocrities. In this respect, the 'charismatic' element of all leadership is at work in the party system.

In very different degrees this system made headway, although it was in constant, latent struggle with local notables and the members of parliament who wrangled for influence. This was the case in the bourgeois parties, first, in the United States, and, then, in the Social Democratic party, especially of Germany. Constant setbacks occur as soon as no generally recognized leader exists, and, even when he is found, concessions of all sorts must be made to the vanity and the personal interest of the party notables. The machine may also be brought under the domination of the party officials in whose hands the regular business rests. According to the view of some Social Democratic circles, their party had succumbed to this 'bureaucratization.' But 'officials' submit relatively easily to a leader's personality if it has a strong demagogic appeal. The material and the ideal interests of the officials are intimately connected with the effects of party power which are expected from the leader's appeal, and besides, inwardly it is *per se* more satisfying to work for a leader. The ascent of leaders is far more difficult where the notables, along with the officials, control the party, as is usually the case in the bourgeois parties. For ideally the notables make 'their way of life' out of the petty chairmanships or committee memberships they hold. Resentment against the demagogue as a *homo novus*, the conviction of the superiority of political party 'experience' (which, as a matter of fact, actually is of considerable importance), and the ideological concern for the crumbling of the old party traditions—these factors determine the conduct of the notables. They can count on all the traditionalist elements within the party. Above all, the rural but also the petty bourgeois voter looks for the name of the notable familiar to him. He distrusts the man who is unknown to him. However, once this man has become successful, he clings to him the more unwaveringly. Let us now consider, by some major examples, the struggle of the two structural forms—of the notables and of the party—and especially let us consider the ascendancy of the plebiscitarian form as described by Ostrogorsky.

First England: there until 1868 the party organization was almost purely an organization of notables. The Tories in the country found

support, for instance, from the Anglican parson, and from the schoolmaster, and above all from the large landlords of the respective county. The Whigs found support mostly from such people as the nonconformist preacher (when there was one), the postmaster, the blacksmith, the tailor, the ropemaker—that is, from such artisans who could disseminate political influence because they could chat with people most frequently. In the city the parties differed, partly according to economics, partly according to religion, and partly simply according to the party opinions handed down in the families. But always the notables were the pillars of the political organization.

Above all these arrangements stood Parliament, the parties with the cabinet, and the ‘leader,’ who was the chairman of the council of ministers or the leader of the opposition. This leader had beside him the ‘whip’—the most important professional politician of the party organization. Patronage of office was vested in the hands of the ‘whip’; thus the job hunter had to turn to him and he arranged an understanding with the deputies of the individual election boroughs. A stratum of professional politicians gradually began to develop in the boroughs. At first the locally recruited agents were not paid; they occupied approximately the same position as our *Vertrauensmänner*.<sup>4</sup> However, along with them, a capitalist entrepreneurial type developed in the boroughs. This was the ‘election agent,’ whose existence was unavoidable under England’s modern legislation which guaranteed fair elections.

This legislation aimed at controlling the campaign costs of elections and sought to check the power of money by making it obligatory for the candidate to state the costs of his campaign. For in England, the candidate, besides straining his voice—far more so than was formerly the case with us [in Germany]—enjoyed stretching his purse. The election agent made the candidate pay a lump sum, which usually meant a good deal for the agent. In the distribution of power in Parliament and the country between the ‘leader’ and the party notables, the leader in England used to hold a very eminent position. This position was based on the compelling fact of making possible a grand, and thereby steady, political strategy. Nevertheless the influence of the parliamentary party and of party notables was still considerable.

That is about what the old party organization looked like. It was half an affair of notables and half an entrepreneurial organization with salaried employees. Since 1868, however, the ‘caucus’ system developed, first for local elections in Birmingham, then all over the country. A nonconformist parson and along with him Joseph Chamberlain brought this system to life. The occasion for this development was the democratization of the franchise. In order to win the masses it became necessary to call into being a tremendous apparatus of apparently democratic associations. An electoral association had to be formed in every city district to help keep the organiza-

tion incessantly in motion and to bureaucratize everything rigidly. Hence, hired and paid officials of the local electoral committees increased numerically; and, on the whole, perhaps 10 per cent of the voters were organized in these local committees. The elected party managers had the right to co-opt others and were the formal bearers of party politics. The driving force was the local circle, which was, above all, composed of those interested in municipal politics—from which the fattest material opportunities always spring. These local circles were also first to call upon the world of finance. This newly emerging machine, which was no longer led by members of Parliament, very soon had to struggle with the previous power-holders, above all, with the ‘whip.’ Being supported by locally interested persons, the machine came out of the fight so victoriously that the whip had to submit and compromise with the machine. The result was a centralization of all power in the hands of the few and, ultimately, of the one person who stood at the top of the party. The whole system had arisen in the Liberal party in connection with Gladstone’s ascent to power. What brought this machine to such swift triumph over the notables was the fascination of Gladstone’s ‘grand’ demagoguery, the firm belief of the masses in the ethical substance of his policy, and, above all, their belief in the ethical character of his personality. It soon became obvious that a Caesarist plebiscitarian element in politics—the dictator of the battlefield of elections—had appeared on the plain. In 1877 the caucus became active for the first time in national elections, and with brilliant success, for the result was Disraeli’s fall at the height of his great achievements. In 1866, the machine was already so completely oriented to the charismatic personality that when the question of home rule was raised the whole apparatus from top to bottom did not question whether it actually stood on Gladstone’s ground; it simply, on his word, fell in line with him: they said, Gladstone right or wrong, we follow him. And thus the machine deserted its own creator, Chamberlain.

Such machinery requires a considerable personnel. In England there are about 2,000 persons who live directly off party politics. To be sure, those who are active in politics purely as job seekers or as interested persons are far more numerous, especially in municipal politics. In addition to economic opportunities, for the useful caucus politician, there are the opportunities to satisfy his vanity. To become ‘J.P.’ or even ‘M.P.’ is, of course, in line with the greatest (and normal) ambition; and such people, who are of demonstrably good breeding, that is, ‘gentlemen,’ attain their goal. The highest goal is, of course, a peerage, especially for the great financial Maecenases. About 50 per cent of the finances of the party depend on contributions of donors who remained anonymous.

Now then, what has been the effect of this whole system? Nowadays the members of Parliament, with the exception of the few cabinet members (and a few insurgents), are normally nothing better

than well-disciplined 'yes' men. With us, in the Reichstag, one used at least to take care of one's private correspondence on his desk, thus indicating that one was active in the weal of the country. Such gestures are not demanded in England; the member of Parliament must only vote, not commit party treason. He must appear when the whips call him, and do what the cabinet or the leader of the opposition orders. The caucus machine in the open country is almost completely unprincipled if a strong leader exists who has the machine absolutely in hand. Therewith the plebiscitarian dictator actually stands above Parliament. He brings the masses behind him by means of the machine and the members of Parliament are for him merely political spoilsmen enrolled in his following.

How does the selection of these strong leaders take place? First, in terms of what ability are they selected? Next to the qualities of will—decisive all over the world—naturally the force of demagogic speech is above all decisive. Its character has changed since the time speakers like Cobden addressed themselves to the intellect, and Gladstone who mastered the technique of apparently 'letting sober facts speak for themselves.' At the present time often purely emotional means are used—the means the Salvation Army also exploits in order to set the masses in motion. One may call the existing state of affairs a 'dictatorship resting on the exploitation of mass emotionality.' Yet, the highly developed system of committee work in the English Parliament makes it possible and compelling for every politician who counts on a share in leadership to cooperate in committee work. All important ministers of recent decades have this very real and effective work-training as a background. The practice of committee reports and public criticism of these deliberations is a condition for training, for really selecting leaders and eliminating mere demagogues.

Thus it is in England. The caucus system there, however, has been a weak form, compared with the American party organization, which brought the plebiscitarian principle to an especially early and an especially pure expression.

According to Washington's idea, America was to be a commonwealth administered by 'gentlemen.' In his time, in America, a gentleman was also a landlord, or a man with a college education—this was the case at first. In the beginning, when parties began to organize, the members of the House of Representatives claimed to be leaders, just as in England at the time when notables ruled. The party organization was quite loose and continued to be until 1824. In some communities, where modern development first took place, the party machine was in the making even before the eighteen-twenties. But when Andrew Jackson was first elected President—the election of the western farmers' candidate—the old traditions were overthrown. Formal party leadership by leading members of Congress came to an end soon after 1840, when the great parliamentarians,

Calhoun and Webster, retired from political life because Congress had lost almost all of its power to the party machine in the open country. That the plebiscitarian 'machine' has developed so early in America is due to the fact that there, and there alone, the executive—this is what mattered—the chief of office-patronage, was a President elected by plebiscite. By virtue of the 'separation of powers' he was almost independent of parliament in his conduct of office. Hence, as the price of victory, the true booty object of the office-prebend was held out precisely at the presidential election. Through Andrew Jackson the 'spoils system' was quite systematically raised to a principle and the conclusions were drawn.

What does this spoils system, the turning over of federal offices to the following of the victorious candidate, mean for the party formations of today? It means that quite unprincipled parties oppose one another; they are purely organizations of job hunters drafting their changing platforms according to the chances of vote-grabbing, changing their colors to a degree which, despite all analogies, is not yet to be found elsewhere. The parties are simply and absolutely fashioned for the election campaign that is most important for office patronage: the fight for the presidency and for the governorships of the separate states. Platforms and candidates are selected at the national conventions of the parties without intervention by congressmen. Hence they emerge from party conventions, the delegates of which are formally, very democratically elected. These delegates are determined by meetings of other delegates, who, in turn, owe their mandate to the 'primaries,' the assembling of the direct voters of the party. In the primaries the delegates are already elected in the name of the candidate for the nation's leadership. Within the parties the most embittered fight rages about the question of 'nomination.' After all, 300,000 to 400,000 official appointments lie in the hands of the President, appointments which are executed by him only with the approval of the senators from the separate states. Hence the senators are powerful politicians. By comparison, however, the House of Representatives is, politically, quite impotent, because patronage of office is removed from it and because the cabinet members, simply assistants to the President, can conduct office apart from the confidence or lack of confidence of the people. The President, who is legitimized by the people, confronts everybody, even Congress; this is a result of 'the separation of powers.'

In America, the spoils system, supported in this fashion, has been technically possible because American culture with its youth could afford purely dilettante management. With 300,000 to 400,000 such party men who have no qualifications to their credit other than the fact of having performed good services for their party, this state of affairs of course could not exist without enormous evils. A corruption and wastefulness second to none could be tolerated only by a country with as yet unlimited economic opportunities.

## POLITICS AS A VOCATION

Now then, the boss is the figure who appears in the picture of this system of the plebiscitarian party machine. Who is the boss? He is a political capitalist entrepreneur who on his own account and at his own risk provides votes. He may have established his first relations as a lawyer or a saloonkeeper or as a proprietor of similar establishments, or perhaps as a creditor. From here he spins his threads out until he is able to 'control' a certain number of votes. When he has come this far he establishes contact with the neighboring bosses, and through zeal, skill, and above all discretion, he attracts the attention of those who have already further advanced in the career, and then he climbs. The boss is indispensable to the organization of the party and the organization is centralized in his hands. He substantially provides the financial means. How does he get them? Well, partly by the contributions of the members, and especially by taxing the salaries of those officials who came into office through him and his party. Furthermore, there are bribes and tips. He who wishes to trespass with impunity one of the many laws needs the boss's connivance and must pay for it; or else he will get into trouble. But this alone is not enough to accumulate the necessary capital for political enterprises. The boss is indispensable as the direct recipient of the money of great financial magnates, who would not entrust their money for election purposes to a paid party official, or to anyone else giving public account of his affairs. The boss, with his judicious discretion in financial matters, is the natural man for those capitalist circles who finance the election. The typical boss is an absolutely sober man. He does not seek social honor; the 'professional' is despised in 'respectable society.' He seeks power alone, power as a source of money, but also power for power's sake. In contrast to the English leader, the American boss works in the dark. He is not heard speaking in public; he suggests to the speakers what they must say in expedient fashion. He himself, however, keeps silent. As a rule he accepts no office, except that of senator. For, since the senators, by virtue of the Constitution, participate in office patronage, the leading bosses often sit in person in this body. The distribution of offices is carried out, in the first place, according to services done for the party. But, also, auctioning offices on financial bids often occurs and there are certain rates for individual offices; hence, a system of selling offices exists which, after all, has often been known also to the monarchies, the church-state included, of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The boss has no firm political 'principles;' he is completely unprincipled in attitude and asks merely: What will capture votes? Frequently he is a rather poorly educated man. But as a rule he leads an inoffensive and correct private life. In his political morals, however, he naturally adjusts to the average ethical standards of political conduct, as a great many of us also may have done during the hoarding period in the field of economic ethics.<sup>5</sup> That as a 'professional'

politician the boss is socially despised does not worry him. That he personally does not attain high federal offices, and does not wish to do so, has the frequent advantage that extra-party intellects, thus notables, may come into candidacy when the bosses believe they will have great appeal value at the polls. Hence the same old party notables do not run again and again, as is the case in Germany. Thus the structure of these unprincipled parties with their socially despised power-holders has aided able men to attain the presidency—men who with us never would have come to the top. To be sure, the bosses resist an outsider who might jeopardize their sources of money and power. Yet in the competitive struggle to win the favor of the voters, the bosses frequently have had to condescend and accept candidates known to be opponents of corruption.

