

Partisanship and Scholarship

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I grew up in Nazi Germany in a hurry. War made me a political animal; liberation, an intellectual; emigration, a political sociologist. It is a truism that individuals react differently to the same events, even impressionable young people from the same social background. I lived through World War II more intensely and with greater awareness than most of my classmates, but with them I was part of the war's lucky generation. Not yet ten years old when the war began, most of us missed being pressed into military service in its last hours; hence we were not demographically decimated. More important, we were too young to have to choose between fighting for the Nazis or being persecuted by them. We could afford the luxury of not feeling "really" responsible for what "they" had done. But we were old enough to get a lifelong lesson. In our teens we were ready for the tremendous experience of intellectual liberation and political freedom, in a time that was also the formative period of the Federal Republic of Germany. Too young to actively rebuild German democracy and the German economy, we were prime beneficiaries of the reconstruction. We still studied under various kinds of material handicaps, but we entered professional life during the years of greatest economic prosperity and the best job opportunities. In the 1970s my political generation moved into positions of political influence and governmental responsibility in West Germany, just when the age of social reform came to an end and the world economy was shaken by the first oil crisis. I have remained a member of this generation as an outsider, an observer, and an occasional participant. I still maintain my

friendships from classical school and from my short period of political activism in Germany in the early 1950s.

At some point not very clear to me formative experience turned into life pattern. The exciting things happened to me early, and I will focus my narrative on them. I will then attempt to reconstruct some of the (to me blurry) connections between my life and my work.

1931–1945

If my generation was lucky, I was particularly fortunate. I was born into an unusual family. I received an antifascist upbringing, an advantage that I tended to turn into self-righteousness later in my teens. By contrast, many families tried to shield their children from what was going on around them and exclude them from any political awareness and discussion.

I was born at the end of the Weimar Republic, in 1931, at the onset of the German depression, which had begun in earnest with the spectacular failure of the famed Darmstädter und National-Bank in my hometown, Darmstadt. To give birth my mother went back to her nearby native village, Wolfskehlen, where my great-grandmother, a midwife, delivered me. When the Nazis came to power two years later, my father retreated into free-lance journalism and photography. He had behind him a career as a parliamentary and wire-service stenographer and reporter at the constituent assembly of 1919, the Spa reparations conference of 1920, and the Reichstag. Subsequently he had been on the staff of a democratic newspaper. During the war he was to make sure that I would share his high regard for the men who had been statesmen and responsible political leaders, in contrast to the rulers of the day. Although reprimanded several times for politically questionable reporting, he could eke out a living by roaming the countryside, covering cattle and horse auctions and similarly mundane events. By declaring my mother typist and secretary of his news service—a mere letterhead enterprise—he succeeded in keeping her away first from political, then, during the war, from industrial, recruitment. My mother objected to the Nazis primarily for aesthetic and soundly ladylike reasons: Nazi speakers yelled too loudly and turned red in the face.

When the Nazis introduced military registration, my father was already relatively old—he was born in 1896—and received a low rating because he lacked prior military experience and could point to a history of psychosomatic and nervous ailments. In this manner he had survived

World War I, in which most of his classmates from classical school were killed in action. He taught me early that Langemarck, one of the great nationalist symbols of patriotic sacrifice, had been a crime; there, in Flanders, thousands of German student volunteers stormed to their death on November 11, 1914, four years before the great slaughter came to an end. My draft-dodging father proved that in the struggle for survival the fittest are most likely to get killed off. He never lifted a hammer or any other heavy object in his life, but he could take shorthand in four languages. In later years he reminded me very much of Siegfried Kracauer's self-portrait as a wartime survival artist, which had appeared anonymously in 1928, the same year as Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*.¹

My first political memory dates from November 9, 1938, known as Kristallnacht, when synagogues were burned down and Jewish shops vandalized. My parents woke me up and showed me the cloudy sky reddened by flames. Something was said about the horror of it, about the beginning of war. Six years later I watched my hometown being consumed by a fire storm under another red sky. When the second war, which my parents had expected as early as 1938, finally came, it strongly preoccupied my imagination: I can recall the streetlights going out—for many years, as it turned out—and the excitement of blacking out all light from the windows. Matters military fascinated me, but my father, a stern disciplinarian, refused to buy me military toys, although my friends had them in abundance. My gentle paternal grandmother bought me just a few, but it was a rule that I had to keep them in my room on pain of having them thrown at me if a tank dared advance into the living room.

I insisted on finding the newspaper at my bedside in the morning, but I needed my father to learn how to read it. When Denmark and Norway were attacked in April 1940, he called me into his study, showed me the headline, and asked me what it meant. It said something about the protection of neutrality. "It means," explained my father, "that we are invading and overrunning another little country." On June 22, 1941, my mother woke me up with the news of the German offensive against the Soviet Union: "Now Hitler will suffer the fate of Napoleon." When Hitler declared war on the United States in December in a long and rambling speech, my father exclaimed, "Now he has done everything to ruin himself." Other lessons remain in my memory. I remember vividly the day when a group of Jews were deported from our neighborhood. Police quickly cordoned off the area and stopped all traffic, shooing the

pedestrians away. My father, who had noticed the commotion, fetched me and told me to observe the scene and "never forget how they treat human beings." I climbed up a tree to look over a high wall and watched old people being put in a covered truck.² Once when I walked to school in the morning darkness, I saw two armed Sicherheitsdienstmen (SD, i.e., security services) escorting a mother and two children.

Did I know what was going to happen to these people apart from their deportation to eastern "reservations" or "reservoirs," as the language sometimes expressed it with unconscious linguistic treachery? I knew the name of only one concentration camp, Dachau, about which anti-Nazi jokes circulated. I did not learn of Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, or Buchenwald until after the war, but I heard one of my political tutors tell about the SD's mass executions in Russia and about huge ditches being dug as graves. Truth remained a rumor since nothing could be verified in a totalitarian state that prosecuted people for spreading gossip when they spoke the truth. But since our little circle considered the Nazis capable of any crime, we tended to trust the very rumors that many people preferred to disbelieve.

I received much of my political education in the deep stone basement of the old villa from the 1870s that served as home for my family and two others. During more than one hundred nights, after air raid alarms woke us up and sent us down, I listened to the political conversations of my father and the two other men in the house, one a local businessman who happened to have an invaluable Swiss passport and brought reliable political news from abroad, the other a violinist in the opera orchestra who had joined the Nazi party early but turned against it when his Masonic lodge was outlawed. We were often joined by a former Schutzstaffel (SS) man who in the 1920s had had his skull cracked by a Hessian policeman in a street brawl but who had come to loathe the regime, which he did not survive. (He was killed in one of the air raids.) I read to them my fledgling attempts at anti-Nazi poetry until they made me promise not to write any more since it could endanger everybody in the house. How was such a house community possible under totalitarian conditions? In our case one important means of neighborhood surveillance had broken down. Our Nazi Blockwart, the party member appointed to watch out for anything suspicious in the neighborhood, was a very discreet janitor who combined deference to his "social betters" with simple human decency.

