

NAZI GERMANY
AND THE
HUMANITIES

How German Academics
Embraced Nazism

WOLFGANG BIALAS AND
ANSON RABINBACH



ONE WORLD

A Oneworld Book

First published by Oneworld Publications 2007

This edition published by Oneworld Publications 2014

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A CIP record for this title is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-78074-434-6

eISBN 978-1-78074-616-6

Text design and typeset by Jayvee, Trivandrum, India

Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

Oneworld Publications

10 Bloomsbury Street

London WC1B 3SR

England

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is the result of two conferences held at the University of California, Irvine (9–10 November 2001) and at Princeton University (4–5 April 2003). The editors are indebted to the German Academic Exchange Services (D.A.A.D.) for their generous support. At the University of California, Irvine we would like to thank: the School of the Humanities, University of California Humanities Research Institute, the Humanities Center, the Critical Theory Institute, the Department of Philosophy, and the German Department. At Princeton we are thankful for the support of the Council of the Humanities, the Program in European Cultural Studies, the Department of History, and the Shelby Cullom Davis Center. We are especially grateful to Lilian Friedberg and Peggy Reilly for their editorial assistance.

INTRODUCTION: THE HUMANITIES IN NAZI GERMANY

Wolfgang Bialas and Anson Rabinbach

1. German Mandarins and the Third Reich

In his classic study, *The Decline of the German Mandarins*, Fritz Ringer held the German academic community accountable for having helped undermine the Weimar Republic: “they willfully cultivated an atmosphere,” he wrote, “in which any ‘national’ movement could claim to be the spiritual revival.”¹ Scholars, especially in the humanities, regarded politics not as a “vocation” but as a sphere of order and authority prefigured by Plato’s idea of the state and threatened by the ideas of 1789.² This is hardly surprising, since in interwar Europe “the choice of whether to commit oneself to a totalitarian movement of the left rather than of the right often depended on whether one regarded oneself as a legatee of the Enlightenment or the Counter-Enlightenment.”³ In Germany the very word “intellectual” was suspect and the majority of academic scholars, to the extent that they had political affiliations, were on the right. Was the vulnerability of German academic scholars to the temptations of nationalism and dictatorship the consequence of a “nonpolitical” tradition of spiritual, aesthetic, and political solipsism, famously celebrated by Thomas Mann’s 1918 *Reflections of an Unpolitical Man*, or was there an even deeper connection between “tyranny in the mind and tyranny in political life?”⁴

These questions have lost none of their actuality more than half a century after the defeat of National Socialism. During the 1980s and 1990s, public scandals erupted over the political complicity of master

thinkers like Martin Heidegger and Carl Schmitt, and a number of well-publicized affairs involving prominent West German academic figures, including the literary historian Hans Robert Jauss and the historians Theodor Schieder and Werner Conze, put the role of the humanities in Nazi Germany in the spotlight. In what was perhaps an extreme case, a well-respected literary scholar, named Hans Ernst Schneider, was revealed to have been wartime head of the so-called “Germanic Scholarly Incursion” (*Germanischer Wissenschaftseinsatz*) sponsored by Heinrich Himmler’s infamous S.S. Ancestral Heritage Project (S.S. *Ahnenerbe*). After the war, Schneider seamlessly and secretly morphed into a new and untarnished postwar identity as the distinguished and liberal rector of the Technical University at Aachen, named Hans Schwerte.⁵ The attention given to these events in the media belong to what one historian aptly called “the cyclically recurring debates and periodic outbursts in regard to the Nazi past” that mark the public political culture of contemporary Germany.⁶ Keeping pace with these more sensational examples, research into the activities of professors during the Third Reich burgeoned in the last decade, yielding from archival research insightful monographs and numerous studies of individual academic personalities, disciplines, institutions, and universities.⁷

These works offer a more comprehensive and detailed picture of the complex ways in which scholars in a variety of disciplines were able to advance their careers during the Third Reich by lending their skills and professional expertise to well-funded national research “communities,” to the wartime “mobilization of the humanities,” and, to a somewhat lesser extent, to party organizations like Himmler’s *Ahnenerbe* and Alfred Rosenberg’s ideological empire.⁸ The fate of refugee scholars, especially those who made their careers in the U.S. and Britain, have been studied extensively.⁹ More recently, perhaps even belatedly, German scholars have turned to their own disciplines to illuminate not only how frequently the academics accommodated with the regime’s least imposing imperatives, but the extent to which a majority of scholars adopted and employed ideologically prescribed themes and concepts even within narrowly conceived research programs. As the generation trained by those who had remained in the academic system during the National Socialist era began to pass into retirement, during the 1970s, students in a variety of disciplines, beginning with the social sciences and extending to history and the humanities, no longer felt constrained by

personal loyalties and professional politesse, and began investigating their forebears. The results are not particularly inspiring in their assessment of humanities scholars, departments, and institutions. Unfortunately, much of this specialized research has had a limited impact within well-defined disciplinary communities and a comprehensive history of the humanities in the Third Reich has yet to emerge.¹⁰ Another reason, perhaps, is that much of this German-language research has been narrowly oriented towards a more or less “prosecutorial” effort to reveal the extent of a particular individual’s participation in or enthusiasm for National Socialism. Consequently, the more difficult questions of how a shared sense of general philosophical and existential crisis, a “German” ideology, a common mentality, a generational experience, a distinctly national orientation, and a conformist academic culture contributed to the nazification of the German universities are only beginning to be explored as a serious dimension of the history of scholarship. Also, the fate of disciplines encompassed by the humanities presents a set of problems that are in some ways distinct from those of the social and natural sciences, which, presumably, might have challenged the racial and political precepts of National Socialism from the standpoint of “science” and intellectual autonomy. Although one might assume that the conceptual world of the humanities could, from a different, but equally critical perspective, challenge the ideology of Germany’s new masters, National Socialism proved, in Helmuth Plessner’s words, to have a “special resonance” precisely for the academics, intellectuals, and educated elite.¹¹ It is our hope that this volume will provide, if not a complete overview, a survey of the situation of the humanities by focusing on key disciplines and approaches in order to illuminate the broader historical context of these high-profile cases occurred.

2. The Nationalization of the Academics

In 1933, scholars of Jewish descent, and to a lesser degree political opponents of the Nazis, suffered an unprecedented loss of positions and livelihood at Germany’s universities. Of the seventeen hundred faculty members and 313 full professors (*Ordinarius*) who lost their jobs, eighty per cent were removed on racial grounds. The rest were pacifists or had left-wing sympathies.¹² Jews were slightly better

represented among academics than in the general population, but comprised only 12.5 per cent of the professorate. In some fields, most notably, German literature, no Jew could be removed, simply because there were no Jewish appointments during the Weimar era.¹³ As Steven P. Remy shows in his superb study of Heidelberg University, with few exceptions the academic elite welcomed and justified the acts of the Nazi regime, uttered not a word of protest when their Jewish and liberal colleagues were dismissed, nor raised a stir when Jewish students were barred admission.¹⁴ Among those professors who became the best-known supporters of the regime in 1933, few had been party members and even fewer full professors in German universities were “Nazi party intellectuals” in any sense. Of the best-known early enthusiasts of the regime, like Hans Freyer (sociology), Willy Andreas and Alexander von Müller (history), Gerhard Fricke and Julius Petersen (literature), Martin Heidegger (philosophy), and Carl Schmitt (jurisprudence), none had been a National Socialist Party member before January 1933. When the musicologist and Wagner specialist Alfred Lorenz died in 1940, his eulogist made special mention of the fact that he had been one of the only university professors who “already long before the seizure of power unconditionally swore allegiance to Adolf Hitler.”¹⁵

The philosopher Helmuth Plessner, who took refuge in The Netherlands in 1934, attempted to explain the unabashed enthusiasm of his colleagues in terms of the sense of crisis produced by an almost universally felt discrepancy between the quasi-messianic idea of Germany’s world historical mission and its post-1918 plunge into insignificance as a world power.¹⁶ For Plessner, this shared sense of cultural crisis, whether it was expressed as ontological, geopolitical, or philosophical, was all pervasive and the humanities, entrusted with both “protecting” and “redeeming” Germany’s cultural heritage, grasped at the new ideal of scholarship in the service of life.¹⁷ A survey of the rectoral addresses delivered in the year 1933 reveals a deep religiosity in both tone and language, attesting to the fact that the “miraculous turn” of 1933 seemed to many scholars to rescue the humanities from the marginalization their disciplines had suffered for decades.¹⁸

Nevertheless, much of the recent scholarship on the humanities in Nazi Germany has not sustained Plessner’s overarching explanation: no single rationale can be ascribed to all of these early (or later) academic converts to National Socialism. The broad support National Socialism garnered from the established representatives of the

humanities in the key disciplines displayed a spectrum of motives ranging from a small coterie of professional ideologues who unconditionally supported all elements of the Nazi worldview to the far greater number of academics whose anti-liberalism, anti-Semitism, and hatred for the Weimar Republic had grown in intensity since the end of the First World War and eventually opened the way to a more general affirmation of "Hitler's German message." Franz Neumann, the political scientist who later emigrated to the United States, recalled that when he was a student at the University of Breslau in 1918 "the most celebrated professor of literature, after having paid homage to Kantian idealism, derived from that philosophy the categorical imperative of a German victory, a German monarchy," not to mention substantially favorable peace terms.¹⁹ Little wonder that defeat and the creation of the hated Weimar Republic produced a deep sense of malaise and resentment among the mandarins, who, for all their differences, had in common the belief that a "profound 'crisis of culture' was at hand."²⁰ While only a few scholars built new careers in the party bureaucracies and organizations, most subscribed to vaguely national, *völkisch*, or racial doctrines well before 1933. Not surprisingly, many retained the illusion of intellectual independence, and only a tiny minority withheld participation. Prominent figures like Schmitt, Heidegger, and Arnold Gehlen (see Karl Siegbert Rehberg's essay) saw Hitler's ascent as a unique opportunity to turn their convictions into political ends, to achieve the absolute clarity of a political "decision" in the face of a plurality of opinions, or to take the larger step to "activism." For these academic giants, the chance to exert an influence on academic politics and perhaps even on key aspects of society, the opportunity that had been denied to them in the "era of the system" (*System-Zeit*), proved impossible to pass up. For the vast majority, however, the "higher" purpose of maintaining a certain intellectual *niveau* in the turbulent moment of political change was, at the very minimum, a justification to offer their services to the new regime in good faith. It is also apparent that those scholars drawn to the S.S. and the party organizations (like the historian Kleo Pleyer, discussed by Willi Oberkrome) were younger, more zealous, and more ideologically committed to the new order.