Thus there exists a strong capitalist party machine, strictly and thoroughly organized from top to bottom, and supported by clubs of extraordinary stability. These clubs, such as Tammany Hall, are like Knight orders. They seek profits solely through political control, especially of the municipal government, which is the most important object of booty. This structure of party life was made possible by the high degree of democracy in the United States—a 'New Country.' This connection, in turn, is the basis for the fact that the system is gradually dying out. America can no longer be governed only by dilettantes. Scarcely fifteen years ago, when American workers were asked why they allowed themselves to be governed by politicians whom they admitted they despised, the answer was: 'We prefer having people in office whom we can spit upon, rather than a caste of officials who spit upon us, as is the case with you.' This was the old point of view of American 'democracy.' Even then, the socialists had entirely different ideas and now the situation is no longer bearable. The dilettante administration does not suffice and the Civil Service Reform establishes an ever-increasing number of positions for life with pension rights. The reform works out in such a way that university-trained officials, just as incorruptible and quite as capable as our officials, get into office. Even now about 100,000 offices have ceased being objects of booty to be turned over after elections. Rather, the offices qualify their holders for pensions, and are based upon tested qualifications. The spoils system will thus gradually recede into the background and the nature of party leadership is then likely to be transformed also—but as yet, we do not know in what way.

In Germany, until now, the decisive conditions of political management have been in essence as follows:

First, the parliaments have been impotent. The result has been that no man with the qualities of a leader would enter Parliament permanently. If one wished to enter Parliament, what could one achieve there? When a chancellery position was open, one could tell the administrative chief: 'I have a very able man in my election district who would be suitable; take him.' And he would have con-

curred with pleasure; but that was about all that a German member of Parliament could do to satisfy his instincts for power—if he possessed any.

To this must be added the tremendous importance of the trained expert officialdom in Germany. This factor determined the impotence of Parliament. Our officialdom was second to none in the world. This importance of the officialdom was accompanied by the fact that the officials claimed not only official positions but also cabinet positions for themselves. In the Bavarian state legislature, when the introduction of parliamentary government was debated last year, it was said that if members of the legislature were to be placed in cabinet positions talented people would no longer seek official careers. Moreover, the civil-service administration systematically escaped such control as is signified by the English committee discussions. The administration thus made it impossible for parliaments—with a few exceptions—to train really useful administrative chiefs from their own ranks.

A third factor is that in Germany, in contrast to America, we have had parties with principled political views who have maintained that their members, at least subjectively, represented bona-fide *Weltanschauungen*. Now then, the two most important of these parties, the Catholic Centre Party and the Social Democratic party, have, from their inceptions, been minority parties and have meant to be minority parties. The leading circles of the Centre party in the Reich have never concealed their opposition to parliamentary democracy, because of fear of remaining in the minority and thus facing great difficulties in placing their job hunters in office as they have done by exerting pressure on the government. The Social Democratic party was a principled minority party and a handicap to the introduction of parliamentary government because the party did not wish to stain itself by participating in the existing bourgeois political order. The fact that both parties dissociated themselves from the parliamentary system made parliamentary government impossible.

Considering all this, what then became of the professional politicians in Germany? They have had no power, no responsibility, and could play only a rather subordinate role as notables. In consequence, they have been animated anew by the guild instincts, which are typical everywhere. It has been impossible for a man who was not of their hue to climb high in the circle of those notables who made their petty positions their lives. I could mention many names from every party, the Social Democratic party, of course, not excepted, that spell tragedies of political careers because the persons had leadership qualities, and precisely because of these qualities were not tolerated by the notables. All our parties have taken this course of development and have become guilds of notables. Bebel, for instance, was still a leader through temperament and purity of character, however modest his intellect. The fact that he was a mar-

tyr, that he never betrayed confidence in the eyes of the masses, resulted in his having the masses absolutely behind him. There was no power in the party that could have seriously challenged him. Such leadership came to an end, after his death, and the rule of officials began. Trade-union officials, party secretaries, and journalists came to the top. The instincts of officialdom dominated the party—a highly respectable officialdom, of rare respectability one may say, compared to conditions in other countries, especially the often corruptible trade-union officials in America. But the results of control by officialdom, which we discussed above, also began in the party.

Since the eighteen-eighties the bourgeois parties have completely become guilds of notables. To be sure, occasionally the parties had to draw on extra-party intellects for advertising purposes, so that they could say, 'We have such and such names.' So far as possible, they avoided letting these names run for election; only when it was unavoidable and the person insisted could he run for election. The same spirit prevailed in Parliament. Our parliamentary parties were and are guilds. Every speech delivered from the floor of the Reichstag is thoroughly censored in the party before it is delivered. This is obvious from their unheard-of boredom. Only he who is summoned to speak can have the word. One can hardly conceive of a stronger contrast to the English, and also—for quite opposite reasons—the French usage.

Now, in consequence of the enormous collapse, which is customarily called the Revolution, perhaps a transformation is under way. Perhaps—but not for certain. In the beginning there were new kinds of party apparatuses emerging. First, there were amateur apparatuses. They are especially often represented by students of the various universities, who tell a man to whom they ascribe leadership qualities: we want to do the necessary work for you; carry it out. Secondly, there are apparatuses of businessmen. It happened that men to whom leadership qualities were ascribed were approached by people willing to take over the propaganda, at fixed rates for every vote. If you were to ask me honestly which of these two apparatuses I think the more reliable, from the purely technical-political point of view, I believe I would prefer the latter. But both apparatuses were fast-emerging bubbles, which swiftly vanished again. The existing apparatuses transformed themselves, but they continued to work. The phenomena are only symptoms of the fact that new apparatuses would come about if there were only leaders. But even the technical peculiarity of proportionate representation precluded their ascendancy. Only a few dictators of the street crowds arose and fell again. And only the following of a mob dictatorship is organized in a strictly disciplined fashion: whence the power of these vanishing minorities.

Let us assume that all this were to change; then, after what has been said above, it has to be clearly realized that the plebiscitarian

leadership of parties entails the 'soullessness' of the following, their intellectual proletarianization, one might say. In order to be a useful apparatus, a machine in the American sense—undisturbed either by the vanity of notables or pretensions to independent views—the following of such a leader must obey him blindly. Lincoln's election was possible only through this character of party organization, and with Gladstone, as mentioned before, the same happened in the caucus. This is simply the price paid for guidance by leaders. However, there is only the choice between leadership democracy with a 'machine' and leaderless democracy, namely, the rule of professional politicians without a calling, without the inner charismatic qualities that make a leader, and this means what the party insurgents in the situation usually designate as 'the rule of the clique.' For the time being, we in Germany have only the latter. For the future, the permanence of this situation, at least in the Reich, is primarily facilitated by the fact that the *Bundesrat*<sup>6</sup> will rise again and will of necessity restrict the power of the Reichstag and therewith its significance as a selective agency of leaders. Moreover, in its present form, proportional representation is a typical phenomenon of leaderless democracy. This is the case not only because it facilitates the horse-trading of the notables for placement on the ticket, but also because in the future it will give organized interest groups the possibility of compelling parties to include their officials in the list of candidates, thus creating an unpolitical Parliament in which genuine leadership finds no place. Only the President of the Reich could become the safety-valve of the demand for leadership if he were elected in a plebiscitarian way and not by Parliament. Leadership on the basis of proved work could emerge and selection could take place, especially if, in great municipalities, the plebiscitarian city-manager were to appear on the scene with the right to organize his bureaus independently. Such is the case in the U.S.A. whenever one wishes to tackle corruption seriously. It requires a party organization fashioned for such elections. But the very petty-bourgeois hostility of all parties to leaders, the Social Democratic party certainly included, leaves the future formation of parties and all these chances still completely in the dark.

Therefore, today, one cannot yet see in any way how the management of politics as a 'vocation' will shape itself. Even less can one see along what avenue opportunities are opening to which political talents can be put for satisfactory political tasks. He who by his material circumstances is compelled to live 'off' politics will almost always have to consider the alternative positions of the journalist or the party official as the typical direct avenues. Or, he must consider a position as representative of interest groups—such as a trade union, a chamber of commerce, a farm bureau,<sup>7</sup> a craft association,<sup>8</sup> a labor board, an employer's association, et cetera, or else a suitable municipal position. Nothing more than this can be said about this external

aspect: in common with the journalist, the party official bears the odium of being *déclassé*. 'Wage writer' or 'wage speaker' will unfortunately always resound in his ears, even though the words remain unexpressed. He who is inwardly defenseless and unable to find the proper answer for himself had better stay away from this career. For in any case, besides grave temptations, it is an avenue that may constantly lead to disappointments. Now then, what inner enjoyments can this career offer and what personal conditions are presupposed for one who enters this avenue?

Well, first of all the career of politics grants a feeling of power. The knowledge of influencing men, of participating in power over them, and above all, the feeling of holding in one's hands a nerve fiber of historically important events can elevate the professional politician above everyday routine even when he is placed in formally modest positions. But now the question for him is: Through what qualities can I hope to do justice to this power (however narrowly circumscribed it may be in the individual case)? How can he hope to do justice to the responsibility that power imposes upon him? With this we enter the field of ethical questions, for that is where the problem belongs: What kind of a man must one be if he is to be allowed to put his hand on the wheel of history?

One can say that three pre-eminent qualities are decisive for the politician: passion, a feeling of responsibility, and a sense of proportion.

This means passion in the sense of *matter-of-factness*, of passionate devotion to a 'cause,' to the god or demon who is its overlord. It is not passion in the sense of that inner bearing which my late friend, Georg Simmel, used to designate as 'sterile excitation,' and which was peculiar especially to a certain type of Russian intellectual (by no means all of them!). It is an excitation that plays so great a part with our intellectuals in this carnival we decorate with the proud name of 'revolution.' It is a 'romanticism of the intellectually interesting,' running into emptiness devoid of all feeling of objective responsibility.

To be sure, mere passion, however genuinely felt, is not enough. It does not make a politician, unless passion as devotion to a 'cause' also makes responsibility to this cause the guiding star of action. And for this, a sense of proportion is needed. This is the decisive psychological quality of the politician: his ability to let realities work upon him with inner concentration and calmness. Hence his *distance* to things and men. 'Lack of distance' *per se* is one of the deadly sins of every politician. It is one of those qualities the breeding of which will condemn the progeny of our intellectuals to political incapacity. For the problem is simply how can warm passion and a cool sense of proportion be forged together in one and the same soul? Politics is made with the head, not with other parts of the body or soul. And yet devotion to politics, if it is not to be frivolous intel-

lectual play but rather genuinely human conduct, can be born and nourished from passion alone. However, that firm taming of the soul, which distinguishes the passionate politician and differentiates him from the 'sterilely excited' and mere political dilettante, is possible only through habituation to detachment in every sense of the word. The 'strength' of a political 'personality' means, in the first place, the possession of these qualities of passion, responsibility, and proportion.

Therefore, daily and hourly, the politician inwardly has to overcome a quite trivial and all-too-human enemy: a quite vulgar vanity, the deadly enemy of all matter-of-fact devotion to a cause, and of all distance, in this case, of distance towards one's self.

Vanity is a very widespread quality and perhaps nobody is entirely free from it. In academic and scholarly circles, vanity is a sort of occupational disease, but precisely with the scholar, vanity—however disagreeably it may express itself—is relatively harmless; in the sense that as a rule it does not disturb scientific enterprise. With the politician the case is quite different. He works with the striving for power as an unavoidable means. Therefore, 'power instinct,' as is usually said, belongs indeed to his normal qualities. The sin against the lofty spirit of his vocation, however, begins where this striving for power ceases to be *objective* and becomes purely personal self-intoxication, instead of exclusively entering the service of 'the cause.' For ultimately there are only two kinds of deadly sins in the field of politics: lack of objectivity and—often but not always identical with it—irresponsibility. Vanity, the need personally to stand in the foreground as clearly as possible, strongly tempts the politician to commit one or both of these sins. This is more truly the case as the demagogue is compelled to count upon 'effect.' He therefore is constantly in danger of becoming an actor as well as taking lightly the responsibility for the outcome of his actions and of being concerned merely with the 'impression' he makes. His lack of objectivity tempts him to strive for the glamorous semblance of power rather than for actual power. His irresponsibility, however, suggests that he enjoy power merely for power's sake without a substantive purpose. Although, or rather just because, power is the unavoidable means, and striving for power is one of the driving forces of all politics, there is no more harmful distortion of political force than the parvenu-like braggart with power, and the vain self-reflection in the feeling of power, and in general every worship of power *per se*. The mere 'power politician' may get strong effects, but actually his work leads nowhere and is senseless. (Among us, too, an ardently promoted cult seeks to glorify him.) In this, the critics of 'power politics' are absolutely right. From the sudden inner collapse of typical representatives of this mentality, we can see what inner weakness and impotence hides behind this boastful but entirely empty gesture. It is a product of a shoddy and superficially

blasé attitude towards the meaning of human conduct; and it has no relation whatsoever to the knowledge of tragedy with which all action, but especially political action, is truly interwoven.