Another source of antifascist education was my experience in the Jungvolk, the compulsory drill and indoctrination organization for

those between the ages of ten and fourteen. Twice a week after school we had to assemble at a public place or encampment. When I first reported to Fänlein 10/115 in 1941, it turned out that I was the only classical student in a tough working-class unit. As an only child from a middle-class family I was scared of the bullying teenage drill sergeants but perhaps even more of the physical prowess and violence of my peers. After about a year my quick physical maturation and growing self-confidence enabled me to hold my own in wrestling matches and to make friends with working-class children, whose parents had voted only eight years earlier for the Communist or Social Democratic party. At the same time there was much turnover among our "leaders," who volunteered for military service at the earliest possible moment and seemed in a hurry to get themselves killed. Former youth leaders who occasionally visited us during military leaves came away complaining that we were just a "herd of swine." We became ever more truculent and took to greeting one another with a defiant *Heil Moskau*. Nobody ever squealed.³ For a time the police made a special effort to round up truants, but as the bombing raids multiplied and the Nazi regime attempted total mobilization after Stalingrad, there was increasing disarray and personnel shortage, and we managed to stay away more frequently until our local organization practically collapsed.

Much more important for my life than the Jungvolk was enrollment, in 1941, in classical school (*humanistisches Gymnasium*), the most prestigious of the secondary schools. Whether a person could someday attend university was decided at age ten, mostly by parents, but a pupil had to be competent enough to pass a fairly demanding examination. Only a small minority went to secondary school after due preparation, which often included private tutoring. The Nazis recruited their own future elite through a small number of boarding schools (*Napolas*). They disliked the classical schools and planned to abolish them after the war. Once I had passed the (to me frightening) admission test, my father assured me that henceforth he would no longer spank me since spanking was incompatible with a classical student's dignity. He also considered it appropriate to my new status to tell me that Christianity was a myth that need not be taken seriously. (Behind him were two generations of agnostic country schoolteachers and church organists.) The cessation of physical punishment was important since it eliminated my most basic fear of him. Instead of pushing me into early rebellion and toward the peer group camaraderie of the Nazi youth movement, as other stern fathers sometimes did unintentionally, he won me over to his view of the

world without having to worry that I would report him. I suspect that my reliability was reinforced by another status factor. As an only child in the family and the house I was very adult-oriented and felt even more grown up when I was allowed to listen to serious talk about matters of state.

Our class quickly developed an esprit de corps. It was socially unacceptable to be an outspoken adherent of Nazism. Somehow the two or three self-declared Nazi enthusiasts flunked out soon. Had they been articulate Nazis because they were poor students, or was it the other way round? I have a hazy recollection that another status element may have been involved: these pupils came from lower middle-class families that identified with the regime but still considered classical school a social step upward—unattainable, as it turned out. Most of our teachers were committed to the embattled classical curriculum and tried to continue teaching us Caesar and Cicero in the vaults of our three-hundred-year-old school during air raid warning times. Some teachers taught beyond retirement age and were closer to the monarchist past than the present. Only the director was expected to be a Nazi, but some teachers were known to be true believers. Our art teacher, for instance, had no academic credentials and owed his job to his vociferously expressed party loyalty. We were at perpetual war with him, and he often screamed that we were “cultural Bolsheviks.” Once we were kept for two periods after school and had to take turns reading aloud the account of Hitler’s abortive march on the Feldherrnhalle in Munich on November 9, 1923, when he was fatefully spared by the police bullets—the most sacred event in Nazi mythology. That did nothing to win us over to the cause.

At that time I developed my first notions about the United States. Before the declaration of war Nazi propaganda had observed some limits, denouncing highly visible persons rather than the United States government. Fiorello La Guardia, the mayor of New York, was a favorite target. A famous photo of La Guardia leaning over the side of Roosevelt’s car was evidence of how “the Jews” had the president’s ear. I vaguely remember also a picture showing another political figure—perhaps New York governor Herbert Lehman—consorting with a stripper. After the declaration of war Nazi propaganda went into high gear and exposed American “cultural decadence.” Film reels showed a black jazz band playing syncopated Schubert, boxing matches between big fat women and small thin men, and ladies wrestling in mud or on fish—all fascinating for an eleven- or twelve-year-old.

In 1943 I had my first visual contacts with the Americans, as the Flying Fortresses (B-17s) appeared in the daytime sky. Bombing by the Royal Air Force (RAF) had greatly increased during 1942, but the slow British Lancasters flew only at night and could only be heard, not seen. By 1942–43 many cities had been ravaged, but only 152 persons had been killed in my hometown. I had lived through four major nighttime bombings, the last on September 23, 1943, which surprised me in bed. Christmas trees (marking flares) were already illuminating the city when I got up. The bombs came whistling, and their detonations were louder than usual, but I dared racing across the yard to get to a safer basement. Our house was lucky that night.

Relatively late, in May 1944, our school was finally moved into the countryside in a vain effort to get us out of bombing range.⁴ I was sent to a very small village, which had no Nazi youth organization, to live with people I had never seen in my life. As the only classical student I immediately became the object of much taunting by the village youth as a city slicker, although relations improved as I worked with them during the potato harvest. The nine months on my own at age thirteen proved a very important step in my maturation and self-reliance. For about two years I was also free of the tutelage of my father, who in desperation had taken a job late in 1943 with an agricultural agency in another province, escaping by just a few hours the men who appeared at our doorstep to serve him a draft warrant and take him away on the spot.

During the night of September 11–12, 1944, from the safe distance of fifteen miles I watched my hometown being incinerated, knowing my mother to be in the inferno. Using a new fanning-out technique for creating a fire storm, the RAF carried out, according to its own claims, one of the war’s most successful raids. About 240 Lancasters, with only two hundred blockbusters, five hundred other explosives, and about three hundred thousand incendiary devices, managed to kill more than twelve thousand people, about two-thirds of them women and children. Seventy thousand were left homeless, and 80 percent of the city was destroyed.⁵ I made my way into the smoldering city past hundreds of bodies, among whom I discovered the parents of a classmate and some neighborhood children. At that moment the American air force appeared for a follow-through attack since most major factories, army barracks, and the railroad junction had escaped the RAF’s fury. With the basements inaccessible, still burning and filled with thousands of suffocated and shrunken victims, there was nothing for me to do when the lead plane dropped its smoke signal but lie down in the rubble-

strewn street among the living and the dead and hope to survive. The nearest bombs fell a few hundred feet away. A little later I was told by a survivor standing before the smoking ruins of my home that my mother belonged to the lucky half of my immediate neighborhood. She was alive. To this day I do not like to look at crowds of dozing sunbathers around swimming pools or on the greens of college campuses because they remind me of the bodies I saw that morning.

