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Theorizing against politics : rethinking Max Weber and the purpose of political theory.

John A. Goulding
University of Massachusetts Amherst

THEORIZING AGAINST POLITICS:
RETHINKING MAX WEBER AND THE PURPOSE OF POLITICAL THEORY

A Dissertation Presented

by

JOHN A. GOULDING

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Approved as to style and content by:

Nicholas Xenos, Chair

Roberto Alejandro Rivera, Member

William M. Johnston, Member

Eric S. Einhorn, Department Head
Political Science

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ABSTRACT

THEORIZING AGAINST POLITICS:
RETHINKING MAX WEBER AND THE PURPOSE OF POLITICAL THEORY

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JOHN A. GOULDING

B.S., UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES

M.A., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Ph.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

DIRECTED BY: PROFESSOR NICHOLAS XENOS

Political theorists have long noted the "liberal" dimensions of Max Weber's theory of politics. In doing so, I believe they overlook the anti-political overtures in his push for national glory, his mechanical design of parliamentarism, and his desperate faith in plebiscitarian leaders--all of which constrain the prospect of human struggle underlying his idea of politics. Political theorists who address Weber's works on science and methodology have viewed them as "correlates" of his

theoretical project of politics. I contend that they too ignore the degree to which Weber's methodological works reveal an immanent critique of his own theory of politics in particular and the craft of political theorizing in general.

In this dissertation I confirm the anti-political overtures that underlie Max Weber's theory of politics. I challenge his theory of liberal democracy insofar as he anchors it to his public and quite problematic advocacy of German national glory. But more important, I charge that his scientific and methodological works provide greater insight into the elements that comprise a theory of politics in his thinking. I believe they do so in that Weber's theory of scientific scholarship posits the aim of ethical clarity, the divide between facts and values, and the conditional quality of all human values. I thus turn Weber the ethical scholar against Weber the active citizen.

With this critique, I draw several conclusions about the contemporary value of Max Weber's political thinking. In clarifying the differences between his concepts of political judgment (*Augenmass*) and scholarly judgment (*Urteil*), I confirm that where the former succumbs to the dictates of one conviction, the latter ultimately contests all convictions. Based on this contrast, I also affirm how Weber's idea of scholarship invites more fruitful prospects of political struggle, prospects that extend outside the "life-sphere" of the liberal institutions of politics.

Finally, from this alternative location of politics, I suggest that Weber's idea of an ethic of responsibility (*Verantwortungsethik*) includes the scholar as much as the politician, especially a scholar who contests the ultimate ends of the politician, other scholars, and one's own self.

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INTRODUCTION

The bulk of the scholarly literature on Max Weber's political thinking tends to be broad in its volume yet quite narrow in its theoretical focus. For instance, the works of Wolfgang Mommsen, David Beetham and Robert Eden--among many others--demonstrate a thorough mastery of Weber's theoretical project of politics. In each case, however, his theory of politics becomes a mere validation of the political project of modern liberalism. Though he renders Weber's "political goals...subordinate to the [German] nation's requirements," Mommsen still relates his thinking to a "defense of liberalism," one "endowed with an entirely aggressive rather than a resigned tone."[1] David Beetham employs another approach to Weber's liberal project, such that he reveals a clash between Weber's "commitment to German cultural values" and both "his emphasis on leadership in society and his concern for liberty in an increasingly bureaucratised age."[2] Even Robert Eden, who rejects the Straussian view of Weber as a perpetrator of nihilism, contends that Weber's theory of politics represents a "defense of liberal democratic institutions...against Nietzsche's nihilistic politics."[3] Given these interpretations, it is apparent that they view his political theory primarily from the standpoint of its emancipatory gesture either to revitalize the German nation, to mend

Germany's class divisions, or to sate the starved moral space of European culture.

I wish to depart from these "liberal" nationalist interpretations insofar as they fail to acknowledge the deeply flawed design of Weber's theory of politics. That flaw appears in the very liberal aims that underlie his political thinking: parliamentarism, universal suffrage, and individual autonomy. For such aims, I believe, tend to impede rather than invite the human struggles that inform and undergird Weber's idea of politics. Indeed, I contend that a more interesting and fruitful idea of politics derives from Weber's writings on methodology and science. Though much of the scholarly literature explores the intricate bond between science and politics in Weber's theoretical corpus, such works approach it from a somewhat limited perspective. It is Peter Breiner's contention, for instance, that Max Weber's social scientific works support "his objective stance to argue for the unfeasibility of political projects he disagrees with substantively."[4] David Owen also seeks to reveal what he calls an "implicit politics," a "political correlate," in Weber's notion of a cultural science. In fact, Owen perceives his idea of science "in terms of its capacity for 'breeding' autonomous individuals" who can partake in "a political activity which is manifest through the specification of the conditions of autonomy in the different life-spheres."[5] There is also H.

H. Bruun, who argues "that the concepts of conflict and power, which indisputably constitute the central core of Weber's conception of the essence of politics, *may* be contained within the frame of reference defined by his various methodological reflections."[6]

Thus each thinker underscores the bond between science and politics. However, where they tend to view Weber's theory of science as an essential corollary of his politics, I view it as both a immanent critique of his political theory in particular and a provocative rejoinder to liberal politics in general. In this dissertation I thus confirm the anti-political overtures that underlie Max Weber's theory of politics. I challenge his theory of liberal democracy insofar as he anchors it to his public and quite problematic advocacy of German national glory. But more important, I charge that his scientific and methodological works provide greater insight into the elements that comprise a theory of politics in his thinking. I believe they do so in that Weber's theory of scientific scholarship posits the aim of ethical clarity, the divide between facts and values, and the conditional quality of all human values. In short, I turn Weber the ethical scholar against Weber the active citizen, concluding that his theory of science offers something his theory of politics does not: a more keen perception into the idea of democracy.

I find myself siding with a view of Weber which ceases to corner him between either a blind defense of a particular moral conviction or a scholarly indifference to all convictions. Rather than further establish Weber's intricate moral aims, however, I wish to explore how such ambitions compel us to rethink his theoretical project of politics. Indeed, I approach Weber's political thinking from the standpoint of his nationalist convictions, which, I believe, tend to constrain the possibilities of political struggle and, thus, undercut the very goal of German national glory. Still, this paradox of national politics is evident in more than just Weber's political thinking. It also appears in relation to his concept of science or scholarship (*Wissenschaft*), such that one of the moral aims of science is establishing "clarity" between human values, technical means, and any corresponding consequences. Thus a problem is apparent in Weber's thinking, a problem that issues from a clash of multiple moral ambitions. A significant part of this problem manifests itself in an ethical paradox of sorts, one that exposes the degree to which Weber the theorist of national politics deviates from Weber the professional scholar. I therefore offer an interpretation of Max Weber's political thinking that moves beyond explorations of the moral diversity and ethical ambiguity in his work. I offer an view whereby the ethical limits of his project confirm not simply the problem of

theorizing politics, but the critical and instructive value of theorizing against a flawed notion of politics.

With regard to the concepts of "politics" and "political," I, much like Weber, understand them to signify the possibility of a human struggle, one premised on a multitude of ultimate convictions. Yet unlike Weber, who utilizes the struggle of politics as a means to advance the singular end of German national power, I also understand politics as an end itself: a sporadic, unanticipated, and wholly contingent contestation of all ultimate ends--even the end of politics itself. Thus, when I use the concept of "politics," I am referring to those historical and theoretical instances in which an open-ended public disagreement over ends and means flourishes among equally impassioned persons. When I use the concept of "political," moreover, I am referring to those individual, social, or public circumstances which are informed by at least the prospect of the aforementioned human struggles. Accordingly, even parliamentary democracy becomes contestable on the basis of its limited and finite location, its narrow and specialized criteria for admission, and its closed and instrumental advance of, say, the ends of law and order, democratic republicanism, or liberal individualism. As Weber himself notes, parliamentary democracy is contestable insofar as it inevitably mandates "that things must be emptied and made into matters-of-fact

(*Versachlichung*), and the following must undergo spiritual proletarianization, in order to achieve 'discipline'."[7] In short, parliamentary democracy is a political condition which, ironically, threatens the prospect of politics with constraints on both the number and value of ultimate ends.

Max Weber's desire to advance the Wilhelmine German nation strongly influences his theory of modern politics. This leverage is plain in his early essays, in which the aim of his theoretical project was "not to make everybody happy but the *social unification* of the nation."[8] It persists after his emotional "breakdown" and up to the outbreak of the First World War, when Weber's explorations of the "Protestant Ethic" presaged a "modern man" who is "unable to give religious ideas a significance for culture and national character which they deserve."[9] From the First World War until his death in 1920, moreover, the impact of Weber's nationalism on his theory of politics manifests itself in a variety of newspaper articles and public lectures. These works concern his belief that "the question of the internal reconstruction of Germany" will determine "whether the nation feels ready to bear the responsibility which a nation of seventy million people has towards its descendants."[10] Clearly, then, though Weber's theory of politics touches on numerous topics, it consistently mirrors his moral ambition to advance the power of the Wilhelmine German nation.

What is novel about the nationalist underpinnings of Weber's political thought is not so much that they bare troublesome ties to the anti-democratic and anti-liberal sentiments of German National Socialism.[11] Nor that they illuminate tensions in his particular brand of "aggressive liberalism," tensions which appear to privilege democratic institutions and charismatic politicians at the expense of a democratic citizenry.[12] What is novel is that the bond between Weber's political thought and his nationalist convictions indicates a significant problem involving the marriage of morality and politics in the modern world.[13]

The union of morality and politics is a theme that pervades the entire range of Max Weber's writings. It begins when he declares in his 1895 "Freiburg Inaugural Address" that an "ultimate subjective core" underlies all moral convictions in modern politics, a core which ensures that "[e]ven our highest, our ultimate ideals in this life change and pass away."[14] It expands in the first two decades of the 20th century, notably in his essays in <u>The Methodology of the Social Sciences</u>. There he argues that a person's "value-judgements" are not so much conceived by modern science as they are constructed over the course "of an irreconcilable death-struggle, like that between 'God' and the 'Devil'" which is endemic to modern science.[15] Finally, this union, which is predicated on the "ethical irrationality" of the modern world and the centrality of

"conflict" in social life, saturates Weber's famed 1919 lecture on "The Profession and Vocation of Politics." In that lecture he submits "that the achievement of 'good' ends is in many cases tied to the necessity of employing morally suspect or at least morally dangerous means."[16] Given these claims, it seems as though Weber is at least equally interested in the mix of morality and politics as he is in devising a theory of politics that advances the aim of German national power.

In the chapters which follow, I argue that Weber's interest in morality and politics places him in a significant predicament. It does so, not because he straddles a fine line between the morally "empty" creed of "Machtpolitik"[17] and Kant's dictum that "[t]he God of morality does not yield to Jupiter, the custodian of violence."[18] Rather, in light of Weber's axiom that morality and politics reflect "a tension that may erupt at any moment into a irresolvable conflict,"[19] it is a predicament that makes him prone to the "ethical paradoxes" that appear in his own theory of politics. By an ethical paradox, he means the situation in which a person, who seeks "to save his own soul and the souls of others," discredits his own moral end "with the diabolical powers that lurk in all violence."[20] These paradoxes, which evoke Machiavelli's tale of the contingencies of "fortune," confront the purpose of politics and the constancy of

morality. They challenge those persons who, like Weber with his nationalist ambitions, seek to combine both while "striving for power" in the modern world.

I maintain further that Weber's interest in morality and politics reveals at least two types of "life-conduct" (*Lebensführung*) that are capable of withstanding the force of these paradoxes. The basis of this claim derives from his lectures on "The Profession and Vocation of Politics" and "Science as a Vocation." In the former lecture, he points to a conduct of politics indicative of a person's "passionate commitment to a 'cause' (*Sache*)" and a "sense of responsibility" and "judgement." These two latter traits, which combine to subdue the "vain" tendencies of one's "soul," direct a person's life-conduct "entirely at the service of the 'cause'" despite the modern world's ethical incoherence.[21] In the other lecture, Weber notes that a life-conduct of science requires self-sacrifice, insofar as "strict specialization" and "self-clarification" help a person "become fully conscious...that he has achieved something that will endure" the shifts of an irrational cosmos.[22] But unlike the conduct of politics, which requires total submission to a moral conviction, the conduct of science is "subjected" to the historical fate of "progress," which for Weber means the "common goal" of dispelling and surpassing the absolute design of knowledge.[23] Hence the distinction between these two types

of life-conduct denote a tension in Weber's political thinking. It constitutes a tension in that the politician restricts the scope of politics by obeying one particular moral conviction and the scholar encourages politics by questioning all--even one's own--moral convictions.

These two types of conduct thus signify the extent to which Weber's theory of science, more than his theory of politics, maintains the mix of morality and politics. In his theory of politics, the politician appears to weather an ethical paradox by fashioning both politics and oneself into an instrument, "a human 'apparatus,'" that advances a moral conviction. This transformation, however, cannot eliminate the ethical paradoxes stemming from the union of morality and politics. Indeed, it limits politics to a set of "parliamentary" institutions and a code of "responsible" conduct, whereby a person's conviction accrues power enough to influence the violence of the state, the moral direction of politics and, thus, the meaning of an ethical paradox.

In Weber's theory of science, which mirrors the conflicts surrounding his theorizing of the political, the scholar appears to confront an ethical paradox, too. He does so, not by obeying a conviction at the cost of politics and oneself, but by "clarifying" the differences between political means and moral convictions. The impact of this conduct surfaces neither in the institutional design of parliamentary politics nor in the violent enterprise of the

bureaucratic state. Instead it appears in the shape of a scholar who "confronts" and "forces" politicians and citizens alike to account for the ethical tensions between politics and their moral convictions. Hence, I am not turning Weber's political thinking on its head, so to speak, and defending the claim that science is more political than politics itself. I am simply turning his political thinking against itself, contending that Weber's idea of science both augments his understanding of modern politics and questions the way in which he theorizes it.

In the dissertation I discuss, examine, and confirm the different dimensions of this argument over the course of five chapters. Each chapter not only discloses the problematic tie between morality and politics in Weber's political thinking, but specifies its impact on the politician or political theorist who grapples with both. As I will point out below, these themes issue from Weber's theoretical and historical depictions of politics, nation, ethics, judgment, and vocation in the modern world.

The dissertation's first chapter explores Max Weber's idea of politics, an idea he posited on the assumption that human struggle (*Kampf*) is central to all forms of social life. In his early work on the shifts from "in kind" to "money-wage" labor in the rural regions of East Elbia, Weber theorized a politics indicative of "the hard struggle of man with man" for the creation of "elbow-room in this earthly

life."[24] Later, while outlining the epistemology of the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* in 1904, Weber noted again "that the highest ideals," political or otherwise, "are always formed only in the struggle with other ideals."[25] By the time the First World War was ravaging both the modern nation-state and the liberal individual, Weber easily pledged his support to "the given palaestra for the modern politician," which took shape in "parliamentary conflict and the fight for the party in the country."[26] Over the course of his varied works, therefore, works which explored the meaning of rural labor, scientific objectivity, and parliamentary democracy, Weber's idea of politics presupposed human struggle as the groundwork for power in the modern world.

By assuming that "all politics is essentially struggle," and that struggle ensures an "influence on the distribution of power," Weber appears to theorize a politics which acts as a means for the advance of a conviction. However, this "mechanical" view of politics and the human struggle upon which it is posited poses a problem in Weber's political thinking. It is a problem, not simply because a contingent struggle over differing convictions works at cross-purposes with a calculated design toward the preeminence of one conviction over all others. But it poses a problem, too, insofar as Weber signifies the advance of the German nation as that conviction which informs his

depiction of modern politics. He thus ignores his own claims about the capricious qualities of political struggle, an omission that illuminates a discrepancy in his political thinking. Likewise, he narrows the scope of convictions in politics by virtue of their duty to the preservation, unity, and expansion of the German nation, a restriction that reveals a tension in his theory of politics. Each case is evident in Weber's theoretical push to "clear away mechanical obstacles" that weaken Germany's national power, as well as in his political drive to contest those who, because of their "traditional," "immature," or "vain" convictions, impede the path to that power. I thus conclude that Weber's idea of politics both discloses the limits of his own political thinking and foreshadows the extent to which his devotion to the idea of a German nation obstructs the theoretical expanse of each particular idea.

Weber's attempt to direct theoretically and politically the human struggle of politics indicates the moral relevance of his commitment to the German nation. The second chapter explores the multiple meanings of Weber's idea of nation, focusing on its moral dimensions as they appear in both his political and sociological works. Though the advance of German national glory marks the chief moral aim of Weber's theory of politics, and that such an aim undergoes various transformations over the course of his intellectual career, the idea of "greatness" or glory still remains an ill-

defined concept in his thinking. If there is a substance to Weber's idea of nation, it reveals itself most clearly in his desire both to distance himself from the archaic national aspirations of his Wilhelmine contemporaries and envision a more robust and liberal concept in the future.

In early contrast to Treitschke's Idealist view of a German nation "shrouded in mystical obscurity," Weber conceives of it as a "worldly organization." Indeed he renders it a "worldly organization," the "economic and political-power interests" of which confirm its "decisive," "final," and "enduring" disposition.[27] Between 1910 and 1914, Weber perceives this historically distinct yet morally absolute idea of nation as such from a more analytical perspective. As he notes in Economy and Society, the meaning of "'nation' is usually anchored in the superiority...the irreplaceability, of the culture of values" central to a peculiar group.[28] By 1917, as the "value" of a war-torn German nation took center stage in his thinking, Weber found it easy to assert "that the vital interests of the [German] nation take precedence even over democracy or parliamentary rule."[29] Rejecting the dying "traditions" of Prussia, the "ethnic" focus of German Machtpolitik, and the "immaturity" of the Supreme Command and the Munich soviets, Weber's view of both the German nation and the nation as such evokes a multitude of meanings reaped in opposition to his own times. They also evoke his

desire to verify a moral conviction capable, not only of unifying a nation as diverse as Wilhelmine Germany, but of guiding it beyond the earthly tedium of the present toward the prospect of national glory in some other-worldly future.

Weber's moral commitment to the nation, however, and its expression as the aim of German politics, tends to narrow rather than expand the diversity of convictions in modern politics. By defining a single moral purpose in terms of training national leaders, reforming national institutions, and unifying a national citizenry, Weber's idea of nation represents a barrier to the political struggles which promote such goals. His idea of nation hinders them insofar as it excludes alternative interpretations, public deliberations, and broad participation in the human struggle of politics. Rather than spurring national power in the future, his idea of nation thus reveals an "ethical paradox" issuing from a tension between the moral absolute of nation and the earthly character of political struggle. Again, this paradox ensnares not only Weber's idea of nation, but his theory of politics too. It confirms the degree to which the nation constricts the prospects of human "struggle" in politics, and how politics unmasks the moral "'good'" of the nation.

The appearance of an ethical paradox between Weber's ideas of nation and politics requires an examination of his theory of political ethics. I do so by tracing, not only

Weber's interpretation of political ethics, but the theoretical and political problems allied with his inability to meet the very ethical criteria he envisions for others. This examination represents the focus of chapter three.

The issue of political ethics is one which Weber approaches most thoroughly only late in his life. Yet, when he does approach it, it is always within the framework of the potential for political leadership in the German nation. In his lecture on "The Profession and Vocation of Politics," Weber notes that "to ask what kind of human being one must be...to seize the spokes of the wheel of history is to pose an ethical question."[30] From this claim about the ethical ground of leadership, Weber surveys various notions of political ethics in post-World War I German politics. He contests the political ethics of the Allied Powers as ignoble, those of Pacificism as self-defeating, and those of Syndicalism, Spartacism, and Bolshevism as irrational.[31] These "ethics of conviction" (*Gesinnungsethik*), which focus exclusively on advancing the moral purity of an ideal, are viable only insofar as they reject the use of "morally dangerous means." Given that "the use of violence" is the "decisive means of politics," Weber holds little hope for the political sustenance of such ethics in the modern world. Only an "ethic of responsibility" (*Verantwortungsethik*), which focuses on the conviction as well as its paradoxical bond with violence, allows a person "to look at the

realities of life with an unsparing gaze, to bear these realities and be a match for them inwardly."[32]

It is important to note, however, that the ethic of responsibility entails more than a way of acting in the realm of politics, more than just a qualification for assuming political leadership in Wilhelmine Germany. I believe that it also reveals a substantive sense of the political in Weber's thinking. It does so inasmuch as the ethic of responsibility, one, reflects the chief criterion of success in modern politics; two, necessitates a struggle with opposing persons and convictions; three, underscores the tragic violation and thus limit of one's own actions; and, four, derives from Weber's public critique of the other ethical positions in German politics. But the chief problem with his notion of political ethics is that, as a political theorist, Weber fails to measure up to his own self-imposed "responsibility *before history*." That duty, he says in 1895, is to find for the nation of Wilhelmine Germany a way "to become something different: the precursors of an even greater epoch."[33] Spurning the anachronisms of the Prussian aristocracy, the passivity of the bourgeoisie, and the divisive interests of the working class, Weber believes the "responsible" path toward national glory leads Germany through a network of parliamentary institutions. That is where he thinks a political fight over the values of the nation occurs and fosters active political judgment

(*Augenmass*) as much as collective unity. Some four months before his death in 1920, however, Weber was no longer concerned with educating the German nation in the ways of political judgment and participation. By then he was simply searching for a leader who, as "*a bearer of the principle of the unity of the Reich*," could "create a dam" against a wave of fragmented interests.[34]

Thus the problem is not so much that Weber fails as a German citizen to expand the possibilities of politics and national power. What is troublesome is that Weber's idea of an ethic of responsibility reveals how his political theory seems to fall outside his own prescribed set of ethical standards. His inability to recognize, first, that his moral concern for the German nation limits the possibility of politics and, second, that his mechanical design of politics violates his ideal of the German nation, highlights his failure "to be conscious of these ethical paradoxes and of his responsibility for what may become of *himself* under pressure from them."[35] For this reason, Weber's idea of political ethics stresses the "ethical paradox" facing, not just the political leader in his theory of politics, but Weber himself as a theorist of politics in the late-19th and early-20th centuries.

These ethical limits reflected in Weber's theory of politics, and in the politics that surround his theorizing, presuppose at least two notions of judgment. On the one

hand, his idea of political judgment (*Augenmass*) points to a person who estimates within an historical moment the differences between his own moral conviction and such external parameters as other people, things, and even one's own vanity. On the other hand, though, his notion of scholarly judgment (*Urteil*) mandates a more thorough, sobering, and on-going account of such distinctions, such that it anticipates a reconfiguration rather than a protection of one's ultimate convictions. In short, where political judgment succumbs to the dictates of conviction, scholarly judgment inevitably unsettles them.

Like so many other themes in Max Weber's thinking, his idea of scholarly judgment (*Urteil*) derives from a number of battles with other influential schools of thought at the time. If Weber was not positioning himself against "scientific positivists," who, like Gustav Schmoller, believed judgment generated moral ends on the basis of empirical evidence, then he was situating himself contrary to "cultural subjectivists," who, like Stefan George and even Georg Simmel, considered judgment as a way to infuse personal values into historical events.[36] In each case the problem was not one chiefly concerned with judgment *per se*, but one concerned with the degree of "distance" between a person's judgment, his or her convictions, and the empirical constraints of history. Weber thus argued that the notion of judgment expressed by positivists betrayed too much

distance, whereas the notion of judgment expounded by subjectivists betrayed too little. He himself viewed "*judgement*" in terms of "the ability to maintain one's inner composure and calm while being receptive to realities, in other words *distance* from things and people."[37]

Max Weber's two notions of judgment, however, is not without its theoretical and political flaws. In one instance, he identifies political judgment (*Augenmass*) as a person's capacity "to overcome... the mortal enemy of all dedication to a cause," which for Weber means the "all-too-human enemy" of "common *vanity*."[38] The problem is not so much that Weber's notion of judgment perceives a person potentially "detached" from worldly things, other persons, and even oneself. Nor that it seeks to rid human excess and folly from modern politics, nudging Weber close to positivism. Rather, the problem with Weber's theory of judgment derives from its technical purpose in "clearing away" the obstacles which impede one's moral conviction, thus subsuming human judgment beneath the auspices of that specific conviction.

In another instance, Weber's notion of scholarly judgment (*Urteil*) reveals how he, as a political theorist, fails to judge the shortcomings of his own theoretical project, one that marches politics toward the goal of German national power. It divulges a political problem, moreover, in that a lack of "distance" blurs the line between his

devotion to German nationalism and his commitment to theorizing politics, thus pushing Weber close to subjectivism. This is evident in his battles with the positivists, subjectivists, and even the reign of bureaucratic "officialdom," whereby Weber's own lack of judgment "tempts him to strive for the glittering appearance of power rather than its reality."[39] Given these problems, which feature Weber's want of "responsibility" before the "paradoxes" in his political thought, judgment unveils him to be both a political actor fated to surrender himself to a moral conviction and a political theorist destined to thrust himself into the struggle of politics.

The "ethical paradoxes" in Weber's political thinking, and the limits of judgment in his theorizing of the political, demand an exploration of what Weber means by a life-conduct (*Lebensführung*) in the modern world. Unlike his scholarly probes into world religions, Weber's political writings show little interest in exploring a notion of "life-conduct," political or otherwise. In fact, his early political thinking only alludes to a vague idea of life-conduct. At that time, in opposition to the conduct of the German bourgeoisie, he states that his chief concern was "not the *well-being* human beings will enjoy in the future but what kind of people they will be."[40] Continuing his rebuke of an "eudaemonistic outlook," Weber attacks the Prussian Junker in a 1904 speech on "Capitalism and Rural

Society in Germany," arguing that such a "traditional" conduct will only decline when faced with the "counter-current" of "modern capitalistic competition."[41] Later, in 1917, he questions Germany's penchant for "unpolitical" conduct, challenging the bureaucratic rule of officialdom on the ground that it champions a person who "must remain outside the *struggle* for power of his own."[42] It appears, then, that though Weber never explicitly theorizes a conduct of politics, he derives from his quarrels with groups in German politics an idea of conduct that mirrors a struggle over the role of moral convictions in modern politics.

Yet my concern with Weber's idea of a political life-conduct is not focused on its failure to achieve a prominent place in his political thinking. The more significant problem, I think, stems from there being at least two different sources of a life-conduct of politics in his theoretical projects of politics. On the one hand, his theory of politics features a life-conduct predicated on, not only a person's ability to endure human conflict while advancing an ideal, but one's capacity to judge responsibly the ethical distance between the two. On the other hand, the politics that corresponds to his theoretical enterprise displays a conduct based on the above criteria as well as on those of a "scientific" nature. As Weber notes in "Science as a Vocation," the scientific criteria of a scholarship

tend to "chain" a person "to the course of progress" in a way that "raises new 'questions'" about all convictions.[43]

Max Weber's two notions of a political life-conduct indicate an ironic situation in his political thinking. They do so in that the politician in Weber's theory of politics represents a person who circumscribes politics by using it to advance a moral conviction, while the scholar who surfaces in the politics of Weber's theorizing depicts a person who commingles morality and politics, if only to contest both with "the inescapable historical situation" of modern science. Thus, the conduct mirrored in the politics of Weber's scholarly theorizing tells us more about the hope for politics than does the conduct he attempts to portray in his theory of modern politics. It confirms that, though a theory of politics may promise power at the cost of morality and politics, the task of theorizing the political promises the chance of mixing the two. This chance, however, comes at the cost of yielding lasting political power.