The final result of political action often, no, even regularly, stands in completely inadequate and often even paradoxical relation to its original meaning. This is fundamental to all history, a point not to be proved in detail here. But because of this fact, the serving of a cause must not be absent if action is to have inner strength. Exactly what the cause, in the service of which the politician strives for power and uses power, looks like is a matter of faith. The politician may serve national, humanitarian, social, ethical, cultural, worldly, or religious ends. The politician may be sustained by a strong belief in 'progress'—no matter in which sense—or he may coolly reject this kind of belief. He may claim to stand in the service of an 'idea' or, rejecting this in principle, he may want to serve external ends of everyday life. However, some kind of faith must always exist. Otherwise, it is absolutely true that the curse of the creature's worthlessness overshadows even the externally strongest political successes.

With the statement above we are already engaged in discussing the last problem that concerns us tonight: the ethos of politics as a 'cause.' What calling can politics fulfil quite independently of its goals within the total ethical economy of human conduct—which is, so to speak, the ethical locus where politics is at home? Here, to be sure, ultimate *Weltanschauungen* clash, world views among which in the end one has to make a choice. Let us resolutely tackle this problem, which recently has been opened again, in my view in a very wrong way.

But first, let us free ourselves from a quite trivial falsification: namely, that ethics may first appear in a morally highly compromised role. Let us consider examples. Rarely will you find that a man whose love turns from one woman to another feels no need to legitimate this before himself by saying: she was not worthy of my love, or, she has disappointed me, or whatever other like 'reasons' exist. This is an attitude that, with a profound lack of chivalry, adds a fancied 'legitimacy' to the plain fact that he no longer loves her and that the woman has to bear it. By virtue of this 'legitimation,' the man claims a right for himself and besides causing the misfortune seeks to put her in the wrong. The successful amatory competitor proceeds exactly in the same way: namely, the opponent must be less worthy, otherwise he would not have lost out. It is no different, of course, if after a victorious war the victor in undignified self-righteousness claims, 'I have won because I was right.' Or, if somebody under the frightfulness of war collapses psychologically, and instead of simply saying it was just too much, he feels the need of legitimizing his war weariness to himself by substituting the feeling, 'I could not bear it because I had to fight for a morally bad cause.' And likewise with the defeated in war. Instead of searching like old

women for the 'guilty one' after the war—in a situation in which the structure of society produced the war—everyone with a manly and controlled attitude would tell the enemy, 'We lost the war. You have won it. That is now all over. Now let us discuss what conclusions must be drawn according to the *objective* interests that came into play and what is the main thing in view of the responsibility towards the *future* which above all burdens the victor.' Anything else is undignified and will become a boomerang. A nation forgives if its interests have been damaged, but no nation forgives if its honor has been offended, especially by a bigoted self-righteousness. Every new document that comes to light after decades revives the undignified lamentations, the hatred and scorn, instead of allowing the war at its end to be buried, at least morally. This is possible only through objectivity and chivalry and above all only through dignity. But never is it possible through an 'ethic,' which in truth signifies a lack of dignity on both sides. Instead of being concerned about what the politician is interested in, the future and the responsibility towards the future, this ethic is concerned about politically sterile questions of past guilt, which are not to be settled politically. To act in this way is politically guilty, if such guilt exists at all. And it overlooks the unavoidable falsification of the whole problem, through very material interests: namely, the victor's interest in the greatest possible moral and material gain; the hopes of the defeated to trade in advantages through confessions of guilt. If anything is 'vulgar,' then, this is, and it is the result of this fashion of exploiting 'ethics' as a means of 'being in the right.'

Now then, what relations do ethics and politics actually have? Have the two nothing whatever to do with one another, as has occasionally been said? Or, is the reverse true: that the ethic of political conduct is identical with that of any other conduct? Occasionally an exclusive choice has been believed to exist between the two propositions—either the one or the other proposition must be correct. But is it true that any ethic of the world could establish commandments of identical content for erotic, business, familial, and official relations; for the relations to one's wife, to the greengrocer, the son, the competitor, the friend, the defendant? Should it really matter so little for the ethical demands on politics that politics operates with very special means, namely, power backed up by violence? Do we not see that the Bolshevik and the Spartacist ideologists bring about exactly the same results as any militaristic dictator just because they use this political means? In what but the persons of the power-holders and their dilettantism does the rule of the workers' and soldiers' councils differ from the rule of any power-holder of the old regime? In what way does the polemic of most representatives of the presumably new ethic differ from that of the opponents which they criticized, or the ethic of any other demagogues? In their noble intention, people will say, Good! But it is the means about which we speak here, and

the adversaries, in complete subjective sincerity, claim, in the very same way, that their ultimate intentions are of lofty character. 'All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword' and fighting is everywhere fighting. Hence, the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount.

By the Sermon on the Mount, we mean the absolute ethic of the gospel, which is a more serious matter than those who are fond of quoting these commandments today believe. This ethic is no joking matter. The same holds for this ethic as has been said of causality in science: it is not a cab, which one can have stopped at one's pleasure; it is all or nothing. This is precisely the meaning of the gospel, if trivialities are not to result. Hence, for instance, it was said of the wealthy young man, 'He went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.' The evangelist commandment, however, is unconditional and unambiguous: give what thou hast—absolutely everything. The politician will say that this is a socially senseless imposition as long as it is not carried out everywhere. Thus the politician upholds taxation, confiscatory taxation, outright confiscation; in a word, compulsion and regulation for all. The ethical commandment, however, is not at all concerned about that, and this unconcern is its essence. Or, take the example, 'turn the other cheek.' This command is unconditional and does not question the source of the other's authority to strike. Except for a saint it is an ethic of indignity. This is it: one must be saintly in everything; at least in intention, one must live like Jesus, the apostles, St. Francis, and their like. *Then* this ethic makes sense and expresses a kind of dignity; otherwise it does not. For if it is said, in line with the acosmic ethic of love, 'Resist not him that is evil with force,' for the politician the reverse proposition holds, 'thou *shalt* resist evil by force,' or else you are responsible for the evil winning out. He who wishes to follow the ethic of the gospel should abstain from strikes, for strikes mean compulsion; he may join the company unions. Above all things, he should not talk of 'revolution.' After all, the ethic of the gospel does not wish to teach that civil war is the only legitimate war. The pacifist who follows the gospel will refuse to bear arms or will throw them down; in Germany this was the recommended ethical duty to end the war and therewith all wars. The politician would say the only sure means to discredit the war for all foreseeable time would have been a *status quo* peace. Then the nations would have questioned, what was this war for? And then the war would have been argued *ad absurdum*, which is now impossible. For the victors, at least for part of them, the war will have been politically profitable. And the responsibility for this rests on behavior that made all resistance impossible for us. Now, as a result of the ethics of absolutism, when the period of exhaustion will have passed, *the peace will be discredited, not the war*.

Finally, let us consider the duty of truthfulness. For the absolute ethic it holds unconditionally. Hence the conclusion was reached to publish all documents, especially those placing blame on one's own

country. On the basis of these one-sided publications the confessions of guilt followed—and they were one-sided, unconditional, and without regard to consequences. The politician will find that as a result truth will not be furthered but certainly obscured through abuse and unleashing of passion; only an all-round methodical investigation by non-partisans could bear fruit; any other procedure may have consequences for a nation that cannot be remedied for decades. But the absolute ethic just does not *ask* for ‘consequences.’ That is the decisive point.

We must be clear about the fact that all ethically oriented conduct may be guided by one of two fundamentally differing and irreconcilably opposed maxims: conduct can be oriented to an ‘ethic of ultimate ends’ or to an ‘ethic of responsibility.’ This is not to say that an ethic of ultimate ends is identical with irresponsibility, or that an ethic of responsibility is identical with unprincipled opportunism. Naturally nobody says that. However, there is an abysmal contrast between conduct that follows the maxim of an ethic of ultimate ends—that is, in religious terms, ‘The Christian does rightly and leaves the results with the Lord’—and conduct that follows the maxim of an ethic of responsibility, in which case one has to give an account of the foreseeable results of one’s action.

You may demonstrate to a convinced syndicalist, believing in an ethic of ultimate ends, that his action will result in increasing the opportunities of reaction, in increasing the oppression of his class, and obstructing its ascent—and you will not make the slightest impression upon him. If an action of good intent leads to bad results, then, in the actor’s eyes, not he but the world, or the stupidity of other men, or God’s will who made them thus, is responsible for the evil. However a man who believes in an ethic of responsibility takes account of precisely the average deficiencies of people; as Fichte has correctly said, he does not even have the right to presuppose their goodness and perfection. He does not feel in a position to burden others with the results of his own actions so far as he was able to foresee them; he will say: these results are ascribed to my action. The believer in an ethic of ultimate ends feels ‘responsible’ only for seeing to it that the flame of pure intentions is not quenched: for example, the flame of protesting against the injustice of the social order. To rekindle the flame ever anew is the purpose of his quite irrational deeds, judged in view of their possible success. They are acts that can and shall have only exemplary value.

But even herewith the problem is not yet exhausted. No ethics in the world can dodge the fact that in numerous instances the attainment of ‘good’ ends is bound to the fact that one must be willing to pay the price of using morally dubious means or at least dangerous ones—and facing the possibility or even the probability of evil ramifications. From no ethics in the world can it be concluded when and to what extent the ethically good purpose ‘justifies’ the ethically

dangerous means and ramifications.

The decisive means for politics is violence. You may see the extent of the tension between means and ends, when viewed ethically, from the following: as is generally known, even during the war the revolutionary socialists (Zimmerwald faction) professed a principle that one might strikingly formulate: 'If we face the choice either of some more years of war and then revolution, or peace now and no revolution, we choose—some more years of war!' Upon the further question: 'What can this revolution bring about?' every scientifically trained socialist would have had the answer: One cannot speak of a transition to an economy that in our sense could be called socialist; a bourgeois economy will re-emerge, merely stripped of the feudal elements and the dynastic vestiges. For this very modest result, they are willing to face 'some more years of war.' One may well say that even with a very robust socialist conviction one might reject a purpose that demands such means. With Bolshevism and Spartacism, and, in general, with any kind of revolutionary socialism, it is precisely the same thing. It is of course utterly ridiculous if the power politicians of the old regime are morally denounced for their use of the same means, however justified the rejection of their aims may be.

The ethic of ultimate ends apparently must go to pieces on the problem of the justification of means by ends. As a matter of fact, logically it has only the possibility of rejecting all action that employs morally dangerous means—in theory! In the world of realities, as a rule, we encounter the ever-renewed experience that the adherent of an ethic of ultimate ends suddenly turns into a chiliastic prophet. Those, for example, who have just preached 'love against violence' now call for the use of force for the *last* violent deed, which would then lead to a state of affairs in which *all* violence is annihilated. In the same manner, our officers told the soldiers before every offensive: 'This will be the last one; this one will bring victory and therewith peace.' The proponent of an ethic of absolute ends cannot stand up under the ethical irrationality of the world. He is a cosmic-ethical 'rationalist.' Those of you who know Dostoevski will remember the scene of the 'Grand Inquisitor,' where the problem is poignantly unfolded. If one makes any concessions at all to the principle that the end justifies the means, it is not possible to bring an ethic of ultimate ends and an ethic of responsibility under one roof or to decree ethically which end should justify which means.

My colleague, Mr. F. W. Förster, whom personally I highly esteem for his undoubted sincerity, but whom I reject unreservedly as a politician, believes it is possible to get around this difficulty by the simple thesis: 'from good comes only good; but from evil only evil follows.' In that case this whole complex of questions would not exist. But it is rather astonishing that such a thesis could come to light two thousand five hundred years after the Upanishads. Not only the

whole course of world history, but every frank examination of everyday experience points to the very opposite. The development of religions all over the world is determined by the fact that the opposite is true. The age-old problem of theodicy consists of the very question of how it is that a power which is said to be at once omnipotent and kind could have created such an irrational world of undeserved suffering, unpunished injustice, and hopeless stupidity. Either this power is not omnipotent or not kind, or, entirely different principles of compensation and reward govern our life—principles we may interpret metaphysically, or even principles that forever escape our comprehension.

This problem—the experience of the irrationality of the world—has been the driving force of all religious evolution. The Indian doctrine of karma, Persian dualism, the doctrine of original sin, predestination and the *deus absconditus*, all these have grown out of this experience. Also the early Christians knew full well the world is governed by demons and that he who lets himself in for politics, that is, for power and force as means, contracts with diabolical powers and for his action it is not true that good can follow only from good and evil only from evil, but that often the opposite is true. Anyone who fails to see this is, indeed, a political infant.