In 1983 my mother discovered letters I sent to her native village between the great raid and February 22, 1945. It proved an unexpected opportunity to check the accuracy of my fading memories against my sometimes guarded reporting at the time. I had forgotten how often I was cold, preoccupied with the food shortage and torn clothes, and plagued by colds, headaches, and stomach cramps. I had remembered correctly that in the village I lived in a room without heat or running water and that I cracked the frozen water in my washbowl with my fist in the morning before setting off in virgin snow to the railroad stop where I waited hours for a train with the windows blown out to take me to school. The dwindling number of teachers tried in vain to keep instruction going in cold school buildings. Teaching was more and more disrupted by a new scourge, American fighter-bombers, mostly Thunderbolts (P-47s) and Lightnings (P-38s), which bombed and strafed the countryside almost daily, leaving the cities to the big bombers. After a close hit near our school building we were scattered around town as soon as an air raid alarm sounded, but even more frequently the fighter planes appeared without any warning. With a friend I was assigned to a Protestant pastor who had been shell-shocked and buried alive in a bunker in World War I and whose face was distorted by involuntary grimaces when he preached. Discreetly absenting himself, he let me listen to the BBC in his study, after which I supplied my peers with the latest news. Many still considered a stalemate possible and questioned my conviction of the Nazi regime's impending doom. But to me the signs were obvious. On October 20, 1944, I reported to my mother, "All males between the ages of sixteen and sixty have been called up for the Volkssturm [people's army] in the village [ten exclamation marks]. . . . Our school director gave a speech in which he told us, 'We prefer to die for our beloved Führer than to become unfaithful to him.' The slogan of the new Hungarian government is, 'Destroy or be destroyed.' That shows clearly the way things are going." Carelessly I sometimes added the latest anti-Nazi joke.

Terrible moments were to come. I regularly informed my mother

about the growing number of people and draft horses killed in the vicinity. Sometimes I was awakened by strafing planes; once broken windowpanes fell on my bed; another time I interrupted my letter writing to race to the bunker my foster family and I had dug in the garden and braced with old railroad ties. My freedom of movement came to depend exclusively on my bicycle since train travel had become too dangerous. How long would my often patched tires last? On January 15, 1945, several of my schoolmates were surprised in a train by P-38s, which machine-gunned them in the snowy fields that provided no cover. One died; several were seriously wounded, including the one whose dead parents I had found in my hometown. I grimly affirmed much of the violence as being necessary for the destruction of the Nazi regime, but I wanted to see my friends and myself spared. By now I was becoming anxious to be liberated by the Americans before they killed me in the daily chase. In August and early September 1944 I prematurely counted my liberation in weeks. Then came the disappointment of autumn, when Patton's Third Army ran out of gas and exhausted Eisenhower's blessing at the wide-open and undefended German border.⁶ But Patton's hour (and mine) finally came. At 10 P.M., March 22, 1945, the Third Army bested Montgomery by crossing the Rhine at Oppenheim ahead of Montgomery's vast and cumbersome British operation further north. My mother and I were in my birthplace three miles east of the river, directly in the path of the Third Army. The village was supposed to be defended by two dozen overage policemen and a few dozen sixteen-year-old secondary-school students who served in the anti-aircraft units. Some retreating students were later caught by the SS and hanged from roadside trees. The scattered remnants of the regular German army were sensible enough to flee. But the local authorities ordered all available hands to dig trenches, and that order should have included me, although I was barely fourteen. I did not care to be killed at the last moment and agreed with my mother that I should flee on my bicycle (she had none). I left at four on the morning of March 23, with exploding artillery shells coming closer and closer. Returning to my foster village, I was immediately taken to a military officer, who did not believe my report of the American crossing. But a few hours later all soldiers had fled. On March 25 I walked to my hosts' home from the house of the village schoolteacher, one of my father's reliable acquaintances, with whom I had discussed the American whereabouts. Spotter planes circled the village, and the hum of engines grew ever louder. The streets were deserted. Walking in the middle of the main street, I encoun-

tered the first tank of Patton's favorite division, the Fourth Armored, rambling over the top of the hill. The young gunner, his face covered with road dust, trained his machine gun on me but did not pull the trigger: I was liberated! That day has always appeared to me the most important of my life.

At the time my elation was ill received by my hosts. The husband yelled at me, "Here is one guy who can enjoy a moment like this!" Since the whole division had raced on, in true blitzkrieg style, without bothering to occupy the village, and German units might appear again, I did not feel safe. I packed a few of my belongings, got on my bicycle for one last trip, and set out for my native village, anxious to know whether my mother had survived. I made my way to a road crowded with thousands of GIs in their unending train of vehicles and, ignorant of curfew regulations, pedaled in the opposite direction from the American advance. The only other civilians were a few liberated foreign workers. Without being stopped once, I reached Wolfskehlen and found my grandfather's house half destroyed by tank shells but my mother alive and unhurt. It took several more weeks before we would know whether my father had outwitted the Nazi regime one last time and survived the dangerous moments of liberation. In the last weeks of the war he was sent to the western front with a rifle and a hand grenade, neither of which he could operate. When his incompetence was discovered, he was put in one of the safest of the Westwall bunkers to do paperwork, while outside most of his Volkssturm battalion was wiped out. In the last hours of the war my father was discharged at the testimony of a military doctor who complained that he was a nervous wreck who should never have been drafted.

1945–1953

Political liberation was an exhilarating experience. With much luck I had survived the Nazi regime during the years of its greatest power and in its period of disintegration. My personal feeling of liberation, however, met an ambiguous reality. In posters hung up in my native village General Eisenhower announced that he had come as a conqueror, not a liberator, and I too was treated accordingly. My maternal grandfather, a small building contractor, did not take the pronouncement too seriously. He had assured me during the war, "First the Americans will defeat us, then they will help us, just as after 1918." Actually what I lived through at first was a period of anarchy—another political lesson.

After totalitarianism and overregulation came the absence of any rule—*anarchism* in the literal sense of the Greek roots. No civil authority was left, and no police remained to back it up. Just before and after the occupation much looting went on, first by Germans, then by foreign workers. Several murders, which were never solved nor the perpetrators brought to justice, were committed locally. On top of this anarchic world an authoritarian military government was gradually established, beginning with strict curfew regulations and branching out into a thorough regulation of public and especially economic life. The military government was concerned primarily with public health, secondarily with a political purge, and lastly with food distribution.

Living conditions deteriorated in the spring of 1945. For the first time in my life I did not have a bed but slept for several weeks in a potato cellar infested with lice and worms. There was no running water, electricity, or gas. Fortunately there was an unpolluted well in the garden, from which I hauled buckets of water. I worked in the fields and at reconstruction and did my share of draft labor for the American army. Some of my grandfather's workers taught me the rudiments of masonry, plastering, carpentry, and roofing—still my favorite relaxation today. The reward for doing much repair work was getting a roof over the house and a bed in which I slept better than ever in my life before or after. For a while I seemed on my way to becoming a farmhand and construction worker, but my father's unannounced reappearance late in May changed all of that. He immediately made me take time to learn from him white-collar skills that might come in handy in the uncertain future—typing and the German shorthand he had helped standardize in the 1920s. He hired the widow of a U-boat captain to teach me what I wanted to acquire most—English. Soon I also began to write shorthand in English, which I still practice as a quaint skill today. At the time fraternization was still forbidden. In spite of this prohibition I felt awkward about my initial inability to communicate with my liberators and much better once I had mastered the rudimentary skills of explaining road directions to lost GIs. I never used my new language skills for the black-market transactions that soon became ubiquitous in violation of all political and economic regulations. A mixture of moralism and social incompetence held me back.