Morality and politics represent a vital yet destructive mix in Max Weber's political thinking. This mix is vital, not just because it points to a dimension in Weber's work more theoretically expansive than his devotion to the ideal of the German nation. It is vital because it marks both a wellhead of differing perspectives in politics and a worldly vehicle for the advance of moral convictions. It is destructive, however, not only on account of the ethical

paradoxes it imposes on the politician in Weber's theory of politics, paradoxes which challenge a person's advance toward and maintenance of political power. It is destructive, too, on account of the ethical paradoxes it imposes on the political theorist. For they impel a person outside the politician's domain to engage in a type of politics marked by a conflict over the value of convictions, the "intellectualization" of the world, and, thus, the moral uncertainty of one's life and worldly enterprise.

If this mix of morality and politics tells us anything about Weber's political thought, it is that he was after something more than the advance of German nationalism. Even more than gaining knowledge about morality and politics as such, I believe he was after insight into the worldly consequences of such a problematic bond. He wanted insight into the consequences that challenge not only a person's capacity to advance a moral conviction in politics, but one's sense of responsibility, judgment, and life-conduct in an ethically irrational world. These consequences, of course, surfaced as paradoxes in both Weber's theory of politics and the politics that correspond to his theorizing, confirming how they impact the lives of politicians as much as political theorists. While the impact is more direct and perilous for the politician, mainly with regard to one's office, prestige, and power, the political theorist bears the weight of such paradoxes with distrust for the earthly

longevity of moral convictions. The theorist carries this weight in contrast to the politician's unwavering quest for power and for the scholarly sake of maintaining the mix of morality and politics. As long as Weber's political thought maintains this distinction between scholars and politicians, I believe it reveals differing locations of politics beyond those defined by his commitment to German national glory.

Notes

[1]Wolfgang Mommsen, Max Weber and German Politics, trans. Michael Steinberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 87.

[2]David Beetham, Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985), 54.

[3]Robert Eden, Political Leadership & Leadership (Tampa: University Presses of Florida, 1983), 42.

[4]Peter Breiner, Max Weber & Democratic Politics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 17.

[5]David Owen, Maturity and Modernity (London: Routledge, 1994), 99.

[6]H.H. Bruun, Science, Values and Politics in Max Weber's Methodology (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1972), 240.

[7]Max Weber, "WPW, 365; GPS, 557.On Weber's quarrel with the political economics of liberal Utilitarianism, see his "The Nation State and Economic Policy" in Weber: Political Writings, eds. Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 14. Hereafter referred to as WPW. The standard German version of this text appears as "Der Nationalstaat und die Volkswirtschaftpolitik" in Gesammelte politische Schiften, ed. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1958), 12. Hereafter referred to as GPS.

[8]Max Weber, "The Nation-State and Economic Policy" in Weber: Political Writings, eds. Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 26. Hereafter referred to as WPW. The standard German version of this text appears as "Der Nationalstaat und die Volkswirtschaftspolitik" in Gesammelte politische Schiften, ed. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1958), 23. Hereafter referred to as GPS.

[9]Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), 183. The standard German version of these articles appears in Max Weber, Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie I (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1920), 203. Hereafter referred to as GARS.

[10]Max Weber, "Parliament and Government in Germany Under a New Political Order" in WPW, 270. The standard German version of these articles appears as "Parlament und Regierung im neugeordneten Deutschland" in GPS, 442-443.

[11]Cf., Herbert Marcuse, "Industrialization and Capitalism" in Negations (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 201-226; and George Lukcas, Max Weber and German Sociology" in Economy and Society 1 (1972), 386-398.

[12]Among those who emphasize the "aggressive" traits in Weber's liberalism are David Beetham, Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1985); and Wolfgang Mommsen, "A Liberal in Despair" in The Age of Bureaucracy (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974), 95-115.

[13]For a discussion on the moral dimensions of Max Weber's social and political thought see, among others, Wilhelm Hennis, Essays in Reconstruction; Karl Löwith, Max Weber and Karl Marx, trans. Hans Fantel (London: Routledge, 1993); Albert Salomon, "Max Weber's Methodology," Social Research 1 (1934): 147-168; and Albert Salomon, "Max Weber's Political Ideas," Social Research 2 (1935): 368-384. With regard to the term "modern," Weber refers to several different meanings. On the one hand, his use of the term often refers to the "impersonal" consequences incurred by the "development of economic rationalism," which evokes an historical situation defined by the dissipation of magical and religious forces via the repressive and methodical calculations corresponding to ascetic Protestantism. On the other hand, Weber's use of the term modern refers to a type of person, someone whose personality exemplifies a constant and disciplined "overcoming of the *status naturae*," which indicates a mastery over the sensual qualities of both the self and the world. In addition to these historical and psychological depictions, Weber perceives the "modern" world as a theological condition, in which it signifies a "distinctive type of guilt" for having rationally and unalterably organized the world in direct contrast to the ultimate convictions that seek to direct people away from the alleged depravities of the world. Judging from these three depictions, then, I believe Weber's understanding of modernity represents a historical situation brought on by economic rationalism and illustrated by a person whose disciplined conduct obstructs, tragically, the ideals to which one aspires. For other views on this theme of modernity in Weber's work see Sam Whimster, "The Secular Ethic and the Culture of Modernism" in Max Weber, Rationality and Modernity, eds. Sam Whimster and Scott Lash (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 259-290. Hereafter referred to as MWRM. See also Bryan S. Turner, "The Rationalization of the Body: Reflection on Modernity and Discipline" in MWRM, 222-241; and Gershon Shafir, "The incongruity between destiny and merit: Max Weber on meaningful existence and modernity," The British Journal of Sociology 4 (1985): 516-530. For a discussion of the problems posed by the question of modernity in contemporary political and social thought see Scott Lash, "Modernity or Modernism? Weber and Contemporary Social Theory" in MWRM.

[14]WPW, 15-18; GPS, 13-16.

[15]Max Weber, "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality' in Sociology and Economics" in The Methodology of the Social Sciences, trans. and eds. Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (New York: The Free Press, 1949), 18. Hereafter referred to as MSS. The standard German version of this text appears as "Der Sinn der 'Wertfreiheit' der soziologischen und ökonomishen Wissenschaften" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre, ed. Johannes Winckelmann, 5th edition (Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1982), 507. Hereafter referred to as GAW.

[16]Max Weber, "The Profession and Vocation of Politics" in WPW, 360. The standard German version of this text appears as "Politik als Beruf" in GPS, 552.

[17]WPW, 354; GPS, 547.

[18]Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace" in Kant: Political Writings, ed. Hans Reiss and trans. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 116.

[19]WPW, 366; GPS, 557.

[20]WPW, 365; GPS, 557. Also, concerning the gender of the political leader see WPW, 316-318; GPS, 512-515, where he refers to those leaders who live 'off' and 'for' politics, as well as those individuals who have an "avocation" for politics, with masculine pronouns. Moreover, in WPW, 21; GPS, 18-19, he discusses the "*claim to political leadership*" largely in the plural terminology of social classes. Finding no reference in either text to a feminine notion of leadership, I will adhere to Weber's masculine construction of the idea, qualifying it with the knowledge that such categories are contestable and mutable over the course of time. I therefore engage Weber on Weber's terms, so to speak, while insisting that leadership is as a much a feminine as it is a masculine category.

[21]WPW, 352-354; GPS, 545-547.

[22]Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation" in From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, trans. and eds. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1946), 135. Hereafter referred to as FMW. The standard German version of this text appears as "Wissenschaft als Beruf" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre, ed. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1988), 588. Hereafter referred to as GAW.

[23]FMW, 137-ff; GAW, 591-ff.

[24]Max Weber, "Developmental Tendencies in the Situation of East Elbian Rural Labourers" in Reading Weber, ed. Keith Tribe (London: Routledge, 1989), 163-164. Hereafter referred to as RW. The standard German version of this texts appears as "Entwickelungstendenzen in der Lage der ostelbischen Landarbeiter" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, ed. Marianne Weber (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1988), 477-478. Also, WPW, 14; GPS, 12.

[25]Max Weber, "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy" in MSS, 57. The standard German version of this text appears as "Die 'Objektivität' sozialwissenschaftlicher und sozialpolitischer Erkenntnis" in GAW, 154.

[26]WPW, 173-174; GPS, 347.

[27]WPW, 17; GPS, 14-15.

[28]Max Weber, "Political Communities" in Economy and Society, eds. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press), 925. Hereafter referred to as ES. The standard German version of this text appears as "Politische Gemeinschaften" in Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, ed. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck] 1972), 530. Hereafter referred to as WuG.

[29]WPW, 133; GPS, 309.

[30]WPW, 352; GPS, 545.

[31]WPW, 355-ff; GPS, 548-ff.

[32]WPW, 367; GPS, 558.

[33]WPW, 28; GPS, 24.

[34]Max Weber, "The President of the Reich" in WPW, 307. The standard German version of this text appears as "Der Reichspräsident" in GPS, 500.

[35]WPW, 365; GPS, 557.

[36]Concerning Max Weber's critique of scientific positivism as manifested in the German Historical School, see Max Weber, "The Nation State" in WPW, 17-19; GPS, 15-17. On his critique of cultural subjectivism, see Max Weber, "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality' in Sociology and Economics" in MSS, 3-6; GAW, 491-495. For an interesting interpretation of these theoretical and political battles between Max Weber and his contemporaries, see Sheldon Wolin, "Max Weber: Legitimation, Method and the Politics of Theory." Political Theory, 9 (August 1981): 401-24. See also Vernon K. Dibble, "Social

Science and Political Commitments in the young Max Weber" in Archives Europeenes de Sociologie 9 (1968): 92-110; Fritz Ringer, The Decline of the German Mandarins (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 146ff; and T.S. Simey, "Max Weber: Man of Affairs or Theoretical Sociologist?" in Sociological Review 14 (Nov. 1966): 303-27.

[37]WPW, 353; GPS, 546. On the issue of "distance" in Weber's sociological and political writings see David Owen, "Autonomy and 'inner distance': a trace of Nietzsche in Weber" in History of the Human Sciences 4 (1991): 79-91; and Ralph Schroeder, "'Personality' and 'inner distance': the conception of the individual in Max Weber's sociology" in History of the Human Sciences 4 (1991): 61-78.

[38]WPW, 353; GPS, 546.

[39]WPW, 354; GPS, 547.

[40]WPW, 15; GPS, 12.

[41]Max Weber, "Capitalism and Rural Society in Germany" in FMW, 366.

[42]WPW, 161; GPS, 335.

[43]FMW, 137-38; GAW, 591.

CHAPTER I

POLITICS AND "THE HARD STRUGGLE OF MAN WITH MAN"

Introduction

In his well-known work "The Prince," Niccolo Machiavelli conveys to Lorenzo de Medici, heir apparent to the Florentine throne, that the goddess of Fortune (*fortuna*) rules only half of our actions. She allows the other half to be ruled by our own volition. Those actions ruled by *fortuna*, he says, require a prince to confront her contingent furies with vigor, or otherwise face personal and political ruin. Yet despite a person's calculated response, Machiavelli believes *fortuna* "shows her force where there is no organized strength to resist her."[1] This unruly force takes on a different character in Machiavelli's other work of political theory, "The Discourses." In that work, his task is not to admonish princes who seek power in the face of *fortuna*, but to defend republican government against the contingencies brought on by *fortuna*. Machiavelli advises republics to busy themselves with the creation of "good laws," for "good laws bring good fortune, and from good fortune results happy success in all enterprises."[2] Together both works signify a tension in Machiavelli's thinking, one between a politics posited on historical chance and another based on human design. It is a tension that underlies his idea of politics in 16th century Italy.[3]

In a similar way, Max Weber's theory of politics reflects a tension involving the meaning of politics in 19th and 20th century Germany. From his infamous "Freiburg Inaugural Address" of 1895 to his celebrated lecture on the "The Profession and Vocation of Politics" in 1919, Weber assails just about every significant interpretation of politics. He contests the political aims of Utilitarian liberalism, scientific Positivism, the Prussian Junkers, the German bourgeoisie, the youthful pundits of cultural "experience," the German Supreme Command, and the universal proletariat.[4] If Weber achieves any influence in these battles, it appears in something more than a brief conquest over his opponents. It appears, too, in a theory of politics indicative of struggle (*Kampf*), denoting a person who is "at all times" subject to "multiple sets of values, each of which...seems to impose an obligation on him."[5]

In contrast to this fortuitous element in the human struggle of politics, Weber also theorizes a notion of politics characterized by a collection of modern institutional structures.[6] These structures, which he derives from the philosophical wellhead of liberal democracy, guide human conflicts through the "machinery" of labor unions, party organizations, universal suffrage, parliament, and the administrative state.[7] They also cultivate "professional" politicians who, by way of a parliamentary struggle, simultaneously confront a myriad of

moral convictions and induce their opponents to support one specific conviction over all others. This duty to a singular "cause" (*Sache*) corresponds to Weber's view of parliamentary institutions, the purpose of which is to provide "the elements of mass discipline" for a German nation replete with contending interests. "By contrast," he writes in a 1917 issue of *Frankfürter Zeitung*, "as far as national politics are concerned, the *un*organized mass, the democracy of the street, is wholly irrational."[8] Weber's theory of politics signals, therefore, the gravity of a human struggle between ultimate convictions, but only insofar as the contingencies associated with such struggles conform to the discipline of modern institutions.

Though distinct, these two views of political struggle nevertheless admit the importance of power in Weber's theory of politics. "Anyone engaged in politics," he claims in his "Vocation" lecture, "is striving for power, either power as a means to attain other goals...or power 'for its own sake'"[9] Like Machiavelli, Weber sees politics as a struggle for power, one involving a relatively autonomous person hindered by historical chance and human institutions designed to order life's irregularities. Contrary to Machiavelli, though, who views this struggle as a means to advance the interests of "one man alone" or the "original principles" of republicanism, Weber renders it as a vehicle for the defense, unity, and expansion of the German nation.

Though he shares Machiavelli's view of struggle and the rift between its source and design, Weber still departs from his predecessor when he subsumes persons, institutions, and ideals beneath the aim of German national glory.[10]

By assuming that "all politics is essentially struggle," and that such a struggle promises an "influence on the distribution of power," Weber theorizes a politics that acts as a means toward the advance of one conviction. I argue in this chapter, however, that this "mechanical" notion of politics and the human struggle upon which it is posited represents a problem in Weber's political thinking. It is a problem to the extent that a contingent struggle over convictions works at cross-purposes with a calculated political plan that imposes one conviction upon all others, notably the advance of German national power. Thus he overlooks his own claims about the capricious qualities of the human struggle of politics, an oversight which I believe highlights a serious discrepancy in his political thinking. Moreover, by limiting convictions in politics on the basis of their allegiance to the German nation, Weber expels his opponents from any fruitful theoretical discussion on German national politics. This expulsion reveals, I think, a flaw in his approach to the political conflicts that influences the way he theorizes in the modern world.

Each shortcoming is evident in Weber's theoretical desire to "clear away mechanical obstacles" that impede

Germany's quest for national greatness. They are evident, too, in his political desire to challenge those thinkers who, because of their "traditional", "immature", or "vain" ideals, obstruct the path towards national power. In light of these events, I submit that Weber's idea of politics reveals more than the limits of his political thinking. It foreshadows the degree to which his devotion to the idea of nation hinders the theoretical expanse of both politics and the German nation itself. As a first step in confirming these claims, I begin with three questions: What does Weber mean when he refers to the term human struggle? How does it correspond to his theory of politics? And what, if anything, does it say about Weber's impact on the enterprise of contemporary political thinking?

Freedom and Nation-State

Over the course of 54 years, Max Weber's intellectual life was swayed strongly by a variety of human struggles. As Marianne Weber notes in her husband's biography, he witnessed debates between Wilhelm Dilthey, Theodor Mommsen, Levin Goldschmidt, Heinrich von Trietschke, and Heinrich von Sybel, all of whom frequented the Berlin home of Max Weber Sr., a one-time National Liberal Party member in the Reichstag.[11] His life also documents methodological battles within the *Verein für Sozialpolitik*; personal frays with his own emotional state; ideological tussles with

Marxism; ethical disputes with German militarism and Pacificism; and political fights with the Prussian bureaucracy, the German Supreme Command, and the Hohenzollern crown.[12] These events may not reveal Weber's exact interpretation of human struggle, but they do reveal how its historical specter loomed over his rendering of the term and its place in his political thought.

Beginning with his earliest academic forays, Weber approached the notion of human struggle from a decidedly economic point of view. As a scholar at the *Verein*, a relatively conservative policy institute established by, among others, Gustav von Schmoller, he found himself absorbed in the fight "for an improvement in the situation of the working classes."[13] During one portion of his 33-year tenure at the *Verein*, Weber focused his investigative gaze on the conditions of agricultural labor east of the Elbe River. He was concerned with the recent introduction of "the principle of *economic rationality* into the wage-forms" of farm workers, who prior to the late 19th century laboured for feudal Prussian estate owners in return for small land holdings and a share of the estate's product.[14] From these investigations, all of which stressed the increasing divide among differing economic classes, Weber gradually fashioned a theoretical notion of human struggle.

Originally a request on behalf of Prussian estate owners, who, in the early 1890s, were seeking cause for

state-imposed grain duties, Weber's probe of East Elbian labor relations urged something altogether different. Rather than affirm the traditional authority of the estate owners, he argued that the "modern development" of the "'free labour contract'" gave workers the chance to flee such "brutal personal domination," freeing them to fend for themselves "in a struggle of interests."[15] It was this human migration off the estates and into the capitalist market that gave Weber insight into the meaning of human struggle in late 19th-century Germany. He documented the intransigence of Prussian traditions, the impersonality of market relations, the rift between a dying landlord class and a growing proletariat, and the infusion of Slavic immigrants into newly-vacated jobs on the Elbian estates. These effects, and others, moved Weber to conclude in his Freiburg Address that in such an "economic struggle for life...there is no peace to be had."[16]

As landlords and laborers moved in accordance with the "increased capitalization" of the estates, the latter did not necessarily struggle for increased wages. What was unique about their struggle, says Weber, was "the urge for personal freedom" that lead them away from the feudal domination of Prussian landlords. He highlights how "[t]hey sacrifice their accustomed conditions in their aspiration for emancipation: their apathy is shattered."[17] Severing its ties to the estates, economic sustenance, and cultural

tradition, this emergent class of laborers turned over its duties to a mass of Slavic workers willing to accept the despotic circumstances east of the River Elbe.

These German laborers were not thrown off the estates by spiteful landlords, nor were they drawn to the cities with material guarantees of factory employment. According to Weber, they believed in the "magic of *freedom*," by which he meant the chance for each person to labor by the tolling of one's own estate bell. However, it was also a belief that lead them into "a silent and bleak struggle for everyday economic existence...they [were] leaving their homeland and [were] about to submerge themselves in a dark future."[18] Thus the lives of German laborers convinced Weber that human struggle, despite its role in the death of feudalism and the birth of capitalism, culled its theoretical ground from such liberal ideals as human freedom, commercial ambition, and self-determination.

In addition to depicting the ideals involved in a laborer's fight for freedom, Weber was perceptive enough to note the contingent qualities reflected in such a struggle. His youthful theoretical renderings go beyond mere vague allusions to some "dark future" facing German workers in the impersonal market place of modern capitalism. They evoke, too, a sobering perception of East Elbian labor relations, one that deters Germans "from imagining that peace and happiness lie waiting in the womb of the future, and from

believing that anything other than the hard struggle of man with man can create any elbow-room in this earthly life."[19] Hence his notion of human struggle appears to promise persons neither human well-being, material security, nor even human happiness. On the contrary, it secures a person nothing more than a chance to advance these and other ultimate convictions, and only then while remaining engaged in a human struggle with other individuals.

Much like Machiavelli's view of *fortuna*, then, Weber's rendering of human struggle presupposes a person who, with desire, calculation, and conviction, embraces the mere possibility of furthering some ultimate goal. Indeed, it is a person composed of what Weber calls "those characteristics which we think of as constituting the human greatness and nobility of our nature."[20] But this person represents only one side of his rendering, for, again like Machiavelli, he denotes an institutional device capable of countering the uncertainties that come with human struggle. Where Machiavelli finds order in legal, religious, and military institutions, Weber instead finds it in the nation-state, an institution that "should have the final and decisive say in all questions of German economic policy."[21] As rifts between Prussian tradition, modern capitalism, and Slavic immigration became more evident, he thus qualified the nation-state as a mitigating force in all struggles befalling Wilhelmine Germany.

In one particular instance, Weber prompted the German nation-state to mitigate vigorously another facet of the human struggle unfolding in East Elbe. That facet involved "itinerant Polish workers," who, because of the "economic death throes of the old Prussian Junkerdom" and the workers new-found "magic of *freedom*," were able to amass available German farmlands. Their ability "to adapt" to subservient living conditions in return for a share of East Elbian land induced a situation in which, according to Weber, "one hundred thousand peasants relate to their home soil in a different way than a hundred thousand workers."[22] Given its potential threat to German unity, expansion, and greatness, this discord lead Weber to interpret the nation-state as sole adjudicator on "questions of whether, and how far, the state should intervene in economic life, or of whether and when it is better for it to free the economic forces of the nation from their fetter and to tear down the barriers in the way of their autonomous development."[23] Whether that meant the "interior settlement" of estates, the "opening of new markets" for Germans, or the "closing of the eastern frontier" to Poles, Weber matched the ill effects of human struggle with the imposing will of the nation-state.

By positing the nation-state as arbitrator of human disputes and creator of capitalist markets, Weber signals the chief instrument of German unity, expansion, and power. He explains this position in his 1897 lecture entitled

"Germany as an Industrial State." Speaking before the *Evangelisch-soziale Kongreß* in Leipzig, Weber argued that though the state can easily quell those struggles which impede the nation, Germany must not pursue a "policy of national *comfort* but rather one of greatness."[24] By "greatness" he meant a policy through which the nation-state alters the "vain and hopeless combat" between landlord and working classes into an accord that combats the influx of immigrants and the feudal traditions which draw them on to German soil. In this way, the nation-state rids itself of those internal divisions that obstruct Germany's chance to compete for power with the world's other "Great Powers."[25] Weber concludes "that the gospel of *struggle* is a national duty, an unavoidable economic task for individual and for the collectivity of which we are not 'ashamed' and represents for us the sole path to greatness."[26]

This depiction of the German nation-state reveals the extent to which Weber not only banishes "the urge for personal freedom" to the realm of self-interest but modifies its "element of primitive idealism" into a national fight for greatness. In fact, the struggle for national greatness was his way of bringing human design and order to the unpredictable class and ethnic struggles unfolding east of the Elbe River. However, insofar as Weber anchors his idea of struggle to this end of German national greatness, a theoretical rift surfaces in his political thinking. In one

sense, his explorations of East Elbian labor relations posit a notion of human struggle based on a person whose quest for freedom derives from "the most elemental drives in the human breast."[27] In another sense, they postulate an idea of human struggle that, in contrast to the quest for personal freedom, presupposes the supremacy of the German nation-state, the aim of which "is not to make everybody happy but the *social unification* of the nation."[28] Judging from this contrast, Weber's view of human struggle marks more than a mere theoretical problem in the early stages of his political thinking. It also suggests a political problem, in that the struggle for freedom becomes the means rather than the goal of Germany's struggle for power.

This divide between a person's struggle for freedom and the German nation-state's struggle for power points to a paradox in Weber's early theoretical depictions of politics. Insofar as his East Elbian scholarship accentuates a person whose ability to struggle derives from a "primitive" site in the "human breast," Weber hinges German national greatness on a person's ultimate goal of human freedom. Put a different way, the advance of the German nation-state depends on persons whose ideals shift between such desires as economic liberty, ideological autonomy and, possibly, political opposition. Conversely, in that his same works designate the nation-state as the "final and decisive" judge of all struggles, Weber defies the very persons and ideals

on which the nation-state pivots for power. Accordingly, the struggle for freedom succumbs to the nation-state's project of unity, expansion, and power, a project utilizing persons for the goal of greatness rather than exalting them as goals in and of themselves. His theory of politics portends, therefore, a situation in which either the nation-state limits its chief means towards greatness or a person's struggle for freedom disrupts the aims of the nation-state.

Likewise Weber's early interpretation of politics suggests a problematic situation involving the political disputes that impact his theorizing. His scholarly approach to the labor situation in East Elbe symbolized something more than a detached analysis of Wilhelmine Germany's shifting class structure. It also signified his passionate dismissal of Prussian Junkerdom's claim to political authority, the bourgeoisie's selfish aspiration toward an unpolitical future, and the German proletariat's desire for political leadership.[29] Moreover, Weber's youthful approach to theorizing politics marked his own desire to distance himself from the conservative views of the *Verein*, views which he thought simply bolstered the tradition of the Prussian state at the expense of the German nation.[30] The politics of his theorizing thus imparts the weight of human struggle in the theoretical enterprise itself, but only insofar as it discounts contending views of politics that impair Germany's prospects for national power. Rather than

augment the dialogue between these differing views, Weber's task tends to narrow the theoretical views of politics, presaging the alteration of political theory into an agent of German nationalism.

These early works suggest, in part, that Weber's notion of struggle marks a dividing line between passionate persons seeking freedom and the absolute authority of the German nation-state. In turn, this division reveals a paradox at the heart of his theory of politics, such that the passionate persons who were suppose to elevate the nation-state were the very persons whose passions the nation-state sought to subdue. This division reveals, furthermore, a paradox in the way Weber engages in the act of theorizing. It is a paradox indicative of his public rejection of those human convictions that are central to the very idea of the German nation he sought to advance. These flaws in both his theory of politics and his approach to the task of theorizing exhibit the degree to which the idea of human struggle points to the first problematic trait of Weber's theoretical enterprise.

Asceticism and Revolution

Max Weber's studies of the East Elbe "situation" between 1893 and 1898 demonstrate how his theory of politics entails both an individual struggle for human freedom and a national struggle for social order. It was a period that

paralleled his own personal struggle to come to terms with both his growing influence in the *Verein* and the demise of Germany's archaic political traditions. Soon after this fruitful stretch, Weber faced a struggle unlike any he had ever experienced: his "emotional breakdown," that was accompanied by "the psychological pressure of [an] 'unworthy situation' in which he draws a salary and will not be able to accomplish anything in the foreseeable future."[31] From 1898 until 1902, Weber fought off this crisis with trips to the North Sea and Italy, stays at a Lake Constanz sanatorium, and infrequent ventures into abstruse scholarly projects.[32] Finally, in 1903, he returned to intellectual tasks which reflected, not only his earlier commitment to the individual and the nation-state, but his insights into the role human struggle may play in a theory of politics.

At least three works represent this period of Weber's combined intellectual and emotional rejuvenation. The first work is The Protestant and the Spirit of Capitalism, a series of essays first published in the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* between 1903 and 1905.[33] The other two works were his chronicles of the 1905 Russian Revolution, "Bourgeois Democracy in Russia" and "Russia's Transition to Pseudo-constitutionalism," both of which appeared in the *Archiv* in 1905 and 1906, respectively.[34] What all three texts share with Weber's earlier projects is a keen perception of the historical

impact of modern capitalism and its intrusion upon and challenge to the cultural traditions of individuals and nations alike. However, these later works depart from the earlier ones not because they focus on the intransigence of tradition nor the cultural weight of capitalism. As will become obvious, these later works depart in terms of the philosophical groundwork and the political aim Weber ascribes to the concept of human struggle in his theory of modern politics.