We are placed into various life-spheres, each of which is governed by different laws. Religious ethics have settled with this fact in different ways. Hellenic polytheism made sacrifices to Aphrodite and Hera alike, to Dionysus and to Apollo, and knew these gods were frequently in conflict with one another. The Hindu order of life made each of the different occupations an object of a specific ethical code, a Dharma, and forever segregated one from the other as castes, thereby placing them into a fixed hierarchy of rank. For the man born into it, there was no escape from it, lest he be twice-born in another life. The occupations were thus placed at varying distances from the highest religious goods of salvation. In this way, the caste order allowed for the possibility of fashioning the Dharma of each single caste, from those of the ascetics and Brahmins to those of the rogues and harlots, in accordance with the immanent and autonomous laws of their respective occupations. War and politics were also included. You will find war integrated into the totality of life-spheres in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, in the conversation between Krishna and Arjuna. 'Do what must be done,' i.e. do that work which, according to the Dharma of the warrior caste and its rules, is obligatory and which, according to the purpose of the war, is objectively necessary. Hinduism believes that such conduct does not damage religious salvation but, rather, promotes it. When he faced the hero's death, the Indian warrior was always sure of Indra's heaven, just as was the Teuton warrior of Valhalla. The Indian hero would have despised Nirvana just as much as the Teuton would have sneered at the Christian paradise with its angels' choirs. This

specialization of ethics allowed for the Indian ethic's quite unbroken treatment of politics by following politics' own laws and even radically enhancing this royal art.

A really radical 'Machiavellianism,' in the popular sense of this word, is classically represented in Indian literature, in the *Kautaliya Arthasastra* (long before Christ, allegedly dating from Chandragupta's time). In contrast with this document Machiavelli's *Principe* is harmless. As is known in Catholic ethics—to which otherwise Professor Förster stands close—the *consilia evangelica* are a special ethic for those endowed with the charisma of a holy life. There stands the monk who must not shed blood or strive for gain, and beside him stand the pious knight and the burgher, who are allowed to do so, the one to shed blood, the other to pursue gain. The gradation of ethics and its organic integration into the doctrine of salvation is less consistent than in India. According to the presuppositions of Christian faith, this could and had to be the case. The wickedness of the world stemming from original sin allowed with relative ease the integration of violence into ethics as a disciplinary means against sin and against the heretics who endangered the soul. However, the demands of the Sermon on the Mount, an acosmic ethic of ultimate ends, implied a natural law of absolute imperatives based upon religion. These absolute imperatives retained their revolutionizing force and they came upon the scene with elemental vigor during almost all periods of social upheaval. They produced especially the radical pacifist sects, one of which in Pennsylvania experimented in establishing a polity that renounced violence towards the outside. This experiment took a tragic course, inasmuch as with the outbreak of the War of Independence the Quakers could not stand up arms-in-hand for their ideals, which were those of the war.

Normally, Protestantism, however, absolutely legitimated the state as a divine institution and hence violence as a means. Protestantism, especially, legitimated the authoritarian state. Luther relieved the individual of the ethical responsibility for war and transferred it to the authorities. To obey the authorities in matters other than those of faith could never constitute guilt. Calvinism in turn knew principled violence as a means of defending the faith; thus Calvinism knew the crusade, which was for Islam an element of life from the beginning. One sees that it is by no means a modern disbelief born from the hero worship of the Renaissance which poses the problem of political ethics. All religions have wrestled with it, with highly differing success, and after what has been said it could not be otherwise. It is the specific means of legitimate violence as such in the hand of human associations which determines the peculiarity of all ethical problems of politics.

Whosoever contracts with violent means for whatever ends—and every politician does—is exposed to its specific consequences. This holds especially for the crusader, religious and revolutionary alike.

## POLITICS AS A VOCATION

Let us confidently take the present as an example. He who wants to establish absolute justice on earth by force requires a following, a human 'machine.' He must hold out the necessary internal and external premiums, heavenly or worldly reward, to this 'machine' or else the machine will not function. Under the conditions of the modern class struggle, the internal premiums consist of the satisfying of hatred and the craving for revenge; above all, resentment and the need for pseudo-ethical self-righteousness: the opponents must be slandered and accused of heresy. The external rewards are adventure, victory, booty, power, and spoils. The leader and his success are completely dependent upon the functioning of his machine and hence not on his own motives. Therefore he also depends upon whether or not the premiums can be *permanently* granted to the following, that is, to the Red Guard, the informers, the agitators, whom he needs. What he actually attains under the conditions of his work is therefore not in his hand, but is prescribed to him by the following's motives, which, if viewed ethically, are predominantly base. The following can be harnessed only so long as an honest belief in his person and his cause inspires at least part of the following, probably never on earth even the majority. This belief, even when subjectively sincere, is in a very great number of cases really no more than an ethical 'legitimation' of cravings for revenge, power, booty, and spoils. We shall not be deceived about this by verbiage; the materialist interpretation of history is no cab to be taken at will; it does not stop short of the promoters of revolutions. Emotional revolutionism is followed by the traditionalist routine of everyday life; the crusading leader and the faith itself fade away, or, what is even more effective, the faith becomes part of the conventional phraseology of political Philistines and banausic technicians. This development is especially rapid with struggles of faith because they are usually led or inspired by genuine leaders, that is, prophets of revolution. For here, as with every leader's machine, one of the conditions for success is the depersonalization and routinization, in short, the psychic proletarianization, in the interests of discipline. After coming to power the following of a crusader usually degenerates very easily into a quite common stratum of spoilsmen.

Whoever wants to engage in politics at all, and especially in politics as a vocation, has to realize these ethical paradoxes. He must know that he is responsible for what may become of himself under the impact of these paradoxes. I repeat, he lets himself in for the diabolic forces lurking in all violence. The great *virtuosi* of acosmic love of humanity and goodness, whether stemming from Nazareth or Assisi or from Indian royal castles, have not operated with the political means of violence. Their kingdom was 'not of this world' and yet they worked and still work in this world. The figures of Platon Karatajev and the saints of Dostoievski still remain their most adequate reconstructions. He who seeks the salvation of the soul, of

his own and of others, should not seek it along the avenue of politics, for the quite different tasks of politics can only be solved by violence. The genius or demon of politics lives in an inner tension with the god of love, as well as with the Christian God as expressed by the church. This tension can at any time lead to an irreconcilable conflict. Men knew this even in the times of church rule. Time and again the papal interdict was placed upon Florence and at the time it meant a far more robust power for men and their salvation of soul than (to speak with Fichte) the 'cool approbation' of the Kantian ethical judgment. The burghers, however, fought the church-state. And it is with reference to such situations that Machiavelli in a beautiful passage, if I am not mistaken, of the *History of Florence*, has one of his heroes praise those citizens who deemed the greatness of their native city higher than the salvation of their souls.

If one says 'the future of socialism' or 'international peace,' instead of native city or 'fatherland' (which at present may be a dubious value to some), then you face the problem as it stands now. Everything that is striven for through political action operating with violent means and following an ethic of responsibility endangers the 'salvation of the soul.' If, however, one chases after the ultimate good in a war of beliefs, following a pure ethic of absolute ends, then the goals may be damaged and discredited for generations, because responsibility for consequences is lacking, and two diabolic forces which enter the play remain unknown to the actor. These are inexorable and produce consequences for his action and even for his inner self, to which he must helplessly submit, unless he perceives them. The sentence: 'The devil is old; grow old to understand him!' does not refer to age in terms of chronological years. I have never permitted myself to lose out in a discussion through a reference to a date registered on a birth certificate; but the mere fact that someone is twenty years of age and that I am over fifty is no cause for me to think that this alone is an achievement before which I am overawed. Age is not decisive; what is decisive is the trained relentlessness in viewing the realities of life, and the ability to face such realities and to measure up to them inwardly.

Surely, politics is made with the head, but it is certainly not made with the head alone. In this the proponents of an ethic of ultimate ends are right. One cannot prescribe to anyone whether he should follow an ethic of absolute ends or an ethic of responsibility, or when the one and when the other. One can say only this much: If in these times, which, in your opinion, are not times of 'sterile' excitation—excitation is not, after all, genuine passion—if now suddenly the *Weltanschauungs*-politicians crop up *en masse* and pass the watchword, 'The world is stupid and base, not I,' 'The responsibility for the consequences does not fall upon me but upon the others whom I serve and whose stupidity or baseness I shall eradicate,' then I declare frankly that I would first inquire into the degree of

## POLITICS AS A VOCATION

inner poise backing this ethic of ultimate ends. I am under the impression that in nine out of ten cases I deal with windbags who do not fully realize what they take upon themselves but who intoxicate themselves with romantic sensations. From a human point of view this is not very interesting to me, nor does it move me profoundly. However, it is immensely moving when a mature man—no matter whether old or young in years—is aware of a responsibility for the consequences of his conduct and really feels such responsibility with heart and soul. He then acts by following an ethic of responsibility and somewhere he reaches the point where he says: ‘Here I stand; I can do no other.’ That is something genuinely human and moving. And every one of us who is not spiritually dead must realize the possibility of finding himself at some time in that position. In so far as this is true, an ethic of ultimate ends and an ethic of responsibility are not absolute contrasts but rather supplements, which only in unison constitute a genuine man—a man who can have the ‘calling for politics.’

Now then, ladies and gentlemen, let us debate this matter once more ten years from now. Unfortunately, for a whole series of reasons, I fear that by then the period of reaction will have long since broken over us. It is very probable that little of what many of you, and (I candidly confess) I too, have wished and hoped for will be fulfilled; little—perhaps not exactly nothing, but what to us at least seems little. This will not crush me, but surely it is an inner burden to realize it. Then, I wish I could see what has become of those of you who now feel yourselves to be genuinely ‘principled’ politicians and who share in the intoxication signified by this revolution. It would be nice if matters turned out in such a way that Shakespeare’s Sonnet 102 should hold true:

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. Not summer’s bloom lies ahead of us, but rather a polar night of icy darkness and hardness, no matter which group may triumph externally now. Where there is nothing, not only the Kaiser but also the proletarian has lost his rights. When this night shall have slowly receded, who of those for whom spring apparently has bloomed so luxuriously will be alive? And what will have become of all of you by then? Will you be bitter or banausic? Will you simply and dully accept world and occupation? Or will the third and by no means the least frequent possibility be your lot: mystic flight from reality for those who are gifted for it, or—as is both frequent and unpleasant—for those who belabor themselves to follow this fashion? In every one of such cases, I shall draw the conclusion that they have not measured up to their own doings. They have

## POLITICS AS A VOCATION

not measured up to the world as it really is in its everyday routine. Objectively and actually, they have not experienced the vocation for politics in its deepest meaning, which they thought they had. They would have done better in simply cultivating plain brotherliness in personal relations. And for the rest—they should have gone soberly about their daily work.

Politics is a strong and slow boring of hard boards. It takes both passion and perspective. Certainly all historical experience confirms the truth—that man would not have attained the possible unless time and again he had reached out for the impossible. But to do that a man must be a leader, and not only a leader but a hero as well, in a very sober sense of the word. And even those who are neither leaders nor heroes must arm themselves with that steadfastness of heart which can brave even the crumbling of all hopes. This is necessary right now, or else men will not be able to attain even that which is possible today. Only he has the calling for politics who is sure that he shall not crumble when the world from his point of view is too stupid or too base for what he wants to offer. Only he who in the face of all this can say ‘In spite of all!’ has the calling for politics.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Trachtet nach seinem Werk.*

<sup>2</sup> A high ministerial official in charge of a special division concerning which he had to give regular reports.

<sup>3</sup> Head of an administrative division in a ministry.

<sup>4</sup> The ‘local agents’ of the party.

<sup>5</sup> Weber alludes to the evasion of rationing and priority rules and the developments of ‘black markets’ during the wartime administration of Germany, 1914 to 1918.

<sup>6</sup> Federal Council.

<sup>7</sup> *Landwirtschaftskammer.*

<sup>8</sup> *Handwerkskammer.*

### Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation"

'Wissenschaft als Beruf,' from *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre* (Tübingen, 1922), pp. 524-55.

Originally delivered as a speech at Munich University, 1918.

Published in 1919 by Duncker & Humblot, Munich.

You wish me to speak about 'Science as a Vocation.' Now, we political economists have a pedantic custom, which I should like to follow, of always beginning with the external conditions. In this case, we begin with the question: What are the conditions of science as a vocation in the material sense of the term? Today this question means, practically and essentially: What are the prospects of a graduate student who is resolved to dedicate himself professionally to science in university life? In order to understand the peculiarity of German conditions it is expedient to proceed by comparison and to realize the conditions abroad. In this respect, the United States stands in the sharpest contrast with Germany, so we shall focus upon that country.

Everybody knows that in Germany the career of the young man who is dedicated to science normally begins with the position of *Privatdozent*. After having conversed with and received the consent of the respective specialists, he takes up residence on the basis of a book and, usually, a rather formal examination before the faculty of the university. Then he gives a course of lectures without receiving any salary other than the lecture fees of his students. It is up to him to determine, within his *venia legendi*, the topics upon which he lectures.