The "vow of allegiance" to Adolf Hitler published by the Saxon branch of the National Socialist Teachers Association in November 1933 proudly contained an "appeal to the intelligentsia of the world" accompanied by statements in four languages by distinguished

representatives of German scholarship, among them Heidegger, Eugen Fischer, Rector of the University of Berlin, and the art historian Wilhelm Pinder.²¹ The “vow of allegiance” clearly articulated the political expectations the National Socialist state placed on these self-proclaimed “apolitical” scholars. Shrouded in the appearance of an uncoerced and “freely undertaken oath,” the public display of allegiance to the new order was all the more valuable, as a contemporary photograph of the professorate surrounded by flag-bearing Brownshirts demonstrated. Rhetorically staged as a public decision of conscience for the National Socialist revolution, the “vow” could be seen as a collective statement, directed at the academic profession as a whole, not of politicized scholarship endangered by National Socialism but of an expressly guaranteed autonomy, indeed, ironically, of “freedom of scholarship.”

Such public gestures of enthusiasm for Hitler ironically permitted some scholars to combine public display with private reservations. An insight into the private thoughts of one noted literary scholar, and perhaps of numerous colleagues in other disciplines at the same moment, is evident from a letter written by Karl Viëtor to the philosopher and Rector of the University of Bonn, Erich Rothacker, in July 1933, in which he avowed that “there can be no question of a party-oriented coordination (*parteimäßiger Gleichschaltung*)” but affirmed that “it is self-evident that I am prepared to make common cause in conformity with my entire German scholarly attitude.”²² No doubt, this sort of ambivalence was also evident in Viëtor’s effort to include the works of the revolutionary nineteenth-century dramatist Georg Büchner, who founded the revolutionary “Society for Human Rights,” in the National Socialist canon. Though it may have contained political material, “*Danton’s Death*,” he wrote in 1934, “is very German. Where is the political program in this drama? There is none. There is only history and a religious truth derived from history.”²³ Like Viëtor, the vast majority of humanities scholars who adapted to the circumstances of the new situation clung to the illusion of intellectual autonomy and rejected any suggestion that there was any direct “political pressure” on the substance of their disciplines or their research. In other words, a certain degree of arrogance in the face of Nazi politicians and ideologues, a belief in their own superior capacity for complexity and nuance, and an equal degree of opportunism eased a pragmatic and effective career-oriented accommodation with the ideological demands and practices of the regime and the party.

Whatever diverse motives humanities scholars may have had in 1933, the bulk of recent scholarship has shown that the image of Nazism as an alien power imposed on German universities from without was a convenient fiction. Despite such rationalizations, the ideological “self-coordination” of the humanities disciplines and the public realm in National Socialism is indisputable. The reality was much more aptly described by Oscar J. Hamman in the *Journal of Modern History* in 1941: “As a whole it may be said that the German historians, save for a republican minority, needed little ‘co-ordination.’”²⁴ After 1945, these former enthusiasts justified the rapid “self-coordination” of the humanities on the grounds that it preserved the autonomy of existing university structures and prevented political interference by “outsiders,” as Heidegger infamously claimed in 1945.²⁵ Such attitudes also help explain in large part why so many prominent academics could be such willing collaborators as well as why these very same figures could later in “good” conscience disavow any ideological convictions, explaining that they had only accepted the new regime in order to forestall “worse” and/or resist the pressure to elevate party zealots to important positions. Consequently, after the collapse of National Socialism in 1945, the same scholars could just as readily adjust to the new democratic political circumstances by proclaiming yet another “new beginning” and abandon National Socialist rhetoric as no longer functional, without undue concern, sparing themselves burdensome inner struggles or trying conflicts with their own former convictions. Such rationalizations were also sustained by the largely inaccurate justification that, despite the willingness of academic elites to cooperate with the new rulers, the rulers themselves by and large found little use for the academics.

Another reason for the ostentatious displays of loyalty in 1933 was that academics were well aware that the Nazis had nothing but contempt for them, calling them “desktop intellectuals” and openly mocking their “wait and see” attitude.²⁶ Party ideologues frequently expressed frustration at their inability to penetrate the academic fortress; evident, for example, in the literary specialist Helmut Langenbücher’s bitter complaint about the constant “evasion” of a confrontation over the ideological imperatives of the regime which plagued the “old school of literary scholarship.”²⁷ When the Nazis seized power they did not have a coherent academic policy apart from a few slogans, but official statements left no doubt that they did not harbor any strong expectation that any “renewal” of the universities could come from within.²⁸

Nevertheless, the fact that no ideological “corset” (Beat Näf) was imposed on humanities faculties did not mean that the academics did not frequently come under intense scrutiny by such political institutions as the National Socialist Professors’ Organization (*N.S. Dozentenbund*), the Gestapo, and the Ministry of Science, Education, and Public Pedagogy under Reich Minister Bernhard Rust. Scholarly everyday life in the humanities after the seizure of power often presented a deceptive picture of academic “normality” with any number of “substantive” controversies and debates, a multitude of highly specialized journals and publications, active scholarly societies, and the usual academic competition for posts. The absence of any single ideological central authority (with the exception of the Rust Ministry) capable of formulating a homogeneous National Socialist humanities “policy” that could be disseminated from above only fuelled the desire of individuals and faculties to “work towards the *Führer*,” in Ian Kershaw’s felicitous phrase. Only rarely were controversies between diverse schools of scholarship in the respective disciplines politically adjudicated in favor of a single authoritative National Socialist doctrine. Of course, this image of normality was highly deceptive, tarnished by the “racial-political” removal of Jewish scholars and the purge of the universities and academic institutions of “political enemies” and “unreliable elements.” Few could resist profiting from these purges. Individuals who gained from the resulting vacancies were not particularly perturbed by the repressive side of the events that led to their professional good fortune. If they were not themselves endangered, as a rule they seized the professional blessings of the moment without undue moral scruple, justifying their decisions long after the regime reached its political end.

Ironically, it was also never entirely the case that attempts to enforce ideological recodings of the respective humanities disciplines automatically guaranteed personal advantages or an individual’s catapulting into the desirable position of gatekeeper of the profession. In fact, the opposite was often more likely; ideological presumptuousness could incur a heavy cost in one’s professional reputation. The precipitous drop in the status of figures of like Heidegger, Schmitt, and the philosopher Ernst Krieck after their run-ins with party authorities attests to the danger inherent in assuming too high a profile. To a large extent the real gatekeepers of the humanities still remained the traditional *Ordinarius* professors, though a few appointments, like those of Krieck and the philosopher Alfred Bäumler, came at the behest of the political authorities. Such overtly political appointments were by and

large the exception, however, as was demonstrated by the unique case of an “outsider,” Walter Ebenhardt, who was named professor of classical philology in Münster.²⁹ Attempts by the party or the *Dozentenbund* to influence the appointment of professors were frequently unsuccessful and often met with disapproval by the established senior professors. When conflicts did erupt, the faculties, often in cooperation with the Rust Education Ministry (REM), were able to quietly overcome challenges by the doctrinally “purer” *Amt Rosenberg*, which had “higher” ideological standards for professorial appointments and much less concern for disciplinary standards.³⁰ The not infrequent unwillingness of professors to participate in the “research” programs promoted by those quasi-official organizations was evidence not so much of their reluctance to adapt to the regime’s demands, but of their unwillingness to work for lesser institutions outside of their disciplines or to fully surrender control and allow external authorities to determine the substance of their academic work.

This did not mean that in the 1940s younger professors, trained during the Nazi era and more likely to conform to its ideological precepts, were not treated preferentially by university faculties, the REM and the *Dozentenbund*, each of which tried to influence appointments.³¹ The tensions between humanities faculties and the institutional apparatus of the Nazi Party did not, as many of the contributions in this volume show, amount to dissension from the precepts of National Socialism. On the contrary, they allowed academic elites to nourish the illusion of independence while rendering service, required or unrequired, to the powers that were.

Consequently, after the collapse of National Socialism professors could almost universally present themselves as having been apolitical scholars concerned with objective research and forced to withdraw into their scholarly pursuits, a kind of academic “inner emigration.” Daniel Penham, the U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps officer charged with the denazification of the University of Heidelberg (later a distinguished professor of Romance languages at Columbia University), recalled that his practice of confronting scholars with their own Nazi-era writings was considered at best “unfair” and at worst “sadistic.”³² Many were subsequently exonerated as “fellow travelers” by local courts (*Spruchkammer*) established in the Federal Republic to deal with lesser cases, receiving only mild opprobrium and emerging with a much coveted “clean bill of health” (*Persilschein*). After 1945, these compromised

professors contributed to the creation of what Remy calls the “Heidelberg Myth,” according to which German universities had remained liberal and fiercely independent until 1933, when they were hijacked by Nazi thugs who, despite their ruthless efforts, ultimately had little impact on German scholarship. Though scholars privately bemoaned the lengthy proceedings and denounced overzealous denazifiers, a stance ruthlessly parodied by Walter Maria Guggenheimer in an apocryphal letter addressed to “the tragicomic figure of the designated scapegoat,” this myth served to draw the wagons around German universities, reaffirming the rule of the mandarins and guiding the occupation authorities away from a more intensive denazification.³³ For this reason a clearer understanding of the extent and practices of the political coordination and self-coordination of academic and university life under National Socialism is indispensable before certain questions can even be posed: Was was it for example possible, as many scholars in the humanities later maintained, to occupy politically marginal niches in academic institutions, to not only survive without opportunistic concessions to the dominant *zeitgeist*, but to survive National Socialism productively?

3. Postwar Reckonings

In the early postwar years, there was little reason for humanities scholars to broach the theme of the intellectual complicity of their disciplines during the catastrophe. Even the anti-Nazi historian Friedrich Meinecke emerged from the war more convinced than ever that the National Socialist era was nothing more than a brief interlude imposing its “unculture” on Germany’s proud intellectual tradition. He could unequivocally state that he still hoped and believed that the “German spirit, after it has found itself again, still has to fulfill its special and irreplaceable mission with the Western community.”³⁴ Nonetheless, as Oberkrome shows in his essay on the historians, even Meinecke was not able to suppress his patriotic sentiments as Hitler’s armies marched into Paris. The ancient historian Victor Erdmann, who, as a Jew, had to emigrate to England, noted after his return from a first visit to Germany after the war that “no revival of Nazism seemed possible” but “there was comparatively little feeling of guilt.”³⁵ Scholars whose careers had begun in the Nazi era under the auspices of German mandarins whose wartime writings left little doubt about

their allegiances and convictions could still achieve distinguished professional status in both postwar Germanys.³⁶

In 1961, almost a third of university professors in the German Democratic Republic had been members of the NSDAP, and in the West only a handful of former Nazis were deprived of their posts.³⁷ A collective silence (*Beschweigen*) took hold in the immediate postwar era, initially prompted by fear of juridical consequences, public humiliation, and loss of prestige and position. In that context, and in the climate of the Cold War, there was little reason for students to excavate their teachers' writings or further investigate their activities.