With the world opening wide before me, my father's employment by the military government was crucial for my intellectual liberation and incipient Americanization. As one of the few journalists who had not been a Nazi party member, he was hired by Radio Frankfurt, at first an

American agency, and also went to work for the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, the second German newspaper to be licensed. Suddenly he had no illnesses anymore, and for twenty-five years he worked full-time, until he was seventy-five, without ever consulting a doctor. For me one benefit of my father's new career was permission to return as early as 1946 to Darmstadt, where our Swiss landlord had rebuilt our old home in record time amid all the ruins.⁷ Another benefit was that over the next two to three years many newspapers and journals, which were published in rapidly increasing numbers in the four occupation zones, heaped up on my desk. To compensate for the book shortage of the time, I set up a meticulously kept archive, which by 1950 comprised more than ten thousand newspaper clippings on politics, economics, geography, history, philosophy, literature, theater, and the arts. (Ever since this excess I have been poor at keeping my files in order.) Not only did I read voraciously, I also tried not to miss any of the plays, operas, dance performances, exhibitions, and American, French, and English movies.⁸ I shared these intellectual and aesthetic excitements with a small group of friends who were of great emotional and intellectual significance to me, in part because philosophy, literature, or the arts were their paramount concerns, whereas I tried to argue also for the importance of politics and society.

How did I discover sociology? It is not difficult to see that the profusion of interests just described—they existed side by side with the classical curriculum—made my friends and me a circle of teenage intellectuals. But my own turn to sociology, which none of my friends followed, needs a more specific explanation. To be sure, my father had taken a course with Franz Oppenheimer at the University of Frankfurt in the early 1920s and told me about him. As early as 1947, at age sixteen, I met Max Horkheimer on his first postwar trip to Germany. Speaking with a soft voice before a tiny adult-education class—an important vehicle of intellectual revival after the war—he impressed me much, but I do not remember a word of what he said. My interest in sociology was not awakened by being told about an academic discipline. Rather, it had to do with my political perceptions. It was my fervent conviction that democratic reconstruction required education to pay more attention to political, economic, and social issues. I was here echoing the American reeducation efforts directed toward changing the German national character through the democratic socialization of the young. It seems to me that I turned to sociology in large part as a protest against the classical curriculum with its emphasis not only on Greek and Latin but also on

literature in general. As a student spokesman I took a hand in shaping the new and embattled civics course as well as geography, the only field in which economic issues could be given some attention. Thus I took a stand against the classical school's time-honored preoccupation with *Geisteswissenschaft* in favor of adding *Gesellschaftswissenschaft*.

Apart from the fledgling civics course, history was the curricular subject that lent itself best to the kind of exploration in which I was interested. During the war I had received my first A ever in this subject that had inevitably been the most nazified in our school. I had been fully aware of the propagandistic nature of the texts and had tried to counter them by studying my father's history books from his own schooldays. In the late 1940s I read my way through world history, beginning by memorizing Egyptian dynasties and parallel time tables. Leafing through my old papers, I see that I wrote a thirty-five-page typewritten essay, "On the Enlightenment of the Fifth and Sixth Century B.C.," using Greek sources. I also wrote the traditional composition on the causes of the decline of antiquity. In my last year in classical school, 1950–51, I dropped mathematics with the special permission of the ministry of education and chose history as a main field, producing a hundred-page senior thesis of sorts on a thousand years of Russian history. It was also my first sustained analysis of Leninism and Stalinism, reflecting my strong opposition to them. My eclectic view of Russian history was influenced by Arnold Toynbee's *Study of History* (1946), then much discussed in its abridgment. Beside it I read Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West* (1918–22), Egon Friedell's *Cultural History of Modernity* (1930), and Hans Freyer's *World History of Europe* (1948).⁹ My primary historical concern was, of course, the search for the causes of the German catastrophe, as the octogenarian Friedrich Meinecke called it in 1946 in his revisionist book on German history. In August 1949 I finished a long research paper on the rise and fall of Hitler and his Reich, the beginning of a project to write, in due course, my own book on Nazism. (I dropped the plan only many years later.)

In 1951, after ten years of classical school, which had been interrupted for about a year in the months before and after the end of the war in Europe, I graduated summa cum laude in a class of about two dozen students. I was still the most political among us and the only one clearly headed in the direction of the social sciences. Only I emigrated to the United States, probably an indication of how much more pro-American or Americanized I had been in my teens.¹⁰

When I went to the University of Frankfurt in the spring of 1951, I

resolved not only to study sociology but also to become politically active. In fact my historical, sociological, and political interests were all bound up with one another in a tangle of scholarship and partisanship. I felt that ominous political developments were coming to a head. My antifascism had not ended in 1945. Since I did not have a father who had been a party member or was otherwise seriously compromised, as was true for some of my classmates, it was easy for me to advocate a far-reaching denazification in all major spheres of society. I did not understand that subjective aspect sufficiently at the time, but there was an objective situation: thousands of businessmen, judges, and other high-ranking civil servants, including professors and secondary-school teachers, crept back into their positions. Many vicious crimes went unpunished. It appeared to me that the Social Democrats did yeoman service in rebuilding the shattered communities physically and spiritually but that on the emergent federal level political and social restoration held sway. My political radicalism was a mixture of antifascism and socialism. But because of the cold war and especially the Communist suppression of the Social Democrats in Eastern Europe and East Germany, I never came close to becoming a true Marxist believer and never had to reconvert at a later time. My political concerns and probably also my agnostic Lutheranism made me oppose Konrad Adenauer, the first chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, who ruthlessly mobilized many nationalists of the 1920s and many Nazis of the 1930s for his paramount purpose, the establishment of a bourgeois Rhineland state in which the Catholic element would have not only numerical parity but also political dominance, a reversal of the Prussian and Protestant domination of the old Germany. I did not mind the separation from the Communist-controlled Prussian heartland, but I bitterly opposed Adenauer's resolve to rearm West Germany as the price for its protection by the Western powers and his blunt insistence that atomic weapons be stationed in the Federal Republic. (I remember the seventy-five-year-old patriarch in a peremptory tone informing a silent and stunned audience of fifteen thousand of his own followers in Darmstadt that there was no political alternative.) I feared, as I wrote in an essay on December 7, 1949, that "rearmament will ring the death knell for the young German democracy." Personally I found the idea of having to serve under officers from the Nazi Wehrmacht intolerable. In fact there was so much opposition among my contemporaries that in the mid-1950s Adenauer simply declared us the "white cohorts" and drafted instead younger men who barely remembered the war.