In the United States the academic career usually begins in quite a different manner, namely, by employment as an 'assistant.' This is similar to the great institutes of the natural science and medical faculties in Germany, where usually only a fraction of the assistants try to habilitate themselves as *Privatdozenten* and often only later in their career.

Practically, this contrast means that the career of the academic man in Germany is generally based upon plutocratic prerequisites. For it is extremely hazardous for a young scholar without funds to expose himself to the conditions of the academic career. He must be able to endure this condition for at least a number of years without knowing whether he will have the opportunity to move into a position which pays well enough for maintenance.

In the United States, where the bureaucratic system exists, the young academic man is paid from the very beginning. To be sure, his salary is modest; usually it is hardly as much as the wages of a semi-skilled laborer. Yet he begins with a seemingly secure position, for he draws a fixed salary. As a rule, however, notice may be given to him just as with German assistants, and frequently he definitely has to face this should he not come up to expectations.

These expectations are such that the young academic in America must draw large crowds of students. This cannot happen to a German docent; once one has him, one cannot get rid of him. To be sure, he cannot raise any 'claims.' But he has the understandable notion that after years of work he has a sort of moral right to expect some consideration. He also

expects -- and this is often quite important -- that one have some regard for him when the question of the possible habilitation of other *Privatdozenten* comes up.

Whether, in principle, one should habilitate every scholar who is qualified or whether one should consider enrollments, and hence give the existing staff a monopoly to teach -- that is an awkward dilemma. It is associated with the dual aspect of the academic profession, which we shall discuss presently. In general, one decides in favor of the second alternative. But this increases the danger that the respective full professor, however conscientious he is, will prefer his own disciples. If I may speak of my personal attitude, I must say I have followed the principle that a scholar promoted by me must legitimize and habilitate himself with *somebody else* at another university. But the result has been that one of my best disciples has been turned down at another university because nobody there *believed* this to be the reason.

A further difference between Germany and the United States is that in Germany the *Privatdozent* generally teaches fewer courses than he wishes. According to his formal right, he can give any course in his field. But to do so would be considered an improper lack of consideration for the older docents. As a rule, the full professor gives the 'big' courses and the docent confines himself to secondary ones. The advantage of these arrangements is that during his youth the academic man is free to do scientific work, although this restriction of the opportunity to teach is somewhat involuntary.

In America, the arrangement is different in principle. Precisely during the early years of his career the assistant is absolutely overburdened just because he is paid. In a department of German, for instance, the full professor will give a three-hour course on Goethe and that is enough, whereas the young assistant is happy if, besides the drill in the German language, his twelve weekly teaching hours include assignments of, say, Uhland. The officials prescribe the curriculum, and in this the assistant is just as dependent as the institute assistant in Germany.

Of late we can observe distinctly that the German universities in the broad fields of science develop in the direction of the American system. The large institutes of medicine or natural science are 'state capitalist' enterprises, which cannot be managed without very considerable funds. Here we encounter the same condition that is found wherever capitalist enterprise comes into operation: the 'separation of the worker from his means of production.' The worker, that is, the assistant, is dependent upon the implements that the state puts at his disposal; hence he is just as dependent upon the head of the institute as is the employee in a factory upon the management. For, subjectively and in good faith, the director believes that this institute is 'his,' and he manages its affairs. Thus the assistant's position is often as precarious as is that of any 'quasi-proletarian' existence and just as precarious as the position of the assistant in the American university.

In very important respects German university life is being Americanized, as is German life in general. This development, I am convinced, will engulf those disciplines in which the craftsman personally owns the tools, essentially the library, as is still the case to a large extent in my own field. This development corresponds entirely to what happened to the

artisan of the past and it is now fully under way.

As with all capitalist and at the same time bureaucratized enterprises, there are indubitable advantages in all this. But the 'spirit' that rules in these affairs is different from the historical atmosphere of the German university. An extraordinarily wide gulf, externally and internally, exists between the chief of these large, capitalist, university enterprises and the usual full professor of the old style. This contrast also holds for the inner attitude, a matter that I shall not go into here. Inwardly as well as externally, the old university constitution has become fictitious. What has remained and what has been essentially increased is a factor peculiar to the university career: the question whether or not such a *Privatdozent*, and still more an assistant, will ever succeed in moving into the position of a full professor or even become the head of an institute. That is simply a hazard. Certainly, chance does not rule alone, but it rules to an unusually high degree. I know of hardly any career on earth where chance plays such a role. I may say so all the more since I personally owe it to some mere accidents that during my very early years I was appointed to a full professorship in a discipline in which men of my generation undoubtedly had achieved more than I had. And, indeed, I fancy, on the basis of this experience, that I have a sharp eye for the undeserved fate of the many whom accident has cast in the opposite direction and who within this selective apparatus in spite of all their ability do not attain the positions that are due them.

The fact that hazard rather than ability plays so large a role is not alone or even predominantly owing to the 'human, all too human' factors, which naturally occur in the process of academic selection as in any other selection. It would be unfair to hold the personal inferiority of faculty members or educational ministries responsible for the fact that so many mediocrities undoubtedly play an eminent role at the universities. The predominance of mediocrity is rather due to the laws of human co-operation, especially of the co-operation of several bodies, and, in this case, co-operation of the faculties who recommend and of the ministries of education.

A counterpart are the events at the papal elections, which can be traced over many centuries and which are the most important controllable examples of a selection of the same nature as the academic selection. The cardinal who is said to be the 'favorite' only rarely has a chance to win out. The rule is rather that the Number Two cardinal or the Number Three wins out. The same holds for the President of the United States. Only exceptionally does the first-rate and most prominent man get the nomination of the convention. Mostly the Number Two and often the Number Three men are nominated and later run for election. The Americans have already formed technical sociological terms for these categories, and it would be quite interesting to enquire into the laws of selection by a collective will by studying these examples, but we shall not do so here. Yet these laws also hold for the collegiate bodies of German universities, and one must not be surprised at the frequent mistakes that are made, but rather at the number of *correct* appointments, the proportion of which, in spite of all, is very considerable. Only where parliaments, as in some countries, or monarchs, as in Germany thus far (both work out in the same way), or revolutionary power-holders, as in Germany now, intervene for political reasons in academic selections, can one be certain that convenient mediocrities or strainers will have

the opportunities all to themselves.

No university teacher likes to be reminded of discussions of appointments, for they are seldom agreeable. And yet I may say that in the numerous cases known to me there was, without exception, the good will to allow purely objective reasons to be decisive.

One must be clear about another thing: that the decision over academic fates is so largely a 'hazard' is not merely because of the insufficiency of the selection by the collective formation of will. Every young man who feels called to scholarship has to realize clearly that the task before him has a double aspect. He must qualify not only as a scholar but also as a teacher. And the two do not at all coincide. One can be a preeminent scholar and at the same time an abominably poor teacher. May I remind you of the teaching of men like Helmholtz or Ranke; and they are not by any chance rare exceptions.

Now, matters are such that German universities, especially the small universities, are engaged in a most ridiculous competition for enrollments. The landlords of rooming houses in university cities celebrate the advent of the thousandth student by a festival, and they would love to celebrate Number Two Thousand by a torchlight procession. The interest in fees -- and one should openly admit it -- is affected by appointments in the neighboring fields that 'draw crowds.' And quite apart from this, the number of students enrolled is a test of qualification, which may be grasped in terms of numbers, whereas the qualification for scholarship is imponderable and, precisely with audacious innovators, often debatable - that is only natural. Almost everybody thus is affected by the suggestion of the immeasurable blessing and value of large enrollments. To say of a docent that he is a poor teacher is usually to pronounce an academic sentence of death, even if he is the foremost scholar in the world. And the question whether he is a good or a poor teacher is answered by the enrollments with which the students condescendingly honor him.

It is a fact that whether or not the students flock to a teacher is determined in large measure, larger than one would believe possible, by purely external things: temperament and even the inflection of his voice. After rather extensive experience and sober reflection, I have a deep distrust of courses that draw crowds, however unavoidable they may be. Democracy should be used only where it is in place. Scientific training, as we are held to practice it in accordance with the tradition of German universities, is the affair of an intellectual aristocracy, and we should not hide this from ourselves. To be sure, it is true that to present scientific problems in such a manner that an untutored but receptive mind can understand them and -- what for us is alone decisive -- can come to think about them independently is perhaps the most difficult pedagogical task of all. But whether this task is or is not realized is not decided by enrollment figures. And -- to return to our theme -- this very art is a personal gift and by no means coincides with the scientific qualifications of the scholar.

In contrast to France, Germany has no corporate body of 'immortals' in science. According to German tradition, the universities shall do justice to the demands both of research and of instruction. Whether the abilities for both are found together in a man is a matter of absolute chance. Hence academic life is a mad hazard. If the young scholar asks for my

advice with regard to habilitation, the responsibility of encouraging him can hardly be borne. If he is a Jew, of course one says *lasciate ogni speranza*. But one must ask every other man: Do you in all conscience believe that you can stand seeing mediocrity after mediocrity, year after year, climb beyond you, without becoming embittered and without coming to grief? Naturally, one always receives the answer: 'Of course, I live only for my "calling." ' Yet, I have found that only a few men could endure this situation without coming to grief.

This much I deem necessary to say about the external conditions of the academic man's vocation. But I believe that actually you wish to hear of something else, namely, of the *inward* calling for science. In our time, the internal situation, in contrast to the organization of science as a vocation, is first of all conditioned by the facts that science has entered a phase of specialization previously unknown and that this will forever remain the case. Not only externally, but inwardly, matters stand at a point where the individual can acquire the sure consciousness of achieving something truly perfect in the field of science only in case he is a strict specialist.

All work that overlaps neighboring fields, such as we occasionally undertake and which the sociologists must necessarily undertake again and again, is burdened with the resigned realization that at best one provides the specialist with useful questions upon which he would not so easily hit from his own specialized point of view. One's own work must inevitably remain highly imperfect. Only by strict specialization can the scientific worker become fully conscious, for once and perhaps never again in his lifetime, that he has achieved something that will endure. A really definitive and good accomplishment is today always a specialized accomplishment. And whoever lacks the capacity to put on blinders, so to speak, and to come up to the idea that the fate of his soul depends upon whether or not he makes the correct conjecture at this passage of this manuscript may as well stay away from science. He will never have what one may call the 'personal experience' of science. Without this strange intoxication, ridiculed by every outsider; without this passion, this 'thousands of years must pass before you enter into life and thousands more wait in silence' -- according to whether or not you succeed in making this conjecture; without this, you have no calling for science and you should do something else. For nothing is worthy of man as man unless he can pursue it with passionate devotion.

Yet it is a fact that no amount of such enthusiasm, however sincere and profound it may be, can compel a problem to yield scientific results. Certainly enthusiasm is a prerequisite of the 'inspiration' which is decisive. Nowadays in circles of youth there is a widespread notion that science has become a problem in calculation, fabricated in laboratories or statistical filing systems just as 'in a factory,' a calculation involving only the cool intellect and not one's 'heart and soul.' First of all one must say that such comments lack all clarity about what goes on in a factory or in a laboratory. In both some idea has to occur to someone's mind, and it has to be a correct idea, if one is to accomplish anything worthwhile. And such intuition cannot be forced. It has nothing to do with any cold calculation. Certainly calculation is also an indispensable prerequisite. No sociologist, for instance, should think himself too good, even in his old age, to make tens of thousands of quite trivial computations in his head and perhaps for months at a time. One cannot with

impunity try to transfer this task entirely to mechanical assistants if one wishes to figure something, even though the final result is often small indeed. But if no 'idea' occurs to his mind about the direction of his computations and, during his computations, about the bearing of the emergent single results, then even this small result will not be yielded.

Normally such an 'idea' is prepared only on the soil of very hard work, but certainly this is not always the case. Scientifically, a dilettante's idea may have the very same or even a greater bearing for science than that of a specialist. Many of our very best hypotheses and insights are due precisely to dilettantes. The dilettante differs from the expert, as Helmholtz has said of Robert Mayer, only in that he lacks a firm and reliable work procedure. Consequently he is usually not in the position to control, to estimate, or to exploit the idea in its bearings. The idea is not a substitute for work; and work, in turn, cannot substitute for or compel an idea, just as little as enthusiasm can. Both, enthusiasm and work, and above all both of them *jointly*, can entice the idea.

Ideas occur to us when they please, not when it pleases us. The best ideas do indeed occur to one's mind in the way in which Ihering describes it: when smoking a cigar on the sofa; or as Helmholtz states of himself with scientific exactitude: when taking a walk on a slowly ascending street; or in a similar way. In any case, ideas come when we do not expect them, and not when we are brooding and searching at our desks. Yet ideas would certainly not come to mind had we not brooded at our desks and searched for answers with passionate devotion.