In the Protestant Ethic essays, Weber begins by challenging the conventional axioms of late 19th and early 20th century Marxism, suggesting that capitalism may, in part, derive from sources other than those of an economic nature.[35] He argues that the development of modern capitalism, marked by its penchant for material acquisition and methodical self-control, corresponds instead to "the influence of certain of religious ideas...In this case we are dealing with...the rational ethics of ascetic Protestantism."[36] Specifically, he notes that Calvinism and its belief in "predestination" exemplify a person whose doubtful destiny before an unfathomable God leads him to create a conviction of spiritual certainty. He does so by ordering the material world in a way that utilizes the "objective results" of his labors as "proof" of possible salvation from God. "The moral conduct of the average man," Weber explains, "was thus deprived of its planless and

unsystematic character and subjected to a consistent method for conduct as a whole."[37]

Weber claims that such religious beliefs unveiled before the world more than an ascetic person who, by melding labor and ethical limits on consumption, spurred the "productive investment of capital." Ascetic Protestantism also revealed "an historical individual," one who "had grown up in the hard school, calculating and daring at the same time, above all temperate and reliable, shrewd and completely deovted to...business, with strictly bourgeois opinions and principles."[38] The location of this "individual" at the crux of Weber's argument in no way diminishes the historical gravity of either ascetic Protestantism or the development of modern capitalism. Rather, it both confirms the multi-dimensional quality of the "Protestant Ethic" essays and highlights the role of struggle in cultivating an individual within what Weber calls "the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order."

The underlying struggle is evident when Weber denotes "[t]he most important opponent" of a person to be "that type of attitude and reaction to new situations which we may designate as traditionalism."[39] By traditionalism he means any person who, "'by nature,'" wishes "simply to live as he is accustomed to live." This includes Martin Luther and his authoritarian notion of "*Beruf*," Catholics and their faith in the Church's lax control of human conduct, the feudal

patriarch and his tendency to privilege consumption over production. According to Weber, the ascetic who battled tradition thus cultivated "an unusually strong character" defined by "clarity of vision and ability to act," a unique character that "acted powerfully against the spontaneous enjoyment of possessions...the irrational use of wealth."[40] In this sense, the source of human struggle corresponds to the formation of an historically specific individual, and its purpose is to contest the cultural traditions which impede the individual's self-regulated and calculated conduct.

As this historical struggle continued, however, the individual who was so integral to the advance of modern capitalism developed a more "formalistic, hard, correct character." The individual's regulation of passions, appetites, and the natural world for the sake of producing evidence of divine election led him to renounce, ironically, even religion itself "as a means of drawing people away from labour in this world."[41] For this reason, Weber's illustration of the struggle against tradition uncovers the conditions for the possibility of the material advance of the modern individual. But insofar as this fight with tradition results in both the increase of material wealth and the decrease of religious convictions, it also discloses the conditions which make possible the spiritual demise of the modern individual.

With this latter development, the Protestant Ethic essays indicate another source of human struggle. In addition to the challenges posed by tradition, the ascetic Protestant had "to combat" both "a feeling of unprecedented inner loneliness" and a "dependence on external things." On the one hand, these psychological battles allowed him to order the natural world, not for his own vain indulgences, but for God's glory and the prospect of salvation in an after-life. On the other, they provoked a conduct capable of producing and accumulating an enormous sum of material possessions, which, according to Weber, gradually lured the Protestant's attention away from his belief in divine predestination. Such tensions defined a "continual struggle with the problem of the secularizing influence of wealth," one evident in the banishment of religion's "irrational" beliefs for the individual's "rational planning" of the natural world.[42]

Finally, as a result of this spiritual renunciation, Weber foresees the possibility of a human struggle aimed at modern machine capitalism. His view of this "cosmos" posits an historical condition by which an individual's conduct "cannot directly be related to the highest spiritual and cultural values, or when...it need not be felt simply as economic compulsion, the individual generally abandons the attempt to justify it at all."[43] The individual, who first spurred modern capitalism with a religious desire for

"objective results" and "temperate self-control," loses his ethical orientation in relation to capitalism's increasingly productive technical prowess. "The most important functions of everyday life of society," Weber notes, "have come to be in the hands of technically, commercially, and above all legally trained government officials."[44] If one hopes to buck such a trend towards "disenchantment" and gain back a degree of cultural vigor, clarity of vision, and a modicum of autonomy, then one must reorient one's conduct toward a value other than that of economic compulsion.

Weber in no way advocates, therefore, a specific type of struggle against capitalism, especially not a class struggle pitting workers against the owners of capital.[45] He merely suggests that if individuals fail to infuse their lives with ideals as provocative as those of ascetic Protestantism, then of the modern world "it might well be truly said: 'Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart.'"[46] This forewarning stresses more than just the historical sustenance of an individual whose normative aspirations inform the rational design of his earthly conduct. It further implies a possible source of contention between individuals guided by spiritual ideals and economic institutions fueled most effectively by well-disciplined and mechanical procedures.

Though his Protestant Ethic essays fail to describe how an individual combats the dehumanizing attributes of

capitalism, a year later Weber illustrated such a deed in his writings on the 1905 Russian revolution. Weber was an active observer of Czar Nicholas II's leadership of the Russian nation, for, as Marianne Weber notes, he was concerned with "the possible consequences of the Russian struggle for liberation for his own people."[47] In two separate essays he chronicled the events, the participants, and, most important, the ideas comprising Russia's attempt to change from a provincial autocracy to a constitutional democracy built on Western European ideals. Besides his attention to historical detail, what is apparent in both essays is Weber's interest in the Russian "freedom struggle" (*Freiheitskampf*), which took on both the tradition of agrarian communism and the advances of modern capitalism.

In his first account, "Bourgeois Democracy in Russia," Weber contends that if Russia hopes to succeed in revolutionizing its national culture, it first must be willing to fight for the ideals underlying such a project. He assumes those ideals to be the liberal concepts of democratic individualism, the once-universal convictions with which he believed Western Europe had grown sated and bored. With Russia, however, he views the mix of such "'archaic'" traditions as "*agrarian* communism" and Czarist "police absolutism" with the unsettling advances of capitalism as a formidable barrier to the cultivation of these ideals. According to Weber, Russian tradition sought

to perpetuate "the village commune 'ideal,'" maintaining in various ways "not economic selection of the efficient in the 'business' sense, but 'ethical' equalization of opportunity."[48] Russia's commitment to the ideal of community symbolized the primary obstacle hindering democratic individualism, and for that reason the former's demise was the primary task of any proponent who championed the latter's ideal.

In addition to this communal conviction, Russia's experience with modern capitalism promised "uniformity of the external life-style by means of 'standarization' of production." Weber criticizes this development on the grounds that "[e]very precaution has been taken to ensure that democratic individualism does not enjoy unrestricted growth."[49] The case for democratic individualism required a vigilant fight to fracture what Weber saw as "the empty shell for new serfdom," a phrase referring to the modern proclivity to pacify persons through the dispassionate ranks of bureaucracy. Given such obstacles, therefore, he affirms "the struggle for such 'individualistic' values" as a countermeasure against both the despotism of agrarian traditions and the material abyss of modern capitalism.

Weber also argues that the thrust of a "freedom struggle" ought to target at least two manifestations of tradition and capitalism in Russian political life. The first involves "fighting against both bureaucratic and

Jacobin *centralism*," while the second entails "working at the permeation of the masses with the old individualistic basic idea of the 'inalienable rights of man.'"[50] Battling the Russian bureaucracy, which gained its force as the Czar's administrator and fortified itself with rational techniques, necessitates a degree of human idealism able to endure bureaucracy's affinity for "outward violence" and oppose its myopic fixation on "material interests." The same is true regarding the cultivation of differing ideals, insofar as Weber posits that "'[d]emocracy' and 'individualism'...point as clearly as they can in the opposite direction" from the "'material condition' of the environment" which "renders the masses 'compliant.'"[51] In both cases, he specifies a notion of struggle that not only sustains the prospect of democratic and individualistic ideals in Russian politics, but generates a durable force that can oppose Russia's brush with bureaucratic capitalism.

With his follow-up account of the 1905 revolution, however, "Russia's Transition to Pseudo-constitutionalism," Weber is quick to point out the hardships hindering the possibility of such "freedom struggles" in Russia. Noting rampant police crackdowns and the Czar's gift of mere nominal liberties, Weber argues that Russia's fight for democratic individualism mutated into a conflict defined, not by idealism, but by violence for the sake of violence. He designates Czar Nicholas II's "October Manifesto," which

affirmed civil liberty, an extension of the vote, and legislative power for the Imperial Duma, as the catalyst behind this alteration. It was not the quality of the ideals espoused by the manifesto, but the way the Czar played "a game of tag with a nation's political liberties, by holding them out to it as one holds out a ball to a child and, when it reaches for them, making them disappear behind your back."[52] Such political "insincerity," notes Weber, along with the police repression aimed at resentful Liberal Democrats, Socialists, and peasants, exhibited a total lack of ideals beyond that of the "self-preservation" of the Russian police state. It confirmed why Weber thought Russia's "freedom struggle" had become "a continuous, unrelenting struggle, with the wild deeds of murder and merciless acts of tyranny in such numbers that even these horrors finally become accepted as normal."[53]

What becomes apparent in this latter analysis of Russian reform is Weber's attempt to draw a distinction between two types of human struggle. In one case, he maintains that Russia's fight for freedom, its "uncompromising 'idealism" and "relentless energy," mirrors such great struggles in history as the age of Charles I or the 1848 Frankfurt Parliament. Yet, in another case, Weber declares that "the Russian freedom struggle reveals few of the features of 'greatness', as usually understood, to arouse the emotions of the uncommitted observer."[54] He

justifies this claim in two ways: first, by virtue of the Russian state's quashing of democratic and individual ideals; and, second, by reason of the lack of "really 'great leaders'" on both sides of the Russian freedom struggle. Indeed, by fighting against "police absolutism" rather than for "individual 'liberties,'" the nation "had inevitably to consume so much strength in mere 'tactics', and place so much emphasis on 'technical party considerations', that scarcely any room was left for 'great leaders'. One cannot accomplish 'great' deeds against vermin."[55] In the aftermath of the Russian revolution, Weber thus perceived a human struggle noted for its leaderless and wholly instrumental drift, a fight far different from the one guided by individual convictions, calculations, and freedom.

These chronicles of the 1905 Russian revolution say many things about Weber's notion of human struggle and its place in his theory of politics. The same is true of his Protestant Ethic thesis, which points to the possible religious origins of modern capitalism but uncovers, too, an individual's constant battle with tradition as much as machine capitalism. In both projects, Weber's idea of struggle presupposes the existence of the modern individual, a category derived from neither the traditional *a priori* foundations of divine right or natural law nor the economic axioms of modern capitalism. Instead, such an individual emerges from a constellation of historical transformations,

the most pivotal of which is the incongruous mix of a person's spiritual disposition with the world's material institutions. This depiction of the individual, which corresponds both to the ascetic Protestantism of the West and the revolutionary deeds of the Russian nation, marks the philosophical ground of Weber's notion of human struggle. Unlike liberalism's fixation on natural origins, Marxism's fetish for material interests, and even his own youthful belief in "primitive" idealism, Weber's individual departs from a desire to change one's personal beliefs and worldly institutions. Conversely, it suggests an apparent lack of any clear teleological aim in his notion of human struggle.

If an aim underlies Weber's notion, moreover, it appears in the political possibilities human struggle affords an individual in the modern world. First, in the Protestant Ethic and Russian revolution essays, the political aim of human struggle corresponds to the cultivation and maintenance of "'individualistic' values." But more than just aspiring towards a set of ideals, human struggle directs its energies against the institutions of tradition and capitalism, defying the "leisureliness" of the former and the despiritualized "iron cage" of the latter. This melding of human ideals and institutions indicates more than Weber's ties to the intellectual legacies of Christianity and European Liberalism. It discloses, as well, his view of the location of politics, a place in which

power and greatness can be gained only by those individuals who struggle to advance their ideals within institutions that, in turn, threaten such ideals with annihilation. Maintaining this intersection between a person's ideals and institutional means represents one aim of Weber's idea of human struggle, an aim meant to promote only the possibility rather than the certainty of democratic individualism.

From 1902 until 1907, Weber thus theorized a notion of struggle posited on a belief in the individual, altering his earlier perception of the term by placing the individual within the theological context of ascetic Protestantism. At the same time, his concept of struggle underscored the historical weight of tradition and capitalism, allowing him to augment his initial identification of struggle *vis-a-vis* the German nation-state to include political parties, trade unions, and other types of bureaucratic organizations. The significance of these theoretical shifts lies not so much in Weber's concern for individuals and institutions, for these ideas, as such, carry over from the East Elbe studies. More significant is the extent to which his idea of human struggle marks both a broadening of the philosophical ground of individuals and a narrowing of its political direction to the rational confines of institutions. In this way, Weber's idea of human struggle foreshadows a formidable tension in his theory of politics, a tension between individuals and

institutions as the chief source and purpose of struggle in the 20th century.

Leadership and Responsibility

During the last few years of the 19th century and the first several of the 20th century, Weber fixed his gaze on the junctures between individuals and rationally organized institutions. He even went so far as to include himself among "'individualists' and supporters of 'democratic' institutions" whom he believed "must swim 'against the tide' of material constellations."[56] This battle with the impersonal techniques of machine capitalism stems from Weber's views of both the widening expanse of individual ideals and the narrowing domain of political institutions. Consequently, these two perceptions not only buttressed his theory of human struggle; they demonstrated, too, the extent to which he understood both as being equally important in sustaining the prospect of politics in the modern world.

In the ensuing years, however, those following the outbreak of the First World War, Weber shifted his gaze away from the tension between individuals and institutions, focusing instead on the latter half of this couplet. Leading him in this direction were disputes he had with the German bureaucracy, the German Supreme Command, and the Hohenzollern monarchy. The source of such disputes concerned the inability of each particular group to provide

Wilhelmine Germany a leader who could promise the nation-state an opportunity for greatness in its struggle with the world's "Great Powers."

Regarding the bureaucracy's active role in foreign policy, Weber contended in his *Frankfürter Zeitung* articles that any such official "must remain outside the struggle for power" since "his sense of duty to his office overrides his individual wilfulness."[57] In his 1919 "Vocation" lecture, moreover, he contested the leadership of the German Supreme Command, arguing that their ultimate aim of European domination "has shown us just how much inner weakness and ineffectuality are concealed behind this grandiose but empty pose."[58] Lastly, in his 1917 brochure "Suffrage and Democracy in Germany," Weber challenged the "emotional qualities" of Wilhelm II's leadership, a monarch who "compromise[d] the nation's political position for decades to come by excited and incautious telegrams and speeches."[59] Given these "inner" limits of German leadership, at a time when it had "to resist the inundation of the entire world" by England and Russia, Weber, like Machiavelli in The Discourses, relied on the institutional rather than individual traits of human struggle.

It is important to note that this change in Weber's view in no way represents a conscious disregard on his part for the principles of democratic individualism. As his writings from this period indicate, Weber still acknowledged

an individual who "can only feel himself subject to the struggle between multiple sets of values."[60] What changes is the degree to which he perceives an individual's struggle from the angle of Germany's leadership void, allowing him to claim that "the only persons with the training needed for political leadership are those who have been selected in political *struggle*."[61] Granted, Weber was always interested in the sources of German national leadership, at least as far back as his East Elbian investigations. But after 1914 his works tend to neglect the "primitive idealism" and "the complex interaction of...historical factors" which he believed, previously, qualified individuals to assume leadership of the German nation. They note, instead, Weber's belief that human struggle ought not to occur between individuals and institutions but solely within the political institutions of the nation-state, restricting individual aims within a parliamentary design.

It should come as no surprise that this variation in Weber's understanding of human struggle occurs during the last years of Germany's disastrous involvement in the First World War. Again in "Suffrage and Democracy in Germany," he argues on behalf of democratic individualism, asking the war-weary nation-state to relinquish its attachment to the Prussian three-tiered voting system and grant "equal voting rights" to all individuals.[62] The reasoning behind this claim rests on Weber's belief that an individual "for once,

is *not*...considered in terms of the particular professional and family position he occupies, nor in relation to differences of material and social situation, but purely and simply *as a citizen*."[63] He thus inscribes all individuals with "the equality of certain fates," the benefit of which plays itself out in the reform of aristocratic party structures, the arrest of an encroaching bureaucracy, and the selection of national rather than class-based political leaders. As Germany faced defeat by the Allies and strife among its citizens, Weber pushed democratic individualism in the guise of equal suffrage, believing it "expresse[d] the political unity of the nation (*Staatsvolk*) rather than the dividing lines separating the various spheres."[64]

Underlying this defense of equal voting rights, however, is something other than Weber's advance of democratic individualism. As his argument unfolds, it becomes apparent that the individual also represents an instrument designed to advance the unity of the German nation-state in its time of military and political ruin. Weber posits an individual who neither "demand[s] only freedom *from* the state" nor "intervenes *directly* in politics." In fact, he posits an individual whose "equality" derives directly from the modern state, which grants individual citizens "sheer physical security" in return for "the battlefield on which to die."[65] By entrusting individuals with the vote, he promises them at

least "a minimal right of codetermination in the affairs of the community," a chance to fight within the institutional confines of the German nation-state. But more explicitly, by "integrating" them into these confines, Weber promises Germany the means by which individuals are utilized for the purposes of regulating human struggles and advancing national unity. If Germany chose to do otherwise, he concluded, "the energies of the masses would then be engaged in a struggle *against* a state in which they are mere objects and in which they have no share."[66]

Insofar as Weber would transform individuals into agents of German unity with the ballot, he thus situates the prospect of human struggle within the institutional parameters of democratic parliamentarism. Between April and June of 1917, Weber explained this position further in his *Frankfürter Zeitung* articles, together entitled "Parliament and Government in Germany under a New Political Order." He argues many points in these five essays. Prominent among them is his claim that Germany's "prime task...is to ensure that the soldiers come back to find that it has *already been made possible* for them to elect their own representatives at the ballot box and through them build anew the Germany whose existence they preserved."[67] Hence he failed to locate a struggle among individuals in the East Elbian estates, in the market place of machine capitalism, or on the streets of

revolutionary Russia. If anywhere, he believed it must occur within the narrow confines of parliamentary politics.

In support of this claim, Weber first attacked "Bismarck's Legacy" on the grounds that it perpetuated "a nation accustomed to *submit passively*." He again castigated the "[r]ule by officials" for having "*failed utterly* whenever it dealt with *political* questions." And he contested the Prussian Diet by virtue of its desire to "obstruct the development towards parliamentarisation." But more directly, Weber bolstered his claim by establishing "parliamentary conflict" as "the given palaestra" of modern politics, noting "there is nothing of equal value which can replace such struggle."[68] This notion of parliamentary politics--with its electoral, committee, and leadership struggles--represents Weber's challenge to Germany's traditional political arrangements, ones that hindered any prospect of universal suffrage. It also demonstrates how he invites all individuals, regardless of tradition, into the modern arena of human struggle, underscoring a belief that they are "actively involved in shaping the politics" of post-World War I Germany.

Weber's thesis in the "Parliament and Government" project continues to stress, therefore, his undying commitment to the modern individual. Yet, more than pushing individual voting rights, Weber's argument champions political institutions based on a parliamentary design, in

which "*great problems* are not only *discussed* but are *conclusively decided* there."[69] One result of such institutionalized struggles, in which people are exposed to discordant interests, ideals, and strategies, is the development of a "training" ground for the purpose of producing national political leaders. Conversely, the politicians trained in parliament must measure up before the voting masses, whose function it is to "select" the politician most capable of leading Germany out of its own anti-democratic morass.

The individual's task of selection and parliament's function as the site of human struggle together reveal the "machinery" by which Weber sought to avert "the possibility that *emotional* elements become predominant in politics."[70] With these tools, he advances both individualism and parliamentarism, but only insofar as the latter harnesses the former by virtue of universal suffrage, squelching any vain or selfish impulse that derives from the human struggle. Each function verifies, as well, the extent to which Weber believed, especially near the end of the First World War, "that the vital interests of the nation take precedence even over democracy and parliamentary rule."[71] Neither the advance of the modern individual nor the push for parliamentary democracy marks the ultimate conviction informing Weber's theoretical project of politics. Instead, such "technical changes" formed a restraint on "street

democracy" and a consolidation of "the *struggle* for power," fueling his conviction that the German nation-state, despite its impending defeat, "has a decisive say" in a world with other great nation-states.

By anchoring the individual to parliamentary institutions, Weber circumscribes the range of human struggle within the German nation-state. The struggle of persons against or outside of such an organization, he surmises, signifies a blend of politics comprised of civil "'anarchy,'" an "'authoritarian state,'" and a "democracy without a leader." In January of 1919, Weber lectured in Munich on the "qualities" required of those persons who chose to struggle within the institutional confines of the nation-state, titling it "The Profession and Vocation of Politics." Before an audience of the *Freistudentische Bund*, a group of leftist students whom he had first met at the 1917 Lauenstein congresses[72], Weber argued that "to feel passion" for an ultimate cause "is not sufficient to make a politician unless...*responsibility* for that cause becomes the decisive lode-star of all action."[73] His support for this claim stems as much from an aversion to the irrational drifts of the masses as it does from a desire for leaders capable of advancing a cause like German nationalism.

First, Weber defends his claim concerning "responsible" leadership by positing a division between individuals who live "'from'" politics and those who live "'for'" it. He

regards the former, a party boss who struggles politically for monetary reasons, as "an absolutely sober man" lacking "firm political 'principles,'" whereas the latter takes part in the struggle with "passion, a sense of responsibility, judgement."[74] Based on this distinction, he affirms the "qualities" of the politician rather than the party boss, because the politician links his passion for a cause to a perception of himself as burdened with any consequence that corresponds to the advance of that cause. By using "judgement" to discern passion from responsibility, the politician is also better apt "to overcome a quite trivial, all-too-human enemy which threatens him from within: common *vanity*, the mortal enemy of all dedication to a cause and of...distance to oneself."[75] Insofar as an individual unites as well as discerns passion and responsibility, Weber thus concludes that one can "achieve that powerful control over the soul which distinguishes the passionate politician from the 'sterile excitement' of the political amateur."[76]

In addition to differentiating the politician from the party boss, this quality of responsibility allows Weber to underscore another, more problematic division between leaders and citizens. Without a sense of responsibility, and enough judgment to detach one's ideals from "the realities of life," a person's "striving for power...becomes a matter of purely personal self-intoxication instead of being placed entirely at the service of the 'cause'."[77]

Responsible leadership in a struggle is quite distinct from what Weber terms as the "'occasional' politician," the majority of individual citizens whose profession and disposition preclude fixed commitments to some cause. "We are all 'occasional' politicians," he says, "when we post our ballot slips or express our will in some similar way, such as voicing approval or protest at a 'political' meeting, making a 'political' speech and so on.[78] The implication of this difference between leaders and citizens is not that the latter are necessarily "irresponsible" and, thus, incapable of partaking in the human struggle of modern politics. It is that they, unlike "responsible" leaders, are ill-prepared to accept the "paradoxes" issuing from a mix of ideals and deeds, and thus are incapable of enduring "the diabolical powers at work" in any political struggle.

Given this rendering of responsibility, it appears as though Weber views human struggle as involving only a limited number of individuals within the political institutions of the nation-state. Indeed, from the First World War until 1920, he viewed the prospects of human struggle largely in terms of its capacity to foster a "nation of masters" (*Herrenvolk*) who can "thrust their hands into the spokes of the world's development."[79] But the question concerning that which constitutes a "master" capable of battling others for the destiny of a nation-state goes to more than just the issue of responsible leadership

in modern politics. It also goes to the issue of politics in Weber's theoretical project, a politics employed by select persons to advance neither the ideals of human freedom nor the chances of human struggle, but mainly the power of the German nation-state.

This tension first became obvious in "Suffrage and Democracy in Germany," when Weber modified what was an historically derived individual into a state-designated agent of national unity. Here was an individual whose "ballot slip" promised German social order in return for limited access to the struggle of politics. In his "Parliament and Government" essays, too, Weber's allegiance to the German nation-state was apparent insofar as "the given palaestra for the modern politician" marked the institutional boundaries of human struggle. Human struggle was to function like a "machine," he said, producing national political leaders within a highly disciplined and hierarchical parliamentary design. By the time he arrived at his position in the "Vocation" lecture, Weber's notion of human struggle revealed an unique individual. Unlike the "emotional" masses or the "unprincipled" party functionary, this individual was "responsible" enough to lead other individuals through the ethical labyrinth of politics in the name of some ultimate cause. What these works confirm, therefore, is a pattern of thought by which Weber alters the individual and institutional components of human struggle,

transforming a once-contingent battle between both components into a political tool of German national order.

During the last six years of his life, Weber's political thought also signified the extent to which he gradually ignored the individual as the chief source of human struggle. By positing both the individual conceived by the modern state and institutions contrived to marshall human struggle, his theory of politics leaves little chance that individuals--other than those capable of "responsible" leadership--might advance their convictions in a political struggle. Hence his theoretical project of politics exemplifies what he himself called the "'principle of the small number'," suggesting a notion of struggle limited to select persons within specific institutions, persons who adhered to particular ultimate convictions. In these later works, Weber made it clear that such convictions concurred with the German nation-state's want of unity, power, and greatness rather than the Enlightenment aims of liberal individualism and parliamentary democracy.

Politics and Political Theory

Max Weber's references to the term human struggle between 1895 and 1920 reveal the many-sided meanings it assumed at different points in his political thinking. His East Elbian labor studies display a notion of human struggle defined, on the one hand, by an individual who aspires

toward the ideal of freedom and, on the other, by the German nation-state's quest for historical greatness. When he surveys the theoretical designs of ascetic Protestantism and the Russian revolution, his view of human struggle again punctuates the relevance of the individual and the nation-state, only this time he clearly acknowledges the inimical link between the two. By the time Weber ponders the prospects of responsible leadership in politics, his idea of struggle admits neither the relative autonomy of an individual nor the constant discord between individuals and the institutions of the German nation-state. It bares, instead, the submission of individuals and institutions alike to the aim of German national greatness, leaving the struggle of politics to those few leaders responsible enough to achieve such a goal.

Despite these historical variations, however, Weber's interpretation of human struggle maintains a devotion to the theoretical troika of individuals, national institutions, and ultimate convictions. His idea of struggle assumes the existence of a person who, by nature, history, or the modern state, is capable of perceiving as well as promoting a self-defined ideal in a world increasingly devoid of values beyond those of an economic design. Juxtaposed to this individual is a web of political institutions, which Weber presumes to be rationally organized for the purpose of consolidating and selecting individuals who wish to champion

their ideals in the world. Both parts thus confer the extent to which his perception of struggle presupposes the necessity of convictions, whether they derive from an "inarticulate, half-conscious urge" of the individual or bend to the "spiritual proletarianisation" of modern institutions. In any case, they reflect the immeasurable prospects as much as the material limits of human struggle, thus presaging a divide in Weber's political thinking.