After 1945, university professors active during the Third Reich found themselves suddenly confronted with newly returned émigrés, many of whom had come back, as Max Horkheimer, once remarked, just to "spite" what he called the "fascistic reentrenchment." The atmosphere could not be described as collegial, though the refugees treated their colleagues with distance and discretion.³⁸ In sociology, for example, one of the fields most devastated by the Nazi takeover of the universities, of eight existing chairs, three were occupied by returned exiles or anti-fascists (Horkheimer, René König, and Otto Stammer), while five were occupied by scholars whose academic careers were made under the Nazis (Arnold Gehlen, Helmut Schelsky, Gerhard Mackenroth, Max Graf Solms, and Werner Ziegenfuss).³⁹ The internal solidarity of the disciplines and professional tact were further sustained by a strongly enforced taboo on public discussion of the Nazi era until the 1960s. Even during the student upheavals of that decade, preoccupation with generic theories of "fascism" frequently served to draw attention away from the incriminating details of individual biographies and embarrassing departmental decisions.

Though many contemporaries later conceded to privately "having known" who had been a Nazi and what had occurred among their colleagues, private conversations among the "complicit" took place in the highly cultivated "security of silence."⁴⁰ Networks of former Nazi professors remained restrictive coteries, like the Schmitt circle in legal philosophy or the "Königsberg circle" of historians, who, as Hans-Ulrich Wehler recalled, "stuck together like burrs because they had the feeling that they were lucky when compared to those who had fallen (to use this terrible jargon) or had returned crippled." These "milieus" rendered support and assistance for their compatriots and kept council with those whom they knew they could trust.⁴¹ Neither in East nor in West Germany did that kind of privileged knowledge, though

sometimes cultivated by the secret services, easily find its way into the public realm.

There was, however, one crucial exception to this general trend, though, tellingly, not in Germany. In 1946, an émigré scholar from Latvia, Max Weinreich, co-founder and research director of the Yiddish Scientific Institute in Vilna and after 1940 in New York (Y.I.V.O.), published *Hitler's Professors: The Part of Scholarship in Germany's Crimes against the Jewish People*. Weinreich did not mince words, stating unequivocally that "German scholarship provided the ideas and techniques which led to and justified this unparalleled slaughter."⁴² Basing his conclusions on the more than five thousand books that "began pouring into the library of the Y.I.V.O.," Weinreich produced a remarkable "report" on the ways that "many fields of learning, different ones at different times, according to the shrewdly appraised needs of Nazi policies, were drawn into the work for more than a decade: physical anthropology and biology, all branches of the social sciences and the humanities – until the engineers moved in to build the gas chambers and crematories."⁴³ Weinreich even anticipated the self-serving reply of those who would subsequently argue that it was not the authentic scholars who perpetrated these crimes but "sham" scholars elevated in rank by their Nazi friends and protectors. "Even this consolation is baseless," he wrote, because "the scholars whom we shall quote in such impressive numbers, like those others who were instrumental in any other part of the German pre-war and war efforts, were to a large extent people of long and high standing, university professors and academy members, some of them world famous, authors with familiar names and guest lecturers abroad, the kind of people Allied scholars used to meet and fraternize with at international congresses."⁴⁴ Given his conclusion, "that literally every discipline was pervaded with intense nationalism that waited for the organizing hand of the *Führer*," it is not surprising that his book – published first in Yiddish and later translated into English – attracted virtually no notice in Germany and has still not been translated into German.⁴⁵

Among the émigrés, only Hannah Arendt, at that time an editor at Shocken Books, took notice of Weinreich's work in a lengthy *Commentary* review. She praised his sobriety and expert knowledge, conceding that "many more names, especially from the humanities, could have been added." But Arendt faulted Weinreich for not distinguishing the "outstanding scholars" from "the majority of German professors who fell into line simply for the sake of their jobs."⁴⁶ She did

not shrink from condemning those distinguished scholars who lent their prestige and intellect to the Nazis (she named Carl Schmitt, the theologian Gerhard Kittel, the sociologist Hans Freyer, and Martin Heidegger), but Arendt accused Weinreich of lumping them together with “lesser-known scholars and scholars of bad reputation.” The problem with Weinreich’s book, she claimed, was that he paid the former group “too great a compliment by taking them too seriously.” The fact is “not one of these first-rate German scholars ever attained a position of influence” and they were “soon taken aback by the outspoken vulgarity of the representatives of the Nazi regime – not, however, by its crimes.” The Nazis did not really require “ideas,” Arendt argued, since respectable German professors who volunteered their services were of little use: “The Nazis had their own ideas – what they needed were techniques and technicians with no ideas at all or educated from the beginning in only Nazi ideas. The scholars first put to one side by the Nazis as of relatively little use to them were old-fashioned nationalists like Heidegger, whose enthusiasm for the Third Reich was matched only by his glaring ignorance of what he was talking about.”⁴⁷ Much more exemplary of the “physiognomy” of the average German professor under Hitler, Arendt concluded, was Gerhard Ritter, the Freiburg historian, who pursued his scholarly research on German power politics since Frederick the Great, while keeping his real opinions secret and pursuing the “deeper life of the intellect.”⁴⁸

However, Ritter, as recent historiography has shown, was anything but “average.” A classical mandarin, Ritter’s “anxiety of chaos” and fear of massification made him a defender of a strong nation-state and authoritarian “decisionism” that permits individuals “moral” but not political freedom. Ritter never overtly supported the Nazi regime, but his writings, especially his 1940 opus, *Dämonie der Macht*, were hardly oppositional, though they may have contained camouflaged criticisms of Nazi amorality and imperial expansion. Ritter played a marginal role in the 20 July plan for a coup d’état and in 1946 participated in the internal deliberations on the fate of Martin Heidegger at Freiburg University.⁴⁹ After the war, Ritter became a leading, albeit highly conservative figure in the history profession, exaggerating the degree of his own “immunity” from collaboration, while exonerating his professional colleagues. Ritter set the stage for what was to become the most ubiquitous caricature of German scholarly behavior by distinguishing the “swarm of ambitious strivers and young activists”

or party “bureaucrats” like the historian Walter Frank, who “betrayed the spirit of authentic scholarship,” from what he deemed the “vast majority of German historians who were not led astray by any racial theory.”⁵⁰ Though neither Ritter nor Arendt apologized for “Hitler’s professors,” they, like so many of their contemporaries, drew a thick black line between the more accomplished and prominent scholars whose efforts to accommodate the regime were of little consequence and party ideologues like Frank, Rosenberg, Bäumler, and Kriek who could be regarded as mere “pamphleteers.” To a large extent the distinctions drawn by Arendt and Ritter mirrored in many respects the judgments of the official *Spruchkammer*, with its broad exonerations of fellow travelers who stood in contrast to the tiny minority of “real” Nazis who were brought to trial or removed from their posts by the occupying authorities.

More questionable still was Arendt’s rejection of the central premise of Weinreich’s work, that the Nazis had any use for “ideas,” a stunning judgment from the foremost theorist of totalitarian ideology which all but foreclosed posing the question of whether German intellectual traditions or intellectual history played any role whatsoever in the origins of Nazism, not to mention the specific problem of how deeply the humanities had been impacted by the Nazi years. It also cast aside questions of what role professors – even those who were not scholars of international reputation – played in the Nazi system of power.⁵¹ Like Ritter, Arendt did not excuse the master thinkers as much as she elevated them – as they themselves often did – far above the vulgar Nazi ideologues whose contempt for ideas made them unable even to recognize the willingness of these naïve giants to make themselves useful. For that reason, despite her critical comments about them, more difficult cases, like those of Heidegger and Carl Schmitt, received little serious attention in Arendt’s writings during those years.⁵²

Arendt’s review raises the question: what use *did* the Nazis have for the intellectual collaboration that was so often generously offered to them? In particular, when this collaboration was coupled with a highly ambitious readiness to cooperate in creating the new political reality, were the scholarly mandarins ultimately compliant with the pragmatic politics of the Nazi revolution? Or did they truly deceive themselves about the character of that revolution as well as about their own role as the revolution’s potential intellectual leaders as Arendt suggests? Finally, why did Weinreich and Arendt find no

audience or scholars willing to take up their largely unnoticed discussion in postwar Germany? Even today, when the controversy over the collaboration of scholars with the Third Reich has become a major topic of study and debate, Weinreich's contribution has been all but forgotten. These are but a few of the questions that this volume attempts to address.

4. Establishing a Historiography

A few isolated works on the role of the humanities in the Third Reich appeared sporadically during the 1960s. In 1962 Guido Schneeberger published his extensive documentation of Heidegger's speeches and articles (in a self-financed publication).⁵³ Ironically, Schneeberger's revelations about Heidegger led to a significant debate in the mid-1960s in France, though there was little resonance in Germany.⁵⁴ In their pioneering studies of the intellectual origins of National Socialism, George L. Mosse and Fritz Stern drew attention to the *völkisch* background and conservative cultural pessimism that contributed to the Nazi worldview, though neither directly treated either the academic milieu or the Nazi intelligentsia.⁵⁵ George G. Iggers, in *The German Conception of History*, emphasized the strong continuities in the German idealist tradition of historical writing before and after 1945, though he too devoted no separate chapter to the Nazi historians.⁵⁶ These studies, all of them not insignificantly by refugee historians living in the United States, broke new ground in illuminating the manifold ways in which the Nazi revolution of 1933 did not emerge *sui generis* from Hitler and his paladins, but could be traced back to distinctive mentalities that were formed in the *Kaiserreich* and coalesced into a politically virulent agenda among a wide variety of intellectuals, students, and professors in the years following Germany's defeat in the First World War.⁵⁷

In Germany, the first book to comprehensively treat the role of Nazi historians was Helmut Heibers' monumental study of Walter Frank's *Reichsinstitut für Geschichte des neuen Deutschlands* (Reich Institute for the History of the New Germany) (1966).⁵⁸ Heiber's work shed light on the official party historians, but also on those university scholars who contributed to official party publications and lent their talents to so-called *Judenforschung* (Jewish research). Specialized studies of Nazi cultural fiefdoms like the *Amt Rosenberg*, by Reinhard