However this may be, the scientific worker has to take into his bargain the risk that enters into all scientific work: Does an 'idea' occur or does it not? He may be an excellent worker and yet never have had any valuable idea of his own. It is a grave error to believe that this is so only in science, and that things, for instance, in a business office are different from a laboratory. A merchant or a big industrialist without 'business imagination,' that is, without ideas or ideal intuitions, will for all his life remain a man who would better have remained a clerk or a technical official. He will never be truly creative in organization. Inspiration in the field of science by no means plays any greater role, as academic conceit fancies, than it does in the field of mastering problems of practical life by a modern entrepreneur. On the other hand, and this also is often misconstrued, inspiration plays no less a role in science than it does in the realm of art. It is a childish notion to think that a mathematician attains any scientifically valuable results by sitting at his desk with a ruler, calculating machines or other mechanical means. The mathematical imagination of a Weierstrass is naturally quite differently oriented in meaning and result than is the imagination of an artist, and differs basically in quality. But the psychological processes do not differ. Both are frenzy (in the sense of Plato's 'mania') and 'inspiration.'

Now, whether we have scientific inspiration depends upon destinies that are hidden from us, and besides upon 'gifts.' Last but not least, because of this indubitable truth, a very understandable attitude has become popular, especially among youth, and has put them in the service of idols whose cult today occupies a broad place on all street corners and in all periodicals. These idols are 'personality' and 'personal experience.' Both are intimately connected, the notion prevails that the latter constitutes the former and belongs to it.

People belabor themselves in trying to 'experience' life -- for that befits a personality, conscious of its rank and station. And if we do not succeed in 'experiencing' life, we must at least pretend to have this gift of grace. Formerly we called this 'experience,' in plain German, 'sensation'; and I believe that we then had a more adequate idea of what personality is and what it signifies.

Ladies and gentlemen. In the field of science only he who is devoted *solely* to the work at hand has 'personality.' And this holds not only for the field of science; we know of no great artist who has ever done anything but serve his work and only his work. As far as his art is concerned, even with a personality of Goethe's rank, it has been detrimental to take the liberty of trying to make his 'life' into a work of art. And even if one doubts this, one has to be a Goethe in order to dare permit oneself such liberty. Everybody will admit at least this much: that even with a man like Goethe, who appears once in a thousand years, this liberty did not go unpaid for. In politics matters are not different, but we shall not discuss that today. In the field of science, however, the man who makes himself the impresario of the subject to which he should be devoted, and steps upon the stage and seeks to legitimate himself through 'experience,' asking: How can I prove that I am something other than a mere 'specialist' and how can I manage to say something in form or in content that nobody else has ever said? -- such a man is no 'personality.' Today such conduct is a crowd phenomenon, and it always makes a petty impression and debases the one who is thus concerned. Instead of this, an inner devotion to the task, and that alone, should lift the scientist to the height and dignity of the subject he pretends to serve. And in this it is not different with the artist.

In contrast with these preconditions which scientific work shares with art, science has a fate that profoundly distinguishes it from artistic work. Scientific work is chained to the course of progress; whereas in the realm of art there is no progress in the same sense. It is not true that the work of art of a period that has worked out new technical means, or, for instance, the laws of perspective, stands therefore artistically higher than a work of art devoid of all knowledge of those means and laws--if its form does justice to the material, that is, if its object has been chosen and formed so that it could be artistically mastered without applying those conditions and means. A work of art, which is genuine 'fulfilment,' is never surpassed; it will never be antiquated. Individuals may differ in appreciating the personal significance of works of art, but no one will ever be able to say of such a work that it is 'outstripped by another work which is also 'fulfilment.'

In science, each of us knows that what he has accomplished will be antiquated in ten, twenty, fifty years. That is the fate to which science is subjected; it is the very *meaning* of scientific work, to which it is devoted in a quite specific sense, as compared with other spheres of culture for which in general the same holds. Every scientific 'fulfilment' raises new 'questions'; it *asks* to be 'surpassed' and outdated. Whoever wishes to serve science has to resign himself to this fact. Scientific works certainly can last as 'gratifications' because of their artistic quality, or they may remain important as a means of training. Yet they will be surpassed scientifically -- let that be repeated -- for it is our common fate and, more, our common goal. We cannot work without hoping that others will advance further than we have. In principle, this progress goes on *ad infinitum*. And with this we come to

inquire into the *meaning* of science. For, after all, it is not self-evident that something subordinate to such a law is sensible and meaningful in itself. Why does one engage in doing something that in reality never comes, and never can come, to an end?

One does it, first, for purely practical, in the broader sense of the word, for technical, purposes: in order to be able to orient our practical activities to the expectations that scientific experience places at our disposal. Good. Yet this has meaning only to practitioners. What is the attitude of the academic man towards his vocation -- that is, if he is at all in quest of such a personal attitude? He maintains that he engages in 'science for science's sake' and not merely because others, by exploiting science, bring about commercial or technical success and can better feed, dress, illuminate, and govern. But what does he who allows himself to be integrated into this specialized organization, running on *ad infinitum*, hope to accomplish that is significant in these productions that are always destined to be outdated? This question requires a few general considerations.

Scientific progress is a fraction, the most important fraction, of the process of intellectualization which we have been undergoing for thousands of years and which nowadays is usually judged in such an extremely negative way. Let us first clarify what this intellectualist rationalization, created by science and by scientifically oriented technology, means practically.

Does it mean that we, today, for instance, everyone sitting in this hall, have a greater knowledge of the conditions of life under which we exist than has an American Indian or a Hottentot? Hardly. Unless he is a physicist, one who rides on the streetcar has no idea how the car happened to get into motion. And he does not need to know. He is satisfied that he may 'count' on the behavior of the streetcar, and he orients his conduct according to this expectation; but he knows nothing about what it takes to produce such a car so that it can move. The savage knows incomparably more about his tools. When we spend money today I bet that even if there are colleagues of political economy here in the hall, almost every one of them will hold a different answer in readiness to the question: How does it happen that one can buy something for money -- sometimes more and sometimes less? The savage knows what he does in order to get his daily food and which institutions serve him in this pursuit. The increasing intellectualization and rationalization do not, therefore, indicate an increased and general knowledge of the conditions under which one lives.

It means something else, namely, the knowledge or belief that if one but wished one *could* learn it at any time. Hence, it means that principally there are no mysterious incalculable forces that come into play, but rather that one can, in principle, master all things by calculation. This means that the world is disenchanted. One need no longer have recourse to magical means in order to master or implore the spirits, as did the savage, for whom such mysterious powers existed. Technical means and calculations perform the service. This above all is what intellectualization means.

Now, this process of disenchantment, which has continued to exist in Occidental culture for millennia, and, in general, this 'progress,' to which science belongs as a link and motive force, do they have any meanings that go beyond the purely practical and technical? You

will find this question raised in the most principled form in the works of Leo Tolstoy. He came to raise the question in a peculiar way. All his broodings increasingly revolved around the problem of whether or not death is a meaningful phenomenon. And his answer was: for civilized man death has no meaning. It has none because the individual life of civilized man, placed into an infinite 'progress,' according to its own imminent meaning should never come to an end; for there is always a further step ahead of one who stands in the march of progress. And no man who comes to die stands upon the peak that lies in infinity. Abraham, or some peasant of the past, died 'old and satiated with life' because he stood in the organic cycle of life; because his life, in terms of its meaning and on the eve of his days, had given to him what life had to offer; because for him there remained no puzzles he might wish to solve; and therefore he could have had 'enough' of life. Whereas civilized man, placed in the midst of the continuous enrichment of culture by ideas, knowledge, and problems, may become 'tired of life' but not 'satiated with life.' He catches only the most minute part of what the life of the spirit brings forth ever anew, and what he seizes is always something provisional and not definitive, and therefore death for him is a meaningless occurrence. And because death is meaningless, civilized life as such is meaningless; by its very 'progressiveness' it gives death the imprint of meaninglessness. Throughout his late novels one meets with this thought as the keynote of the Tolstoyan art.

What stand should one take? Has 'progress' as such a recognizable meaning that goes beyond the technical, so that to serve it is a meaningful vocation? The question must be raised. But this is no longer merely the question of man's calling *for* science, hence, the problem of what science as a vocation means to its devoted disciples. To raise this question is to ask for the vocation of science within the total life of humanity. What is the value of science?

Here the contrast between the past and the present is tremendous. You will recall the wonderful image at the beginning of the seventh book of Plato's *Republic*: those enchained cavemen whose faces are turned toward the stonewall before them. Behind them lies the source of the light which they cannot see. They are concerned only with the shadowy images that this light throws upon the wall, and they seek to fathom their interrelations. Finally one of them succeeds in shattering his fetters, turns around, and sees the sun. Blinded, he gropes about and stammers of what he saw. The others say he is raving. But gradually he learns to behold the light, and then his task is to descend to the cavemen and to lead them to the light. He is the philosopher; the sun, however, is the truth of science, which alone seizes not upon illusions and shadows but upon the true being.

Well, who today views science in such a manner? Today youth feels rather the reverse: the intellectual constructions of science constitute an unreal realm of artificial abstractions, which with their bony hands seek to grasp the blood-and-the-sap of true life without ever catching up with it. But here in life, in what for Plato was the play of shadows on the walls of the cave, genuine reality is pulsating; and the rest are derivatives of life, lifeless ghosts, and nothing else. How did this change come about?

Plato's passionate enthusiasm in *The Republic* must, in the last analysis, be explained by the fact that for the first time the *concept*, one of the great tools of all scientific knowledge, had

been consciously discovered. Socrates had discovered it in its bearing. He was not the only man in the world to discover it. In India one finds the beginnings of a logic that is quite similar to that of Aristotle's. But nowhere else do we find this realization of the significance of the concept. In Greece, for the first time, appeared a handy means by which one could put the logical screws upon somebody so that he could not come out without admitting either that he knew nothing or that this and nothing else was truth, the *eternal* truth that never would vanish as the doings of the blind men vanish. That was the tremendous experience that dawned upon the disciples of Socrates. And from this it seemed to follow that if one only found the right concept of the beautiful, the good, or, for instance, of bravery, of the soul -- or whatever -- that then one could also grasp its true being. And this, in turn, seemed to open the way for knowing and for teaching how to act rightly in life and, above all, how to act as a citizen of the state; for this question was everything to the Hellenic man, whose thinking was political throughout. And for these reasons one engaged in science.

The second great tool of scientific work, the rational experiment, made its appearance at the side of this discovery of the Hellenic spirit during the Renaissance period. The experiment is a means of reliably controlling experience. Without it, present-day empirical science would be impossible. There were experiments earlier; for instance, in India physiological experiments were made in the service of ascetic yoga technique; in Hellenic antiquity, mathematical experiments were made for purposes of war technology; and in the Middle Ages, for purposes of mining. But to raise the experiment to a principle of research was the achievement of the Renaissance. They were the great innovators in *art*, who were the pioneers of experiment. Leonardo and his like and, above all, the sixteenth-century experimenters in music with their experimental pianos were characteristic. From these circles the experiment entered science, especially through Galileo, and it entered theory through Bacon; and then it was taken over by the various exact disciplines of the continental universities, first of all those of Italy and then those of the Netherlands.

What did science mean to these men who stood at the threshold of modern times? To artistic experimenters of the type of Leonardo and the musical innovators, science meant the path to *true* art, and that meant for them the path to true *nature*. Art was to be raised to the rank of a science, and this meant at the same time and above all to raise the artist to the rank of the doctor, socially and with reference to the meaning of his life. This is the ambition on which, for instance, Leonardo's sketchbook was based. And today? 'Science as the way to nature' would sound like blasphemy to youth. Today, youth proclaims the opposite: redemption from the intellectualism of science in order to return to one's own nature and therewith to nature in general. Science as a way to art? Here no criticism is even needed.

But during the period of the rise of the exact sciences one expected a great deal more. If you recall Swammerdam's statement, 'Here I bring you the proof of God's providence in the anatomy of a louse,' you will see what the scientific worker, influenced (indirectly) by Protestantism and Puritanism, conceived to be his task: to show the path to God. People no longer found this path among the philosophers, with their concepts and deductions. All pietist theology of the time, above all Spener, knew that God was not to be found along the

road by which the Middle Ages had sought him. God is hidden, His ways are not our ways, His thoughts are not our thoughts. In the exact sciences, however, where one could physically grasp His works, one hoped to come upon the traces of what He planned for the world. And today? Who -- aside from certain big children who are indeed found in the natural sciences -- still believes that the findings of astronomy, biology, physics, or chemistry could teach us anything about the *meaning* of the world? If there is any such 'meaning,' along what road could one come upon its tracks? If these natural sciences lead to anything in this way, they are apt to make the belief that there is such a thing as the 'meaning' of the universe die out at its very roots.

And finally, science as a way 'to God'? Science, this specifically irreligious power? That science today is irreligious no one will doubt in his innermost being, even if he will not admit it to himself. Redemption from the rationalism and intellectualism of science is the fundamental presupposition of living in union with the divine. This, or something similar in meaning, is one of the fundamental watchwords one hears among German youth, whose feelings are attuned to religion or who crave religious experiences. They crave not only religious experience but experience as such. The only thing that is strange is the method that is now followed: the spheres of the irrational, the only spheres that intellectualism has not yet touched, are now raised into consciousness and put under its lens. For in practice this is where the modern intellectualist form of romantic irrationalism leads. This method of emancipation from intellectualism may well bring about the very opposite of what those who take to it conceive as its goal.