This divide appears at those points where his idea of human struggle situates a willful and passionate individual in relation to the institutional confines of the nation-state. It is problematic in that Weber, over the course of some 25 years of serious political thinking, divulges a shifting strategic position on the theoretical source and purpose of human struggle in politics. Early on he locates an individual who, despite a "political instinct" that in "normal times...sinks below the level of consciousness," typifies a "primitive idealism" that guides one towards "the magic of freedom" and, thus, the prospect of struggle against any limit on human freedom.[80] Yet several years later, Weber tempers this idealism by requiring the individual to "take account of the 'material' condition of the environment at every step" and, in turn, qualify the contingencies of a "freedom struggle" with the "permanent apparatus" of democratic institutions.[81] Eventually, with revolution looming in Germany's post-war future, Weber grows

ever-more distrustful of individuals, their varied convictions, and their irrational fights for human freedom. He thus works to secure human struggles within the parliamentary institutions of the German nation-state, declaring that "popularly elected" leaders are the only persons who can "create a dam to prevent" such "[p]articularism" from "getting out of hand."[82]

The problem with Weber's idea of human struggle, then, is not so much that it fails to admit the political validity of class conflict, revolutionary reform movements, or radical street democracy. It is that his idea privileges, over time, the quest for social order and German national unity, despite assumptions to the contrary about a passionate individual whose actions and ideas add a fortuitous quality to the political equation. Hence Weber sounds like Machiavelli, when, near the end of "The Discourses," he states "that all the things of this world have a limit...; but those only run the entire course ordained for them by Heaven that do not allow their body to become disorganized."[83] The significance of this problem shows itself, therefore, in the way Weber theorizes human struggle with an ever-increasing nationalist and authoritarian purpose. He seems to forget Machiavelli's earlier warning in "The Prince" that *fortuna* "directs her fury where she knows that no dykes or barriers have been made to hold her."[84] Though Weber's theoretical project of

politics increasingly busies itself by fashioning national ideals and institutions, he cannot rid it of the chief source of human struggle--the fortuitous passions of individual citizens, politicians, and political thinkers.

This untimely feature of human struggle also points to a problem in Weber's theory of politics. Insofar as he understood early on that the struggle for freedom was tantamount to fostering the German peoples' "*political maturity*," Weber's theory of politics questioned "their grasp of the nation's economic and political *power* interests and their ability...to place these interests above all other considerations."[85] In the Protestant Ethic essays, too, when he viewed human struggle as a check on tradition and capitalism, Weber's approach to politics found an individual whose fight for possessions left one unable to give ideals other than "purely eudaemonistic self-interest" the "significance for culture and national character which they deserve."[86] Finally, by limiting struggle to the institutions of the German nation-state, his theoretical project affirmed the extent to which such institutions, "in their function as places where mass leaders are selected and have to prove themselves as statesmen, are fundamental requirements of stable politics."[87] In each case, therefore, Weber's theory of politics presupposes the historical necessity of human struggle as well as the moral

instability of modern individuals, the combination of which marks a significant problem.

His theory of politics is problematic in that it hinges on human struggle to advance the goal of German national power, yet it discounts the multitude of individuals who can possibly constitute that struggle. On the one hand, Weber's theory of politics admits struggle by virtue of its capacity to elevate individual convictions, to merge individuals within the nation-state, and to utilize them for the selection of national leaders. Hence politics operates on the ground of human struggle for a specific purpose, that of unifying a multitude of citizens behind the advance of German national power. On the other hand, his theory of politics gradually ignores the source of human struggle, insofar as individuals relent to a self-interested eudaemonism, conform to the procedures of parliamentary institutions, or submit to the convictions of a select circle of political leaders. Hence politics mirrors a distrust toward the foundation of human struggle, a foundation rippled by either apolitical, indifferent, or irrational individuals who can obstruct Germany's prospects for greatness. This tension, then, between the source and purpose of struggle, exposes the extent to which Weber's theory of politics obscures its aim by equating the advance of the German nation-state with the bridling of individuals and their ultimate convictions.

The significance of this problem is found not only in the elitist, specialized, and undemocratic qualities of his theory of politics. In addition, it manifests itself in a theoretical disposition that is anti-political insofar as Weber rendered human struggle a necessity of politics. At first, Weber's theoretical project of politics acknowledged the varied possibilities underlying the modern individual's struggle for freedom, even though they were offset by the absolute authority of the German nation-state. But as revolution, war, and civil unrest saturated his theoretical focus, Weber became less concerned with individuals and their boundless convictions. He instead became more involved in the design of national institutions, which could delineate the prospects of human struggle and dismiss individuals whose ultimate aims challenged the advance of the German nation-state. His theory of politics thus prioritized the goal of German national power over the aims of individualism, democracy, and freedom, altering the struggle of politics from an art of the possible into a mechanism of order. In this way Weber perceived politics, not as an end in itself, but as an act if not to be denied then certainly harnessed for the higher goal of ensuring Germany a "decisive say" among other nation-states.

If Weber's own theory of politics is not enough to confirm its anti-political disposition, then perhaps the politics of his theorizing can provide additional support.

As a theorist, he was clear about his convictions, noting that audiences "for whom the historical tasks of the German nation do not take *precedence*...over all questions of the *form* that should assume, or anyone with a fundamentally different perception of these tasks, will not be open to the arguments advanced here."[88] He wrote these lines in 1917, when military "officials" like Ludendorff continued to push an aggressive policy of national conquest, when "litterateurs" like Treitschke dismissed the national efficacy of parliamentarism, when "socialists" like Luxemburg invited revolt against the war-weary German state. Even prior to this period, Weber theorized politics in a way that affirmed and advanced his ultimate goal of German national power. In doing so, he also contested the nationalist convictions of a "vain" Prussian landowning class, an "unpolitical" bourgeois class, and a "vulgar" and "*politically* uneducated" working class. These battles underlying.Weber's quest to theorize politics thus suggest that his project was as much a push for German nationalism as it was a rejection of differing political ideas and the ultimate aims with which they corresponded.

The politics of Weber's theorizing uncovers more than just a passion for the German nation-state and his struggles against his theoretical and political opponents, however. It indicates, too, a problem insofar as his political thinking seeks to exclude any sort of challenge that might

hinder the advance of German national power. In his 1920 opening to the "Protestant Ethic" essays, Weber advised the Marxist disciple of historical materialism that "He who yearns for seeing should go to the cinema...whoever wants a sermon should go to the conventicle."[89] He also cautioned his positivistic colleagues in the German Historical School, noting that if one aspired to "the pure, Platonic interest of the technologist," it would be best to remain "in the stillness of the library."[90] Lecturing on the "vocation" of politics, he even alerted his young audience to Nietzschean trends that led to "a mystical flight from the world," implying that only those persons who could be "a match for the world as it really is" were cut out for the enterprises of politics and political theory.[91] Each case thus confirms how Weber, with metaphorical dash and pointed clarity, extracts dissimilar views from his own project and disperses them to philosophical sites that pose little threat to the power of the German nation-state.

By expelling the views of Marxists, scientific positivists, cultural subjectivists, and others, Weber's theory of politics displays a problem shared by many figures in the history of political thought. One need only note Plato's exclusion of poets from The Republic, Rousseau's restraint on Hobbes in The Social Contract, or Nietzsche's expulsion of positivists from The Gay Science. Despite his inclusion within this legacy of exclusion, however, Weber's

theoretical project of politics is unique in that his criteria for nullification derives from a devotion to the acquisition, preservation, and expansion of German national power. As far back as his Freiburg Address he understands his theoretical enterprise to be "a servant of politics." He furthermore makes it clear that his intention is to serve, "not the day-to-day politics of the persons and classes who happen to be ruling at any given time, but the enduring power-political interests of the nation."[92] For this reason, Weber's problematic exclusion of differing interpretations of politics illuminates at least one more element verifying the anti-political traits of his theoretical disposition. It verifies, too, how the politics of his theorizing, much like his theoretical design of politics, narrows the prospects of each task for the sake of ensuring the certainty of the German nation-state.

Notes

[1]Niccolo Machiavelli, "The Prince" in The Portable Machiavelli, eds. and trans. Peter Bondanella and Mark Musa (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), 159.

[2]Niccolo Machiavelli, "The Discourses" in The Prince and The Discourses, trans. Luigi Ricci (New York: Random House, 1950), 148.

[3]With regard to my approach to Machiavelli's political thinking, I draw on the work of Peter Bondanella and Mark Musa, "Introduction" in The Portable Machiavelli, 9-40; Isaiah Berlin, "The Originality of Machiavelli" in Against the Current, ed. Henry Hardy (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), 25-79; Quentin Skinner, Machiavelli (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981); and Sheldon Wolin, Politics and Vision (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960), especially chapter 7 "Machiavelli: Politics and the Economy of Violence".

[4]On Weber's quarrel with the political economics of liberal Utilitarianism, see his "The Nation State and Economic Policy" in Weber: Political Writings, eds. Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 14. Hereafter referred to as WPW. The standard German version of this text appears as "Der Nationalstaat und die Volkswirtschaftpolitik" in Gesammelte politische Schiften, ed. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1958), 12. Hereafter referred to as GPS. Concerning Weber's disputes with scientific Positivists see WPW, 17-19; GPS, 15-16. With regard to his distaste for Prussian authority see Max Weber, "Capitalism and Rural Society in Germany" in From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, eds. and trans. Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 369. Hereafter referred to as FMW. Concerning his contempt for the "unpolitical" disposition of the German bourgeoisie see WPW, 24; GPS, 21. On Weber's disagreements with cultural subjectivists see Max Weber, "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality' in Sociology and Economic" in The Methodology of the Social Sciences, trans. by Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1949), 28. Hereafter referred to as MSS. The original German version of this text appears as "Die Objektivität sozialwissenschaftlicher und sozialpolitischer Erkenntnis" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre, Johannes Winckelman (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1922), 519. Hereafter referred to as GAW. Also see Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation" in FMW, 143 & 149. The original German version of this texts appears as "Wissenschaft als Beruf" in GAW, 598 & 605. Finally, with regard to his scorn for the German Supreme Command and other proponents of Machtpolitik see WPW, 354-55; GPS, 547. With

regard to Weber tussles with the growing proletariat see WPW, 25-27; GPS, 22-24.

[5]Max Weber, "Between Two Laws" in WPW, 78-79. The standard German version of this text appears as "Zwischen zwei Gesetzen" in GPS, 145. Cf., David Beetham, Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics (London: Polity, 1985), 41-42.

[6]See "Introduction," endnote #7.

[7]Max Weber, "Parliament and Government in Germany under a New Political Order" in WPW, 134. The standard German version of this text appears as "Parlament und Regierung im neugeordneten Deutschland" in GPS, 309.

[8]WPW, 231; GPS, 404.

[9]WPW, 311; GPS, 507.

[10]On some of the theoretical connections between Machiavelli and Max Weber see Arun Sahay, "Virtu, Fortuna and Charisma: An Essay on Machiavelli and Weber" in Sociological Analysis & Theory 3 (October 1977), 165-183.

[11]Marianne Weber, Max Weber: A Biography, ed. and trans. Harry Zohn (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1988), 39-40. Hereafter referred to as MWB. See also Wolfgang Mommsen, Max Weber and German Politics: 1890-1920, trans. Michael S. Steinberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), especially chapter 1 "The Young Weber's Political Development."

[12]The significance of the generational and methodological rifts between Weber and other members of the *Verein* is the subject of the following works: Vernon K. Dibble, "Social Science and Political Commitments in the young Max Weber" in Archives Europeenes de Sociologie 9 (1968): 92-110; T.S. Simey, "Max Weber: Man of Affairs or Theoretical Sociologist?" in Sociological Review 14 (Nov. 1966): 303-27; and Fritz Ringer, The Decline of the German Mandarins (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 146-ff. On Weber's disputes with the German Supreme Command and Wilhelm II, see Wolfgang Mommsen, Max Weber and German Politics: 1890-1920, especially chapters 6 and 7, respectively. Concerning Weber's distaste for what he called "the 'personal regime'" of Kaiser Wilhelm II see Marianne Weber MWB, 404-405.

[13]Marianne Weber, MWB, 127-128 and 415.

[14]Max Weber, "Developmental Tendencies in the Situation of East Elbian Rural Labourers" in Reading Weber, ed. and trans. Keith Tribe (London: Routledge Press, 1989), 163.

Hereafter referred to as RW. The standard German version of this text appears as "Entwickelungstendenzen in der Lage der ostelbischen Landarbeiter" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, ed. Marianne Weber (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1988), 477. Hereafter referred to as GASW.

[15]RW, 171; GASW, 488.

[16]WPW, 14; GPS, 12.

[17]RW, 175; GASW, 493.

[18]WPW, 14; GPS, 12.

[19]WPW, 14; GPS, 12.

[20]WPW, 15; GPS, 12-13.

[21]WPW, 17; GPS, 14-15.

[22]RW, 182-83; GASW, 505.

[23]WPW, 17; GPS, 14-15.

[24]Max Weber, "Germany as an Industrial State" in RW, 213.

[25]On Weber's understanding of Great Powers see his "Political Communities" in Economy and Society, eds. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press), 910-912. Hereafter referred to as ES. The standard German version of this text appears as "Politische Gemeinschaften" in Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, ed. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck] 1972), 520-521. Hereafter referred to as WuG. Among some of the rich histories that explore the specter of the "Great Powers" in Wilhelmine German politics are Gordon A. Craig, Germany: 1866-1945 (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), especially chapter IX: Weltpolitik, Navalism, and the Coming of the War, 1897-1914; Hajo Holborn, A History of Modern History: 1840-1945 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), especially chapter 7: Germany Under William II; and Hans-Ulrich Wehler, The German Empire: 1871-1918, trans. Kim Traynor (Providence and Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1985), especially part III, chapter 7: Foreign policy.

[26]RW, 219.

[27]WPW, 8; GPS, 7.

[28]WPW, 26; GPS, 23.

[29]See endnote #3 above. Also, on Weber's skepticism concerning the political qualifications of the German working class, see WPW, 25-27; GPS, 22-24.

[30]See endnote #11 above.

[31]MWB, 261. The most notable, and controversial, of the "breakdown" theories is Arthur Mitzman, The Iron Cage: An Historical Interpretation of Max Weber (New York: Knopf, 1970). For a discussion of the impact of Weber's "darker side" on his work see Jeffrey Alexander, "The Dialectic of Individuation and Domination: Weber's Rationalization Theory and Beyond" in MWRM, 185-206. For a discussion of the cultural and historical contexts of this period of Weber's life see Lawrence A. Scaff, Fleeing the Iron Cage: Culture, Politics, and Modernity in the Thought of Max Weber (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), especially chapter 3.

[32]MWB, especially chapter 8, "Breakdown."

[33]Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, trans. by Talcott Parsons, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958). Hereafter referred to as PESC. The standard German version of these articles appears in Max Weber, Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie I (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1920). Hereafter referred to as GARS. For an interesting set of discussions on the historical context that informed Weber's formulation of the Protestant Ethic argument, see Hartmut Lehmann and Gunther Roth, *Weber's* Protestant Ethic: Origins, Evidence, Contexts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). On Weber's scholarly exchanges with Felix Rachfahl, his most devoted critic of the Protestant Ethic thesis, see "Anticritical Last Word on The Spirit of Capitalism," trans. Wallace M. Davis, American Journal of Sociology 83: 1105-1131, 1978. The standard German version of these dialogues appears in Max Weber, Die protestantische Ethik II: Kritiken und Antikritiken, ed. Johannes Winckelmann (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlaghaus Gerd Mohn, 1978).

[34]Max Weber, "Bourgeois Democracy in Russia" and "Russia's Transition to Psuedo-constitutionalism" in The Russian Revolutions, trans. and eds. Gordon C. Wells and Peter Baehr (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995). Hereafter referred to as RR. The standard German versions of these texts appear as "Zur Lage der bürgerlichen Demokratie in Rußland" and Rußlands Übergang zum Scheinkonstitutionalismus" in GPS.

[35]Concerning Max Weber's view of both Marx and late 19th and early 20th century Marxism, see Eduard Baumgarten, Max Weber: Werk und Person (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck],

1964], 554-55. Hereafter referred to as WP. For brief yet thorough interpretation of the relationship between Weber and Marx, see Karl Löwith, Max Weber and Karl Marx, trans. Hans Fantel (London: Allen & Unwin, 1982). Also, see A Marx-Weber Dialogue, edited by Robert J. Antonio and Ronald M. Glassman (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1985); The Marx-Weber Debate, ed. Norbert Wiley (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1987); and Richard Ashcraft, "Marx and Weber on Liberalism as Bourgeois Ideology" in Comparative Studies in Society and History 2 (March 1972), 130-168.

[36]PESC, 27; GARS, 12.

[37]PESC, 117; GARS, 115.

[38]PESC, 47 & 69; GARS, 30 & 54.

[39]PESC, 59; GARS, 43.

[40]PESC, 170-71; GARS, 190.

[41]PESC, 69-70 & 166; GARS, 53-54 & 182.

[42]PESC, 174-175; GARS, 195-196.

[43]PESC, 182; GARS, 204.

[44]PESC, 16; GARS, 3.

[45]For a discussion of Max Weber's view of the class struggle in modern German politics see David Beetham, Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics, who argues that Weber's "'idea of nation' provided a common consciousness which transcended that of class; in particular, it offered a means of drawing the working class away from an attitude of total opposition to the existing social order," 144.

[46]PESC, 184; GARS, 206.

[47]MWB, 357.

[48]RR, 76 & 101; GPS, 47 & 54.

[49]RR, 108-109; GPS, 63-64.

[50]RR, 108; GPS, 62.

[51]RR, 108; GPS, 63.

[52]RR, 173-74; GPS, 74.

[53]RR, 231; GPS, 109.

[54]RR, 230-31; GPS, 108.

[55]RR, 231; GPS, 109.

[56]RR, 109; GPS, 64.

[57]WPW, 160-61; GPS, 385. On Weber's ambivalent approach to modern bureaucracy see Wolfgang Mommsen, "Max Weber on Bureaucracy and Bureaucratization: Threat to Liberty and Instrument of Creative Action" in The Political and Social Theory of Max Weber: Collected Essays (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 109-120; Arno Mayer, The Persistence of the Old Regime (New York: Random House, 1981), 297-299; and David Beetham, Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics, especially chapter 3: "The Limits of Bureaucratic Rationality".

[58]WPW, 354; GPS, 547. See also footnote #11 above.

[59]Max Weber, "Suffrage and Democracy in Germany" in WPW, 113. The standard German version of this text appears as "Wahlrecht und Demokratie in Deutschland" in GPS, 275.

[60]WPW, 79; GPS, 145.

[61]WPW, 219; GPS, 392.

[62]On Weber's critique of the Prussian three-class system of suffrage see Wolfgang Mommsen, MWGP, especially chapter 7: The World War as a Proving Ground for the German Reich as a Great Power. See also Hajo Holborn, HMG, 364-365; and Arno J. Mayer, The Persistence of the Old Regime, 157-159.

[63]WPW, 103; GPS, 266.

[64]WPW, 103; GPS, 266.

[65]WPW, 105; GPS, 268.

[66]WPW, 129; GPS, 291.

[67]WPW, 132; GPS, 308.

[68]WPW, 173-74; GPS, 347.

[69]WPW, 145; GPS, 320.

[70]WPW, 230; GPS, 403-04. It is interesting to note that Weber construes the "emotive devices" of "demagogy" as central to his theory of modern politics, in that they provide a politician the means by which "to gain the confidence of the masses and their belief in his person, and thereby gains

power." However, he also makes a distinction between demagogy that exploits the masses who are "incapable of judging the issue" and demagogy that seeks win from the masses "a confession of 'belief' in the vocation for leadership of the person who has laid claim to this acclamation," Weber refers to the first as a "*rabble without democracy*" and the second as "*an orderly democracy*." In any case, he situates the emotional element of politics squarely in the hands of professional politicians.

[71]WPW, 133; GPS, 309.

[72]Marianne Weber, MWB, 628. For a discussion of Weber's relationship with the *Freistudentische Bund* and the circumstances leading up to his presentations of the "vocation" essays, see MWB, 598-99 & 636. See also Guenther Roth and Wolfgang Schluchter, Max Weber's Vision of History (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 115-16. For those readers interested in Max Weber's participation in the Lauenstein congresses of May and October 1917, see MWB. Marianne Weber describes them as a place "where the Jena publisher and book dealer Eugen Diederichs convened a colorful group of scholars, artists, political writers, *Lebenspraktiker* [men in practical life] and *Freistudentische Jugend* [Free German Youth] for an exchange of ideas about the meaning and the mission of the age," 596-601.

[73]WPW, 353; GPS, 546.

[74]WPW, 346 & 352; GPS, 539 & 345.

[75]WPW, 353; GPS, 546.

[76]WPW, 353; GPS, 546.

[77]WPW, 354; GPS, 547.

[78]WPW, 316-17; GPS, 512.

[79]WPW, 269; GPS, 441.

[80]WPW, 21; GPS, 19.

[81]RR, 108; GPS, 63.

[82]Max Weber, "The President of the Reich" in WPW, 307. The original German version of this text appears as "Der Reichspräsident" in GPS, 500.

[83]Niccolo Machiavelli, The Discourses, 397.

[84]Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince, 91.

[85]WPW, 20-21; GPS, 18.

[86]PESC, 183; GARS, 205.

[87]WPW, 230; GPS, 403.

[88]WPW, 130; GPS, 306.

[89]PESC, 29; GARS, 14.

[90]WPW, 19 & 8; GPS, 16 & 7.

[91]WPW, 368-69; GPS, 560.

[92]WPW, 16; GPS, 14.

CHAPTER II

NATION AND THE PERILS OF ITS "WORLDLY ORGANISATION"

Introduction

Max Weber's view of the German nation assumes a variety of forms in his political thinking. The most notable form appears in his early studies of the labor "situation" in East Elbia. In those writings, he conceives of the German nation as a "race" of peoples who "can no longer adapt" to the changing economic circumstances in their homeland.[1] Some 20 years later, as he examines the likely impact of parliamentary democracy on German society, Weber envisions war-weary Germany as "a self-assured 'nation of masters' (*Herrenvolk*), entirely confident in its outward manner."[2] Between these two distinct views of the German nation, Weber, in devising concepts that would later comprise Economy and Society, conjectures an "ideal-type" of the nation as such. It is a theoretical fusion of the "sentiments of prestige" and "a specific belief in responsibility towards succeeding generations."[3] Like his idea of the human struggle of politics, Weber's view of the nation takes various and, at times, divergent forms in his political thinking. What remains constant, though, is his undying devotion to the ideal of the German nation.

I believe this devotion indicates a parallel between Weber's political thinking and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's theoretical task in On the Social Contract. As a citizen of

the "free State" of Geneva, Rousseau sees himself as bound to "the duty of learning about public affairs," striving "to find in my research new reasons to love that of my country!"[4] Yet as a political theorist his task is more direct in that, among other things, he aims "to examine the act by which a people becomes a people. For this act...is the true basis of society."[5] According to Rousseau, and other 17th and 18th century political thinkers, human "nature" signifies the creative force of a people by virtue of nature's "reasonable" capacity to impart far more than selfish impulses and appetites.[6] By "contracting with himself," rather than with "brutish" Hobbesian others, a person admits to those passions and liberties which are universal and, thus, integral to the formation of human communities.[7] "Instantly," notes Rousseau, "in place of the private person of each contracting party, this act of association produces a moral and collective body...which receives from this same act its unity, its common *self*, its life, and its will."[8] The formation of this "general will," as Rousseau calls it, depicts one of the chief concerns in his theory of politics, as much as it informs his duty as a citizen of Geneva.

As a citizen of Wilhelmine Germany, Weber is equally interested in the formative aspects of a community of people. Unlike Rousseau, however, Weber dismisses the philosophical import of human nature since modernity's

scientific prowess tends to undercut such a universal theme with empirical evidence.[9] He also rejects Rousseau's negative rendering of human interests, desires, and ideals insofar as their individual expression unifies rather than divides a community. Weber instead contends that the formation of a people--notably a national one--issues from what he terms the human struggle of politics, a "machine" of sorts that guides the voice, union, and growth of the German nation. Although he differs with Rousseau on the source and direction of human collectivities, Weber still shares Rousseau's curiosity about their theoretical and political significance. Indeed, Weber's devotion to the ideal of the German nation dominates his view of the world around him, as well as it obstructs his ability to theorize a politics beyond the bounds of that national ideal.[10]

In this chapter, I seek to do more than reconfirm how Weber's theory of nation, and its expression as the aim of German politics, limits the variety of convictions in the arena of politics. By restricting politics to the training of national leaders, the reform of governmental structures, and the unification of a citizenry, I believe Weber omits convictions which might contest such instrumental political ambitions. Moreover, insofar as politics serves the moral aim of the German nation, I claim his theory of the nation impedes the human struggles that, ultimately, promote the prospect of German national glory. In fact, rather than

spurring the prospect of glory in the future, Weber's idea of the nation discloses an "ethical paradox" at the heart of his political thinking. This paradox arises from the clash between the morally absolute aim of the nation and the earthly function of modern politics. It highlights, I conclude, an incongruity in Weber's thinking such that, first, his idea of nation constricts the "human struggle" of politics and, second, his idea of politics defies the absolute moral "'good'" of the nation. In light of this framework, I raise three questions: How does Weber contribute to the German tradition of theorizing the idea of nation? How does his theory of politics subvert the ultimate ambitions he ascribes to the idea of German nation? Lastly, what insights might such a subversion provide in terms of weighing the enduring value of Max Weber's theoretical perspective on politics?

Pathos and Nation

In 1909 Paul Siebeck, publisher of the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozial Politik*, asked Max Weber to organize a collaborative study of the science of political economy. After assuming editorial duties, and later failing to receive contributions from his colleagues, Weber focused on his own studies, which subsequently appeared as part two of Economy and Society. Entitled "The Economy and the Arena of Normative and De Facto Powers," it represents an

exhaustive catalogue of "ideal-types" that he culled from his growing interest in interpretive (*Verstehen*) sociology. The purpose of this cataloguing, some argue, is to define the bond between "laws and conventions, on the one hand, and the groups that sustain them on the other."[11] With a group such as the nation, Economy and Society exhibits Weber's attempt to capture within an analytical device the complex ties between individual citizens and political leaders. These ties are complex because they designate a national community based on the shared yet mutable traits of human emotion and a sense of responsibility before history.