Bollmus (1970), and the S.S. *Ahnenerbe*, by Michael Kater (1974), also touched on the substantial connections between university professors and Nazi cultural organizations.⁵⁹

In the 1970s and 1980s a new generation of scholars concerned with the history of National Socialism produced the first pioneering studies of the individual humanities disciplines during the Third Reich. Most noteworthy was Volker Losemann's study of the ancient historians, *Nationalsozialismus und Antike* (1977), written under the supervision of the Marburg historian Karl Christ.⁶⁰ Not until the mid-1980s, however, did a significant body of work concerned with the degree to which National Socialist attitudes, concepts, and ideological patterns penetrated the attitudes and publications of leading representatives of the academic disciplines begin to appear. Significantly, many of these studies did not begin with 1933 but in Wilhelmine Germany and earlier, in order to demonstrate strong continuities in the "mentality" of the academic elite. During World War I German intellectuals who opposed the war were suspect as alien and deracinated avatars of "civilization" and accused of collaboration "on the side of civilization *entente*," as Thomas Mann contemptuously put it. Among those prominent scholars who signed the "famous appeal to the civilized world" in October 1914 were some of Germany's most distinguished historians and classicists, among them Eduard Meyer, Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, and Karl Robert.⁶¹ Beat Näf's *Von Perikles zu Hitler?* (1986) investigated the extent to which anti-democratic attitudes among historians of classical antiquity in the late Wilhelmine era were radicalized and given a racial dimension by historians "in the train of National Socialism."⁶² Bernd Faulenbach's *Ideologie des deutschen Weges* (1980) traced the "nationalization" of the German historians after World War I, and the pioneering study by the British historian Michael Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastward: A Study of "Ostforschung" in the Third Reich* (1988), illuminated the role of historians in Germany's campaign and conquest in Eastern Europe. Karen Schönwälder's *Historiker und Politik* (1992) extensively documented the "fundamental consensus" among German historians about the revision of the Versailles treaty and German territorial aspirations in the east as well as their failure to resist the expulsion and emigration of historians of Jewish origin, including Eugen Täubler, Richard Laqueur, Hans Rothfels, and Ernst Kantorowicz.⁶³

5. Meta-Greece: Nazi Philhellenism

Given the propensity of Hitler and the other ideologues of the Third Reich to proclaim their descent from the “racial ancestors” and the “heroic-political epoch” of Greek and Roman antiquity, the study of the ancient world was confronted with a particularly difficult challenge. The worldwide prestige of German universities during the nineteenth century was owed in no small measure to the Humboldtian vision of a cultural elite formed by the moral and aesthetic examples contained in the classical sources and devoted to the cultivation of “inner growth.”⁶⁴ As Suzanne Marchand has shown, Germany’s professional classes were imbued with an unwavering belief in the virtues of philhellenism: “Thanks especially to Winckelmann, Goethe, and Schiller, the study of the Greeks had taken on the quality of a redemptive return to mankind’s origins.”⁶⁵ The German devotion to antiquity was always deeply ambiguous: if one pillar of German neo-humanism was the disinterested and ascetic scholar who emphasized historicist philology, the other regarded philological study of classical antiquity as a kind of nationalist *Bildung*. Wilhelmine philhellenism presupposed not only the veneration of the ancients but a reproach to the moderns, especially British utilitarianism and French republicanism. As the philologist Friedrich Leo remarked, “The rise of German national culture was in fact born from the Renaissance of the Greek.”⁶⁶ So powerful was the “tyranny of Greece over Germany” that Wilhelm II himself worried that generations molded by the classicists and philologists might present an obstacle to Germany’s imperial ambitions: “We want to educate our pupils into young Germans,” he complained, “not young Greeks and Romans.”⁶⁷

For the Nazi elite too, ancients and Germans shared a common destiny, albeit a racial and aesthetic one. As Hitler proclaimed in 1933, “Greeks and Romans were ... so close to the Germans because all of them could find their roots in a common racial foundation and thus the undying achievements of the ancient peoples again and again exert their magnetic effect over their racially akin descendents.”⁶⁸ For Rosenberg, “the most beautiful dream was the dream of Nordic mankind in Hellas.”⁶⁹ Hitler’s court artists, especially Josef Thorak and Arno Breker, cultivated a “meta-Greek” aesthetic of martial manliness and hyperfemininity modeled on Greek and Roman iconography, in the belief that they were recreating “the spirit and the spatial principle of antiquity, without classicizing, that is without being an imitator.”⁷⁰

The Nazi fetishism of antiquity attracted classical scholars to the German revolution of 1933 while it created new and unanticipated problems for them. After 1918, German classical scholars, facing exclusion from the international scholarly community, the collapse of their dreams of educating the nation to heroism and sacrifice, and imbued with the conviction that the new democracy would bring ruin and decay – as it had in classical Athens – shared Wilamowitz’s view of the Weimar Republic as the advent of “mob rule.”⁷¹ After 1933, some classical scholars could welcome Nazism as redemption from the chaos of democracy, the true fulfillment of the Athenian polis, Spartan rule, or even, as Heidegger believed, an epochal replication of the Greek “beginning.”

Yet, Nazi ideologues were somewhat suspicious of the “Third Humanism” promoted by the renowned German classicist Werner Jaeger, Wilamowitz’s student. Jaeger’s case, though by no means typical, illustrates several crucial aspects of the complex and ambiguous ways that the German mandarins confronted Nazi rule. Like many of his contemporaries Jaeger was convinced that the crisis of culture could be countered not by mere institutional reform but by a renewal of the “spirit.”⁷² If the certainty of a “two-thousand year old history in which the planetary course of the European Spirit was in orbit around the Hellenistic sun” could no longer be taken for granted, Jaeger imagined that a Third Humanism (beyond the Greek and the Renaissance) might bring about the necessary realignment.⁷³ His 1933 article, “Antike und neue ‘Bewegung’ ” (Antiquity and the New Movement) (published in the quasi-official *Volk im Werden*) distinguished between his own Third Humanism and the disparaged “enlightenment humanism” that was from his perspective incompatible with the intellectual historical assumptions of National Socialism. In 1933 Jaeger left little doubt that he imagined the Nazi movement as a suitable vehicle for his Third Humanism, which he put at the service of the *Volksrasse*.⁷⁴ The program he helped draft for the “association of ancient philologists” (*Altphilologenverband*), presented to Education Minister Rust in that year, contained a list of “principles” that redefined humanism in the framework of racially inflected terms like racial affinity (*Artverwandtschaft*) and linked Germany’s “faithful encounter with Greekdom” with liberation from the culture of the Enlightenment.⁷⁵ Though willing to reorient his “political humanism” to the “great state, folk, and community,” Jaeger’s Third Humanism ultimately proved too unpolitical to satisfy party

ideologues. As the Nazi pedagogue Ernst Krieck remarked, the Third Reich was not the Third Humanism; the Reich required loyalty to the state, heroism, and a martial-political pedagogy rather than intellectualism and humanism.⁷⁶ By 1936, Jaeger, who had now emigrated to America, was vilified by Krieck for his obsolete ideas and lack of an ideal of education based on “martial discipline and *völkisch* realism” (*völkischer Realismus*).⁷⁷ His story makes abundantly clear that the gulf between the spiritual revival that the mandarins had been preaching and the fanaticism that now threatened to engulf them was not as great as they had once imagined. At the same time, Jaeger’s fortuitous move to the United States and his distinguished career at Harvard are testimony to the fact that mere intellectual predisposition to authoritarianism and political “scholarship” did not necessarily guarantee acceptance by or accommodation to Nazi policymakers and ideologues.

As Losemann’s study of the discipline of ancient history amply shows, the purge of Jewish scholars and the emigration of scores of first-rank historians, philologists, and archeologists enriched Anglo-Saxon scholarship as much as it impoverished German universities. Among those who remained in their posts, the advent of Nazi rule was greeted with a mixture of “expectation and anxiety” as far as the discipline was concerned.⁷⁸ Yet, if one-third of all chairs could be newly occupied (the source of much hope and anticipation among younger scholars), fear of overweening government intervention proved unwarranted; only a handful of appointments were directly controlled by non-university agencies such as the *N.S. Dozentenbund* or the *Amt Rosenberg*. The vast majority of teaching posts were filled by promotions from within the ranks, frequently with the cooperation of the Rust Ministry.⁷⁹ Losemann’s study broke new ground, not only by focusing on the institutional and individual dimensions of the discipline, but for its close attention to the relationship between the party agencies and academic politics. Only in the 1990s did scholars begin to significantly extend his approach to the fields of philosophy, history, archeology, art history, and philology.⁸⁰

6. Heidegger and National Socialism

No academic discipline has received as much attention as philosophy, the result of the worldwide debate provoked by the Chilean philosopher

Viktor Farias's polemical book *Heidegger and Nazism* (*Heidegger et le nazisme*) (1987), followed by a more sober and detailed academic biography by Hugo Ott and a general biography by Rüdiger Safranski. A voluminous literature on the "Heidegger affair" produced a substantial and ongoing discussion of the relationship between "work and worldview" (Habermas) in the philosopher's oeuvre, as well as a considerable interest in the broader university world in which Heidegger's rectorate and his postwar tribulations occurred.⁸¹ The Heidegger affair reached beyond the question of how to interpret Heidegger's pre- and post-Nazi works in light of his engagement with National Socialism, to raise the broader issue of the connection between the Western tradition of political thought and the seductions of tyranny in the twentieth century. As Mark Lilla has noted, "the Heidegger case is only the most dramatic twentieth-century example of how philosophy, the love of wisdom, declined into philotyranny within living memory."⁸²

Could the case of Heidegger be explained by the peculiarities of German idealism, by the illiberal and anti-democratic ethos of the German *Sonderweg*, or conversely by a surfeit of metaphysics and Western nihilism?⁸³ However, historians and philosophers might choose to interpret Heidegger's "choice," it soon became evident that he was hardly alone in his enthusiasm for National Socialism among the scores of German scholars and writers who turned their normally "unpolitical" pursuits to political ends. Heidegger was more typical than atypical and the compatibility between his fundamental ontology and National Socialism was of far less consequence in the Third Reich than it was, and remains, for Heidegger's interpreters.⁸⁴ As long as philosophers did not call into question the specific policies of the regime or directly challenge its worldview, they enjoyed a relatively wide latitude to develop their own philosophical narrative of National Socialism. George Leaman's useful survey of academic philosophy shows that despite the initial wave of forced resignations and emigrations the vast majority of scholars continued their old academic pursuits while most, like Heidegger, oriented their thinking towards serving the regime. Consequently, it is extremely difficult to draw a clear line between those philosophers who signed on for reasons of opportunism and advancement and those who were absolutely sincere in their convictions.⁸⁵ Membership figures for the Nietzsche and Schopenhauer societies are instructive: both societies suffered an initial decline in membership between 1932 and 1935, but in 1936 the

numbers again stabilized, demonstrating that the majority of philosophers were unaffected by the purges and were willing to participate in professional associations.⁸⁶