After Nietzsche's devastating criticism of those 'last men' who 'invented happiness,' I may leave aside altogether the naive optimism in which science -- that is, the technique of mastering life which rests upon science -- has been celebrated as the way to happiness. Who believes in this? -- aside from a few big children in university chairs or editorial offices. Let us resume our argument.

Under these internal presuppositions, what is the meaning of science as a vocation, now after all these former illusions, the 'way to true being,' the 'way to true art,' the 'way to true nature,' the 'way to true God,' the 'way to true happiness,' have been dispelled? Tolstoy has given the simplest answer, with the words: 'Science is meaningless because it gives no answer to our question, the only question important for us: "What shall we do and how shall we live?"' That science does not give an answer to this is indisputable. The only question that remains is the sense in which science gives 'no' answer, and whether or not science might yet be of some use to the one who puts the question correctly.

Today one usually speaks of science as 'free from presuppositions.' Is there such a thing? It depends upon what one understands thereby. All scientific work presupposes that the rules of logic and method are valid; these are the general foundations of our orientation in the world; and, at least for our special question, these presuppositions are the least problematic aspect of science. Science further presupposes that what is yielded by scientific work is important in the sense that it is 'worth being known.' In this, obviously, are contained all our problems. For this presupposition cannot be proved by scientific means. It can only be *interpreted* with reference to its ultimate meaning, which we must

reject or accept according to our ultimate position towards life.

Furthermore, the nature of the relationship of scientific work and its presuppositions varies widely according to their structure. The natural sciences, for instance, physics, chemistry, and astronomy, presuppose as self-evident that it is worthwhile to know the ultimate laws of cosmic events as far as science can construe them. This is the case not only because with such knowledge one can attain technical results but for its own sake, if the quest for such knowledge is to be a 'vocation.' Yet this presupposition can by no means be proved. And still less can it be proved that the existence of the world which these sciences describe is worth while, that it has any 'meaning,' or that it makes sense to live in such a world. Science does not ask for the answers to such questions.

Consider modern medicine, a practical technology that is highly developed scientifically. The general 'presupposition' of the medical enterprise is stated trivially in the assertion that medical science has the task of maintaining life as such and of diminishing suffering as such to the greatest possible degree. Yet this is problematical. By his means the medical man preserves the life of the mortally ill man, even if the patient implores us to relieve him of life, even if his relatives, to whom his life is worthless and to whom the costs of maintaining his worthless life grow unbearable, grant his redemption from suffering. Perhaps a poor lunatic is involved, whose relatives, whether they admit it or not, wish and must wish for his death. Yet the presuppositions of medicine, and the penal code, prevent the physician from relinquishing his therapeutic efforts. Whether life is worthwhile living and when--this question is not asked by medicine. Natural science gives us an answer to the question of what we must do if we wish to master life technically. It leaves quite aside, or assumes for its purposes, whether we should and do wish to master life technically and whether it ultimately makes sense to do so.

Consider a discipline such as aesthetics. The fact that there are works of art is given for aesthetics. It seeks to find out under what conditions this fact exists, but it does not raise the question whether or not the realm of art is perhaps a realm of diabolical grandeur, a realm of this world, and therefore, in its core, hostile to God and, in its innermost and aristocratic spirit, hostile to the brotherhood of man. Hence, aesthetics does not ask whether there *should* be works of art.

Consider jurisprudence. It establishes what is valid according to the rules of juristic thought, which is partly bound by logically compelling and partly by conventionally given schemata. Juridical thought holds when certain legal rules and certain methods of interpretations are recognized as binding. Whether there should be law and whether one should establish just these rules--such questions jurisprudence does not answer. It can only state: If one wishes this result, according to the norms of our legal thought, this legal rule is the appropriate means of attaining it.

Consider the historical and cultural sciences. They teach us how to understand and interpret political, artistic, literary, and social phenomena in terms of their origins. But they give us no answer to the question of whether the existence of these cultural phenomena have been and are *worthwhile*. And they do not answer the further question, whether it is

worth the effort required to know them. They presuppose that there is an interest in partaking, through this procedure, of the community of 'civilized men.' But they cannot prove 'scientifically' that this is the case; and that they presuppose this interest by no means proves that it goes without saying. In fact it is not at all self-evident.

Finally, let us consider the disciplines close to me: sociology, history, economics, political science, and those types of cultural philosophy that make it their task' to interpret these sciences. It is said, and I agree, that politics is out of place in the lecture-room. It does not belong there on the part of the students. If, for instance, in the lecture-room of my former colleague Dietrich Schafer in Berlin, pacifist students were to surround his desk and make an uproar, I should deplore it just as much as I should deplore the uproar which anti-pacifist students are said to have made against Professor Forster, whose views in many ways are as remote as could be from mine. Neither does politics, however, belong in the lecture-room on the part of the docents. And when the docent is scientifically concerned with politics, it belongs there least of all.

To take a practical political stand is one thing, and to analyze political structures and party positions is another. When speaking in a political meeting about democracy, one does not hide one's personal standpoint; indeed, to come out clearly and take a stand is one's damned duty. The words one uses in such a meeting are not means of scientific analysis but means of canvassing votes and winning over others. They are not plowshares to loosen the soil of contemplative thought; they are swords against the enemies: such words are weapons. It would be an outrage, however, to use words in this fashion in a lecture or in the lecture-room. If, for instance, 'democracy' is under discussion, one considers its various forms, analyzes them in the way they function, determines what results for the conditions of life the one form has as compared with the other. Then one confronts the forms of democracy with non-democratic forms of political order and endeavors to come to a position where the student may find the point from which, in terms of his ultimate ideals, he can take a stand. But the true teacher will beware of imposing from the platform any political position upon the student, whether it is expressed or suggested. 'To let the facts speak for themselves' is the most unfair way of putting over a political position to the student.

Why should we abstain from doing this? I state in advance that some highly esteemed colleagues are of the opinion that it is not possible to carry through this self-restraint and that, even if it were possible, it would be a whim to avoid declaring oneself. Now one cannot demonstrate scientifically what the duty of an academic teacher is. One can only demand of the teacher that he have the intellectual integrity to see that it is one thing to state facts, to determine mathematical or logical relations or the internal structure of cultural values, while it is another thing to answer questions of the *value* of culture and its individual contents and the question of how one should act in the cultural community and in political associations. These are quite heterogeneous problems. If he asks further why he should not deal with both types of problems in the lecture-room, the answer is: because the prophet and the demagogue do not belong on the academic platform.

To the prophet and the demagogue, it is said: 'Go your ways out into the streets and speak

openly to the world,' that is, speak where criticism is possible. In the lecture-room we stand opposite our audience, and it has to remain silent. I deem it irresponsible to exploit the circumstance that for the sake of their career the students have to attend a teacher's course while there is nobody present to oppose him with criticism. The task of the teacher is to serve the students with his knowledge and scientific experience and not to imprint upon them his personal political views. It is certainly possible that the individual teacher will not entirely succeed in eliminating his personal sympathies. He is then exposed to the sharpest criticism in the forum of his own conscience. And this deficiency does not prove anything; other errors are also possible, for instance, erroneous statements of fact, and yet they prove nothing against the duty of searching for the truth. I also reject this in the very interest of science. I am ready to prove from the works of our historians that whenever the man of science introduces his personal value judgment, a full understanding of the facts *ceases*. But this goes beyond tonight's topic and would require lengthy elucidation.

I ask only: How should a devout Catholic, on the one hand, and a Freemason, on the other, in a course on the forms of church and state or on religious history ever be brought to evaluate these subjects alike? This is out of the question. And yet the academic teacher must desire and must demand of himself to serve the one as well as the other by his knowledge and methods. Now you will rightly say that the devout Catholic will never accept the view of the factors operative in bringing about Christianity, which a teacher who is free of his dogmatic presuppositions presents to him. Certainly! The difference, however, lies in the following: Science 'free from presuppositions,' in the sense of a rejection of religious bonds, does not know of the 'miracle' and the 'revelation.' If it did, science would be unfaithful to its own 'presuppositions.' The believer knows both, miracle and revelation. And science 'free from presuppositions' expects from him no less -- and no more -- than acknowledgment that *if* the process can be explained without those supernatural interventions, which an empirical explanation has to eliminate as causal factors, the process has to be explained the way science attempts to do. And the believer can do this without being disloyal to his faith.

But has the contribution of science no meaning at all for a man who does not care to know facts as such and to whom only the practical standpoint matters? Perhaps science nevertheless contributes something.

The primary task of a useful teacher is to teach his students to recognize 'inconvenient' facts -- I mean facts that are inconvenient for their party opinions. And for every party opinion there are facts that are extremely inconvenient, for my own opinion no less than for others. I believe the teacher accomplishes more than a mere intellectual task if he compels his audience to accustom itself to the existence of such facts. I would be so immodest as even to apply the expression 'moral achievement,' though perhaps this may sound too grandiose for something that should go without saying.

Thus far I have spoken only of practical reasons for avoiding the imposition of a personal point of view. But these are not the only reasons. The impossibility of 'scientifically' pleading for practical and interested stands -- except in discussing the means for a firmly given and presupposed end -- rests upon reasons that lie far deeper.

'Scientific' pleading is meaningless in principle because the various value spheres of the world stand in irreconcilable conflict with each other. The elder Mill, whose philosophy I will not praise otherwise, was on this point right when he said: If one proceeds from pure experience, one arrives at polytheism. This is shallow in formulation and sounds paradoxical, and yet there is truth in it. If anything, we realize again today that something can be sacred not only in spite of its not being beautiful, but rather because and in so far as it is not beautiful. You will find this documented in the fifty-third chapter of the book of Isaiah and in the twenty-first Psalm. And, since Nietzsche, we realize that something can be beautiful, not only in spite of the aspect in which it is not good, but rather in that very aspect. You will find this expressed earlier in the *Fleurs du mal*, as Baudelaire named his volume of poems. It is commonplace to observe that something may be true although it is not beautiful and not holy and not good. Indeed it may be true in precisely those aspects. But all these are only the most elementary cases of the struggle that the gods of the various orders and values are engaged in. I do not know how one might wish to decide 'scientifically' the value of French and German culture; for here, too, different gods struggle with one another, now and for all times to come.

We live as did the ancients when their world was not yet disenchanted of its gods and demons, only we live in a different sense. As Hellenic man at times sacrificed to Aphrodite and at other times to Apollo, and, above all, as everybody sacrificed to the gods of his city, so do we still nowadays, only the bearing of man has been disenchanted and denuded of its mystical but inwardly genuine plasticity. Fate, and certainly not 'science,' holds sway over these gods and their struggles. One can only understand what the godhead is for the one order or for the other, or better, what godhead is in the one or in the other order. With this understanding, however, the matter has reached its limit so far as it can be discussed in a lecture-room and by a professor. Yet the great and vital problem that is contained therein is, of course, very far from being concluded. But forces other than university chairs have their say in this matter.

What man will take upon himself the attempt to 'refute scientifically' the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount? For instance, the sentence, 'resist no evil,' or the image of turning the other cheek? And yet it is clear, in mundane perspective, that this is an ethic of undignified conduct; one has to choose between the religious dignity that this ethic confers and the dignity of manly conduct which preaches something quite different; 'resist evil--lest you be co-responsible for an overpowering evil.' According to our ultimate standpoint, the one is the devil and the other the God, and the individual has to decide which is God for him and which is the devil. And so it goes throughout all the orders of life.

The grandiose rationalism of an ethical and methodical conduct of life that flows from every religious prophecy has dethroned this polytheism in favor of the 'one thing that is needful.' Faced with the realities of outer and inner life, Christianity has deemed it necessary to make those compromises and relative judgments, which we all know from its history. Today the routines of everyday life challenge religion. Many old gods ascend from their graves; they are disenchanted and hence take the form of impersonal forces. They strive to gain power over our lives and again they resume their eternal struggle with one

another. What is hard for modern man, and especially for the younger generation, is to measure up to *workaday* existence. The ubiquitous chase for 'experience' stems from this weakness; for it is weakness not to be able to countenance the stern seriousness of our fateful times.

Our civilization destines us to realize more clearly these struggles again, after our eyes have been blinded for a thousand years -- blinded by the allegedly or presumably exclusive orientation towards the grandiose moral fervor of Christian ethics.

But enough of these questions which lead far away. Those of our youth are in error who react to all this by saying, 'Yes, but we happen to come to lectures in order to experience something more than mere analyses and statements of fact.' The error is that they seek in the professor something different from what stands before them. They crave a leader and not a teacher. But we are placed upon the platform solely as teachers. And these are two different things, as one can readily see. Permit me to take you once more to America, because there one can often observe such matters in their most massive and original shape.