Detached from his orations on the East Elbian labor problem, and not yet consumed by the furies of the First World War, Weber approaches the "ideal-type" of the nation as such from an historical perspective. This is clear in his 1914 preface to Economy and Society. There he "proceeded from the view that the development of the economy must be investigated primarily as a particular phenomenon of the *general rationalization* of life."[12] His theoretical ideal of the nation as such unfolds, therefore, along an historical trajectory that confirms the ever-increasing mastery of worldly forces by human calculation. Yet this trajectory, and the analytical devices to which it corresponds, imparts something different and, at times, contrary to the "ideal-type" of the nation. Indeed, Weber's impartial depiction of the nation posits both a specific

kind of "pathos" and a specific sentiment of solidarity as its theoretical foundation.[13] It indicates, I believe, a break from the history of "*rationalization*" and the "logical" structure of ideal-types. Equally important, I think Weber's theoretical ideal of the nation challenges his own understanding of the "machinery" of modern politics.[14]

The postulates of pathos and solidarity reveal the degree to which Weber extends the German tradition of theorizing the nation, a tradition that, ironically, stems from the work of Rousseau. With his 1762 work On the Social Contract, Rousseau elicited responses from several late-18th and early-19th century German Idealist thinkers who fixed on his belief in the "collective" ambitions of "private" persons. As each person "contracts" with another, Rousseau, declared, "this act...produces a moral and collective body, composed of as many members as there are voices in the assembly, which receives from this same act its unity, its common *self*, its life, and its will."[15] This reference to the "*general will*" inspired Herder, among others, to challenge not Rousseau's idea of community *per se*, but his notion of the contract which informs it. Against this idea of contract, which Herder contested on the basis of its *a priori* gesture toward "the outcries of nature," he posited a human community on man's "invention" of language. Thus, he charged in his 1770 "Essay on the Origin of Language," "[t]he first human thought is...a preparation for the

possibility of dialoguing with others!"[16] With this communal view of language, Herder rendered it the source of "national feelings," a trait that comes from "the dark recesses of the human soul...where the most diverse feelings engender one another, where an urgent occasion musters all forces of the soul."[17] It was this emotional element in Herder's work that allowed Weber to perceive the nation in terms of historical change rather than man's static nature.

In his chapter on "Political Communities" in Economy and Society, Weber portrays the nation in terms of a unique "pathos" such that it influences a specific group of people. However, Weber deviates from Herder's vision of a *Volkstaat* insofar as he concentrates on a group's shared feelings and not on the "objective" trait of language that transmits them. In contrast to the Marxian and positivist tenets of early-20th century social science, moreover, Weber argues that the "fervor of this emotional influence does not, in the main, have an economic origin. It is based upon sentiments of prestige."[18] By "sentiments of prestige," Weber means the shared bond between individual members of a community, in which each "individual is expected to face death in the group interest."[19] Given this "common struggle of life and death," a political community takes form around "joint memories" that often outweigh the more objective bonds of language, religion, race, ethnicity, or economy. In fact, according to Weber, these sentiments

"strengthen the ardent belief in the actual existence of one's own might, and this is important for positive self-assurance in case of conflict."[20] Thus Weber does not ground the ideal-type of nation solely on the basis of objective measures. Rather, he grounds it on the "enduring emotional foundations" of a group of individuals, foundations that are prone to subjective impulse, not simply empirical measurement.

Weber also characterizes the nation as such in terms of each individual's historical "responsibility" toward the future of the community. He perceives the source of this responsibility to be that which coincides with the sentiments of prestige: the shared pathos that comes from "facing death" in the interest of the nation. But rather than merely fortify a passionate belief in the right and might of the nation, this idea of responsibility entails a belief in the perpetuation of the nation's own "succeeding generations."[21] Given this latter belief, which connotes a transcendent, other-worldly depiction of the nation, Weber claims "great power structures *per se* are then held to have a responsibility of their own for the way in which power and prestige are distributed between their own and foreign polities."[22] Indeed this "responsibility before history" imparts, not just an added degree of emotion to the nation, but a universal value by which the nation accrues, maintains, and expands its power among other nations.

The responsibility which individuals feel toward the future members of their community indicates another aspect of Weber's ideal-type of the nation. That aspect is power. While exploring the meaning of "Ethnic Groups" in Economy and Society, Weber remarks that "the concept [of nation] seems to refer...to a specific kind of pathos which is linked to the idea of a powerful political community of people."[23] Yet, again, he untangles this link in a more precise way in his exploration of "Political Communities." Based on its shared sentiments of prestige, which foster a sense of collective prowess, Weber maintains that the nation strives to confirm "the glory of power over other communities...the expansion of power."[24] However, this struggle for national power does not necessarily involve an aggressive physical conquest of another nation's territory. He notes instead that it is "usually anchored in the superiority, or at least the irreplaceability, of the cultural values that are to be preserved and developed only through the cultivation of the peculiarity of the group."[25] This struggle thus involves the moral and political depletion of those values that diverge from the ideal of the nation itself, such that they promote either one differing ideal or a multitude of competing ideals. Hence human pathos and responsibility more than clarify Weber's theoretical design of the nation as such. They clarify,

too, the type of absolute power that is pivotal to its longevity in a world of other nations.

The nation asserts this power over the differing values of its citizens and other nations with the assistance of the modern bureaucratic state. "The more power is emphasized," Weber explains, "the closer appears to be the link between nation and state."[26] In his chapter on "Bureaucracy," moreover, he defines the developmental path of this rule-based and regulatory machine as one that inevitably approaches the modern state. The state's role in the nation's reach for power thus appears in "its purely *technical* superiority over any other form of organization." It affords the nation "[p]recision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, continuity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs."[27] The state's untimely qualities surface, however, insofar as its superiority over the nation's opponents also risks expunging the human pathos that forms the basis of the nation as such. As Weber makes clear, the modern state "develops the more perfectly, the more it is 'dehumanized,' the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business...all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements."[28] The state is as indispensable to the nation's power as it is pernicious to the emotions undergirding the nation's design. It therefore suggests, I think, the first

of several theoretical discrepancies involving Weber's ideal-type of the nation as such.

His view of the state's relation to the nation denotes a discrepancy in that the former's "*technical* superiority" implies a dismissal of the latter's "enduring emotional foundations." Undoubtedly, he insists that the "*impersonal* and *functional* purposes" of the state "frequently gain an ideological halo from cultural values...which appear as surrogates for a this-worldly or other-worldly personal master and which are embodied by a given group."[29] With regard to the nation, though, Weber also posits the state as a mechanism that gradually confines the human struggles, or "frictions," which stem from a multitude of human convictions. "A direct road leads," he says, referring to the aims of the state, "from mere modifications of the blood feud...to the present position of the policeman as the 'representative of God on earth.'"[30] The state thus assures the nation both emotional and ideological uniformity among its individual members in return for a mask of honor and integrity. Yet, when the dispassionate forces of officialdom make this mask transparent, the state also assures the nation nothing more than a disciplined "discharge of business according to *calculable rules* and 'without regard for person.'"[31]

This discrepancy between the state's function and the nation's exalted moral status points to another

contradiction in Weber's political thinking. It tends to surface when the state utilizes the nation in its own forceful reach toward greater power. Put a different way, the modern bureaucratic state seeks to advance more than the nation's power. Weber notes, for instance, the extent to which "those groups who hold the power to steer common conduct within a polity" are the same ones who "most strongly instill themselves with this idealist fervor of power prestige."[32] In view of these "interested" members, the state's advance of the nation's power represents neither an entirely technical nor a wholly national project. Such "status groups" as the military, intelligentsia, civil servants, and politicians "remain the specific and most reliable bearers of the idea of the state as an imperialist power structure demanding unqualified devotion."[33] The nation's power thus derives, not just from the technical vigor of the state *per se*, but from those impassioned groups who wield the state in favor of one expressed national ideal. It resides, furthermore, on the perilous ground of the modern state, perilous because the narrow ideals that inform the methods of the state defy the broad emotions that unify the individual persons of a nation.

Limited by the state's technical purpose and its most entrenched members, Weber's theoretical ideal of the nation is also bound by its responsibility to future generations. The limits of responsibility have less to do with the

clairvoyant gestures of a national community and more to do with the metaphysical framework of the nation itself. By positing the nation on a "specific belief" in the "struggle of life and death" and a history of "superiority" and irreplaceability," Weber underscores those "sentiments of likeness which will persist after their demise."[34] This transcendence of the nation's temporal boundaries in the present signifies a narrowing of the nation's "sphere of values." It narrows this sphere for the sake of a singular view of the nation's future: that is, the perpetuation of the nation's present across time. However, as Weber remarks, the metaphysical reach of responsibility largely extends from a group of "intellectuals" whom he designates as "specifically predestined to propagate the '*national* idea.'"[35] In light of this control of values by a group of elites, Weber's idea of national responsibility operates from a finite, even calculated position--a position at odds with the nation's collective pathos. For all its universal aims, then, the nation's responsibility toward its future citizens is not without its theoretical incongruities.

Besides its responsibility before history, its drive for power, and its union with the state, the nation's "emotional foundations" confront one additional challenge. That challenge stems from the theoretical construction of human "pathos" itself, which Weber links to an individual's duty to face death for the good of the national group. Yet,

despite this individual depiction of the nation's pathos, Weber entrusts its magnitude to "the ideological interests of strata that are...privileged within a polity and, indeed, privileged by its very existence."[36] These groups of citizens, who, according to Weber, "think of themselves as being the specific 'partners' of a specific 'culture,'" represent the stewards of the nation's emotional union. "Under the influence of these circles," he notes, "the naked prestige of 'power' is unavoidably transformed into other special forms of prestige and especially into the idea of the 'nation.'"[37] Therefore, though he postulates the nation as such on the shared pathos of individuals, Weber still situates its fate in the hands of certain individuals. They are individuals who, because of their fixed convictions and instrumental functions in the state, promise the nation the prestige of power as well as a breach of emotions.

By predicating the ideal-type of the nation on the groundwork of human pathos, Max Weber admits to the individual's integral role in the nation's "common political struggle of life and death." But his theory of the nation as such also emphasizes "that *it is proper* to expect from certain groups a specific sentiment of solidarity in the face of other groups. Thus, the concept belongs in the sphere of values."[38] It is evident from this theoretical difference that the emotional basis which Weber ascribes to the nation privileges, not the individual person

necessarily, but those groups which can best marshall the pathos of other individuals. Moreover, insofar as elite groups consolidate the nation's individual passions, it is evident that they--and not individuals--champion the feelings concerning the nation's sense of power prestige. Hence Weber's premise about the "emotional influence" of the nation as such confirms the extent to which a passion for glory, power, and greatness supersedes differing passions for the nation itself. In other words, it confirms a narrow rather than broad "sphere of values," suggesting a type of politics that is bound by the goal of national glory and a restricted idea of human struggle.

The same can be said about Weber's premise of the nation's responsibility toward succeeding generations. On the one hand, he understands responsibility to involve a shared sense of emotional solidarity between present and future citizens. In this way, responsibility reveals a universal bond that verifies the nation's historical continuity and political purpose. On the other hand, he perceives it to be a belief cultivated and maintained by specific cultural and political elites who, with the "idealist fervor of power prestige," strive to advance the supremacy of the nation. Hence "responsibility" in this context underscores neither the universal design of the nation itself nor the ultimate end of national solidarity. Weber's view of the term intimates instead the calculated

aim of the nation as such, while circumscribing the values available to the national citizenry. This means that a dividing line of sorts runs the length of the nation's sense of responsibility, a line drawn by persons whose zeal for national power warrants the exclusion of "irresponsible" citizens from the nation's sphere of values. Accordingly, Weber's premise concerning the importance of national responsibility no longer foreshadows the nation's sense of solidarity. In fact, it portends a rift among citizens and leaders, a rift which imperils that nation's reach for power in the present and future.

With pathos and responsibility as the basis of the nation as such, I think Weber unwittingly affords an insight into the theoretical factors that obstruct politics and national glory. Furthermore, inasmuch as the nation strives to feel the "prestige of power," he emphasizes the self-interested groups that govern and guide the nation, denoting simultaneously the aims which justify restraint on the human struggles of politics. Such restraint, however, tends to impede the nation's chances of achieving historical greatness. By infusing the nation with the state's "*technical* superiority," Weber theorizes the nation on the basis of something more calculable than the emotional traits of a citizenry. He situates it, too, on the state's ordering of the nation's emotional solidarity. Given this impassive state function, I thus believe Weber's ideal-type

of the nation signifies at least two troublesome outcomes. The first, of course, is "the reduction of friction" between passionate individuals who, with distinct ideals, help comprise the human struggle of politics. The second is the likely elimination of those human emotions which may not aid the nation's "superiority" and "irreplaceability," but which nevertheless mirror its impassioned landscape. Both outcomes thus demonstrate the degree to which Weber's theory of the nation as such presages limited occasions for both the human struggle of politics and the glory of the nation.

Race and Nation

In his 1895 Freiburg Inaugural Address, Max Weber detects a national crisis more troubling than the demise of Prussian authority, the immaturity of the German working class, or the rise in Slavic immigration. What troubles him is Wilhelmine Germany's self-imposed curse of "the hard fate of the political *epigone*." His perception of epigone derives, in part, from Bismarck's deft and forceful unification of a culturally divisive Germany in 1871. As a result of this monumental struggle, Weber beholds a nation in which the taste for political conflict and new historical challenges dissipates in the air of military conquest and relative social calm. His view of Germany's "political *epigone*" is such that "a peculiarly 'unhistorical' and unpolitical spirit seized the rising generation of the

German bourgeoisie, drunk as it was with success and thirsty for peace."[39] But more than just a rebuke against the bourgeoisie, Weber's view of epigone includes the entire Wilhelmine citizenry for whom, with great naivete, "German history appeared to be over. The present was the complete fulfillment of the past thousands of years."[40] Given this depiction of epigone, Weber suggests that the least of Germany's problems reside in the structural shifts occurring in East Elbia. The nation's problem appears in the "mass-psychological" flaws of its citizens, who would rather subject the German nation to a legacy of dull mediocrity than struggle for the aim of national greatness.

By denoting epigone as Wilhelmine Germany's primary impediment to national greatness, Weber also acknowledges the principal task facing Germany. "We shall not succeed in exorcising the curse that hangs over us...," he proclaims, referring to the fate of epigone, "unless we discover how to become something different: the precursors of an even greater epoch."[41] This transformation, which for Weber entails "an immense work of *political* education," is important from the standpoint of his theory of politics, in that politics represents the means of cultivating a community of people. It is also important with regard to Weber's view of the German nation, since his desire to transform it into "something different" discloses a theoretical concern for the individual. In fact, Weber says

that he and his scholarly colleagues in the cultural sciences "do not want to breed well-being in people, but rather those characteristics which we think of as constituting the human greatness and nobility of our nature."[42] This concern for the individual territory of the German nation issues from Weber's view of epigone, but it opposes the push of "this hard fate" toward political inertia. Rather, his early approach to the German nation stresses the alteration of an individual's "psychological and physical racial characteristics" which make the nation prone to historical and political oblivion.[43]

Max Weber's desire to educate the individual citizen again reveals an affinity with Rousseau, notably the Rousseau who penned The Government of Poland in 1772. Faced with Russian domination, a group of Polish citizens solicited Rousseau's thoughts on the measure that could best foster a sense of national independence among all Poles. Like Weber before his Freiburg audience, Rousseau's response was direct: "it is education that you must count on to shape the souls of the citizens in a national pattern and so to direct their opinions, their likes, and dislikes that they shall be patriotic by inclination, passionately, of necessity."[44] This view of education, however, which foretold of Polish youth absorbed in "public" and "physical activity," deviated from Weber's idea in that it presupposed a "natural" person who, thanks to "private" customs, spurned

his true self. Hence I think Weber sides with Hegel, who, in his 1821 work on Philosophy of Right, censured Rousseau for reducing "the union of individuals in the state to a contract and therefore to something based on their arbitrary wills."[45] Fixing on the "frightfulness and terror" that issued from the French Revolution, Hegel rebutted his Genevan predecessor, charging that "the individual...has objectivity, genuine individuality" not by virtue of an *a priori* nature, but because of "the state" which "is mind objectified."[46] Though Weber clearly rejects Hegel's notion of the state as "an absolute unmoved end in itself," he accepts Hegel's critique of Rousseau. It is a critique that permits Weber to situate his idea of a political education between a willful individual and a forceful bureaucratic state.

In the Freiburg lecture, which he titled "The Nation State and Economic Policy," Weber insists that "race" (*Rasse*) marks the key element in Germany's education of its citizens. At the lecture's outset, he expounds a desire "to illustrate, from just *one example*, the role played by physical and psychological racial differences between nationalities in the economic struggle for existence."[47] The struggle to which Weber refers pertains to the influx of Slavic immigrants into what was at that time the eastern frontier of Germany. They came in search of work and freedom on the landed estates of East Elbia, estates which

German laborers vacated for factory jobs in cities and towns in western Germany. For Weber, the intriguing difference between Slavs and Germans has to do with the way the former, either by "nature" or "breeding," embrace their subservient living conditions on the Junker estates. It is a "racial" difference no less, one which explains their willingness "even to eat grass" in return for the chance to work a parcel of German farmland. Such indignities, he charges, "lead back...to one and the same reason, *namely lower expectations of the standard of living*...something which is either natural to the Slav race or has been bred into it in the course of its history."[48] Coupled with a German reluctance to change the estate economy for the sake of the "homeland," the Slavs' "racial" traits signify a nation that endures grave structural alterations. Indeed, these traits "have helped the Slavs to victory" in Germany's eastern frontier.

Max Weber's view of the German nation's racial foundation stems from the Slavic capacity to make "the fewest physical and ideal demands on the quality of life." It informs his belief that "the two nationalities differ in their *ability to adapt* to the varying economic and social conditions of existence."[49] The idea of "adaptability" (*Anpassungsfähigkeit*) reflects the one component which, according to Weber, the German race finds wanting. The result of this process, he continues, is such "that one

group yields to the other, that the victorious nationality is the one possessing the greater ability to adapt itself to the given economic and social conditions of life."[50] Given what Weber sees as the differing racial traits of Germans and Slavs, the ability to adapt to the changing circumstances in East Elbia favors the Slavic nation in its accumulation of German farmlands. More important, though, the lack of such a "mass-psychological" orientation threatens the German nation with, if not the "disappearance" of its cultural life, then its submission to a more versatile nation. Hence Weber's view of Germany's failure to adapt to change in East Elbia punctuates its passive racial composition, as well as it indicates the chief deterrent to political struggle and national greatness.

The task facing the German "racial" nation thus reveals itself in a willful cultivation of its citizenry. In other words, it is an educational task that seeks to challenge the historical fate of epigone, Germany's racial constitution, and the German citizen's apathy toward future glory. "The question which stirs us," continues Weber, speaking to some of Germany's most esteemed scholars, "is not the *well-being* human beings will enjoy in the future but what kind of people they will *be*."[51] The target of this task of "*political* education," however, is not "the broad *masses* of the nation" but "the *political* qualifications of the *ruling and rising classes*."[52] Accordingly, it entails the

cultivation of "*political* maturity" among the leadership circles of the German bourgeoisie and proletariat. In short, Weber means "their grasp of the nation's enduring economic and political *power* interests and their ability...to place these interests above all other considerations."[53] Although he voices doubt about the outcome of this task, he remains convinced that immersions into the human struggle for power "breed" anything but "a soft, eudaemonistic outlook" within the German nation. If such a political education prepares a "leading strata" for "the strenuous struggles of the future," Weber surmises, the German nation might have a chance to alter its racial make-up and prospects for glory.

In addition to advocating the maturation of Germany's leaders, Weber argues that the modern state must act on behalf of the German racial nation. It must do so, he continues, insofar as it defends German citizens against the influx of immigrant Slavs in East Elbia. Moreover, it must do so because it reflects "the worldly organisation of the nation's power. In this nation-state the ultimate criterion for economic policy, as for all others, is in our view '*reason of state*'."[54] With regard to East Elbia, Weber notes the gravity of state intervention relative to relieving Junkers of their authority over inefficient estates and protecting German farmlands from foreign appropriation. To ignore such a strategy only nurtures "an

isolated domestic economy," a "Slavic invasion" and, more disturbing, a feeling of "homelessness" across the eastern reaches of the Wilhelmine German nation. "From the standpoint of nation," he asserts with an eye on the Prussian manors, "large-scale enterprises which can only be preserved at the expense of the German race deserve to go down to destruction. To leave them to their own devices means permitting unviable colonies of starving Slavs to come into existence by way of the gradual parcelling-off of the estates."[55] Weber thus concludes "that the German race should be protected in the east," and that the state "*ought to* rise to the challenge of defending it" by subsidizing efficient German ownership of East Elbian farmlands.[56]

Judging from the "racial characteristics" he ascribes to Germans, and the "breeding" tactics he thinks might correct them, I believe Weber's early depiction of the German nation reveals several theoretical disparities. The first of which concerns Weber's understanding of race as the central component of the German nation. By positing the German nation on the basis of race Weber tends to highlight not so much the specific racial characteristics of Germans, nor even the Slavs for that matter. Instead, he illuminates the racial traits which the German nation lacks: "the German agricultural labourers can no longer adapt to the *social* conditions of life in their homeland."[57] If there is a racial ground that underlies his idea of the German nation,

it takes the shape of Prussian estate owners who privilege patriarchal tradition over capitalist development, a bourgeoisie that prefers self-interested eudaemonism to collective glory, and a working class that favors political romanticism to German nationalism. Hence the tension in Weber's idea of the nation is that the "racial characteristics" of Germans confirm a collective unwillingness to adapt to change for the sake of their "homeland." Indeed, they indicate a fragmented nation in the present whose only hope for unity, power, and glory resides in a speculative gesture toward the future.

What further complicates Weber's racial design of the German nation is his understanding of adaptability. He perceives the idea of adaptability in terms of what the German race refuses to do in East Elbia, notably Prussian Junkerdom's aversion to land efficiency, global competition, and the money-wage economy. According to Weber, this lack of an "ability to adapt to the conditions of its existence" marks the most profound characteristic of the German race. It is a "tragic" deficiency, he says, one issuing from Bismarck's Caesarist rule, which "was meant to lead not merely to the external, but also to the inner unification of the nation, and...that has not been achieved."[58] Insofar as it derives from this milieu and denotes a pivotal trait of the German race, Weber's idea of adaptability confirms the absence of a racial dimension in the German nation.

This absence he again redresses with normative glances toward the future, when the nation might be better prepared to embrace change and the human struggles that accompany it. As for the present, Weber's racialist depiction of the nation simply suggests a theoretical rift between Wilhelmine Germany's historical situation and its potential disposition toward change. It also connotes a formidable barrier to German national unity, power, and glory.

The tensions underlying these ideas of race and adaptability, however, do not prevent Weber from prioritizing the ideal of the German nation. For the failure of the German race to embrace willingly the structural changes and human struggles in East Elbia merely marks the conditions for the possibility of national greatness. It also explains Weber's idea of a "*political* education" for the German nation, the aim of which is to render "the specific function of the leading economic and political strata to be the bearers of the nation's sense of political purpose (*Sinn*)."[59] Yet, educating these strata to push for "the *social unification* of the nation" exposes a tension in Weber's idea of the German nation, such that he again stipulates a select group of persons to advance a collective ambition. By stipulating a "leading strata" as the source of national unity, Weber confounds his racial design of the nation with a political divide between persons who consciously guide and those who simply comprise the

German race. If this divide suggests anything about Weber's racial rendering of the German nation, it is that the explicit political function of leadership overrules the vague and passive role of the citizenry. In other words, it appears as though some Germans are more racially sound than others.

This political divide also surfaces in Weber's view of the modern state, which he perceives to be the guardian of the racial constitution of the German nation. State stewardship of the racial nation constitutes a tension in Weber's political thinking since he designates this "worldly organisation" as the "final and decisive say in all questions of German economic policy."[60] Thus neither race, nor any other cultural trait or value for that matter, represents the guiding force of the German nation. In addition, the state compounds this tension in that Germany's racial ability to change depends on the state's power "to free the economic forces of the nation from their fetters and to tear down the barriers in the way of their autonomous development."[61] Contrary to the belief that it stems from an "inner" quality culled from human pathos, the racial trait of adaptability derives from the "external" force of the state. It is a force, in fact, that orchestrates social conditions in a way most promising to the German nation. Therefore, Weber's view of the German state supersedes the

racial make-up of the nation, undercutting the centrality of race and the political prospects of unity and glory.

If Weber's early perspective on the German nation jeopardizes the prospect of politics, there is little doubt that his postulate of race is partly to blame. On the one hand, he argues that Germany's racial traits promise little more than a future of economic anachronisms and cultural subservience, especially given the East Elbia "situation" and power struggles with other nations. This racial flaw certainly invites class struggles, Slavic immigrants, feelings of alienation and homelessness among German citizens, and a fixation on tradition despite the advances of economic rationality. On the other hand, Weber argues that the German race requires individual rulers who can acknowledge and convey to others the "enduring economic and political *power* interests" of the German nation. For these "bearers of the nation's sense of political purpose (*Sinn*)" represent the unifying link across a German race fragmented by differing class and cultural interests, as well as by a narrowly fixed center of political and economic power. Whether it illustrates a collective apathy toward historical change or a mandate for the cultivation of select individuals, Weber's race postulate holds little hope for broadening the prospects of politics in the German nation.

His idea of adaptability also accounts for another factor that is central to the further diminishment of

politics in the German nation. When Weber talks about adaptability it is obvious that he means the facility of the German race to fight in a unified manner for the "enduring" interests and values mirrored in the nation. After all, he views the German race as "imagining that peace and happiness lie waiting in the womb of the future," even though it embodies a dying Junker class, a growing Slavic invasion, and a leadership vacuum in German politics. Thus, as with the race postulate, Weber alters the idea of adaptability when he claims that Germans must "become something different," yielding "the dream" of peace and happiness for "the strenuous struggles of the future." Yet this alteration fails to include "the broad *masses* of the nation," whom he thinks are too often distracted by their "struggle with daily necessity" to appreciate the magnitude of the nation's struggle for glory. Rather, it includes only that "strata" of individuals who are "mature" enough to sacrifice their mundane personal interests for the advance of the "enduring" power-interests of Germany. Insofar as his idea of adaptability indicates a nation either prone to passivity or partial to specific leaders, Weber's racial nation again reflects a narrow scope of political options.

But only when these racial traits mix with Weber's quest for a vigorous breed of citizen does his idea of the German nation reveal the narrow scope politics and the limited reach toward national glory. Witness his idea of

political education, which instructs only certain persons "to raise themselves into the hard, clear air in which the sober work of German politics flourishes, an atmosphere which, however, is also filled with the earnest grandeur of national sentiment."[62] The problem with this instruction is not that it presupposes a citizenry that is historically and psychologically incapable of enduring the "strenuous struggles" that advance the ideal of German national greatness. It is that the theoretical consequence of this presupposition induces Weber to designate a "leading strata" of citizens to be the chief political agent of the national ideals of Wilhelmine Germany. The German nation divulges, not so much a shared racial trait such as adaptability, but select individuals who, because of their learned "maturity," elevate the "enduring" values of the nation above all others. If Weber denotes such leaders as best able to embrace change with a sense of national purpose, his idea of the German nation defies both the broad reach of race and the variety of values in politics.

Besides cleaving the nation's racial foundation through the elevation of specifically "mature" individuals, Weber fragments it further by granting the state the "final and decisive say" in German politics. After all, it is not the German race *per se*--with its fractious interests and values--that must adapt to the shifting social structures in East Elbia. Nor is it the "leading strata" who go forth into

"the strenuous struggles of the future," pushing the ideals of German national power and greatness. Rather, as "the worldly organisation of the nation's power," the state orchestrates Germany's racial faculty to embrace historical change. It does so by encouraging land sales in the east, market expansion abroad, and leadership struggles at home. In consolidating the German race and instructing German political leaders, the modern state from Weber's viewpoint represents more than a vehicle for national power and glory. Ironically, I believe it represents a barrier to the human struggle of politics and, thus, German national glory, especially given the state's narrow range of goals and its decisive control over the mixed values of the citizenry. Weber's idea of the German state thus undercuts his idea of the German racial nation, revealing how its "worldly organisation" dispels the normative scope of the nation's "granduer" and "nobility."