In his excellent book, *Heidegger's Crisis*, Hans Sluga has shown that there was a remarkable diversity among philosophical orientations in Nazified universities and that, apart from the already marginal and banned Marxist and logical positivist schools, a spectrum of philosophical orientations from Kantianism to existentialism continued to flourish.⁸⁷ Precisely because the Nazi worldview played at best a symbolic function, indeterminate, yet at the same time in constant need of refinement and reinterpretation, philosophers found themselves in a unique position to give shape and substance to the new political reality. At the same time, the fact that the worldview remained the final arbiter of truth created problems for philosophers, since Nazism also drew its authority from non-philosophical sources, e.g. biology, race, myth, mysticism, in other words from sources that, to use Heidegger's word, could be considered "primitive."⁸⁸ These and other quandaries caused uncertainty but also produced a good deal of competition for preeminence among philosophical schools, as each sought to define the "ontological order on which the new emerging political order could be grounded."⁸⁹ Were there even any criteria that might transcend the disciplines and according to which the competition for an intellectual foundation of the political transformation of the humanities corresponding to the Nazi worldview could be decided? Or, conversely, was this competition ultimately decided *against* the declared intentions and ambitions of its most famous protagonists? This question goes to the core of the problem of intellectual content versus the political instrumentalization or pragmatic politics of National Socialism. According to Sluga, the very diversity of approaches compatible with Nazism – e.g. defenders and detractors of Fichte and Nietzsche, proponents of the philosophy of life, of Kantianism, existentialism, and Darwinism – says more about the willingness of a variety of scholars to accept the basic political premises of the regime than it does about the complicity of any single philosophical school or intellectual orientation with National Socialism.

To be sure, many of these philosophers held out the hope that the prosaic core of Nazism would be sooner or later replaced by what they considered to be the more sublime "essence" of Nazism. Or, as was the case for Carl Schmitt, Nazism could be considered in some ways merely symptomatic of the telos of modernity in the age of the total

state. Taking as a point of departure the conception of the world-historical mission of the Germans as the “philosophical nation” par excellence, philosophers saw in National Socialism an opportunity and a political movement with deeply rooted intellectual sources and primal “mythic-metaphysical” origins.⁹⁰ National Socialism promised to take politics out of the humdrum of daily routine and to place scholars on a programmatic and philosophic pedestal. From this standpoint National Socialism was not seen as a threat to humanity and intellectual freedom but as a chance for the humanities to play a role in the critical caesura of the times, in which “the living spirit” would emerge and the future of modernity would be decided. Heidegger and Gehlen, for example, hoped that philosophy would emerge from the marginal status of an academic discipline with little political importance to become the guiding force of a new politics and a “new man.” Such fantasies of a quasi-metaphysical and anthropological revolution were not invented by these philosophers. But this “higher” National Socialism needed only to be adopted as a philosophical self-image of the movement against the more prosaic side of National Socialism – the pragmatic or vulgar rhetoric of political struggle and the pamphlets expressing the core racial doctrine – where the movement’s “lower” ideological accents were concentrated. Nevertheless, the academic presumption that human affairs could be guided by philosophical standards, that a political program of anthropological “purification” and “breeding” could make human beings the carriers of a “higher” principle, served also to create a climate that legitimated the inhuman Nazi concepts of demographic pacification and mass murder.

7. The Humanities at War

Despite the initial enthusiasm of the majority of humanities scholars for the “revolution of 1933,” Arendt rightly observed that their efforts were not regarded as particularly useful to the Nazi authorities after the first years of the regime. That situation changed dramatically in 1939 when Germany began its era of conquest. As the pan-European “universal empire” under German hegemony was realized by the *Reichswehr*, professors in unprecedented numbers were recruited in the “wartime mobilization of the humanities” (*Kriegseinsatz der Geisteswissenschaften*) in order to create a “new

European spiritual order.”⁹¹ Under the direction of the Kiel University rector and professor of jurisprudence, Paul Ritterbusch, some five hundred humanities scholars from more than a dozen disciplines, including law, philology, ancient history, German literature, Romance languages, history, Oriental studies, and psychology, were recruited to produce a “communal work” (*Gemeinschaftswerk*) that yielded more than sixty multivolume publications, including forty-three monographs and twenty-four essay collections. The work of the so-called *Aktion Ritterbusch* fell into two phases. From 1940 until the invasion of the Soviet Union on the 22 June 1941, its projects, above all “Europe and the Reich” (*Das Reich und Europa*), were dedicated to providing historical support for the concept of a German order in Western Europe. The second, which lasted until the final months of the war (and of which many contributions remained unpublished), concentrated on the eastern regions, particularly “German cultural space” in occupied Poland.

Frank Rutger-Hausmann’s detailed survey of this mammoth project shows that, despite the fact that a handful of scholars privately expressed reservations and demonstrated remarkable cognizance of the criminal nature of the regime, few of the invited scholars refused to participate in what appeared to them to be a “purely academic” enterprise. His analysis of their motivations and the content of their publications demonstrates that ideological interference by Nazi cultural agencies was largely superfluous, since most humanities disciplines were already “self-coordinated” and so suffused with the Nazi worldview that subscribing to the new order did not require a major shift in perspective or methodology, certainly not the adoption of “alien” perspectives imposed from without.⁹² The project was administered by “disciplinary group leaders,” most of them full professors, and was supported by the Rust Ministry on the grounds that “technology and the natural sciences provide the *means* of military and economic warfare, while the task of the humanities is to provide the content and foundation for the ideological and political aims of the war.” In this way, the *Gemeinschaftswerk* created a unified administration for scholarship and research apart from both the federative university structure and the party, which could serve as a model for the future organization of the humanities.⁹³

The key organizing role played by leading scholars like Carl Schmitt in formulating and articulating the aims of the project insured that overarching tropes like *Führer*, *Reich*, *Volksgemeinschaft*

Rasse, Raum, and Ordnung could take on normative significance for the project as a whole without prescribing the content of specific research subjects. Only a few publications were overtly racist in their orientation, as was, for example, the ancient historian Helmut Berve's *Das neue Bild der Antike*, which emphatically drew a parallel between Greek and Roman antiquity and the German present: "the newly awakened racial instinct of our *Volk* permits us to experience the two peoples of antiquity, each in their own way, as our blood and our type."⁹⁴ Most scholars, however, could easily avoid such explicitly racist tropes and present their subject matter without fundamentally altering their traditional approach apart from some terminological concessions in the prefatory material. Most participants, according to Hausmann, shared only a belief in the continuity of "German spirit" in the past, present, and future, and a general mood of national breakthrough and sustained national enthusiasm. What this meant in practice was that the illusion of academic normality could be maintained while humanities scholars actively pursued their research in accordance with the project's overall aims and ideological purposes.⁹⁵ Even a handful of ambiguously conceived "critical" studies could be published under the auspices of the *Aktion Ritterbusch*, including Hans-Georg Gadamer's controversial study of Plato's concept of the state, which affirmed the philosophical ideal of an authoritarian state but which could also be read as a muted reproach to the regime and its chief legal thinker, Carl Schmitt (see the essay by Richard Wolin in this volume).⁹⁶ Another was the legal historian Walter Schönfeld's thinly disguised Christian existentialist critique of legal positivism (and, implicitly, of Nazi legal doctrine).⁹⁷ The aforementioned Gerhard Ritter initially agreed to participate in the historical subsection, "Das Reich und Europe," though ultimately he did not contribute to it.⁹⁸ Because the *Aktion Ritterbusch* was so ecumenical and encompassed such a range of scholars, orientations, and disciplines, its efforts fell short of the expectations of the *Amt Rosenberg* and the *Dozentenbund*, which accused the *Gemeinschaftswerk* of "gathering scholars of all political colorations without regard to their political stance or worldview."⁹⁹ The extent of participation by humanities scholars demonstrates that to a significant degree the Nazi worldview permeated the humanities and was effectively "transformed by influential scholar-managers and thus achieved a terrifying reality" in this mega-project. At the same time, the pretense of academic quality and independence allowed in the postwar years

former participants to remain proud of their activities, holding to the belief that these projects had little or nothing to do with National Socialism.¹⁰⁰

8. Mobilizing the Historians

Like the scholars engaged in the *Aktion Ritterbusch*, historians were in considerable numbers mobilized by a web of deeply interlaced research and publishing networks likewise well financed by the German Research Association (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*) and devoted to putting “fighting” (*kämpferische*) scholarship in the service of the “European new order.” Beginning in the late 1980s, research by Burleigh, Schönwälder, Fahlbusch, Ingo Haar, and Oberkrome, to name but a few, has documented the ever larger number of historians enlisted by the *Volksdeutschen Forschungsgemeinschaften* (V.F.G.) for political purposes both before and during the war.¹⁰¹ In 1992, Götz Aly and others sensationally revealed the doyens of the German history profession in the Federal Republic, Theodor Schieder and Werner Conze, to have been deeply implicated in wartime policy planning, especially in conquered Poland. As a key figure in the *Landesstelle Ostpreußen*, Schieder was shown to have authored a now notorious October 1939 memorandum calling for the immediate re-Germanizing of former German territories in Poland and for the “removal of the Jews from Polish cities.”¹⁰² Even more egregious were remarks published in the same year by Conze about the “removal of Jews from Polish cities and market areas to bring the new generation of peasants into trade and artisanal occupations.”¹⁰³

These revelations, shocking and belated, were in sharp contrast to the overwhelmingly self-satisfied portrait drawn by the profession over the half-century since Germany’s defeat. No longer could it be argued that the profession was largely “immune” to Nazification apart from the fanatics connected to Frank’s notorious *Reichsinstitut*. In the late 1930s Schieder and Conze were among the most gifted young disciples of the Königsberg circle of historians gathered around Hans Rothfels (a fervent nationalist, who as a Jew was forced to emigrate to the U.S. in 1938), which as a group had aggressively propagated the cultural dominance of Germans in the east and employed the concept of the *Volk* (a nebulous admixture of culture, language, and race) as a weapon in the bitter conflict of nationalities in what they called the

“East German” regions of Poland.¹⁰⁴ Though in the 1920s and early 1930s this approach did not preclude preserving respect for other minorities, its chief impulse came from the need to establish the “natural foundation of the political order” in regions with mixed ethnicities and German minorities. For that purpose, political history was far less useful than geography, anthropology, and linguistics. After 1933, under the auspices of the North and East German Research Community (N.O.F.G.), historians, linguists, geographers, anthropologists, and archeologists developed overarching multidisciplinary projects that established German claims to conquest. Once the war began, these projects took on ever more ominous characteristics as they merged conceptually and politically with the plans for the forced “resettlement” and colonization of conquered Poland and drew into their orbit younger historians whose aim was no longer to restore the borders of 1914 but to extend them and to support German claims to new territories by demonstrating the Germanic *Volk* and “cultural” character of that geographic space. Social, cultural, and racial criteria were now applied not only to describing the long-term historical character of those territories but also to concrete policies aimed at transforming the German minority into a majority. These thoroughly documented revelations made it evident that broad sectors of the German historical profession participated in the regime’s policies of ethnic cleansing and Judeocide in the conquered eastern territories.