In Frankfurt I did the two things that made the most sense to me: I joined the Socialist Student Federation (SDS) because of my general sympathies for the Social Democrats and my specific interest in opposing rearmament; and I went to the Institute for Social Research, which Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Friedrich Pollock had moved back to its original home in 1950 from Columbia University and California. Even though I was only a first-semester student, I dared to sign up for a seminar on planned and market economies with Pollock, who warned me that I would have to sink or swim. After I had handed in an essay on George Orwell's *1984*, Pollock asked me whether I had any experience in the Communist movement since I seemed to know what I was talking about. When I answered no, he offered me a job at the institute. Thus I became its youngest research assistant. For the next two years the institute was my workplace and intellectual home. At the time the Institute for Social Research fully deserved its name, although since the upheavals of the 1960s, which made the Frankfurt school of critical theory famous, it has not been much more than an empty shell. Most of my work at the institute involved its biggest project, a United States-financed inquiry into German postwar attitudes.¹¹ It was thematically, but not methodologically, related to *The Authoritarian Personality*, which Theodor Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswick, Daniel Levinson, and R. Nevitt Sanford had published in the United States in 1950 as part of Horkheimer's series "Studies in Prejudice."

In the early 1950s the University of Frankfurt did not yet have sociology or political-science curricula nor the ~~bachelor's and master's~~ degrees. There was no introductory sociology course, with the exception of Horkheimer's proseminar on basic sociological concepts. His idea of teaching that topic was to assign to me Georg Simmel's *Philosophy of Money* (1900). Very few students knew anything about critical theory, and even in the institute library the journal *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* from the years 1932 to 1942 was not in general circulation. Since the Nazi regime had disrupted the continuity of German social science, I had to go back to the sociology of the 1920s to pick up the strands. I read Hans Freyer's *Introduction to Sociology* (1931), Karl Mannheim's *Contemporary Tasks of Sociology* (1932), Karl Jaspers' *Man in the Modern Age* (1931), and Max Scheler's *Bildung und Wissen* (1925). I also read Alfred Weber's *Farewell to European History* (1946) but not a line by his brother. The temperamental octogenarian from Heidelberg was a familiar political figure to me, thundering on the rostrum against the bureaucratic symbolism of the brand-new United

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Nations office building on New York's East River and exchanging broadsides with the so-called architect of the German economic miracle, Ludwig Erhard.

Almost all my teachers were emigrants or well-known antifascists—not a typical situation at the German universities. Their small number was reinforced by a stream of American visitors, some emigrants too, some not. Thus I took a seminar, "Marriage in Law and in Reality," from Max Rheinstein and Everett C. Hughes from the law school and sociology department, respectively, of the University of Chicago. In 1952 I met Kurt H. Wolff, a refugee from my hometown, visiting at the institute. He was intensely interested in some of the same moral and political issues that had preoccupied me since the war.¹² Some of his closest family had been deported and murdered. He invited me to work with him at Ohio State University, in Columbus, for a year on a study of nationalist and Nazi attitudes and the rise and fall of denazification.

I desperately wanted to go to the United States to study. My motives were thoroughly mixed. Most basic was the excitement of the country to somebody who had grown up as I had. My life appeared incomplete without seeing the Empire State Building and the Golden Gate Bridge. (Most personal was a romantic attachment to a Viennese refugee.) The academic benefits of study in the United States appeared obvious. At the institute we read only English literature in the area of empirical social research, especially survey methods and social psychology. Adorno was eager for me to pick up more survey skills. But Horkheimer, distressed by the rise of McCarthyism, asked me skeptically, "Why do you want to go in this political situation?" The McCarran-Walter Act had just been passed and made entry more difficult: as chairman of the largest SDS club at a German university, I was no longer sure to be welcome.

Besides the pull of the country, there was also a push. My strenuous participation in the campaign against German rearmament was obviously doomed by 1953. From the right Adenauer moved ahead with his plans, with full American support; from the left the Communists did their usual best to infiltrate and undermine the peace movement of the early 1950s. My naive pro-Americanism during the early postwar period was badly shaken. I had lost many illusions about both countries but gained some political realism. Going to the United States, then, was a move away from political activism and toward the study of political reality.¹³

I believed that I was coming to the United States for a limited time and did not know that I was in fact emigrating. At least I came over the

old way. The *Anna Salen*, a converted British aircraft carrier from the days of the convoys running the German gauntlet to Murmansk, was now an immigrant boat laden with thirteen hundred East Europeans and Germans, many with labor contracts. It was not some fancy Italian ship for Fulbright scholars, and commercial jet planes had not yet made the passenger ship obsolete. On September 22, 1953, I left Bremerhaven. The fall storms were terrible. Like almost everybody else, I was seasick. The ship's propellers often emerged out of the water, shaking the whole hull. Water swept through my cabin. After an eleven-day journey the *Anna Salen* safely reached her destination, Quebec; her sister ship was shortly to sink in a Pacific storm. On October 3, I crossed the border at Buffalo on my way to the heartland of America.

1953–1984

More than thirty years after arriving in this country I have been asked to write about my formative experiences and the direction of my work. I am very conscious of the anniversary and welcome the opportunity. For many years I had planned to put down my memories of the war and its aftermath. But each year I had forgotten a bit more and felt less inclination to write. Now that I have recalled some memories from my formative years in Europe, I would like to look back at my scholarly development, its genesis and setting. The danger here is not so much inaccuracy of fact and faulty memory as the temptation to read more sense and consistency into the accidents and vagaries of my career than are warranted. For a career, the opportunities and restraints are as important as the inclinations and aspirations.

The question about the impact of formative experiences requires that I characterize my work, if only in the most sketchy and superficial of terms. My kind of sociology has been historical and political. Substantively sociology has always meant for me the evolutionary and developmental theory of modern society; methodologically it has meant a set of generalizations embodying historical experience. I arrived in the United States with a conviction already formed that a science of society in the positivist (and Marxist *diamat*) sense of invariant laws is not possible, and if it were, it would not help us understand the distinctiveness of modern society. If I learned this from critical theory, it was also the main postulate of German *Historismus*. Thus I have advocated a historically oriented grasp of the nature of modern society. My work has been political not only because I have dealt with political phenomena but also

because of its pedagogical animus. I have tried to help students understand the moral value and historical uniqueness of constitutional government, impersonal administration, and the imperatives of large-scale organization—what Benjamin Nelson came to call the social reality principle. Since dictatorships of various hues distort the historical truth and control the flow of information, I remain convinced that sociology has a moral obligation to assure its own preconditions.

I began my American journey with such views, which I sometimes expressed rather dogmatically, but I lacked solid historical knowledge and methodological comprehension. Working at Ohio State University on the history of American denazification gave me an opportunity to study seriously the decision-making processes in wartime and postwar Washington, clarify the distinction between a political purge and moral retribution, and assess the causes and consequences of the failure of denazification. The outcome was my first English monograph, which Kurt Wolff edited and rendered into intelligible English. In many respects a rough apprentice piece, it had something to offer as “an historical survey and appraisal” (its subtitle). At the same time my disciplinary training did not make much headway. In fact I was not studying for a degree and contemplating an American career. Since I had come on an exchange-visitor visa, not a student visa, I was required to have a research appointment at all times. I could not just study on some fellowship, as many foreign students did. This delayed my Americanization and socialization into the discipline of sociology. I missed out on the good and bad aspects of an American college education and graduate-school program, and did not acquire an M.A. Coursework remained secondary to research. Moreover, I was, in a manner of speaking, suspended between two worlds. I made a living looking backward to Europe rather than looking for America. Although I explored American everyday life with curiosity, including the new medium of television, and found the great distances and landmarks such as the Empire State Building stupendous, I perceived much of what I saw through a filter of political and intellectual abstractions, which came naturally to a young European, who took it for granted that the Midwest was a cultural wasteland. During the first year my mind also remained relatively closed to American intellectual influences. In fact, to Adorno’s dismay, I spent much of my spare time not on learning survey techniques but on poring over issues of *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* from beginning to end and scrutinizing Herbert Marcuse’s *Reason and Revolution* (1942) as well as Max Horkheimer’s *Eclipse of Reason* (1947), two rarely read books.