Herrenvolk and Nation

One onerous bit of history differentiates Weber's later theoretical approach to the nation from his earlier ones: Wilhelimine Germany's role in the First World War. Besides confirming his loyalty to the German nation, the war illustrates the extent to which Weber blames Germany's political institutions for prolonging the conflict and weakening the nation's prospects of power. He does not

necessarily attribute these institutional flaws to either the specter of "epigone" or "the *general rationalisation* of life." Rather, he attributes them to the effects of such conditions as: bureaucratic control of foreign policy, provincial party structures, the lack of responsible politicians, and the absence of universal suffrage. "At this precise moment," he notes in 1917, "when the Great War has reached the stage where diplomacy is making its voice heard again, it is high time to do everything we can to prevent the old errors being committed all over again."[63] Weber seeks to theorize, therefore, a way that allows the German nation "to become something different" after the war, but he ceases to posit that project on the basis of race or human pathos.[64] He instead attempts to ground the German nation on the idea of "*Herrenvolk*," a community of individuals who actively participate in the nation's political institutions.[65]

The role of institutions in Weber's idea of an *Herrenvolk* is not unlike that which Rousseau stipulates in his work on The Government of Poland. Indeed, Rousseau advised the Poles that "*national* institutions" are what give "form to the genius, the character, the tastes, and the customs of a people...what arouses in it that ardent love of fatherland that is founded upon habits of mind impossible to uproot."[66] The German variant of Rousseau's approach to institutions, moreover, manifested itself in the work of

Fichte, who, like Herder before and Hegel after him, still contested the Genevan's theoretical solace in a "natural" past. In 1808, as Napolean's troops were occupying parts of Prussia, Fichte delivered his 14 Addresses to the German Nation, all of which premised the moral renewal of Germany on the institution of education. He lectured his Berlin audience that "the sole means of preserving the existence of the German nation...an entirely new self...a universal and national self" required "a total change of the existing system of education."[67] His idea of education, however, countered Rousseau's as well as Kant's in that it sought to bridle an individual's free will for the sake of one Platonic ideal. It replaced an "old system" with one that "completely destroys freedom of will in the soil which it undertakes to cultivate, and produces on the contrary strict necessity in the decisions of the will."[68] Insofar as such "decisions" concerned the advance of the German nation, I believe Weber shares Fichte's view of institutions, even though he rejects the idea that they be guided by the "educated classes" of Germany.

Again like Fichte and other German Idealists, Weber initiates his exploration of an *Herrenvolk* from the standpoint of what the German nation lacks near the end of the First World War.[69] He notes in his 1917 "Parliament and Government" articles that postwar Germany cannot embrace the "sterile and sentimental reminiscences of the

governmental practices of the old regime," nor can it pursue "any theoretical search for a specifically 'German' form of the state."[70] These "traditions" promise Germany little more than a parliament that forbids universal suffrage, a bureaucracy that lauds secrecy, a monarchy that relishes publicity, and educated "litterateurs" who belittle sober attempts to move the nation in a different direction. In contrast, he charges, Germany must become "a 'nation of masters' (*Herrenvolk*), which means a people controlling the administration of its affairs itself, and, through its elected representatives, sharing decisively in the selection of its political leaders."[71] His idea of *Herrenvolk* thus signifies what the German nation was *not* up until the final years of the war. It signifies, too, what he believed were the normative aspirations of postwar Germany.

Max Weber's idea of an *Herrenvolk* symbolizes what Wilhelmine Germany might become if it undertakes to institute certain "political arrangements" in the present. If Germany desires more than administrative efficiency and historical mediocrity, if it wants a "decisive say" in the "universal trends" of the future, then "[t]he internal structure of the nation, including its political structure, has to be adapted to this task."[72] Indeed, Weber argues further that parliamentary institutions constitute the most effective structure for this task of national reform. He supports this claim with his notion of a "working"

parliament; in which the legislature scrutinizes the bureaucracy, parties train the politicians, politicians persuade the masses, and the masses select the politicians. "Only a *working*, as opposed to a merely talking parliament," he explains, "can be the soil in which...genuinely *political* qualities of leadership can grow and work their way up through a process of selection."[73] By assuring that rulers and the ruled "are *actively* involved in shaping the politics of their country," Weber's view of the "machinery" of parliament illustrates the means by which the German nation becomes an *Herrenvolk*.

Given its potential for political self-mastery, however, Weber warns the German nation that such a path to power and greatness features neither happiness nor certainty. Indeed, he contends that "technical changes" in Germany's political structure "do not in themselves make a nation vigorous (*tüchtig*), nor happy, nor valuable. They can clear away mechanical obstacles in its path and are therefore merely means to an end."[74] The nation's task of becoming an *Herrenvolk* thus entails, not only "*a politically mature people*," but "the sure instinct of other nations" who will challenge Germany's "decisive say" in world affairs. In other words, Weber believes the conversion of a nation of "officials" into a nation of "'masters'" assures Germany only a chance--not a guarantee--to struggle with other nations for power. Conversely, "if parliament were to fail

and, as a result, the old system were to return...we should have to abandon finally all great hopes for Germany's future, *regardless* of the kind of peace that awaits us."[75] An *Herrenvolk* confronts a future rife with struggle and uncertainty, but it is a future that signals many more prospects for greatness than anything the present affords the Wilhelmine nation.

The contingencies of the future, however, do not preclude the German nation from utilizing a variety of political beacons. In addition to its parliamentary "machinery," Weber's nation of masters inevitably relies on the modern bureaucratic state for its guidance. It is not that the Wilhelmine German nation lacks the efficient services of an administrative state. On the contrary, Weber notes, "we lacked...*leadership* of the state by a *politician*, which does not mean a political genius...nor even an important political talent, but simply anyone who was a politician *at all*."[76] His idea of a German *Herrenvolk* requires a particular type of state, the will of which reveals neither a monarch whose authority comes with birth nor a bureaucrat whose duty to an office outweighs his individual ideals. The will of such a state manifests itself in a politician who, on account of his parliamentary training, is more than just "moved by the political fate of *his* people." This politician, says Weber, "will think in terms of the next two to three generations, even where the

creation of new political formations is concerned, since these are the people who will decide what is to become of *his* nation."[77] The link between an *Herrenvolk* and the state thus issues neither from an emotionally or racially identified group of people. According to Weber, who by 1917 seeks a structural remedy for Germany's internal maladies, it issues from a specific type of person. That person is a politician, one who exemplifies leadership traits that both blossom in the fight for national power and brave the public scrutiny from the nation's masses.

Insofar as an *Herrenvolk* denotes willful persons who further their power with parliamentary "political arrangements," I contend that Weber's Great War rendering of the German nation suggests a few theoretical incongruities. The first involves the link between the modern state and a nation of masters. It is an incongruity in that the person whom Weber posits as the leader of the *Herrenvolk* state "is *meant* to be something different," someone who "will often make compromises, which means sacrificing something of lesser importance to something of greater importance."[78] Hence he bases his idea of the nation state on a specific type of person--a politician, who distinguishes himself from bureaucrats, military commanders, monarchs, and even the masses. The politician does so because he, unlike the other members of an *Herrenvolk*, willingly endures the human struggles of politics. "If he proceeds differently," Weber

stipulates, referring to the person who leads the *Herrenvolk*, "he is no politician...he should not step into the arena where the problems of the present are contested."[79] The German *Herrenvolk* thus revolves around two potentially opposing premises, one being that of "*a politically mature people*" and the other being that of a "small number" of leaders who master the nation's people.

This difference between a nation of masters and a leader who masters the nation is more apparent, and problematic, given Germany's pursuit of power and glory. Politicians, Weber argues, are people who "live and breathe" for "[t]he struggle for personal power and the acceptance of full *personal responsibility for one's cause* (*Sache*) which is the consequence of such power."[80] Monarchs rarely struggle for power, he continues; in fact, they are typically born into it. He believes bureaucrats fail to grasp the nuances of a power struggle; they instead excel at detaching themselves from such impassioned tasks. Lastly, he perceives the masses as having some degree of power, but only in that it takes shape in "the selection of the leader" by way of the ballot box. In light of the *Herrenvolk's* struggle for power, therefore, a problem surfaces in Weber's political thinking. It is a problem because he ascribes this struggle, not to a willful citizenry, but to a politician who "uses the means of *mass* demagogy to gain the confidence of the masses and their belief in his person, and

thereby gains power."[81] Put a different way, Weber's view of the national pursuit of power presupposes more than just the necessity of steadfast politicians. An *Herrenvolk* also presupposes the necessity of a politician's mastery over the German citizenry, suggesting not a "nation of masters" but a nation of nonresistant subjects.

The politician's parliamentary preparation for mastery, moreover, indicates another element of tension in Weber's approach to the German *Herrenvolk*. Weber is quite clear about the role of parliamentary politics in the formation of the postwar German nation. Indeed, he claims that the "actual form" of this democratic structure "will depend on where political *personalities with the qualities of leadership* emerge and what role they play."[82] But Weber's parliamentary blueprints involve more than the restriction of its purpose to the cultivation of political leaders. It entails an underlying premise about the limited number of persons who qualify for inclusion within this structure, those who exhibit "a strong instinct for political power" and potential for "political leadership". According to Weber, "[t]he 'principle of the small number' (that is the superior political manoeuvrability of *small* leading groups) always rules political action. This element of 'Caesarism' is ineradicable (in *mass states*)."[83] Judging from this exclusionary design of politics, I thus believe Weber expends theoretical energy cordoning off a vital portion of

the German nation from the very struggles which transform it into an *Herrenvolk*. It is an expense that diminishes the moral validity of the nation in his political thinking.

Based on these three theoretical incongruities, Weber's later idea of the German nation discloses a narrow approach to the meaning of *Herrenvolk*. On the one hand, he claims that for Germany to become a "'nation of masters'" it must allow a people to control both the "administration" of its affairs and the "selection" of its political leaders. This suggests politically engaged persons whose ambitions ought to exceed those mirrored in its tendency toward demagogic persuasion, "'occasional'" votes of public support, and submission to "'a small number'" of impassioned politicians. On the other hand, Weber, while presaging Germany's unstable postwar circumstances, stresses the necessity "to create the organisational *preconditions* for the emergence of leaders, and indeed everything now depends on this happening."[84] If the German nation "depends" on these "leaders," and if they signify the control of the state and the membership of power struggles, then Weber's idea of *Herrenvolk* points to something other than a German "nation" of masters. It points to a political situation in which the German nation reflects both a select circle of "masters" and a sizable constituency of "followers."

Given this contrast between a nation of masters and the masters of a nation, I think Weber's view of the postwar

German *Herrenvolk* indicates a constraint on politics. It is not the theoretical contrast itself, however, that constrains politics. Rather, it has to do with Weber's aim to privilege the political agency of a "'small number'" of masters over the "*un*organised mass" of the nation. Though he grants the mass citizenry control over both the selection of leaders and the ambitions of officialdom, Weber still grounds the force of his project on the lone politician. This politician, whose chief concern is "the political fate of *his* people," represents the chief participant in Weber's theory of politics--that struggle for state power between extraordinary personalities. The individual citizen, though, seeks power only to the extent that trade unions, party hierarchies, political persuasion, and the ballot box can discipline his otherwise "*emotional*" and "undirected mass fury." Weber's idea of a German *Herrenvolk* intimates a type of politics in which an elite group of dynamic politicians articulate, contest, and determine the historical course of the nation. It also divulges a national citizenry of persons whom Weber renders as incompetent to take part in such endeavors. He relegates them instead to a faceless plebiscite. An *Herrenvolk* thus hinges, not so much on a politics that transforms a diverse nation into masters--as Weber intends--but on a politics that requires politicians to master the nation's citizens.

A similar situation occurs in light of Weber's view of parliamentary democracy, which he perceives to be the "technical" means for the advance of German nationalism. In addition to restricting politics to the confines of parliamentary institutions, Weber stipulates an evaluative criteria for those persons who wish to occupy this domain. He underscores that when the right person engages in politics, typically "a cool and clear head...is all the more in command." From this criteria, others follow: "(1) the smaller the number of those who participate in the deliberations, and (2) the more unambiguously responsibilities are understood by each of the participants and by those whom they lead."[85] In short sober judgment, decisiveness, and responsibility speak volumes about the few persons who qualify for politics in the German nation. Yet they also speak volumes about the "*danger*" which parliamentary democracy presents to German politics," one which surfaces in a citizenry "exposed to momentary, purely emotional and irrational influences."[86] By cordoning off politics from "the *un*organised mass," Weber bestows the "political machinery" of Wilhelmine Germany, not to a "'nation of masters,'" but to a group of politicians who are quite distinct from the national citizenry. And insofar as this distinction warrants entry into parliamentary politics, Weber's idea of *Herrenvolk* reveals both a constraint on

politics and narrow interpretation of what it means to be a master as well as a nation.

Judging from these fixed political options, Weber's later view of the German nation stresses the imperative of social order as much as the push for national power. After all, the precondition for the *Herrenvolk* requires more than the "emergence of leaders," of political masters of the nation. It requires what Weber calls the "counterbalance to the rule of the streets which is so typical of purely plebiscitary nations and so prone to momentary and irrational influences."[87] He envisions this "counterbalance" to be the machinery of parliamentary politics, and it does more than simply cultivate the collective push for German national greatness. It limits the citizen's promise of power to the ballot box, in which party bosses, politicians, and bureaucratic officials seek, in various ways, to harness the "dangerous" desires of the masses. If parliament's role is to limit rather than extend a citizen's political power, then this machinery can easily foster the prospects of German national greatness. However, the consequence of this task manifests itself in a rigid social order that precludes a sizable segment of the nation from mastering its own fate. Weber's idea of Germany as an *Herrenvolk* thus illuminates, paradoxically, the limited prospects of politics and, consequently, the limited

likelihood of power, greatness, and glory for a German "'nation of masters.'"

The Value of Nation

Earlier I drew a parallel between the political thinking of Max Weber and that of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. I stressed each thinker's desire to explore the formative sources of a political community like the nation. Rousseau perceives that source to be the individual, who, by virtue of a "natural" rather than "private" disposition, affirms the values; interests, and appetites one innately shares with other persons. As a result, he argues that "the social order is a sacred right that serves as a basis for all the others. However, this right does not come from nature; it is therefore based on conventions."[88] Though Rousseau posits a peoples' formation on the *a priori* ground of "nature," he still seeks social order through the use of human artifice: i.e., sovereignty, law, government, education, the state, etc. His theoretical task in On The Social Contract thus entails more than the philosophical discovery of human nature and its pivotal role in the formation of a political community. It entails his desire to revitalize man's "nature" with humanly contrived social institutions, which, ironically, breed an individual proclivity toward alienation, corruption, and vanity.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau discusses the base influence of human institutions in his Discourses on "The Arts and Sciences" and "The Origins of Inequality." In the first discourse, which he wrote in 1750, Rousseau charges that such modern institutions as science, education, and the arts sap persons of their "natural" desire to coalesce into a unified political community. They instead compel persons to search for things external to one's self, things such as wealth, luxury, and commercial ambition rather than collective solidarity. "We have physicists, geometricians, chemists, astronomers, poets, musicians, and painters in plenty," he thus declares; "but we have no longer a citizen among us."[89] In the second discourse, which he penned in 1755, Rousseau continues the same line of argumentation, only this time he stresses how modern institutions cultivate, not just "private" interests, but "inequality" as well. Unlike "natural inequality," which derives from the "physical" traits of man's strength, age, gender and mind, he claims that "moral and political inequality...depends on a kind of convention, and is established...by the consent of men. The latter consists of the different privileges which some men enjoy to the prejudice of others; such as that of being more rich, more honoured, more powerful, or even in a position to exact obedience."[90] Institutions thus reveal one of many paradoxes in Rousseau's thinking because they

ensure both the perpetuation and the depletion of his concept of the modern individual.

Judging from his three views of the nation, Weber approaches the formative source of a political community somewhat differently than Rousseau. In each case, Weber's approach mirrors an historical context which challenges the "natural" dispositions of individuals. These challenges include "the *general rationalization* of life," Wilhelmine Germany's "political *epigone*," and the "'mass fate'" of the postwar German citizenry. Unlike Rousseau, they allow Weber to view the source of a community in terms of an individual's lack of "nature," a lack which he observes in, say, the German laborer or Junker in East Elbia. Such challenges also allow him to see the source of a community in the political institutions that transform--rather than simply preserve--the collective traits of individual persons. Indeed this perspective marks the underlying assumption in his later works on "Suffrage and Democracy in Germany" and "Parliament and Government in Germany." Given these contrasts, Weber's view of the national community highlights his departure from Rousseau's political thinking. Furthermore, it stresses the significance of individuals and institutions in his theory of the nation, as well as the degree to which the condition of the German nation always impels his own approach to political thinking. But more important, I think Weber's depictions of the nation exhibit

a tension in his political thinking, such that the individuals and institutions that constitute the nation simultaneously dispel its collective and elevated design.

With regard to his ideal-type of the nation as such, Weber stresses the element of human "pathos" insofar as it mirrors an individual's duty "to face death" in the name of the nation. The relevance of these "enduring emotional foundations," however, is not to be found in the "nature" of individuals. According to Weber, these emotional traits emerge only after a political community "imposes obligations on the individual members."[91] Indeed, he believes the relevance of a nation's shared sense of pathos takes the shape of an "idea" which, since its "earliest and most energetic manifestations...contain[s] the legend of a providential 'mission'...this mission can consistently be thought of only as a specific 'culture' mission."[92] Such a universal overture, which informs a nation with claims to "superiority" and "irreplaceablity," indicates the ideal-type of Weber's nation as such. As he points out, the nation achieves its exalted status on the basis of its political institutions, which cultivate "leaders" and "intellectuals" who are "expected to shoulder this mission."[93] Hence the "ideal-type" of the nation as such certainly discloses a emotional element that separates it from Weber's other depictions of the concept. Yet it

imparts a universal dimension that portends the overall design of Weber's idea of the nation.

The foreshadowing of this universal dimension appears, moreover, in Weber's early racialist interpretation of the nation. With the racial nation, he fixes on an objective trait by which a "future" German citizenry might "recognise the character *of its own ancestors*" in the past. "Through our work and our nature we want to be the forerunners of that future race."[94] Race thus forms a trans-historical bond between generations of Germans, allowing Weber to point to something more than a shared "*ability to adapt*" to the structural changes facing Wilhlemine Germany. He also views race in terms of the individuals--be they political leaders or, in Weber's case, political economists--who propagate and advance the German nation as the ultimate collective value. Why else does he claim that "[t]he economic policy of a German state, and, equally, the criterion of value used by a German economic theorist, can therefore only be a German policy or criterion."[95] Weber's racial idea of the German nation represents, therefore, a deviation from the political and emotional underpinnings of his later interpretations. It confirms, too, the extent to which a sense of historical permanence concurs with a claim of cultural "superiority," initiating again a universal task that informs the value of the German nation in Weber's political thinking.

The conclusion of this task appears, of course, in Weber's later theoretical works on the German nation as *Herrenvolk*. In those works, Weber implores the war-torn German nation to become something other than what they are as of 1917: "a nation *entirely without any political will*."[96] The formation of this collective will into a "'nation of masters'" compels Weber to postulate the necessity of parliamentary institutions, which grant individuals control over the political fate of the German nation. This same postulate presumes, however, that specific individuals control the "machinery" of parliamentary politics. In fact he means a "national politician" who, because of his parliamentary education, acts in accordance with "those universal trends which will hold sway in the future over the outward order of the lives and fates of the masses."[97] It follows then, I think, that Weber's idea of a German *Herrenvolk* suggests a theoretical tension, one between his desire for a few "'masters'" of the German nation and his idea of a "'nation of masters'." Insofar as it takes "precedence even over democracy or parliamentary rule"[98], and denotes that "it shall and must live as the land of *our descendants*,"[99] Weber's idea of an *Herrenvolk* illustrates one other implication. It illustrates the extent to which a universal thread stretches from the trans-historical aim of his racialist nation in

1895 to the "universal trends" of democracy that inform his political rendering of the nation in 1917.[100]

These theoretical fragments of the nation reveal, I believe, a problem with the universal framework which Weber ascribes to the nation. The elements of human pathos, race, and *Herrenvolk* hardly indicate a unified interpretation of the German nation. His political depiction rejects the significance of race; his racial depiction ignores the weight of parliamentarism; and his pathological depiction relegates both beneath the weight of collective emotion. It follows that each component symbolizes a separate interpretation of the idea. In each instance, however, he perceives the nation as an absolute ideal, one that supersedes the bounds of parliamentary politics, temporality, and even other theories of the nation. Indeed a universal ambition surfaces in each distinct interpretation. But the problem with this ambition is not that it parallels differing theoretical fragments of the nation, for, despite its foundations of race, pathos or politics, the nation remains a dominant and absolute idea in Weber's work. Rather, the problem is evident in the "political machinery" which Weber assigns to his over-arching "ideal" of the nation. This theoretical fusion of machinery and ideals constitutes a defect in that the worldly traits of the former dispel the "ultimate" reach of the latter.

When Weber formulates his ideal-type of the nation as such in Economy and Society, he grounds it on the foundation of shared human emotions. But Weber also posits that view of the nation on the "modern position" of political associations. That position, he explains, "rests on the prestige bestowed upon them by the belief, held by their members, in a specific consecration: the 'legitimacy' of that social action which is ordered and regulated by them."[101] With this gesture he hitches a national community to a whole galaxy of associations, including the modern state, political parties, and various other bureaucratic structures. The effect of this bond entails a nurturing of the nation's pathos, as well as a justification of the actions of individuals who pursue the nation's power-interests. But, as Weber admits, these institutional means to national power are tinged with a degree of difficulty, even though they reflect a citizenry's bestowal of legitimate prestige. This difficulty is evident insofar as a citizenry's prestige supports national institutions in which, Weber maintains, "social action comprises physical coercion, including the power to dispose over life and death."[102] If a nation utilizes such earthly means to ensure its "providential 'mission,'" then "superiority" and "irreplaceability" may very well be the result. But this result materializes only insofar as the "lifeless machine" of modern politics guides the metaphysics of national

providence earthbound into the moral tumult of difference, human struggle, and violence.

The same sort of paradoxical tension occurs relative to Weber's racial configuration of the German nation. As he makes clear in his Freiburg lecture, the best hope for advancing the German race manifests itself in a "political education" of the nation. This task also utilizes political institutions--notably the modern state--to prepare the German race for its struggles over contested territories, national values, and future glory. Hence, Weber's early political thinking provides a pivotal instrument by which the German nation cultivates its specifically racial "*ability to adapt* to the varying economic and social conditions of existence." It also stipulates that the state possesses "the final and decisive say" on national matters; that select individuals embody "the nation's sense of political purpose"; and that even political theorists act as the intellectual vehicles of "German policy." Together each institution sustains the German nation's constant temporal bond with "future generations" of citizens. Nevertheless, Weber posits this universal aim of the nation on a "leading strata" of individuals who "are able to raise themselves into the hard, clear air in which the sober work of German politics flourishes."[103] By melding "the earnest grandeur of national sentiment" with the "worldly organisation of the nation's power," Weber theorizes what he thinks is a stable

pathway to German national greatness. I think it is an unsteady theoretical route, one rife with the human disparities that are evocative of Weber's wish to inscribe Germany's political "machinery" with a "leading strata" of individuals rather than a "future race" of German citizens.

The tension between Weber's metaphysics of the nation and his instrumental design of politics is also apparent in his interpretation of an *Herrenvolk*. Against the backdrop of the First World War, Weber theorizes an interesting notion of parliamentary politics. It is interesting, not on account of its capacity to champion the cause of democratic individualism, but because of its ability to cultivate individuals who can "*thrust their hands into the spokes of the world's development.*"[104] Thus, given the mechanisms of party hierarchies, legislative debates, and plebiscitary elections, Weber submits that the German nation will be prepared to fight for a "decisive say within that universal process" of development. Yet his theory of parliamentary politics favors a "specifically Caesarist instrument," which allows the German citizenry to supply the nation with effective leaders. "This is not the usual 'casting of votes' or 'election'," Weber reminds the public, "rather it is a confession of 'belief' in the vocation for leadership of the person who has laid claim to this acclamation."[105] He therefore advocates an instrumental design of politics, but only insofar as its overriding absolute ambition is

German national greatness. His advocacy also reveals, however, the degree to which he subsumes a citizenry beneath individual "'masters'," suggesting a politics that can easily unsettle the "final" and "irreplaceable" ambitions of the German *Herrenvolk*.

Judging from Weber's theoretical approach to politics, it is evident that it constitutes the instrumental means that propels the ultimate end of German national greatness. But more than just constituting means, it represents in a paradoxical way the chief obstacle facing such an end. Though it intends to cultivate shared values of power and glory, the political machinery of the nation as such does so, in part, through the use of "physical coercion" against individual citizens. The state represents, moreover, not an instrument for the nation *per se*, but for the individual leaders who are charged with advancing the values of the German nation. And insofar as this is the case, the state indicates how the ideal of national greatness reflects the domain of some, though not all, German citizens. Even the mechanism of parliamentary politics yields the prospect of German national greatness, but only in that particular political leaders control the institutions as well as the citizenry of the nation. Weber clearly signifies politics as the primary route to the ultimate goal of German national greatness. But he does so, I believe, without considering the degree to which this route transgresses the German

nation's sense of shared pathos, racial homogeneity, and political unity.

It is apparent, therefore, that Weber's theoretical approach to the nation illuminates a formidable paradox in his political thinking. He theorizes the nation as a universal end to which Wilhelmine Germany ought to aspire, an end that extends across generations, eclipses other convictions, and unifies a multitude of persons. This end signifies, too, a nation of citizens that defines itself on the basis of a shared emotion, a racial trait, or an intricate web of parliamentary institutions. But Weber also theorizes a politics that aims to advance the universal ideal of the German nation, a politics he posits on the use of physical force, organizational hierarchies, and the "'principle of the small number'." Indeed Weber anchors politics to the moral vagaries of the material world, yet he populates it with only those individuals who push the ideal of German national greatness. His idea of the nation not only necessitates a narrowing of the prospects of politics. It also faces a challenge from politics itself, given that its "machinery" violates the nation's universal claims of historical continuity, cultural superiority, and social solidarity.

Based on this paradox that issues from his theory of the nation, I believe Weber's political thinking intimates a difficult task for the politician as well as the political

theorist. With regard to the politician, Weber's idea of the nation entails a significant degree of ethical tumult for that individual person who elevates an ultimate ideal on the shifting earthly sands of politics. This tumult derives from a union that situates a politician between an ideal such as German national greatness and a political "arrangement" that is partial to force and indifferent to all ideals. Consequently, politics constitutes neither the moral dissipation of the politician's ultimate ideal nor the technical malfunction of modern political institutions. Politics instead reveals a politician who must, both publicly and privately, account for himself when ideals outreach the function of political institutions and politics undercuts the universal design of ideals. Weber's theory of the nation thus connotes the extent to which the politician's existence jeopardizes the prospect of German national greatness, which, in turn, constrains the prospects of politics in the modern world.