After the war, these same scholars, most prominently Schieder and Conze (also important were Karl Dietrich Erdmann, Otto Brunner, Hermann Heimpel, and Hermann Aubin), became towering figures in the history profession, Schieder establishing comparative history and Conze social history; each promoting the careers of numerous talented and creative younger historians who in turn have dominated the profession right up to the present. Though conservatives like Hans Rothfels could pick up their careers where they left off (Rothfels, who was Jewish, welcomed the National Socialist government and became disillusioned only after being forced to emigrate to the U.S.) no other German-Jewish émigrés returned to their universities.

Ironically, one of the most interesting features of the work done by historians under the auspices of the Nazified “east” and “west” research mega-projects was their interdisciplinary and methodologically “innovative” excursions into geography, anthropology, sociology, and linguistics. As Peter Schöttler has pointed out in his work on “West Europe research,” regional and popular history, or so-called *Volksgeschichte*,

was promoted by “mobilized” historians in order to legitimate German territorial conquests by demonstrating the cultural, linguistic, and ultimately racial affinities between the Reich and the territories west of the Rhine.¹⁰⁵ But though they made no bones about lending scholarly support to the *Volkstumskampf* (struggle of peoples) many of their studies appropriated methodological approaches from anthropology, linguistics, and geography. Historiography and politics meshed to both discredit the older idealist and political history and to challenge to the Bismarckian small-state concept.

These revelations and the ensuing public controversy set the stage for the tense confrontation that took place at the *Historikertag* in Frankfurt in September 1998. After World War II, German historians were almost universally drawn to social history. Was the first generation of postwar German historians complicit in National Socialism or, in the phrase famously used by Götz Aly and Susanne Hein, the “architects of annihilation”?¹⁰⁶ Or, was the assumption of a direct connection between policy and practice, thought and deed, presumptuous? What role did generations or “age cohort” play in the decision of the “new” historians who were trained by the World War II generation to protect their mentors? If the “fathers,” who came of age in the Third Reich, held key positions in the postwar era, their “sons,” doyens of the professional caste like Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Hans and Wolfgang Mommsen, and Wolfgang Schieder (Theodor’s son), established social history as the dominant paradigm in the context of a strong liberal-democratic consensus in the 1960s and 1970s. Was there a contradiction between the methodologically innovative aspects of *Volksgeschichte* and the politically dubious purposes of *kämpfende Wissenschaft*? Were the contributions of these scholars to rebuilding the profession after the war indicative of a profound transformation in their scholarly and political orientation, or was their apparent reorientation merely an external accommodation to the new circumstances of liberal-democratic order? Was there a connection between the crisis of the methods promoted by social history and the new but hardly well-established methods of cultural history and the history of mentalities and generational confrontation? This constellation of questions led to a confrontation with those who now represented the so-called “third generation,” younger historians who asked why it had taken so long for the profession to own up to its own history and why had the “sons” – all powerful figures in their own right – not posed the decisive questions?

So identified was that second generation of historians with the rise of social history in the Federal Republic that Wehler even suggested that the controversy over the complicity of the “generation of the fathers” was merely a subterfuge aimed at the “conceptual, indeed the political and moral deligitimation of social history.”¹⁰⁷ At the same time, however, a number of younger historians responded with the equally exaggerated argument that in fact social history in Germany was the product of *Volksgeschichte* rather than American techniques of social science or the French *Annales* school.¹⁰⁸

The Frankfurt debate was in many respects the culmination of years of archival research and public scrutiny. Its most important consequence, as Hans Mommsen eloquently put it, was to “destroy the consensus established in the postwar years, that the profession, with the exception of a few outsiders, was not coordinated and in general upheld its professional standards.”¹⁰⁹ But if “opportunistic fellow traveling” could no longer account for the deep imbrications of these historians in a network of institutions and conceptions that was permeated with racial and anti-Semitic ideology, more controversial is how to interpret the role of the historians during and after the war. According to Aly, the evidence implicating Schieder and Conze revealed a deep commitment to “Nazi-modern racial thought” and to the dream of realizing Germanic “Socialism” by expanding the number of potential German “resettlers” who would benefit from the war by policies of “Aryanization, conquest, plunder, deportation, enslavement and murder.”¹¹⁰ Wolfgang Mommsen offered not so much a refutation of these claims in his presentation to the *Historikertag* as a strong contextualization of the intellectual and cultural formation of the milieu of the Königsberg circle. It would, he argued, be false to presume that the attempt to create a historical basis for German hegemony in areas of East Central Europe characterized by a *mélange* of ethnicities and languages was primarily or exclusively motivated by ethnic or racial goals, since for the “protagonists of an offensive Eastern policy among the historians this concept of the Volk was to a considerable extent oriented towards cultural and civilizational criteria.”¹¹¹ During the 1920s these ideas of German cultural and economic superiority, he argued, were by no means unique to National Socialism or even exclusively claimed by the national-conservative right. After 1939, however, all constraint was thrown overboard as the historians readily crossed the Rubicon to adopt violent policies of ethnic cleansing, and the military conquest of the East was

supplemented by historically and anthropologically grounded “scientific” precepts. The infamous October 1939 Theodor Schieder “memorandum” emerged at this crucial juncture: historians now played catch-up with the *Reichswehr*, “hastily accommodating” to Nazi policies and fashioning their own version of a “a comprehensive plan for the formation of a new German–Polish border and urgent re-Germanizing settlement policies in areas that have now fallen to the Reich.”¹¹² Though he denied that Schieder and Conze could be considered “propagandists,” Mommsen called them collaborators with “little influence,” a conclusion that fell considerably short of Aly’s “architects of annihilation” label. The case of Schieder was nevertheless exemplary, Mommsen noted, providing a striking example of how historians came “more and more to inwardly identify with the goals and ideals of National Socialist regime.”¹¹³

Directly challenging Aly, Hans Mommsen called it “absurd” to attribute any direct causality between the activities of the N.O.F.G. historians and the Final Solution, though he admitted that the language of the “memorandum” did lend itself to a mentality that legitimized and permitted systematic genocide to be considered within the “realm of the possible.” More significant was Mommsen’s sharp retort to those who still maintained that, despite specific instances of “affinity” with the regime’s aims and policies, the professional historians could not be considered “Nazis.” For Mommsen, “what is up for discussion in the example of *Ostforschung*, is not the excrescence (*Ausfluss*) of any affinity to National Socialism, but real National Socialism.”¹¹⁴ In his major study of post-1945 German historians, Nicolas Berg has argued that those members of the West German profession who were themselves “activists” and “fellow travelers” between 1933 and 1945 clouded the crimes of the regime – especially the Holocaust – by later insisting on a neutralizing discourse of “structures” and “functions,” while at the same time excluding the perspective of, and in some cases the very historians themselves, who were victims of the regime.¹¹⁵

9. Was there a “Nazi Ideology?”

One result of the debates over the complicity of the humanities in the Third Reich is greater clarity about the porosity of the Nazi worldview and its effective compatibility with a variety of traditional academic disciplines and approaches. Despite the absolutism of the *Führerprinzip*

and the quasi-liturgical status granted to Hitler's speeches and writings, no single version of "Nazi ideology" ever became hegemonic in the Third Reich. Intellectual fealty to National Socialism required not so much ideological consistency as an ethos or *Gesinnung*, a willingness to adhere to the general precepts of the worldview, which was vague and indistinct enough to embrace a variety of related perspectives. A great deal of confusion over the Nazification of the humanities derives from the difficulty in drawing a firm line between "Nazi ideology" and the wide spectrum of modes of accommodation and participation characteristic of the academic community. As Hans Mommsen noted in Frankfurt, the image of a one hundred per cent Nazi was a phantasm that ironically exonerated the equally fictional majority of "sympathizers" who, according to this argument, distanced themselves internally from this or that aspect of the regime.¹¹⁶

A generation of scholarship has persuasively demonstrated that Nazi ideology was a cultural synthesis fusing diverse and sometimes incompatible tropes – combining a modern technological and consumerist society with a fundamentally irrationalist and unstable admixture of romantic anti-capitalist, nationalist, radical *völkisch*, and bio-racial elements.¹¹⁷ As Sluga aptly points out, the Nazi worldview "encompassed a multiplicity of discordant beliefs." What was important was not the coherence of the worldview but that it served "as a unifying principle for a large and diverse group of people. What mattered was the *appeal* to the worldview rather than the worldview itself."¹¹⁸

Of course, the humanities were called upon to absorb substantial elements of what was referred to as a National Socialist worldview. But some questions, like whether "race" was to be defined biologically, culturally, anthropologically, or philosophically, remained, at least in principle and for a time, relatively open and controversial. What was crucial, however, was not that compulsory concepts were *decided upon*, but that such questions were openly *discussed* by scholars in the academic faculties. Precisely because direct interventions by the external political authorities were most often avoided, protracted competition over the restructuring of the disciplines according to National Socialist principles created the impression of a substantive intellectual debate. In this way ideological conceptions could be built into academic discourse, a process eased by the presence of these discursive elements – race, *Volk*, nation, German essence, etc. – in a long tradition of national-conservative rhetoric. The Nazi worldview appeared, in short, not to be something that went *against the current*

of those older intellectual conceptions, but rather to be something *consistent* with already existing academic controversies.