At Ohio State nobody but Wolff understood anything about critical theory.

A year at the New School for Social Research in 1954–55 was not as much of a step backward as it appeared to some who worried that I was not having an “American” experience. It gave me a chance to meet a number of scholars who had been productive in the Weimar Republic; some had been politically active. It is true that I lived in the émigré community. But by learning more about the diversities of exiled German social science I gained a much-needed broader perspective. I argued with Alfred Schutz and Albert Salomon about the Frankfurt school, discussed denazification with Otto Kirchheimer, and met Herbert Marcuse again when he was writing *Eros and Civilization* (1955). My exaggerated views of the Frankfurt Institute and of critical theory were deflated, sometimes subtly, sometimes bluntly, by the redoubtable Siegfried Kracauer and the encyclopedic Arkadius Gurland, who had an inexhaustible store of information on revolutionaries and émigrés. From the American side the social psychologist Solomon Asch and the psychoanalyst Helen B. Lewis attacked the psychological and methodological assumptions of Adorno et al.’s *The Authoritarian Personality*, further increasing my doubts from having read, in Columbus, a critical volume about it.¹⁴ I became increasingly disenchanted with the feasibility of using personality theory to explain political events and groped my way toward an institutional approach.

Thus I moved away from critical theory, which in those years had a heavy psychological bent. Moreover, I began to understand that holistic approaches—assertions about the totality of culture, civilization, or personality—could not be subject to empirical analysis and that the notion of a self-correcting, reflexive critical theory was a rhetoric that could give no practical political guidance. In this regard I was subject to an authentic American influence through the last major figure of pragmatism, Horace M. Kallen, who attacked the German philosophical tradition and championed a pragmatist, instead of a critical, integration of the social sciences.

I was ready to move on intellectually when Reinhard Bendix, with whose pamphlet “Social Science and the Distrust of Reason” (1951) I was familiar, invited me in the fall of 1955 to work full-time at the Institute of Industrial Relations at the University of California, Berkeley, for the Interuniversity Project on Labor and Economic Development. I was hired to work on labor problems in Imperial Germany. The simple fact of knowing German made me useful for such research

in a situation in which most native graduate students merely went through the motions of learning a little French and German (before the pretense was abolished altogether). There was, however, a matching of opportunity and inclination of which probably neither Bendix nor I was fully aware. At the institute I could continue to combine history and sociology. From my preoccupation with Nazism and its aftermath I now moved further back into German history in search of the causes of "the German catastrophe." With a brief career in the German SDS behind me, I was especially interested in the failure of the German revolution of 1918–19 and the role played by the split Social Democratic labor movement. I had opinions, but little knowledge, about the labor movement in Imperial Germany. My only concrete relationship to it had been the (slightly ridiculous) moment at the founding of the Fifth Socialist International in Frankfurt, in 1951, when I held the funeral flag of Ferdinand Lassalle, the founder of the Social Democratic labor movement, behind the rostrum on which appeared socialist leaders from many countries. Skillful at discreet indirection, Bendix asked me essentially one big question, out of which *The Social Democrats in Imperial Germany* was to emerge (first in 1960 as a dissertation and then in 1963 as a book): "What was the meaning of the labor movement to the workers?" I buried myself in the splendid Berkeley library, trying to make myself spiritually at home in Imperial Germany. But that was only the historical side of the project, congenial to my political and cultural proclivities. The other side was sociological—American modernization theory, which postulated that economic progress in "newly developing" countries would favor democratic pluralism rather than Communist dictatorship. This thesis became the substantive core of the "newly developing" fields of political sociology and comparative politics, which Seymour Martin Lipset was spearheading at the institute.

But what were the lessons of the European experience? Bendix provided some major answers in *Work and Authority* (1956), which was also an early critique of modernization theory. I tried to supply a lesson from Imperial Germany. There the potential of industrialization for creating revolutionary conflict was contained by an authoritarian political system that permitted a hostile mass movement to exist legally but prevented it from gaining access to the power center. This historical conclusion could, however, also be couched in terms of a sociohistorical model, a sociological theory of negative integration, that was applicable to similar cases in other places at other times, for instance, the French

and Italian Communist parties under parliamentary regimes. In a postscript, which Bendix suggested to me, I spelled out some of the personal lessons I drew:

The facts of Nazism provide a powerful moral perspective for German history, but it is neither fair to past generations nor analytically adequate to view this history with the questionable wisdom of hindsight. When I began my research, my own perspective of the history of the German labor movement was strongly affected by German self-recrimination and conventional American perspectives. But gradually I came to change my views. I tried to arrive at a more balanced and detached view, influenced by the positivistic injunctions of an American graduate education and perhaps by the soothing atmosphere of the Pacific Coast, far removed from Germany in time and space. Looking over the completed study, I find myself more sympathetic to the right and the center of the Social Democratic movement than to the left. . . . I have endeavored to preserve a sense for the capacity of individuals and groups to change some parts of their lives as well as for the fateful persistence of social structures and the unpredictable uniqueness of historical events.¹⁵

By the time I reached this personal conclusion, I had given up my political ambitions in a faraway land and come to accept the role of the observer over that of the actor. I had become serious about the possibility of an American career. Yet writing a dissertation on Imperial Germany was then still unconventional in American sociology. Here I benefited from the intellectual climate of Berkeley. For many assistants at the Institute of Industrial Relations, then directed by Clark Kerr, the apprenticeship nature of research was more important than disciplinary study. We—Robert Alford, Bennett Berger, Robert Blauner, Amitai Etzioni, Juan Linz, Gayl Ness, Charles Perrow, and Arthur Stinchcombe—learned by looking over the shoulders of our masters. While I was a full-time researcher, I was also a part-time graduate student in the Department of Sociology, which Herbert Blumer was bent on making the best in the world, as he repeated at the beginning of each academic year. When I tried to take the qualifying examinations after only six months, I was flunked and sent back to read the seventy-five books—a totally eclectic list—that everybody had to read on pain of failing. Having to study books with a variety of different orientations that I had disdained or disregarded before broadened my horizon in a most salutary manner.