As it pertains to the political theorist, Weber's idea of the nation accentuates a similar sort of tension. However, where the politician endures the paradox between national ideals and the force of political institutions, the theorist confronts it--either knowingly or unknowingly--while working on a particular scholarly project. This is, of course, evident in the way Weber theorizes his own idea of the nation. As a theorist of "ideal types," he does more

than interpret the emotional direction of the nation as such. Weber also situates himself at the problematic crossing between the nation's "providential mission" and its dependence on the "physical coercion" of institutions, punctuating a tension in his theoretical approach to nation. When he approaches the racial character of the German nation, furthermore, Weber underscores the end of historical greatness and glory. Yet, he moors that universal end to a narrow political domain of individuals who qualify for state leadership on the basis of their unique devotion to the nation, positioning himself in the crux of a theoretical paradox. The same is true when Weber theorizes the German nation as an *Herrenvolk*. By allying the end of a "'nation of masters'" to the instrument of parliamentary politics, he both subsumes the German nation to a closed strata of "'masters'" and colors his theoretical enterprise with the hue of contradiction. Therefore, I believe Weber's varied approaches to the nation illustrate a political theorist who routinely alludes to the likelihood of a paradox in his thinking. It is a paradox that hinders politics with the ideal of German national glory, as well as transgresses the ultimate idea of nation with the worldly and violent functions of politics.

Notes

[1]Max Weber, "The Nation State and Economic Policy" in Weber: Political Writings, eds. Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 9. Hereafter referred to as WPW. The original German version of this text appears as "Die Nationalstaat und die Volkswirtschaftspolitik" in Gesammelte politische Schriften (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1958), 7. Hereafter referred to as GPS.

[2]Max Weber, "Suffrage and Democracy in Germany" in WPW, 119-20. The original German version of this text appears as "Wahlrecht und Demokratie in Deutschland" in GPS, 282.

[3]Max Weber, "Political Communities" in Economy and Society, eds. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press), 921. Hereafter referred to as ES. The original German version of this text appears as "Politische Gemeinschaften" in Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, ed. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1972), 527. Hereafter referred to as WuG.

[4]Jean-Jacques Rousseau, On the Social Contract, ed. Roger D. Masters and trans. Judith R. Masters (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), 46. Hereafter referred to as SC. For a discussion on some of the various theoretical and national affinities between Weber and Rousseau, see Peter Breiner, Max Weber and Democratic Politics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 217-ff.

[5]SC, 52.

[6]On the differences between Rousseau's approach to the idea of human nature and those of Hobbes and Locke, see Leo Strauss, Natural Right and History (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), especially chapter VI: "The Crisis of Modern Natural Right".

[7]Criticisms of Hobbes's idea of nature pepper Rousseau's writings. The most notable, I think, appears in Rousseau's "A Discourse on the Origin of Inequality" in The Social Contract and Discourses, trans. G.D.H. Cole (London: Everyman's Library: 1983). Hereafter referred to as Discourses. There Rousseau clarifies his philosophical distance from Hobbes: first, when he contests Hobbes's idea of "savage man" on the basis of "self-preservation" and "passions" which are not necessarily "natural" but "the work of society;" and, second, when he supplants savage man's "*amour-propre*" or vanity, "which arises in the state of society," with a "natural compassion" that "contributes to the preservation of the whole species." Discourses, 65-69.

[8]SC, 54.

[9]Max Weber's position on this issue is most evident in his essay on "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy" in The Methodology of the Social Sciences, eds. and trans. Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (New York: The Free Press, 1949). Hereafter referred to as MSS. The original German version appears as "Die 'Objektivität' sozialwissenschaftlicher und sozialpolitischer Erkenntnis" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre, ed. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1988). Hereafter referred to as GAW. "The fate of epoch which has eaten of the tree of knowledge," Weber declares, "is that it must know that we cannot learn the *meaning* of the world from the results of its analysis, be it ever so perfect; it must rather be in a position to create this meaning itself. It must recognize that general view of life and the universe can never be the products of increasing empirical knowledge, and that the highest ideals, which move us most forcefully, are always formed only in the struggle with other ideals which are just as sacred to others as ours are to us." MSS, 57; GAW, 154.

[10]This claim is similar to the one that Wolfgang Mommsen makes in his landmark work, Max Weber and German Politics, trans. Michael Steinberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). There Mommsen argues that from the 1895 Freiburg lecture forward Weber "emphasized the ideal of the national state, and to this ideal he subordinated all social and economic considerations. He thereby arrived at the position which long afterward characterized his political thought," 26. In addition, Mommsen contends that Weber's limited view of the nation "was based not so much on respect for other nationalities and their right to existence as on insight into the preconditions of German great power politics...It came to concentrate on the global political future of the nation. The nation remained the norm of political action although it was now viewed in a broader framework," 64. With regard to the first claim, I depart from Mommsen insofar as his project emphasizes an historical rather than theoretical perspective. Indeed his historical perspective provides rich and novel insights into the development of Max Weber's political thinking about the nation, but it seldom explores the extent to which Weber's thinking impacts the enterprise of modern and contemporary political theorizing. As for the second claim, I diverge from Mommsen's project given that he highlights the *Machtpolitik* traits of Weber's idea of the nation, traits which are, of course, evident in Weber's political thinking. I instead explore the degree to which Weber's idea of the nation, not only constrains the prospect of politics in German society, but depreciates its own distinct value within the mechanically

bureaucratic context of late-19th and early-20th century German politics.

[11]See Gunther Roth's, "Introduction" in ES, LXV.

[12]Max Weber quoted in Marianne Weber, Max Weber: A Biography, ed. and trans. Harry Zohn (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1988), 419-20. Hereafter referred to as MWB.

[13]ES, 398; WuG, 244.

[14]Raymond Aron asserts a similar claim in his lecture on "Max Weber and Power Politics" in Max Weber and Sociology Today, ed. Otto Stammer and trans. Kathleen Morris (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 83-100. Among other things, Aron argues that "Weber's nationalism was anterior to his sociological research, anterior to his scientific work...he absorbed it and made it his own, unhesitatingly, and it seems, without profound reflection," 86-87. Hence, Aron not only aligns himself with Mommsen's approach to Weber's political thinking, but he intimates the irrational and subjective underpinnings of Weber's objective understanding of the scientific enterprise. Unlike Aron, however, who perceives this tension in the context of Weber's *Machtpolitik*, I locate it within the "ideal-type" of the nation itself, such that the postulates of pathos and emotional solidarity are undercut by the necessity of such rational organizations as the modern state.

[15]SC, 53.

[16]Johann Gottfried Herder, "Essay on the Origin of Language" in On the Origin of Language, trans. Alexander Gode (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 128. Hereafter referred to as OL.

[17]OL, 151.

[18]ES, 921; WuG, 527. Cf., H. Stuart Hughes, Consciousness and Society (New York: Vintage Books, 1958), especially chapter 8.

[19]ES, 903; WuG, 515.

[20]ES, 911-12; WuG, 521.

[21]ES, 921; WuG, 527.

[22]ES, 921-22; WuG, 527.

[23]ES, 398; WuG, 244.

[24]ES, 911; WuG, 520.

[25]ES, 925; WuG, 530.

[26]ES, 398; WuG, 244.

[27]ES, 973; WuG, 561-62.

[28]ES, 975; WuG, 563.

[29]ES, 959; WuG, 553.

[30]ES, 972; WuG, 561.

[31]ES, 975; WuG, 562.

[32]ES, 922; WuG, 527-28.

[33]ES, 922; WuG, 527-528.

[34]ES, 390; WuG, 238.

[35]ES, 925-26; WuG, 530.

[36]ES, 922; WuG, 528.

[37]ES, 922; WuG, 528.

[38]ES, 922; WuG, 528.

[39]WPW, 24; GPS, 21.

[40]WPW, 24; GPS, 21.

[41]WPW, 27-28; GPS, 24.

[42]WPW, 15; GPS, 12-13.

[43]On this point I agree with Anthony Giddens, Politics and Sociology in the Thought of Max Weber (London: The MacMillan Press Ltd, 1978). He postulates that "Weber's writings in both politics and sociology have their roots in an attempt to analyse the conditions governing the expansion of industrial capitalism in Germany in the post-Bismarckian era," 15. Indeed Giddens argues that the "interconnections" between Weber's scholarly and political works afford insight, not only into his "ideal-types" of bureaucracy and legitimate domination, but also into his critiques of Germany's growing officialdom and its declining leadership classes--critiques which spur Weber's typology, and vice-versa. However, I object to Giddens's interpretation in that he fails to trace the "roots" of Weber's theory of nation, a theory which

demands more than a "juxtaposition" between history and ideas, but also a "political education" that seeks to correct the discrepancy between the two. For a discussion of Weber's idea of political education see Lawrence Scaff, "Max Weber's Politics and Political Education" in The American Political Science Review, 67 (March 1973), 128-141.

[44]Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Government of Poland, trans. Willmoore Kendall (Indianopolis: Bobbs and Merrill, 1972), 19. Hereafter referred to as GP.

[45]G.W.F. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, trans. T. M. Knox (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 157. Hereafter referred to as PR.

[46]PR, 156.

[47]WPW, 2; GPS, 2.

[48]WPW, 8; GPS, 6.

[49]WPW, 5; GPS, 4. On the shifting significance of Weber's notion of race, see David Beetham, Max Weber's Theory of Modern Politics (London: Polity Press, 1974). Beetham claims (and I concur) that Weber's "[r]acial assumptions...occur frequently in his early writings; but after this period, he became increasingly sceptical of such explanations, on the grounds of their vagueness and untestibility," 123. For a more detailed discussion of Weber's views on race and nation, see Harry Liebersohn, "Weber's Historical Concept of National Identity" in *Weber's* Protestant Ethic, eds. Hartmut Lehmann and Guenther Roth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 123-131. Liebersohn contends that Weber, especially in the period during and after his work on the Protestant Ethic thesis, perceived some racial theories of the nation to be nothing more than "a misplaced materialism," 127. He also gives great weight to Weber's speech at the 1912 meeting of the German Sociological Association, when Weber relegated other racial theories to the realm of pure subjectivism. "On race, Weber commented: 'We would do well to ignore completely the mystical effects of blood community'." Indeed, Liebersohn concludes, "Weber shifted the discourse entirely to the realm of politics," 130.

[50]WPW, 10; GPS, 8.

[51]WPW, 15; GPS, 12-13.

[52]WPW, 26; GPS, 23.

[53]WPW, 20-21; GPS, 18.

[54]WPW, 17; GPS, 14.

[55]WPW, 12; GPS, 10-11.

[56]WPW, 13; GPS, 11.

[57]WPW, 9; GPS, 7.

[58]WPW, 22; GPS, 20.

[59]WPW, 21; GPS, 19.

[60]WPW, 17; GPS, 14.

[61]WPW, 17; GPS, 14-15.

[62]WPW, 28; GPS, 25.

[63]WPW, 132; GPS, 308.

[64]On Weber's deviation from his earlier racial interpretation of the nation see note #53.

[65]See David Beetham, Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics. The bond between political institutions and individuals informs Beetham's approach to Weber's idea of the nation. According to Beetham, Weber "argued for a reciprocal relationship between rational and non-rational elements...The phenomenon of nationalism provides an example of this. Weber regarded its emotional root to lie both in the psychology of the masses and (more continuously) in the prestige sentiments of the ruling political strata. Both became transformed under the influence of intellectual groups into the idea of the nation, which in turn influenced the shape and direction which the expression of emotion took," 120. I share Beetham's view on this postulate, especially insofar as it supports Weber's idea of Germany as an *Herrenvolk*. However, I reject his corresponding claim that Weber's "'idea of the nation' provided a common consciousness which transcended that of class; in particular, it offered a means of drawing the working class away from an attitude of total opposition to the existing social order," 144. I do so, not only on the basis of the logical discrepancy between a "ruling political strata" and the "transcendence" of class conflict, but also on account of Weber's reservations about the post-war nationalist aims of socialist parties--particularly the Sparticists, the Independent Social Democratic Party, and the *Rat der Volksbeauftragten*. See Max Weber, "Socialism" in WPW, 302. The standard German version of this 1918 text appears as "Der Sozialismus" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Soziologie und Sozialpolitik ed. Marianne Weber (Tübingen: Mohr, 1988), 517.

Hereafter referred to as GASS. See also Wolfgang Mommsen, Max Weber and German Politics, 288-ff.

[66]GP, 11.

[67]Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Addresses to the German Nation, trans. R.F. Jones and G.H. Turnbull (Westport, CT: Greenwoods Press, 1979), 12-13. Hereafter referred to as AGN.

[68]AGN, 20.

[69]In some respects, I share Eduard Baumgarten's claim concerning Weber's idea of the nation in his rejoinder to Raymond Aron in Max Weber and Sociology Today, 122-127. He contests Aron's assertion about the *Machtpolitik* underpinnings of Weber's approach to the nation, stressing instead Weber's "conditionally qualified" view of the idea. Noting Weber's "attack" against the Kaiser, his "hatred" of the Pan-Germans and his "anger" toward German students, Baumgarten concludes "that the greatness of the nation was for him [Weber] not a sacrosanct and absolute value, but relative, and above all, open to, and needing criticism," 124-125. What Baumgarten neglects to address, however, is the extent to which these and other "attacks" reveal, not Weber's quest for "real democracy," but his desire to constrain its "emotional" elements. He fails to address, moreover, the possibility that Weber's negative depictions of the German nation indicate the historical absence of one altogether.

[70]WPW, 267; GPS, 439-440.

[71]WPW, 269; GPS, 441.

[72]WPW, 270; GPS, 443.

[73]WPW, 176-77; GPS, 350.

[74]WPW, 134; GPS, 310.

[75]WPW, 133; GPS, 309.

[76]WPW, 162; GPS, 336.

[77]WPW, 270; GPS, 443.

[78]WPW, 160-61; GPS, 334-35.

[79]WPW, 271; GPS, 443.

[80]WPW, 161; GPS, 335.

[81]WPW, 220; GPS, 393. On Weber's interpretation of mass demagoguery in modern politics see note #70 in chapter 1.

[82]WPW, 267; GPS, 440.

[83]WPW, 174; GPS, 348.

[84]WPW, 269; GPS, 442.

[85]WPW, 230; GPS, 404.

[86]WPW, 230; GPS, 404.

[87]WPW, 230-31; GPS, 404.

[88]SC, 47.

[89]Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "A Discourse on the Arts and Sciences" in Discourses, 22.

[90]Discourses, 44.

[91]ES, 903; WuG, 515.

[92]ES, 925; WuG, 530.

[93]ES, 925; WuG, 530.

[94]WPW, 15; GPS, 13.

[95]WPW, 15; GPS, 13.

[96]WPW, 144; GPS, 319.

[97]WPW, 270; GPS, 443.

[98]WPW, 133; GPS, 309.

[99]WPW, 267; GPS, 439-440.

[100]To claim that Max Weber's idea of nation evokes a "universal" design is not unique. After all, Aron claims that Weber's "thinking" in general, "which claims to be free of all illusion, stems from metaphysics, and a pessimistic vision of the world...a metaphysic, partly Darwinian, partly Nietzschean, of the struggle of life." See Max Weber and Sociology Today, 92-93. Even Mommsen underscores such overtures in Weber's approach to the nation, though they occur only by default. According to Mommsen, "[t]he 'nation' as a 'value concept' remained outside of the realm of scientific criticism for [Weber]...He quite consciously did not question whether the national idea could fairly be judged as the

highest guiding principle of political action. See Max Weber and German Politics, 62. Beetham suggests a similar position insofar as he perceives Weber's "'idea of nation'" as a "common consciousness which transcended that of class." See Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics, 144. Nevertheless, I approach the universal design of Weber's idea of nation in a somewhat different way than each of these theorists. Where Aron postulates a metaphysics of pessimism on Darwin and Nietzsche, one which informs the entire scope of Weber's work, I focus only on Weber's idea of nation--an idea which I think at least countervails his pessimistic appraisals of the world. With regard to Mommsen, I agree that Weber fails to subject his ideal of nation to scientific scrutiny; yet I differ in that Mommsen rarely explores the extent to which Weber also fails to subject it to the rigors of political scrutiny. As for my critique of Beetham's claim concerning the "transcendent" quality of Weber's idea of nation, I refer the reader to note #69 above.

[101]ES, 903-904; WuG, 516.

[102]ES, 904; WuG, 516.

[103]WPW, 28; GPS, 25.

[104]WPW, 269; GPS, 442.

[105]WPW, 221; GPS, 393.

CHAPTER III

ENTERING "THE ETHICAL HOME" OF POLITICS

Introduction

The claim that Max Weber's political thinking demonstrates an elitist, anti-democratic, and nationalist bent affords neither a unique nor particularly interesting interpretation.[1] What is, I think, the more unique and interesting approach concerns the "ethical paradoxes" that correspond to these unsettling biases in Weber's thinking. In his theory of politics, for instance, Weber advocates an instrumental design that promotes the goal of German national power, a goal that nevertheless constricts the scope of political struggle and, thus, the very promise of national power. Furthermore, with regard to his ideal of the German nation, Weber posits a universal framework which, ironically, the machinery of politics undercuts with its worldly, violent, and finite actions. In each case the "professional politician" who inhabits Weber's theoretical terrain must, regardless of his or her moral aims, confront an ethical divide between political means and ultimate ends.

The vexing nature of this situation, however, does not surface solely in relation to the theoretical appearance of the politician. I believe it also surfaces in relation to Weber himself, a political theorist who fails to account for the ethical rift between his moral gesture to German national power and his staunch advocacy of the "machinery"

of modern politics. With the exception of his lectures on the "vocations" of science and politics in 1917 and 1919, respectively, Weber rarely explores in detail the varied intricacies of political ethics. When Weber does explore the issue, he seems to rend himself from the aim of Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, which "is not to know what virtue is, but to become good...Hence we must examine the right way to act."[2] Weber also appears detached from the more modern liberal claims of his German predecessor, Kant, who postulates a strict ethical demarcation between morality and politics. In his 1795 essay on "Perpetual Peace," Kant declares that "politics cannot...take a single step without first paying tribute to morality...The rights of man must be held sacred, however great a sacrifice the ruling power may have to make."[3] Contrary to Aristotle's active quest for the "good life" and Kant's logical divide between "right and utility," Weber theorizes a political ethics that more than couples "'good' ends" with the "morally dangerous means" of politics. It decrees "that one must reckon with the possibility or even likelihood of evil side-effects" which stem from such a precarious amalgam.[4]

Max Weber thus posits his theory of political ethics on the idea of "responsibility." He specifies his claim in his lecture on "The Vocation and Profession of Politics." There Weber stipulates that the "man who subscribes to the ethic of responsibility...does not feel that he can shuffle off

the consequences of his own actions...and place the burden on the shoulders of others."[5] Indeed, the politician bears a "burden" inasmuch as he is "conscious" of the "ethical paradoxes" that lurk in the mix of good ends and morally dubious means and of "his "responsibility for what may become of *himself* under pressure from them."[6] Yet, though this idea of responsibility informs the ethic of the politician, Weber still ascribes it to his own ethical duty of scholarship. He explains his idea of scholarly responsibility in his 1895 Freiburg inaugural lecture on "The Nation State and Economic Policy." A scholar's "responsibility *before history*," Weber tells the Freiburg faculty, not only entails "exorcising the curse that hangs over us (that of being the belated offspring of a great, but past political epoch)." It also demands that the scholar teach the German nation "how to become something different: the precursors of an even greater epoch."[7] Accordingly, Weber's attempt to measure up to his own sense of scholarly responsibility manifests itself in the idea of the politician's "ethic of responsibility."[8] This is all the more evident in that the ethic rejects the provincial legacy of German politics yet still exalts the ultimate aim of German national glory.

I believe this idea of "responsibility" discloses, however, a tension in Weber's theory of political ethics. The tension surfaces not simply because the ideal of

responsibility further constricts the prospects of politics with the criteria of a specific type of ethical conduct. Given that responsibility limits the scope of politics, I contend that Weber's idea of political ethics illustrates the degree to which Weber himself, as a political theorist, imperils his own "responsibility *before history*." It is a predicament similar to one Friedrich Nietzsche highlights in On the Genealogy of Morals.[9] Nietzsche perceives "*responsibility*" in terms of what he calls man's cultivated "*right to make promises*" relative to some "'fixed'" and "'unforgettable'" ideal.[10] Yet, what he rebukes is not responsibility *per se*. He instead contests its chief presupposition, that is, the understanding of man as "necessary, uniform, like among like, regular, and consequently calculable" enough to keep his "word...in the face of accidents, even 'in the face of fate'."[11] Of course, Weber would no doubt rebuke this view of a wholly "sovereign" and "proud" man, especially when he declares that a "responsible" politician "is at the mercy" of ethical paradoxes. The question is whether Weber, as a citizen of and a scholar for the German nation, comprehends the ethical paradoxes that lurk in his political thinking.

I will confirm in this chapter that the answer to the above question is negative, that Weber fails to grasp the ethical paradox residing at the heart of his political thinking.[12] Such a task demands that I first explore the

extent to which Weber's idea of political ethics corresponds to his other interpretations of politics and the nation. It also demands that I examine the historical context in which Weber's theoretical approach to political ethics confronts the ethical archetypes of Christianity, revolutionary socialism, pacificism and, yes, even German *Machtpolitik*. In contesting these varied forms of what he calls an "ethic of conviction'" (*Gesinnungsethik*), Weber constructs an "ethic of responsibility" (*Verantwortungsethik*), thus compelling a survey of its theoretical design. This survey will reveal not only the degree to which the politician confronts the limit of his enterprise, a limit which reflects the violently transgressed ideal of the German nation. It will also suggest how Weber himself encounters a similar limit in the enterprise of political theorizing, a limit complicated by his devotion to the ideal of German national glory. I will therefore conclude that Weber's idea of political ethics, though key to his theory of politics, is equally significant in verifying the human limitations of politics as well as contemporary political thinking.[13]

Politics, Nation, and Ethics

In 1888, some seven years prior to Max Weber's Freiburg lecture, Friedrich Nietzsche wrote what was to be the final work he himself would publish, Twilight of the Idols. With pithy aphorisms, he again disclosed to the disciples of

Western philosophy his desire for a "*reevaluation* of all values," disputing the icons of Socrates, Christianity, German Idealism, and Liberalism. The thrust of his critique was not, however, aimed at the values of any one particular person or school of thought. He leveled it at the idea that such values themselves stemmed from the absolute and irrefutable origin of either reason, God, spirit, or nature. "When we speak of values," claims Nietzsche, "we speak with the inspiration, with the way of looking at things, which is part of life: life itself forces us to posit values."[14] Hence he stressed the prospect that human values emerged from something far more immediate, more supple, more provocative than the "'fixed'" and "'unforgettable'" ideals which modern philosophers tended to oblige. By extending his own "anti-natural morality," moreover, "which conceives of God as the counter-concept and condemnation of life," Nietzsche carved out "only a value judgment of life--but of what life? of what kind of life? I have already given the answer: of declining, weakened, weary, condemned life."[15]

When Weber pronounces his own "value judgment of life," he also expresses his sympathy towards Nietzsche's critical task. This sympathy appears in Weber's critique of the *apriori* foundations of Western philosophy and his outspoken distaste for the apparent decline of European (notably German) culture--political and otherwise. Yet his sympathy concludes as his theory of ethics dawns, for Weber, like

Nietzsche's inimical depiction of Socrates, "understood that all the world *needed* him--his means, his cure, his personal artifice of self-preservation."[16] Indeed, with the Allied forces conquering Wilhelmine Germany, he theorizes a political ethics that necessitates a person who "must be a leader; not only that, he must, in a very simple sense of the word, be a hero."[17] By positing his idea of ethics on the philosophically dubious ground of a "responsible" political conduct, Weber thus confirms his departure from Nietzsche's critical enterprise. But in the same gesture he also hints at how his theory of an "ethic of responsibility" might correspond to his thoughts on politics and the nation. It does so, I contend, insofar as Weber denotes the "ethic of responsibility" as a theoretical elixir for a German nation drained of both politics and politicians. What remnants in his political thinking point to a bond between politics, the nation, and ethics?

In his lecture on "The Profession and Vocation of Politics," Max Weber claims that an ethical problem resides at the core of modern politics. This is the case, he explains, because the "principled convictions" of political parties, trade unions, parliamentary committees, the state, and politicians "can only be achieved by force. The genius--or demon--of politics lives in a state of inner tension with the god of love...a tension that may erupt at any moment into irresolvable conflict."[18] Accordingly, Weber's

approach to politics reveals a link to ethics only insofar as "political machinery" forcefully transgresses the very moral ambition it and its political leaders seek to advance in the world. In fact, Weber continues, "[t]he specific means of *legitimate violence per se* in the hands of human associations is what gives all the ethical problems of politics their particular quality."[19] Such "ethical problems" represent a key factor in his theoretical view of politics, marking the politician's hazardous domain as much as Weber's delineation of the ethical bounds of politics.

By virtue of these ethical problems, Weber's political thinking also signifies a link between ethics and the requisite conduct of those persons who engage in politics. Again in the "Vocation" lecture, Weber holds that politics grants the politician both an extraordinary "feeling of power" and an awareness that one controls "some vital strand of historically important events."[20] But more critical than these "inner joys" of the politician are the "personal qualifications" which "will enable him to do justice to this power...and thus to the responsibility it imposes on him."[21] By denoting politics as an ethical minefield, and then lacing it with the intoxicants of power, Weber intimates a type of conduct that negotiates the contingencies of the former and the compulsion toward the latter. This intimation, he says, "takes us into the area of ethical questions, for to ask what kind of a human being

one must be in order to have the right to seize the spokes of the wheel of history is to pose an ethical question."[22] It not only confirms a link between politics and ethics in Weber's political thinking, but it also implies an ethical standard that is as difficult for the politician to attain as it is for the political theorist to defend.

I believe these difficulties are most apparent when Weber maps out the intersection between his ideal of the German nation and his theory of political ethics. In his essays on "Parliament and Government in Germany under a New Political Order," which he wrote in 1917, Weber argues that the nation's fate requires "technical changes" capable of cultivating "responsible" politicians and citizens. "The question," he maintains, "of whether the nation feels ready to bear the responsibility which a nation of seventy million people has towards its descendants, will be answered by the way we address the question of the internal reconstruction of Germany."[23] By "internal reconstruction" Weber means several things: a "rational" rather than traditional design of parties; a "universal" rather than restricted notion of suffrage; a "'positive'" rather than "'negative'" use of parliament; and a political rather than bureaucratic form of leadership for the German nation.[24] Given these vast reforms, it follows that Weber presages neither a "happy" nor a "vigorous" nation. He only foresees a nation of citizens and leaders who share a "responsibility" to provide

"the next two to three generations" with a human conduct that willingly enters "the arena where the problems of the present are contested...If the nation does not dare do the one, it should reject the other, for it leads nowhere politically."[25] Therefore, insofar as he anchors the ideal of German national glory to the moorings of "political machinery" and "responsible" politicians, Weber illustrates a theoretical bond between political ethics and the nation.