Fusion concepts like “reactionary modernism” (Jeffrey Herf) usefully demonstrate that no single distinctive German path to modernity emerged after World War I in circles identified with the Weimar conservative cultural revolution. An embrace of technology and innovation was entirely compatible with Germanic spirituality, anti-materialism, imperial ambitions, and a racist worldview.¹¹⁹ The omnipotence of the human will to control, the principle of unlimited technical possibilities for the perfection of humanity, and, finally, an inner readiness to embrace “final solutions” as a form of politics – and thereby to throw moral inhibitions overboard – created the climate for National Socialism even if no claim to an overarching historical telos towards that end can be presumed.¹²⁰

Consistency was not the strong suit of the party ideologues and their attitudes towards the humanities was no exception. Krieck, who became rector of Frankfurt University in May 1933, attempted to effect a “renewal of the university” in order to produce the “new man” whom he imagined as new and vital “spiritual soldier” of the Third Reich.¹²¹ Rosenberg, by contrast, wanted to bypass the universities entirely and establish his own *Hohe Schulen* (higher schools) to create an official “worldview” for a party elite.¹²² Frequent accusations that university scholars had failed to adopt the “authentic worldview” of National Socialism were coupled with urgent but vague appeals by Rust and other officials to have the courage to base knowledge on “German spirit” and “German life” and “no longer on the rational concepts of the western spirit.”¹²³ As Losemann has shown, even those ancient historians who readily adopted racial explanations during the Nazi era found it difficult to provide empirical evidence for the assertions of the regime’s most prominent “race researcher,” Hans F. K. Günther, the first Nazi professorial appointment engineered by the National Socialist government of Thuringia at the University of Jena in 1930.¹²⁴ Consequently, it might be more accurate to speak of a number of “ideologemes” rather than a unified ideology or doctrine.

To further illustrate this point, one need only compare the writings of leading Nazi thinkers on such key figures as Nietzsche, Wagner, and Spengler, on such themes as the relationship between “Germanism” and “Hellenism,” or even on the primordial nature of the original “Germans.”¹²⁵ Despite Hitler’s seemingly boundless admiration for Wagner, Alfred Bäumler, the most vehement defender of the Nazified

Nietzsche, was, in accordance with his master, a decisive opponent of Wagner, as were Günther, Himmler and Rosenberg, who avoided Wagner in favor of their own predilections to establish a pagan Wotan cult. Defenders of Wagner, of course, bemoaned the fact that “Wagner was suppressed by Nietzsche.”¹²⁶

In the arts and literature serious rifts surfaced between the staunch defenders of expressionism, like Gottfried Benn and Otto Andreas Schreiber (supported by Goebbels), and the resolute enemies of “degenerate” modernism, above all Rosenberg and the art “commissar” Adolf Ziegler, which were not fully resolved until Hitler’s “cultural speech” at the Nuremberg party rally in 1935.¹²⁷ Even the origins of the ancient “Aryans” – from whom the Germans were said to have originated – were hotly contested: were they Indogermanic Persians, “Nordics,” or perhaps the survivors of the lost continent of Atlantis, as Rosenberg’s *Mythos* claimed? In 1934, for example, a strange controversy broke out over the anthropologist Otto Höfer’s hypothesis that the Germanic peoples (*Germanen*) were originally an ecstatic and myth-obsessed cult of wild and bloodthirsty “berserkers” (from their characteristic “bearskins”) who massively engaged in ritual violence. After 1933, some pro-Nazi critics saw Höfer’s “berserker” thesis as a thinly disguised masquerade for a polemic against the brutality of SA street thugs.¹²⁸ These *querelles*, as well as the better-known polemics between Rosenberg and defenders of the established churches, ironically attest to the fact that the far-reaching Nazification of German society was in both language and practice probably furthered rather than hindered by the fact that no single ideology could ever claim full authority and that allegiance could be calibrated to fit the circumstances.

10. Semantic fields and Intellectual Constellations

As the extensive research on the humanities in the Third Reich has amply demonstrated, the line between conviction and career could never be clearly drawn, nor was the distinction ever firmly established between National Socialist politics and ideology on the one side and the discursive practices and mentalities of the academic community on the other. It is all too easy to define Nazi ideology so restrictively that it would be difficult to attach the label of “Nazi” to the vast majority of scholars whose public and private statements about events like the annexation of Austria and the conquest of the eastern territories make

it apparent that such a narrow definition cannot do justice to their real behavior during those twelve years.¹²⁹ If, for example, we approach the problem from the standpoint of language and trace the discourses of the humanities in the Wilhemine era and in the Nazi era, it is evident that no firm line can be drawn between the Nazi worldview and the vocabulary of the academic language of the conservative right in the pre-war era. In short, apart from those removed in 1933, most scholars continued to work as if nothing dramatic had occurred. At the same time, the divisions within the disciplines and the competition for pre-eminence and the capacity to define the center of scholarship took on a political dimension and strengthened the illusion of a plurality of conceptions and competing discourses in the new Nazified context. Even participation in the wartime “mobilization of the humanities” could be undertaken without undue political turbulence.

Explanations of the behavior of the professors, framed in terms of either ideological commitment or opportunistic behavior, only beg the question of whether motivation can ever be understood in terms of such a stark polarity between personal gain and idealistic investment. Much of the recent controversy about the humanities in the Third Reich has often operated at these two distinct but often overlapping levels. While some historians have focused on personal guilt and individual responsibility, others have preferred to show how distinctive intellectual tropes and mentalities contributed to the “German ideology” that rendered service to the “European new order.” Scholars have documented the deep if occasionally ambivalent identification of individual academic personalities with the regime and its goals, while others have focused on the intellectually substantive “correspondences” between the national-conservative stance of the vast majority of humanities scholars and the regime’s broader ideological purposes. The ongoing debate between those who emphasize one or another of these approaches is often evident, though not always articulated, in the contributions in this volume. This divide was especially evident in the public debate between two contributors, Richard Wolin and Frank-Rutger Hausmann, that took place in the *Internationale Zeitschrift für Philosophie* (2000) concerning the role of the philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer in 1941. In May of that year, on the anniversary of the conquest of France, Gadamer delivered a lecture at the German Institute in Paris on the subject “*Volk* and History in Herder’s Thought.” Well respected as a philosopher who did not support the National Socialists, Gadamer is in many

respects a more telling case, since unlike Heidegger he never compromised himself with the Nazis and was hardly demonstrative in his teaching or public utterances. Wolin's contribution to this volume presents Gadamer's 1941 Paris lecture as evidence not merely of the philosopher's longstanding intellectual conservatism but as entirely consistent with his famous (postwar) rejection of *Aufklärung* as a "prejudice against prejudice." Gadamer's admittedly reserved and rarely expressed political authoritarianism was apparent in his aforementioned lecture on Plato's concept of the state and in his conviction that "Germany's victory on the battlefield" and its hegemony over the new Europe was an expression of its clearly superior culture.¹³⁰ Hausmann, by contrast, considers Gadamer's lecture deeply ambiguous, perhaps even a covert affirmation of his distance from the regime and certainly "in no way evidence of Nazi-scholarship, and not understood as such." The passages in the Herder lecture referring to German hegemony, Hausmann notes, are so "ambivalent" that they can be interpreted in opposing ways, and even Gadamer's strong statement about the superiority of German over French or English culture, deriving from the fact that Germany's national identity did not come from a single event (e.g. the English or French Revolution), "can be read as a critique of National Socialism."¹³¹ However one judges Gadamer's text and his sympathies – and there is no doubt that years later he was less than honest in portraying them – the debate demonstrates how difficult it is even in this one instance to reconstruct the relationship between political behavior and philosophical reflection. Was the lecture an expression of Gadamer's advocacy of *völkisch*-nationalist Germany as opposed to the Enlightenment constitutionalism of France and England? Or was it a contorted attempt to make German hegemony intellectually palatable for a French audience whose historical self-consciousness as a nation was not entirely discredited by the absolute destruction of its political and legal institutions? Even more difficult is how to interpret Gadamer's stance *towards* Nazism, which, albeit illiberal, even in the 1930s still emphasized the continuities of tradition that encompassed a classical view of humanism and aestheticism. Was the line between German conservatism and Nazism so blurred by 1941 that Gadamer's efforts to maintain the distinction, however generously one might regard his intellectual pyrotechnics, would have to be judged as utterly inconsequential?

One alternative to these quandaries is the approach pursued by Georg Bollenbeck and his research team, shifting the emphasis from the terrain of individual personalities and broad intellectual orientations to the “semantic field” in which the specific disciplines operated. In this constellation the “disposition” of academic intellectuals in a broad swath of disciplines was framed in large part by the implicit acceptance of a vocabulary that both juridically and discursively reframed historical experiences on the ground as these categories became “emotionally invested.” Though Nazism introduced its own distinctive “language of the Third Reich,” documented in the classic studies by Viktor Klemperer and Dolf Sternberger, also important were the often imperceptible alterations of ordinary language and venerable humanities concepts, creating what Bollenbeck calls the “semantic reconstruction of the cultural sciences.” In addition to these semantic continuities, subtle shifts in meaning or in intensity that were attached to key concepts like *Reich*, *Führung*, *Volk*, etc. were evident in a wide variety of disciplines in the last years of the Weimar Republic.¹³² For example, the very term *Deutsch* (German) was both a descriptive and a normative concept, and took on a more ominous meaning in relation to the semantically pejorative *undeutsch*, a concept with marked anti-Semitic and nationalist overtones.¹³³

Bollenbeck’s approach goes beyond crediting German scholars with a predisposition to romantic and irrationalist tropes by demonstrating that both cognitively rational and emotionally affective terminologies were plastic enough to create an academic milieu that was receptive to, and in many ways constitutive of, National Socialist aims and worldview.¹³⁴ Paradoxically, one of the strengths of Nazi ideology was that it appeared to offer a radical response to the contemporary crisis while at the same time remaining vague enough to be filled with a wide variety of doctrines and to speak to very different strata of the population. Political metaphors and abstract formulae such as “the decisive battle of worldviews” made it possible for any and all of the audiences of National Socialist propaganda to adopt and accentuate for themselves different building blocks of contradictory and heterogeneous programmatic statements. And, if something did not fit entirely with its programmatic logic, it could, as an isolated element, coexist alongside it: “Whatever could not be precisely formulated at the level of ideology could be manifested in the praxis of the ‘movement’ which offered sufficient space for the articulation of latent meanings, certainty and aggressivity.”¹³⁵

11. Curriculum Vitae

It remains incontrovertible that for the majority of humanities scholars the political caesura of National Socialism was not at the time or subsequently perceived as a rupture either in the history of their respective disciplines or in their individual biographies. As Jürgen Kocka noted in his thoughtful response at the Frankfurt *Historikertag*, the reestablishment of careers and reputations contaminated by the National Socialist years belongs to the early history of the Federal Republic, “when silence about personal complicity and guilt was by and large typical, as was the drawing of a sharp divide from the substance of National Socialist public life and politics – and the removal of the Nazi leadership elite.”¹³⁶