The American boy learns unspeakably less than the German boy. In spite of an incredible number of examinations, his school life has not had the significance of turning him into an absolute creature of examinations, such as the German. For in America, bureaucracy, which presupposes the examination diploma as a ticket of admission to the realm of office prebends, is only in its beginnings. The young American has no respect for anything or anybody, for tradition or for public office--unless it is for the personal achievement of individual men. This is what the American calls 'democracy.' This is the meaning of democracy, however distorted its intent may in reality be, and this intent is what matters here. The American's conception of the teacher who faces him is: he sells me his knowledge and his methods for my father's money, just as the greengrocer sells my mother cabbage. And that is all. To be sure, if the teacher happens to be a football coach, then, in this field, he is a leader. But if he is not this (or something similar in a different field of sports), he is simply a teacher and nothing more. And no young American would think of having the teacher sell him a *Weltanschauung* or a code of conduct. Now, when formulated in this manner, we should reject this. But the question is whether there is not a grain of salt contained in this feeling, which I have deliberately stated in extreme with some exaggeration.

Fellow students! You come to our lectures and demand from us the qualities of leadership, and you fail to realize in advance that of a hundred professors at least ninety-nine do not and must not claim to be football masters in the vital problems of life, or even to be 'leaders' in matters of conduct. Please, consider that a man's value does not depend on whether or not he has leadership qualities. And in any case, the qualities that make a man an excellent scholar and academic teacher are not the qualities that make him a leader to give directions in practical life or, more specifically, in politics. It is pure accident if a teacher also possesses this quality, and it is a critical situation if every teacher on the platform feels himself confronted with the students' expectation that the teacher should claim this quality. It is still more critical if it is left to every academic teacher to set himself up as a leader in the lecture-room. For those who most frequently think of themselves as

leaders often qualify least as leaders. But irrespective of whether they are or are not, the platform situation simply offers no possibility of proving themselves to be leaders. The professor who feels called upon to act as a counselor of youth and enjoys their trust may prove himself a man in personal human relations with them. And if he feels called upon to intervene in the struggles of worldviews and party opinions, he may do so outside, in the market place, in the press, in meetings, in associations, wherever he wishes. But after all, it is somewhat too convenient to demonstrate one's courage in taking a stand where the audience and possible opponents are condemned to silence.

Finally, you will put the question: 'If this is so, what then does science actually and positively contribute to practical and personal "life"?' Therewith we are back again at the problem of science as a 'vocation.'

First, of course, science contributes to the technology of controlling life by calculating external objects as well as man's activities. Well, you will say, that, after all, amounts to no more than the greengrocer of the American boy. I fully agree.

Second, science can contribute something that the greengrocer cannot: methods of thinking, the tools and the training for thought. Perhaps you will say: well, that is no vegetable, but it amounts to no more than the means for procuring vegetables. Well and good, let us leave it at that for today.

Fortunately, however, the contribution of science does not reach its limit with this. We are in a position to help you to a third objective: to gain *clarity*. Of course, it is presupposed that we ourselves possess clarity. As far as this is the case, we can make clear to you the following:

In practice, you can take this or that position when concerned with a problem of value -- for simplicity's sake, please think of social phenomena as examples. *If* you take such and such a stand, then, according to scientific experience, you have to use such and such a *means* in order to carry out your conviction practically. Now, these means are perhaps such that you believe you must reject them. Then you simply must choose between the end and the inevitable means. Does the end 'justify' the means? Or does it not? The teacher can confront you with the necessity of this choice. He cannot do more, so long as he wishes to remain a teacher and not to become a demagogue. He can, of course, also tell you that if you want such and such an end, then you must take into the bargain the subsidiary consequences that according to all experience will occur. Again we find ourselves in the same situation as before. These are still problems that can also emerge for the technician, who in numerous instances has to make decisions according to the principle of the lesser evil or of the relatively best. Only to him one thing, the main thing, is usually given, namely, the end. But as soon as truly 'ultimate' problems are at stake for us this is not the case. With this, at long last, we come to the final service that science as such can render to the aim of clarity, and at the same time we come to the limits of science.

Besides we can and we should state: In terms of its meaning, such and such a practical stand can be derived with inner consistency, and hence integrity, from this or that ultimate

*weltanschauliche* position. Perhaps it can only be derived from one such fundamental position, or maybe from several, but it cannot be derived from these or those other positions. Figuratively speaking, you serve this god and you offend the other god when you decide to adhere to this position. And if you remain faithful to yourself, you will necessarily come to certain final conclusions that subjectively make sense. This much, in principle at least, can be accomplished. Philosophy, as a special discipline, and the essentially philosophical discussions of principles in the other sciences attempt to achieve this. Thus, if we are competent in our pursuit (which must be presupposed here) we can force the individual, or at least we can help him, to give himself an *account of the ultimate meaning of his own conduct*. This appears to me as not so trifling a thing to do, even for one's own personal life. Again, I am tempted to say of a teacher who succeeds in this: he stands in the service of 'moral' forces; he fulfils the duty of bringing about self-clarification and a sense of responsibility. And I believe he will be the more able to accomplish this, the more conscientiously he avoids the desire personally to impose upon or suggest to his audience his own stand.

This proposition, which I present here, always takes its point of departure from the one fundamental fact, that so long as life remains immanent and is interpreted in its own terms, it knows only of an unceasing struggle of these gods with one another. Or speaking directly, the ultimately possible attitudes toward life are irreconcilable, and hence their struggle can never be brought to a final conclusion. Thus it is necessary to make a decisive choice. Whether, under such conditions, science is a worthwhile 'vocation' for somebody, and whether science itself has an objectively valuable 'vocation' are again value judgments about which nothing can be said in the lecture-room. To affirm the value of science is a presupposition for teaching there. I personally by my very work answer in the affirmative, and I also do so from precisely the standpoint that hates intellectualism as the worst devil, as youth does today, or usually only fancies it does. In that case the word holds for these youths: 'Mind you, the devil is old; grow old to understand him.' This does not mean age in the sense of the birth certificate. It means that if one wishes to settle with this devil, one must not take to flight before him as so many like to do nowadays. First of all, one has to see the devil's ways to the end in order to realize his power and his limitations.

Science today is a 'vocation' organized in special disciplines in the service of self-clarification and knowledge of interrelated facts. It is not the gift of grace of seers and prophets dispensing sacred values and revelations, nor does it partake of the contemplation of sages and philosophers about the meaning of the universe. This, to be sure, is the inescapable condition of our historical situation. We cannot evade it so long as we remain true to ourselves. And if Tolstoy's question recurs to you: as science does not, who is to answer the question: 'What shall we do, and, how shall we arrange our lives?' or, in the words used here tonight: 'Which of the warring gods should we serve? Or should we serve perhaps an entirely different god, and who is he?' then one can say that only a prophet or a savior can give the answers. If there is no such man, or if his message is no longer believed in, then you will certainly not compel him to appear on this earth by having thousands of professors, as privileged hirelings of the state, attempt as petty prophets in their lecture-rooms to take over his role. All they will accomplish is to show that they are unaware of the decisive state of affairs: the prophet for whom so many of our younger

generation yearn simply does not exist. But this knowledge in its forceful significance has never become vital for them. The inward interest of a truly religiously 'musical' man can never be served by veiling to him and to others the fundamental fact that he is destined to live in a godless and prophetless time by giving him the *ersatz* of armchair prophecy. The integrity of his religious organ, it seems to me, must rebel against this.

Now you will be inclined to say: Which stand does one take towards the factual existence of 'theology' and its claims to be a 'science'? Let us not flinch and evade the answer. To be sure, 'theology' and 'dogmas' do not exist universally, but neither do they exist for Christianity alone. Rather (going backward in time), they exist in highly developed form also in Islam, in Manicheanism, in Gnosticism, in Orphism, in Parsism, in Buddhism, in the Hindu sects, in Taoism, and in the Upanishads, and, of course, in Judaism. To be sure their systematic development varies greatly. It is no accident that Occidental Christianity -- in contrast to the theological possessions of Jewry -- has expanded and elaborated theology more systematically, or strives to do so. In the Occident the development of theology has had by far the greatest historical significance. This is the product of the Hellenic spirit, and all theology of the West goes back to it, as (obviously) all theology of the East goes back to Indian thought. All theology represents an intellectual *rationalization* of the possession of sacred values. No science is absolutely free from presuppositions, and no science can prove its fundamental value to the man who rejects these presuppositions. Every theology, however, adds a few specific presuppositions for its work and thus for the justification of its existence. Their meaning and scope vary. Every theology, including for instance Hinduist theology, presupposes that the world must have a *meaning*, and the question is how to interpret this meaning so that it is intellectually conceivable.

It is the same as with Kant's epistemology. He took for his point of departure the presupposition: 'Scientific truth exists and it is valid,' and then asked: 'Under which presuppositions of thought is truth possible and meaningful?' The modern aestheticians (actually or expressly, as for instance, G. V. Lukacs) proceed from the presupposition that 'works of art exist,' and then ask: 'How is their existence meaningful and possible?'

As a rule, theologies, however, do not content themselves with this (essentially religious and philosophical) presupposition. They regularly proceed from the further presupposition that certain 'revelations' are facts relevant for salvation and as such make possible a meaningful conduct of life. Hence, these revelations must be believed in. Moreover, theologies presuppose that certain subjective states and acts possess the quality of holiness, that is, they constitute a way of life, or at least elements of one, that is religiously meaningful. Then the question of theology is: How can these presuppositions, which must simply be accepted be meaningfully interpreted in a view of the universe? For theology, these presuppositions as such lie beyond the limits of 'science.' They do not represent 'knowledge,' in the usual sense, but rather a 'possession.' Whoever does not 'possess' faith, or the other holy states, cannot have theology as a substitute for them, least of all any other science. On the contrary, in every 'positive' theology, the devout reaches the point where the Augustinian sentence holds: *credo non quod, sed quia absurdum est*.

The capacity for the accomplishment of religious virtuosos -- the 'intellectual sacrifice' -- is

the decisive characteristic of the positively religious man. That this is so is shown by the fact that in spite (or rather in consequence) of theology (which unveils it) the tension between the value-spheres of 'science' and the sphere of 'the holy' is unbridgeable. Legitimately, only the disciple offers the 'intellectual sacrifice' to the prophet, the believer to the church. Never as yet has a new prophecy emerged (and I repeat here deliberately this image which has offended some) by way of the need of some modern intellectuals to furnish their souls with, so to speak, guaranteed genuine antiques. In doing so, they happen to remember that religion has belonged among such antiques, and of all things religion is what they do not possess. By way of substitute, however, they play at decorating a sort of domestic chapel with small sacred images from all over the world, or they produce surrogates through all sorts of psychic experiences to which they ascribe the dignity of mystic holiness, which they peddle in the book market. This is plain humbug or self-deception. It is, however, no humbug but rather something very sincere and genuine if some of the youth groups who during recent years have quietly grown together give their human community the interpretation of a religious, cosmic, or mystical relation, although occasionally perhaps such interpretation rests on misunderstanding of self. True as it is that every act of genuine brotherliness may be linked with the awareness that it contributes something imperishable to a super-personal realm, it seems to me dubious whether the dignity of purely human and communal relations is enhanced by these religious interpretations. But that is no longer our theme.

The fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the 'disenchantment of the world.' Precisely the ultimate and most sublime values have retreated from public life either into the transcendental realm of mystic life or into the brotherliness of direct and personal human relations. It is not accidental that our greatest art is intimate and not monumental, nor is it accidental that today only within the smallest and intimate circles, in personal human situations, in *pianissimo*, that something is pulsating that corresponds to the prophetic *pneuma*, which in former times swept through the great communities like a firebrand, welding them together. If we attempt to force and to 'invent' a monumental style in art, such miserable monstrosities are produced as the many monuments of the last twenty years. If one tries intellectually to construe new religions without a new and genuine prophecy, then, in an inner sense, something similar will result, but with still worse effects. And academic prophecy, finally, will create only fanatical sects but never a genuine community.

To the person who cannot bear the fate of the times like a man, one must say: may he rather return silently, without the usual publicity build-up of renegades, but simply and plainly. The arms of the old churches are opened widely and compassionately for him. After all, they do not make it hard for him. One way or another he has to bring his 'intellectual sacrifice'--that is inevitable. If he can really do it, we shall not rebuke him. For such an intellectual sacrifice in favor of an unconditional religious devotion is ethically quite a different matter than the evasion of the plain duty of intellectual integrity, which sets in if one lacks the courage to clarify one's own ultimate standpoint and rather facilitates this duty by feeble relative judgments. In my eyes, such religious return stands higher than the academic prophecy, which does not clearly realize that in the lecture-rooms of the university no other virtue holds but plain intellectual integrity. Integrity, however, compels

us to state that for the many who today tarry for new prophets and saviors, the situation is the same as resounds in the beautiful Edomite watchman's song of the period of exile that has been included among Isaiah's oracles:

He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come.

The people to whom this was said has enquired and tarried for more than two millennia, and we are shaken when we realize its fate. From this we want to draw the lesson that nothing is gained by yearning and tarrying alone, and we shall act differently. We shall set to work and meet the 'demands of the day,' in human relations as well as in our vocation. This, however, is plain and simple, if each finds and obeys the demon who holds the fibers of his very life.