After 1960 I taught the new fields of industrial sociology and complex organization as well as the traditional subjects of sociological theory and social change, from which I branched out into political sociology and social and economic development, another set of new

teaching fields. These subjects were inherently interdisciplinary, but I also taught in the formally interdisciplinary Social Science Integrated Course directed by Lewis Feuer at Berkeley (1958–60) and the Western civilization program directed by Benjamin Nelson in the earliest days of the Stony Brook campus of the State University of New York (1963–65). My background qualified me for such programs, but at the same time my inclinations held me back from becoming a mainline American social scientist. I did not turn myself into a survey researcher—the usual option at the time—or an organization theorist, another new and attractive possibility realized by several members of my American cohort. The gradual opening of American social science toward the world in the aftermath of World War II, an opening furthered by many émigré scholars, combined in the early 1960s with the stormy expansion of the universities and created considerable intellectual leeway for the pursuit of diverse interests. This latitude enabled me to move closer again to some of my intellectual roots and return to my old interests in world history in the guise of Weberian scholarship. I discovered Max Weber's work only at Berkeley, watching Reinhard Bendix compose his intellectual portrait and writing with him an essay on Weber's growing influence in the United States.¹⁶ After Bendix had laid out the world-historical scope and the comparative logic of Weber's empirical studies, it became highly desirable to have *Economy and Society* (*Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*) available in its totality to counteract the piecemeal and haphazard nature of the Weber reception. With the encouragement of Hans Zetterberg, I began to put together a variorum edition, not knowing that it would take six years even with the help of my Darmstadt classical schoolmate and New York City neighbor Claus Wittich. The complexity of translating and editing was wearisome, the tedium at times crushing, but both of us welcomed the chance to roam through world history in Weber's texts and our background reading and get away from the routines of economics and sociology.

Economy and Society appeared in 1968 at the height of the student rebellion, when Weber, of all people, was regarded as a patron saint of conformist American positivism and its vaunted value-neutrality. My past caught up with me at the Free University of Berlin in 1967–68 and in the civil-war days in Berkeley in 1969–70, where I held visiting appointments. With my memories of Nazi Germany, I could not sympathize with the moral outrage of a younger generation that equated the Federal Republic and the United States, two of the most viable constitutional democracies, with fascism, and Lyndon Johnson with Adolf Hit-

ler.¹⁷ With a generation of émigré scholars as my teachers, I knew what the dangers to scholarship would be if the university, a precarious institution at the best of times, were radically politicized. I was infuriated by the way German students singled out the few Jewish refugee scholars who had returned and were still teaching—Adorno, Ernst Fraenkel, Richard Loewenthal—as special targets of their “antiauthoritarian” and “antifascist” campaign. When the Bonn Bundestag debated the national emergency legislation that had become necessary because of a new treaty with the former occupation powers, student protest climaxed under the leadership of an SDS that was radically different from the SDS of my time. I simply could not forget my early Nazi memories, when I watched from close up as Rudi Dutschke waited for the most propitious moment to make his triumphant entry at a mass rally, which he then pushed into frenzy with a barrage of shouted slogans. At another occasion, when asked to “show my colors” as a university teacher, I professed my conviction, before hundreds of howling students, that the Federal Republic was the best and most democratic regime Germany had ever had and that it was the civic duty of the younger generation to accept its legitimacy. I ended up fleeing the Institute of Sociology, grabbing my American passport and my introduction to *Economy and Society*, never to return. In Berkeley I struggled to teach Weber's sociology of domination surrounded by strikers and demonstrators, sheriffs and national guardsmen. Both groups came close to shutting down the university not only physically but also intellectually. In a situation in which it was well-nigh impossible to go on teaching, I insisted that the university require and demand the separation of scholarship and partisanship. The sudden popularity of the Frankfurt school's critical theory appeared to me in some respects another eclipse of reason: The counterculture's drive to unite theory and practice, if not to replace the former by the latter and thought by emotion, negated the school's rationalist commitments and embittered the last days of Adorno and Horkheimer.

My political combativeness was reawakened by the challenge of a younger generation that knew nothing of war and fascism. My response took the form of a partisan defense of scholarship. Since the 1960s about half of my writings have addressed such topical themes as political critiques of Max Weber, his own generational rebellion and maturation, his relationship to contemporary Marxism, value neutrality in Germany and the United States, the counterculture's charismatic virtuosi and charismatic communities, and the relations between religion and revolutionary beliefs. The other half has dealt with core themes of

sociology proper—rationalization and industrialization, authority and legitimation, personal and impersonal rulership, and the developmental history of the West in comparison with other parts of the world.

What can I say finally about the impact of formative experience on life patterns? Have I always been an exemplar of that hoary archetype of American sociology, the marginal man? To be sure, I was a political outsider in Nazi Germany, watching a tremendous catastrophe sweep over Europe. I found myself a political outsider in Adenauer's conservative republic. I was a foreign student in the United States, again a marginal person with little cultural preparation and no political rights. I finally became an American citizen and found a niche in the American academy but soon saw myself outnumbered in the campus rebellion. At the same time, however, I have never lacked the support of significant others, from the community in my wartime basement to our group in the classical school, from my German political friendships to the émigré scholars who were so generous to me, and from my Berkeley friendships to a network of cosmopolitans scattered around the world. In the end, of course, I cannot deny that culturally I have remained a hyphenated scholar, no matter how much I cringe at being sometimes labeled a German-American sociologist. The story I have told here may convince readers (and ultimately myself) that this is, after all, an accurate designation.

Looking back, I tend to believe that the most formative influence on my career has indeed been the stark lesson of my early years, the experience of the mortal dangers of political conflict. Hence my motivating conviction that power struggles must be contained by constitutional restraint, that universities must be institutionally protected to further rational comprehension and reasonable action, and that sociology must address the big political, cultural, and social issues of modernity.

Notes

1. See Siegfried Kracauer, *Ginster, von ihm selbst geschrieben* (1928; reprint, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1963). The atmosphere of World War I in my immediate region is well captured in another famous antiwar novel, Ernst Glaeser's *Jahrgang 1902*; it too was published in 1928. Carl Zuckmayer, another local member of my parents' generation, wrote an autobiography that my mother declares accurately and vividly portrays the world of her own early memories: *A Part of Myself: Portrait of an Epoch* (New York: Helen and Kurt Wolff, 1970), trans. R. and C. Winston.

2. This seems to have been the last group deportation. On February 10, 1943, fifty-three persons were sent to Theresienstadt. They had been forced to

assemble in the former Rosenthal Clinic, which by then was called an old-age home. Afterwards persons from so-called mixed marriages were individually arrested under various pretexts and deported. Almost all perished. See Efsckhardt Franz and Heinrich Pingel-Rollmann, "Hakenkreuz und Judensterne," in *Juden als Darmstädter Bürger*, ed. E. Franz (Darmstadt: Roether, 1984), pp. 185f.

3. In the summer of 1942, when the Nazi fortunes seemed to stand highest, a group of gold pheasants, as uniformed Nazi leaders were popularly called, inspected us and explained that the Führer had decided to turn us into military peasants (*Wehrbauern*) along the Urals so that we could defend Western civilization against the Asiatic hordes. Expecting the right answer, one functionary went down the line asking each of us for what we would volunteer. None of my peers, who were only two or three years away from finishing their eight-year schooling and beginning their apprenticeship, budged. They all insisted that they would become metal workers, mechanics, electricians, and so forth. I knew that I would spend many more years in school. I wanted to become an opera stage designer—I had rebuilt many stage designs I had seen in the theater—but I was more cowardly than my peers. So I answered that I did not know. After being harangued for being "dirty pigs," we were given two hours of penalty drill until our clothes were covered with dirt and soaked and we looked like the animals we were alleged to be.