Thus, the Nazi years could be integrated into (or erased from) the professor’s curriculum vitae without producing any serious internal theoretical or practical crisis. Did accommodation with the regime by virtually all humanities disciplines during the Nazi era represent a devastating judgment on what might be called the pedagogical enterprise of the humanities? Indeed, did the humanities suffer such a decline in the 1930s, as Ringer contended, that defeat and the creation of the hated Weimar Republic produced a deep sense of malaise and resentment among the mandarins, who, for all their differences, shared a belief that a “profound ‘crisis of culture’ was at hand?”¹³⁷ Some observers have even suggested that the fate of the humanities in the Third Reich confirms the judgment that there is a dark side of the larger “project” of the humanities which revealed a universal potential for repressive, totalitarian, and antidemocratic politics. Some would go so far as to maintain that implicit in the German humanistic educational ideal was an image of a “tradition” that, “no matter its content, is always a necessary tool for the elite to go on ‘guiding’ the species (or nation or race or class) toward perfection by stabilizing and preserving the unity and uniformity of the state and its institutions as an essential means for achieving this perfection.”¹³⁸ To be sure, there is no guarantee that humanism, defined as the grounding of an ethical ideal on the realization of an image drawn from the study of the past, can lead, as the exiled critic Erich Auerbach – ostensibly commenting on the historian Friedrich Meinecke – recognized in 1952, can avoid moral aloofness or abject servility to power politics.¹³⁹ Similarly, Georg Iggers, also discussing the role of German idealism in the nineteenth century, points out that Meinecke could not abandon

his philosophy of identity because he assumed that the interests of the state and those of the individual are ultimately always in harmony with the ethical ideal: “A dualism exists only in the sense that within the state there is a tension between this idea of a better self, and the elemental forces which drive the state.”¹⁴⁰ Writing in 1944, the philosopher Ernst Cassirer reflected on this hubris of the humanities, and countered it with a stoical interpretation of his own: “Kant no longer believes that civilization even in its highest perfection can bring about the happiness of mankind, and he no longer asks it to. It is rather the setting in which man is to test and prove his freedom. And he must undergo this test ever and again.”¹⁴¹ As Cassirer, who left Germany in 1933, was fully aware, with very few exceptions, the humanities in Nazi Germany did not pass that test.

NOTES

1. Fritz K. Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community, 1890–1933* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 446.
2. Hauke Brunkhorst, *Der Intellektuelle im Land der Mandarine* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1987), pp. 18, 19 passim.; Beat Näf, *Von Perikles zu Hitler? Die athenische Demokratie und die deutsche Althistorie bis 1945* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1986).
3. Jerry Z. Muller, *The Other God that Failed: Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 17.
4. Mark Lilla, *The Reckless Mind: Intellectuals in Politics* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2001), p. 210.
5. On Schneider/Schwerte see Joachim Lerchenmueller and Gerd Simon, *MASKEN-WECHSEL Wie der SS-Hauptsturmführer Schneider zum BRD-Hochschulrektor Schwerte wurde und andere Geschichten über die Wendigkeit deutscher Wissenschaft im 20. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen, Germany: Verlag der Gesellschaft für interdisziplinäre Forschung, 1999); Claus Leggewie, *Von Schneider zu Schwerte/ Das ungewöhnliche Leben eines Mannes der aus der Geschichte lernen wollte* (Munich: Hanser, 1998).
6. Atina Grossmann, “The ‘Goldhagen Effect’”: Memory, Repetition, and Responsibility in the New Germany,” *The “Goldhagen Effect” History, Memory, Nazism – Facing the German Past*, ed. Goeffrey Eley (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), p. 93.
7. For a useful bibliography see Rüdiger Hohls and Konrad H. Jarausch, *Versäumte Fragen. Deutsche Historiker im Schatten des Nationalsozialismus* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 2000), pp. 477–502; Beat Näf, “Zu den Forschungen über Antike und Altertumswissenschaften in der Zeit von Faschismus und Nationalsozialismus,” *Antike und Altertumswissenschaft in der Zeit von Faschismus und Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Beat Näf (Mandelbachtal, Germany: Edition Cicero, 1999), pp. 44–70.

8. For example, Barbara Schneider, "Die höhere Schule im Nationalsozialismus: zur Ideologisierung von Bildung und Erziehung," *Beiträge zur historischen Bildungsforschung*, Bd. 21 (Cologne: Böhlau, 2000).
9. Franz L. Neumann, "The Social Sciences," in *The Cultural Migration: The European Scholar in America* ed. Franz Neumann et al. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953); *The Intellectual Migration: Europe and America, 1930–1960*, ed. Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn (Cambridge, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969); Laura Fermi, *Illustrious Immigrants: The Intellectual Migration from Europe, 1930–1941* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); and Norman Bentwich, *The Rescue and Achievement of Refugee Scholars: The Story of Displaced Scholars and Scientists, 1933–1952* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1953); Anthony Heilbut, *Exiled in Paradise: German Refugee Artists and Intellectuals in America, from the 1930s to the Present* (New York: Viking Press, 1983); Herbert A. Strauss, "Jewish Emigration from Germany: Nazi Policies and Jewish Responses, Part 2," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, 26, 1981, pp. 343–409.
10. See the essays in *Die Rolle der Geisteswissenschaften im Dritten Reich 1933–1945*, ed. Frank-Rutger Hausmann (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2002); *Intellektuelle im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Wolfgang Bialas and Manfred Gangl (Frankfurt: P. Lang, 2000) and the now somewhat dated "Die Besten Geister der Nation": *Philosophie und Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Ilse Korotin (Vienna: Picus Verlag, 1994). For the post-1945 "reconstruction" of the humanities, see *Akademische Vergangenheitspolitik. Beiträge zur Wissenschaftskultur der Nachkriegszeit*, ed. Bernd Weisbrod (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2002).
11. See Otto Gerhard Oexle, "Wirklichkeit" – "Krise der Wirklichkeit," – "Neue Wirklichkeit," in *Rolle der Geisteswissenschaften*, ed. Hausmann, p. 18.
12. Ringer, *German Mandarins*, p. 441.
13. Holger Dainat, "Anpassungsprobleme einer nationalen Wissenschaft: Die Neuere deutsche Literaturwissenschaft in der NS-Zeit," *Atta Troll Tanzt Noch: Selbstbesichtigungen der literaturwissenschaftlichen Germanistik im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Petra Boden and Holger Dainat (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1997) pp. 103–126.
14. See his essay in this volume and Steven P. Remy, *The Heidelberg Myth: The Nazification and Denazification of a German University* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).
15. Jens Malte Fischer, "Wagner Interpretation im Dritten Reich," *Richard Wagner im Dritten Reich: Ein Schloss Elmau-Symposium*, ed. Saul Friedländer and Jörn Rüsen (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2000), p. 119.
16. See the essays in *Plessners "Grenzen der Gemeinschaft": Eine Debatte*, ed. Wolfgang Essbach, Joachim Fischer, and Helmut Lethen (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2002).
17. Oexle, "Wirklichkeit," p. 17.
18. Dainat, "Anpassungsprobleme," p. 110.
19. Franz L. Neumann, "The Social Sciences," in *The Cultural Migration: The European Scholar in America* ed. Franz Neumann et al. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953), pp. 15, 16.
20. Ringer, *German Mandarins*, pp. 253, 254.
21. *Bekanntnis der Professoren an den deutschen Universitäten und Hochschulen zu Adolf Hitler und dem nationalsozialistischen Staat* (Dresden: NS Lehrerbund Deutschland/Sachsen, 1933).

22. Karl Viëtor to Erich Rothacker, 1 July 1933, cited in Dainat, "Anpassungsprobleme," p. 107.
23. Karl Viëtor, "Das Leiden am Leben" (1934), in *Georg Büchner: Dantons Tod. Editionen für den Literaturunterricht* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1979), pp. 94–96.
24. Oscar J. Hamman, "German Historians and the Advent of the National Socialist State," *Journal of Modern History*, 13, 1941, pp. 161–188.
25. Martin Heidegger, "The Rectorate 1933/34: Facts and Thoughts," *Martin Heidegger and National Socialism: Questions and Answers*, ed. Günther Neske and Emil Kettering (New York: Paragon House, 1990), p. 17.
26. E. Günther Gründel, "Die Intellektuelle und Nationalsozialismus," *Jahre der Überwindung* (Breslau: Korn Verlag, 1934), pp. 93–103.
27. Dainat, "Anpassungsprobleme," p. 122.
28. Frank-Rutger Hausmann, "Termitenwahn" – Die Bedeutung der Gemeinschaftsforschung für die NS-Wissenschaft," in *Semantischer Umbau der Geisteswissenschaften nach 1933 und 1945*, ed. Georg Bollenbeck and Clemens Knobloch (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 2001), pp. 59.
29. Volker Losemann, *Nationalsozialismus und Antike: Studien zur Entwicklung des Faches Alte Geschichte 1933–1945* (Hamburg: Hoffmann & Campe, 1977), p. 50.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 79, 80.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
32. Daniel Penham, communication to the author, Heidelberg, 5–8 May 1993.
33. Walter Maria Guggenheimer "an einen Mitläufer" (15 April 1947), *Historische Augenblicke: Das 20. Jahrhundert in Briefen*, ed. Jürgen Moeller (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1999), pp. 1–197.
34. Friedrich Meinecke, *The German Catastrophe*, trans. Sidney B. Fay (Cambridge, MA: Beacon Press, 1950), p. 15. See Georg G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical thought from Herder to the Present* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1983), p. 225.
35. V. Ehrenberg, "Personal Memoirs," cited in Volker Losemann, "Nationalsozialismus und Antike – Bemerkungen zur Forschungsgeschichte," in *Antike und Altertumswissenschaft in der Zeit von Faschismus und Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Beat Näf (Mandelbachtal, Germany/Cambridge, UK: Edition Cicero, 1999), p. 75.
36. See the contributions to *Akademische Vergangenheitspolitik: Beiträge zur Wissenschaftskultur der Nachkriegszeit*, ed. Bernd Weisbrod (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2002).
37. Ralph Jesse, *Akademische Elite und kommunistische Diktatur: Die ostdeutsche Hochschullehrerschaft in der Ulbricht-Ära* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999).
38. Max Horkheimer to Friedrich Neumann, 17 September 1948, in Max Horkheimer, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1996), vol. 17, p. 1027.
39. Ralf Wiggershaus, *Die Frankfurter Schule* (Vienna: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1986), pp. 498, 499.
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