4. Late in 1943 the Nazis decided to evacuate my school from Darmstadt and move us deep into Czechoslovakia, into the forests of the Beskids. The evacuation plan made us suspect that they were concerned less about nighttime attacks and direct hits on school buildings during the daytime than about isolating our school from our families and exposing us to more indoctrination. This threat led to the only semiorganized resistance during the war—families trying to protect their own. Although teachers warned my father that he was risking arrest, he called the Nazis' bluff by proving that contrary to their assertions the school could be moved to a nearby small town and the pupils boarded in private homes in the surrounding villages. His many connections from the pre-Nazi period with the rural hinterland served him well. After unsuccessfully sending youth leaders to our school and after an unprecedented parents' meeting with the highest Nazi official in town, the authorities yielded. This victory over the Nazis, whose curious legalism my father manipulated time and again, probably saved our school from being captured by the Russian army.

5. See "A Quiet Trip All Round: Darmstadt," chap. 13 in Max Hastings, *Bomber Command* (New York: Dial Press, 1979), pp. 303–26; "A Detailed Study of the Effects of Area Bombing on Darmstadt, Germany," *The United States Strategic Bombing Survey* 37 (January 1947); Klaus Schmidt, *Die Brandnacht* (Darmstadt: Reba, 1964); David J. Irving, *Und Deutschlands Städte starben nicht* (Zurich: Schweizer Druck- und Verlags- und Verlagshaus, 1964), pp. 266–78.

6. To this day I am studying the pros and cons of what many military experts still believe to have been an unimaginative and overly cautious strategy. See Russel F. Weighley, *Eisenhower's Lieutenants: The Campaign of France and Germany, 1944–1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981).

7. On the enormous reconstruction problems of Darmstadt, see the August 1946 report by an American journalist, "Ein Amerikaner in Darmstadt," *Heute* 3 (1945): 36-43. (*Heute*, modelled after *Life*, was the first magazine in the American occupation zone; it was published by the Information Control Division of the United States Army.) I described a night walk through the ruins of Darmstadt in an unpublished composition dated November 13, 1946, "After Sundown: A Walk Through the City."

8. The first German author to make a powerful impression on me was Heinrich Heine, for whom I had apparently been too young during the war. My father had kept his works in a closed bookcase, which he had made to order during the Nazi regime to hide his library from curious eyes. As early as 1946 (or 1947) I heard the first of the formerly outlawed modern music when the Darmstadt Summer Courses for New Music were organized to train musicians and composers; the courses soon became an international institution, for decades attracting many American musicians. The first abstract paintings I beheld were done by an American officer and shown in a half-ruined building. In 1947 I saw my first large art exhibition: riches from the Berlin Kaiser Friedrich Museum, which the American army had recovered from Thuringian salt mines and taken along with it after abandoning the area to Soviet control. The first American novel I read, still in translation, was Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, which the Nazis had banned after 1933 (together with the works of Dos Passos and Upton Sinclair). It was printed on newsprint and looked like a newspaper. My first American movie was *Thirty Seconds over Tokyo*. In one sitting I devoured my first American play: my father brought home overnight a typewritten translated script of Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth*, which was being rehearsed for the reopening of the theater in Darmstadt.

9. Together with my father's Greek and Latin dictionaries, these history books were the only volumes of our family library that survived the war since I had taken them into the countryside. I still consult the dictionaries and find the textbooks remarkably balanced. See Friedrich Neubauer and Ferdinand Rösiger, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für die höheren Lehranstalten in Südwestdeutschland*, vols. 4 and 5 (Halle: Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1908).

10. In 1981, when we met for our thirtieth anniversary, the school opened its files. Ours were the only records saved because we were considered the most promising and successful group of the postwar period, together with the class just below us, to which my future Weber coeditor Claus Wittich belonged. It must have had to do with being at just the right impressionable age to draw maximum benefit from a bad war experience and the difficult postwar years, which nonetheless provided a liberating contrast. Eight of us ended up as professors, in archaeology, architecture, Catholic theology, electrical engineering, German literature, law, Romance literature, and sociology. The others are today corporate executives, judges, other high-ranking civil servants, journalists, physicians, engineers, and classics teachers. One became a Catholic priest—after the theologian our other convert in class—and one a member of Helmut Schmidt's federal cabinet in the 1970s. My closest friend, the one poet among us, dropped out. When the school files were opened for us, we discovered the predictions our teachers had made, including their evaluation of our "character," a category

later dropped in the course of the "democratization" that undermined our school in the 1960s. By and large our teachers had been accurate.

11. Out of a mountain of disparate materials and reports Friedrich Pollock finally pulled together the study under the title *Gruppenexperiment* (Frankfurt: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1955).

12. See the autobiographical statement "Wie ich zur Soziologie kam und wo ich bin: Ein Gespräch mit Kurt H. Wolff, aufgezeichnet von Nico Stehr," in *Soziologie in Deutschland und Österreich, 1918-1945*, ed. M. Rainer Lepsius (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1981), pp. 324-46.

13. Shortly after my arrival in the United States I wrote in a research paper (still in German): "For young people like me the American turnabout in 1950 to rearm Germany was a bitter disappointment. The United States seemed to abandon the moral foundation on which it had fought the war and which had given it the moral justification for reconstructing Germany. My newly developed realism is not cynicism but has helped me to see matters in a less unrealistic, 'idealist' light" (my translation).

14. See Richard Christie and Marie Jahoda, *Studies in the Scope and Method of "The Authoritarian Personality"* (New York: Free Press, 1954); it includes the well-known methodological demolition by Herbert Hyman and Paul Sheatsley, and Edward Shils's vigorous political critique.

15. Guenther Roth, *The Social Democrats in Imperial Germany: A Study in Working-Class Isolation and National Integration* (Totowa, N.J.: Bedminster Press, 1963; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1979), p. 325. Bendix agreed with Paul Lazarsfeld on the desirability of autobiographical statements for both author and profession. If the old German custom of appending a brief biography to the dissertation could be expanded to include some information about formative experiences and major changes of outlook, the cumulative evidence might be of service to sociologists of knowledge. Authors too might benefit from facing the question of the consistency and continuity of their own lives and work.

16. See Reinhard Bendix, *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait* (New York: Doubleday, 1960; reprint, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977); Guenther Roth and Reinhard Bendix, "Max Weber's Einfluss auf die amerikanische Soziologie," *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 11 (1959): 38-53.

17. To be sure, I had learned enough from saturation bombing to understand that dropping more tonnage on the Vietnamese countryside than was delivered during all of World War II made no sense. I had also grown wary of American moralism, but I still did not dispute the right of the United States to try to stop communist expansion in the world—I had not only been liberated from Nazism but also saved from Soviet domination.

Friedrich

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