In the "Vocation" lecture, where he lays out his most detailed view of political ethics, Weber points to the difficulty of coupling a "responsible" conduct with the "pure conviction" of German national glory. He does so by arguing that politicians who seek to advance such a cause as German nationalism have to personify and exhibit something more than zealotry and passion. "Simply to feel passion," he notes, "however genuinely, is not sufficient to make a politician unless, in the form of service to a 'cause', *responsibility* for that cause becomes the decisive lode-star of all action."[26]

Yet this blend of an "ethic of conviction" with an "ethic of responsibility" reveals more than a possible link between political ethics and the ideal of German glory. By placing a person between "the flame of pure conviction" and "that powerful control over the soul," Weber also affirms how the ethical norm of responsibility compels the politician to admit the political limitations of his

ultimate ideal. Thus, a difficulty emerges with the "responsible" politician whom Weber names as the solution to Germany's problems, a politician who admits to the paradox between the violent machinery of politics and his ideal of German national glory. As for Weber, moreover, the "responsible" scholar, the difficulty manifests itself in a theory of political ethics that defies, not only Weber's view of the technical nature of politics, but also his fervent duty to the German nation.

Judging from these ties between politics, nation, and political ethics, I think the necessity of leadership and the likelihood of paradox inform each particular idea. With regard to politics and ethics, it is obvious that the prospect of paradox bridges Weber's theoretical approach to both concepts. This is the case insofar as Weber presupposes political ethics to be inscribed with a tension between "the means of violence" and "the achievement of 'good' ends." It is also the case in that these "paradoxes" confirm, not just the composite of politics and ethics, but Max Weber's theoretical ameliorant for such vexing political circumstances. That ameliorant is, of course, the "responsible" politician, one who is able "to look at the realities of life with an unsparing gaze, to bear these realities and be a match for them inwardly."[27] Given the world's "ethical irrationality" and Germany's defeat during the First World War, the ethic of responsibility only

underscores the urgency which Weber ascribes to the professional politician. In other words, the prospect of paradox and the necessity of political leadership compel him to theorize an ethic that allows a person to measure up to the formidable demands of both. Yet, by trying to "cure" what Nietzsche thought was a "declining, weakened, weary, condemned life," Weber posits the "value" of responsibility, narrowing the human scope of politics and divulging a tension in his political thinking.

With regard to the nation and ethics, I think it is obvious that the necessity of "responsible" political leadership marks the critical link between each idea. It is critical inasmuch as his wartime view of the German nation mandates "organisational *preconditions* for the emergence of leaders, and indeed everything...depends on this happening. *Only nations of masters are called upon to thrust their hands into the spokes of the world's development.*"[28] However, as long as leaders become responsible "masters," Weber's ideal of the nation mirrors a paradox, in that such "organisational" political forces imperil the values of German unity, expansion, and power. The ethical paradox of the nation thus surfaces with the necessity of political leadership, a theoretical panacea which, ironically, stresses the moral distance between political means and ultimate ends. It foreshadows a difficult course of action for the person who "responsibly" promotes the principled

conviction of the nation in politics. Though Weber views this course of action as a remedy for the national ills of Germany, it still points to an increased chance of ethical incongruities for the nation's political leaders. It also signifies, I believe, an ethical incongruity for Weber the scholar, who, in theorizing an ethic of responsibility, posits a value at odds with that of the German nation and, thus, the purpose of his scholarly enterprise.

Within this theoretical web of politics, nation, and ethics remains Weber's connection to the legacy of Nietzsche. Among other things, this connection reveals a shared view of modernity's incapacity to confirm a "'fixed'" ethical standard in the world. This view of the world's "ethical irrationality", however, fails to keep Weber from perpetuating that "naïve" approach to the world which Nietzsche despised. Nietzsche associated it with those "moralists who wanted man to be different, that is, virtuous--they wanted him remade in their own image, as a prig: to that end, they *negated* the world!"[29] Similarly, Weber prescribes the world another curative "'Man *ought* to be such and such!" for confronting its ethical ambivalence: the antidote of a "responsible" politician. Though Weber's cure may "*negate*" some of the worldly components of politics, it still engenders a bond between his interpretations of politics and the ideal of German national glory.[30] Furthermore, the ethic of responsibility appears

to generate a series of tensions in his political thinking. They are tensions that impact the politician as much as Weber himself, the political theorist, both of whom imperil in different ways the "principled conviction" of German national glory with "morally dangerous means". The fruitful promise of these ethical tensions remains to be seen, but the first few clues become apparent when Weber confronts the differing notions of ethics in Wilhelmine German politics.

Opposing an Ethic of Conviction

Max Weber confronts the notion of political ethics in much the same way a politician might approach a piece of legislation: he contests the ideas of his opponents. He also shares Nietzsche's theoretical approach to the topic. This is so inasmuch as Nietzsche, in On the Genealogy of Morals, prods the "reversals of accustomed perspectives and valuations...so that one knows how to employ a *variety* of perspectives and affective interpretations in the service of knowledge."[31] However, in his "Vocation" lecture on politics, Weber is not interested in contesting a piece of legislation *per se*, nor is he intent on promoting a critical philosophy of perspectivism. Given Germany's humbling defeat by the Allies and the growing civil violence in the cities of Kiel, Berlin and Munich, Weber's theoretical point of attack fixes on "the problem of the ethos of politics as a 'cause' (*Sache*)."[32] Indeed, he notes in January 1919

that the issue of political ethics "has recently been re-opened for discussion (in a quite wrong-headed fashion in my view), so let us approach it resolutely."[33] The "wrong-headed fashion" is, of course, a reference to the dominant views on political ethics in post-war Germany, views that derive from Christianity, revolutionary socialism, pacificism, and the pundits of *Machtpolitik*. In light of Weber's resolve to contest the ethical agendas of others, what might it reveal about his own theoretical approach to political ethics?

What is obvious about Weber's theory of political ethics is that it rests on an historical critique of the reigning interpretations of the idea. In fact, according to Weber, the chief source of any discussion concerning modern political ethics stems, in part, from the book of Matthew in the New Testament. "The Sermon on the Mount," he says, "by which we mean the absolute ethics of the Gospel, is something far more serious than those who are so fond of citing its commandments today believe."[34] As Weber perceives it, the Gospel mandates a type of conduct by which a person rejects without condition such worldly means as physical violence, risking the loss of one's life for the other-worldly glory of God. He thus claims that "it is necessary to be a saint in *all* things, or at least one must want to be one, one must live like Jesus, the Apostles, Saint Francis and men of that kind." Only "*then*," concludes

Weber, "this type of ethic becomes meaningful and expresses a kind of dignity. *But not otherwise.*"[35] Though this "unworldly ethic" denotes humanity at its brotherly zenith, it decrees a level of ethical uniformity that most people fail to sustain, expressly politicians in post-war Germany.

Max Weber's critique centers, therefore, on the problematic politics of Christianity's ethical agenda. It is problematic insofar as the Gospel's "absolute principles" of brotherliness and divine glory appear to be at odds with "the use of violence," which Weber labels as the "decisive means of politics." Drawing an analogy to a more secular enterprise, he views the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount as a doctrine compelled by forces similar to those that drive modern science. "What has been said about causality in science," he mentions in passing, "also applies to this ethic, namely that it is not a hired cab which one may stop at will and climb into or out of as one sees fit."[36] The moral substance of a Christian ethic results from neither a person's occasional devotion to non-violence nor an intermittent duty to the truth, depending on what the circumstances dictate. "Rather," counters Weber, "the meaning of the sermon (if it is not to be reduced to banality) is precisely this: we must accept it in its entirety *or* leave it entirely alone."[37] Judging from this view, it seems that Weber harbors little, if any, doubt about the import of the absolutist ethic of Christianity, an

ethic he believes ought "not to be taken frivolously." More significant, however, he does harbor doubt about its capacity to endure the "paradoxes" that are endemic to modern politics, paradoxes that issue from the political requisite of violence.

Turning away from the New Testament, Weber seeks to locate the more contemporary manifestations of "absolutist ethics" in early-20th century German politics. The first reveals itself in the Allied victory over Wilhemine Germany, when, as Weber suggests in a roundabout way, "the victor will of course assert, with ignoble self-righteousness, 'I won because I was in the right.'"[38] Whether or not this ethical posturing corresponds to the Allies' ideals of popular sovereignty and national self-determination, he still views it with great scorn. He does so neither by virtue of its philosophical groundwork nor on account of the vainglorious conceits expressed by any of its public proponents, notably Woodrow Wilson. Instead, Weber scorns such an ethic for allowing war-weary persons to "lose sight of the inevitable falsification of the whole problem by very material interests--the interests of the victor in maximising the gain (whether moral or material), and the hopes of the defeated that they will negotiate advantages by confessing their guilt."[39] Thus he contests the Allied victors, not on the basis of the moral soundness of their convictions, but for debasing them with the physical

violence of total war. This dispute allows Weber to accuse the Allies of "using 'ethics' as a means of 'being in the right'" rather than as an end in itself.

With regard to such transgressions, Weber views the ethical stance of the Allies as inept at accepting "the responsibility for the *future* which the victor in particular must bear." Anticipating the forces of foreign occupation, financial restitution, and military justice, he discerns this conquering ethic from one more attentive to the consequences that issue from such violent deeds. "A nation will forgive damage to its interests," he says, referring to the material impact of war, "but not injury to its honour, and certainly not when this is done in a spirit of priggish self-righteousness."[40] Weber rejects this ethic of victory because it validates a quest for power while simultaneously disparaging those persons who feel the indignant weight of their powerlessness. More important, by bartering ethical congruity for military conquest, the Allies foiled any sort of "responsible" order among nations. According to Weber, such an order is "only possible through a sober, matter-of-fact approach (*Sachlichkeit*) and chivalry, and, above all, it is only possible where there is *dignity*. But it can never be made possible by an 'ethic' which in fact entails indignity for both sides."[41] It follows then that his critique of the ethic of victory fixes, not on the moral aims or vanity of the Allied powers, but on their lack of

candor and perspective in the aftermath of a ruinous war. In short, Weber believes this deficiency reveals how the Allies undermine their own ideals of sovereignty and self-determination by wielding brute force to punish further an already-vanquished German nation-state.

Another early-20th century display of ethical incongruity surfaces in the deeds of the German Supreme Command, the chief military authority during and after the First World War. However, insofar as the Fatherland Party (*Vaterlandspartei*) mirrored the Supreme Command's political ambitions, Weber claims that the latter suffered ethical flaws different from those of the Allied victors.[42] Given the *Machtpolitik* creed of such party founders as Admiral von Tirpitz, General Ludendorff and other "annexationists," the Supreme Command's ethical base dissipated with each and every reach for power. "The mere 'power politician'," Weber explains, "a type whom an energetically promoted cult is seeking to glorify here in Germany as elsewhere, may give the impression of strength, but in fact his actions merely lead into emptiness and absurdity."[43] The source of this ethical void takes shape neither in a philosophical commitment to some ideal nor in a political duty to deliberation and compromise. Rather, Weber locates it wherever and whenever a "parvenu boasts of his power and vainly mirrors himself in the feeling of power--or indeed any and every worship of power for its own sake."[44]

Accordingly, whereas Weber's critique of the Allied ethic of victory fixes on the lack of "responsible" judgments, his critique of *Machtpolitik* focuses on its absolute lack of an ideal beyond that of human domination.

By chiding both the Supreme Command and the *Vaterlandspartei* for their lack of an ethical orientation, Weber confirms more than just the vain and self-interested desires of these politicians. Their orientation stems from "a most wretched and superficial lack of concern for the *meaning* of human action, a blasè attitude that knows nothing of the tragedy in which all action, but quite particularly political action, is in truth enmeshed."[45] It is evident, therefore, that Weber perceives the ethical flaw of *Machtpolitik* to be its inability to affirm the vitality of a person whose devotion to an ideal outweighs his duty to mundane self-interest. And insofar as the pundits of *Machtpolitik* fail to appreciate this human component, Weber believes they are incapable of comprehending the "ethical paradoxes" which often issue from it. It is no wonder, then, that he attributes "[t]he sudden inner collapse of typical representatives of this outlook (*Gesinnung*)" to the "inner weakness and ineffectuality" that are cloaked "behind this grandiose but empty pose."[46] Max Weber's commentary on the ethical vacuity of the "'power politician'" certainly stresses the absence of a guiding ideal, but he does so in order to emphasize a more significant point: The absence of

ideals in politics presupposes a lack of human perspective and, thus, reveals a lack of responsibility.

Contrary to his direct attack on *Machtpolitik*, Weber approaches the absolutist ethic of pacificism with a more nuanced critique in mind. It is an ethic for which Weber has great respect, even though he perceives it as wholly unsuited for the moral tumult of politics.[47] Viewing it as an ethic that is closely aligned to the ethic in the Book of Matthew, he echoes how the logic of pacificism requires a conscious renunciation of all worldly violence. He contends that an ethic of non-violence is as problematic as the Sermon on the Mount. Pacificism is problematic, not simply by virtue of its imperative withdrawal from politics, but because it demands a degree of ethical consistency reserved only for saints. Noting how good Christians reject "*completely*" the "coercion and order" of the secular world, Weber believes the "same applies to the injunction to 'turn the other cheek!'--unconditionally, without asking by what right the other person has struck you. An ethic of indignity, except for a saint."[48] The pacifist thus holds to an "unworldly ethic of love" which compels him to say, "'resist not evil with force'," while "the politician is governed by the contrary maxim, namely, 'You *shall* resist evil with force'."[49] Based on these ethical and political shortcomings, Weber avoids chiding the proponents of pacificism the way he chided the champions of *Machtpolitik*.

Yet, what incites his critical wrath against pacificism is the pacificist who, in spite of a devotion to an ethic of non-violence, pursues the "diabolical powers" of politics.

The ethical collapse of pacificism becomes apparent to Weber in the harsh light of post-war German politics. Given that they are willing to live like saints in the purely ethical sense of the word, Weber expresses a deep respect for such pacificists as Kurt Eisner, Ernst Toller, and F.W. Foerster.[50] By 1919, however, he views their political actions with more skepticism inasmuch as they "will refuse weapons or throw them away...so that we might fulfill our ethical duty to end the war, and thus to end all war." As a result of this "ethical duty," Weber anticipates "that *peace, not war, will have been discredited*" in the aftermath of Germany's crushing defeat, foreshadowing the vitriolic politics that sabotaged the Weimar republic.[51] In fact, Weber's ambivalence about the political wisdom of pacificism manifests itself in the testimony he gave at the so-called "treason" trial of Toller. He describes Toller as a man whose profound ethical ideals were matched only by his complete lack of political acumen. "'In a fit of anger,'" Weber remarks, explaining Toller's vexing character to the court, "'God made him a politician.'"[52] Thus, according to Weber, the political impact of pacificism surfaces in both the deflation of the ideals underlying its ethical posture and the pacifist's undignified abuse at the hands of

forceful politicians. Its absolute ethic of non-violence cannot withstand the "ethical irrationality" of the violent enterprise of politics.

The same can be said about Weber's insight into at least three early-20th century ethical displays of "revolutionary Socialism": Syndicalism, Bolshevism, and Spartacism:[53] Some several months prior to his "Vocation" lecture on politics, Weber discusses the issue of "Socialism" before an audience of the Austrian Officer Corps in Vienna.[54] His critique of a socialist political ethic departs from its claim concerning the necessary historical movement toward an economic system unblemished by violence and human suffering. Indeed Weber targets revolutionary socialism's "true, ultimate hope: the proletariat *cannot* free itself from servitude without putting an end to *all* rule by man over man."[55] This "prophetic" aim of justice, though, which impelled the deeds of Lenin, Liebknecht, Luxemburg and Michels, mandates the use of violence against the feudal dynasties of the past and the growing bourgeois class in the present and future. "Hence," he retorts in his "Vocation" lecture, "it is...utterly ridiculous for such people to condemn *morally* the 'politicians of violence' of the old regime for using precisely the same means as they are prepared to use."[56] Based on this ethical discrepancy between brotherly love and brute force, I think Weber perceives the socialist ethic in the same way he perceives

the ethic of pacificism. In other words, he views both ethics in relation to a conviction that precludes the use of violence as much as the prospect of politics itself.

Yet one difference does emerge between Weber's views of pacificism and revolutionary socialism. That difference manifests itself in revolutionary socialism's explicit and unconditional obedience to a political cause. Whereas a pacificist adheres to an ethic of non-violence, which eventually drives one from politics, a socialist remains stalwart in forcefully eradicating "*all* rule by man over man." Such a person, Weber clarifies, "feels 'responsible' only for ensuring that the flame of pure conviction (for example, the flame of protest against the injustice of the social order) is never extinguished."[57] Weber therefore narrows his critical sights on the human pathos underlying the socialist's devotion to the ideal of social and economic justice. He does so, not because the socialist ethic intensifies the degree of political struggle, but because it discounts the political significance of responsibility. A syndicalist, for example, whose union violence targets other socialists and the bourgeoisie alike, "might be fully aware that the...consequences of his actions will be, say, increased chances for the forces of reaction, increased oppression of his own class, a brake on the rise of his class. But none of this will make the slightest impression on him."[58] Given this "utterly irrational" and purely

"exemplary value" of revolutionary socialism, it follows that Weber critiques the ethic of socialism on the basis of its prophetic and emotional foundations. It is a critique, moreover, that rebukes the proponents of socialism for yielding to blind passion rather than a keen discernment of the paradoxical consequences issuing from the "diabolical" mix of "'good'" ends with violent means.

Judging from these interpretations, I think Weber views the ethical component of early-20th century German politics as one completely void of a durable agency. His view of the Allied victors shows how their lack of dignity and foresight, relative to a conquered German nation, thwarts the mingling of ethics and politics. The same is true about the German Supreme Command and its political cohorts in the *Vaterlandspartei*, only that it is their plain want of a principled conviction that foils any hope for ethics in German politics. As for pacificism, Weber's view reveals how the aim of non-violence either diverts such an ethic away from politics or, if the pacificist still pursues it, collapses from the burden that stems from the political necessity of violence. Lastly, his view of revolutionary socialism demonstrates how the Syndicalists, Spartacists, and Bolsheviks fail to fuse ethics and politics. According to Weber, they instead adhere to a "feeling" that eclipses the "irreconcilably opposed" yet "complementary" relationship between ethics and politics. In each case

Weber concludes that the ethical component of politics lacks persons and parties, not because of the appearance or absence of certain principled convictions. Rather, it does so because such convictions tend to deflect a person's critical attention away from the consequences that follow the mix of "absolutist ethics" with political violence.

What Weber's critique of political ethics says about his own interpretation of the idea entails, I believe, more than his desire to differentiate himself from his political and theoretical opponents. It speaks volumes as well, I think, about the standard of responsibility he believes to be integral to any manifestation of ethics in modern politics, a standard that alludes to tragic outcomes.[59] By chiding the syndicalist "for ensuring that the flame of pure conviction...is never extinguished" or the pacificist who "'turns the other cheek'" when faced with violence, Weber suggests a political ethic premised on something besides a zealous obligation to a principled conviction. Indeed, he posits his own theory of political ethics on the basis of "responsibility," which is another way of saying that "one must answer for the (foreseeable) *consequences* of one's actions." This "ethic of responsibility" represents Weber's theoretical rejoinder to his opponents. It mandates a passionate devotion to some ultimate end, yet it also requires foresight and acumen enough to discern between "the achievement of 'good' ends" and "ethically dangerous means

and side-effects." Unlike the "'ethic of principled conviction'," Weber's idea of an "'ethic of responsibility'" seeks to confront rather than ignore the "ethical paradoxes" at the heart of modern politics. Just how far the politician--and the political theorist for that matter--goes toward confronting these paradoxes becomes more apparent when Weber postulates his own theory of political ethics.

Theorizing an Ethic of Responsibility

It is clear that Max Weber's critique of political ethics further illuminates the intellectual legacy he shares with Nietzsche. Be it Nietzsche's "great declaration of war" against "eternal idols" or Weber's claim that his "Vocation" lecture "will necessarily disappoint you in various ways," they both regard theorizing as a defiant act "against" their times. However, in terms of Weber's theory of an ethic of responsibility, which presupposes a human faculty to discern the mix of moral aims and violence, Nietzsche portends a weakness in the thinking of his Wilhelmine successor. In Twilight of the Idols, Nietzsche spurns the idea that man is "the effect of some special purpose...the object of an attempt to attain an 'ideal of humanity' or an 'ideal of happiness' or an 'ideal of morality.'"[60] Hence he rejects the philosophical basis that supports Weber's theory of political ethics: the rational and sovereign individual. "No one is responsible

for man's being there at all," remarks Nietzsche, "for his being such-and-such, or for his being in these circumstances or in this environment."[61] As he explains in Beyond Good and Evil, a "philosopher" does not find man's "greatness" in ideas "that would banish everybody into a corner and 'specialty'." Rather, one finds it in man's "range and multiplicity, in his wholeness in manifoldness. He would even determine value and rank in accordance with how much and how many things one could bear and take upon himself, how *far* one could extend his responsibility."[62] With a hint of irony, therefore, the same legacy that allows Weber to theorize an ethic "against" the idols of his own time mirrors the key fount of reproach against his own idea of an ethic of responsibility.[63]

In light of Nietzsche's untimely impact, how might Weber's theory to political ethics divulge the limits of "responsibility" for the politician as well as the theorist?

More than measuring the ethical confines of Christianity, pacificism, *Machtpolitik*, and revolutionary socialism, Weber's theory of political ethics also assess something else. Indeed, he seeks to locate and clarify the theoretical crossroads between ethics and politics. He begins this search in his "Vocation" lecture on politics, asking his audience the following question: "Where is what one might call the ethical home of politics?" The intricacies of this search become apparent when, after

having raised the question, he answers it with a statement: "At this point, admittedly, ultimate *Weltanschauungen* collide, and one has eventually to *choose* between them."[64] Max Weber's desire to locate the "ethical home of politics" thus entails at least two variations on the theme of human struggle. I believe it suggests a struggle between politicians who devote themselves to differing causes as well as one between political theorists who attach themselves to differing views of ethics. Yet the key to grasping Weber's idea of political ethics, and the struggles which concur with it, is not found in the "ethical irrationality" *per se* that is indicative of the modern collision of moral aims. According to Weber, it appears in a person's conscious choice between "two fundamentally different, irreconcilably opposed maxims," whereby a person "can follow the 'ethic of principled conviction' (*Gesinnung*) or the 'ethic of responsibility'."[65] At this crossroads of human choice the ethical struggles of politicians and political theorists alike become quite evident.

The choice Weber recommends to those persons who seek a leadership role in politics is, of course, the latter one: the ethic of responsibility. Portraying the ethic of principled conviction as one "bound to founder hopelessly on this problem of how the end is to sanctify the means," Weber surmises that "the only position it can logically take is to *reject any* action which employs morally dangerous means."[66]

Moreover, given his perception that "[t]he decisive means of politics is the use of violence," the ethic of conviction appears flawed in its potential for logical coherence and political success. This explains, in part, Weber's critical commentary against the political advocates of pacificism and revolutionary socialism. Accordingly, Weber claims that the "means of *legitimate violence per se* in the hands of human associations is what gives all the ethical problems of politics their particular character."[67] Based on this tension between moral aims and violent means, he concludes that a person's duty to a principled conviction, though admirable, is still not enough to brace anyone against the ethical bedlam of politics. The person who is most able to endure this "ethical tension" is not only devoted to a principled conviction but "responsible" for the paradoxical consequences that issue from it.

Max Weber's idea of an ethic of responsibility reveals more than the ethical void bestowed on German politics by the varied proponents of an absolutist ethic of conviction. It also discloses another one of Weber's chief preconditions for the possibility of ethics in modern politics. His idea of an ethic of responsibility posits, not merely a person who is capable of making "mature" choices in politics, but a person whose choices are justified neither by right nor nature. In other words, it postulates a person who stands out on the basis of his "trained ability" to "make

allowances" for such "everyday shortcomings in people" as greed, resentment, stupidity, naivete, etc. According to Weber, such a person "has no right...to presuppose goodness and perfection in human beings. He does not feel that he can shuffle off the consequences of his own actions, as far as he could foresee them, and place the burden on the shoulders of others."[68] By experiencing a litany of political struggles, the person who "subscribes" to an ethic of responsibility becomes cognizant of the moral limitations of others as well as oneself. Such a politician evokes the precept of an "original sin" of sorts, one more historical than theological in its view of individual human conduct. Thus, with an "unsparing gaze" into "the realities of life," a "responsible" politician labors to discern the ethical disparities between moral aims and violent means, defying the absolutist overtures of "conviction" politicians.

By positing this person as the basis of an ethic of responsibility, Weber hopes to fend off the excesses he ascribes to the myopic followers of a principled conviction and the hollow disciples of *Machtpolitik*. As Weber observes the problem, early-20th century German society all too often indulges in the "deadly sins" against the "holy spirit" of politics. By "sin" he means that the "striving for power becomes detached from the task in hand (*unsachlich*) and becomes a matter of purely personal self-intoxification instead of being placed entirely at the service of the

'cause'."[69] This "self-intoxication" is indicative of what Weber labels the "carnival" politics of post-war Germany. Under this label he lumps the actions of Eisner, Toller, and Liebknecht who performed in Berlin and Munich, as well as those of Ludendorff, whose arrogant and repressive tactics piqued widespread distaste for political authority. In contrast, Weber's idea of a "responsibility" refers to a person who, "[e]very day and every hour," confronts the "enemy which threatens him from within: common *vanity*, the mortal enemy of all dedication to a cause."[70] By curbing the vanity of politicians, the ethic of responsibility underscores not just a person's a capacity to differentiate a variety moral ends from violent means. More specifically, it reminds the politician to be diligent in distinguishing "one's inner composure and calm" from his "passionate commitment to a 'cause' (*Sache*)."

What allows a person to discern between these contentious elements, within one's own self and among others in politics, is the element of "judgment" (*Augenmass*). In using this term, Weber points to the "decisive psychological quality" that is representative of the responsible politician. It is a quality that deflects the vain "need to thrust one's person as far as possible into the foreground" of politics, compelling the politician to value the "*distance*" between himself and other "things and people" in politics.[71] This notion of judgment as distance, which

Weber also refers to as "objectivity" (*Sachlichkeit*), allows a politician to differentiate conceptually one's passions from the sobering circumstances of political struggle.[72] It also reminds a person that politics "is an activity conducted with the head, not with the other parts of the body or soul. Yet if politics is to be genuinely human action, rather than some frivolous intellectual game, dedication to it can only be generated and sustained by passion."[73] In short, Weber's idea of judgment accentuates both an ethical chasm and an historical accord between a politician's duty to a cause and his use of violent means to advance that cause. The import of judgment surfaces, therefore, in the view of a politician who understands the present value of his ideals in light of the impending consequences that threaten his ethical posture, social status, and political power.

It seems as though the "responsible" politician banks on little, if any, success in either balancing a conviction with violence or estimating the consequences of such a morally turbulent mix. "Nor," Weber continues, "can any ethic in the world determine when and to what extent the ethically good end 'sanctifies' the ethically dangerous means and side-effects."[74] Thus, the point is that the person who abides by an ethic of responsibility has within his field of focus neither solely a principled conviction nor only an instrumental view of politics. Since these "two

fundamentally different, irreconcilably opposed maxims"[75] often reveal themselves as "complementary to one another,"[76] the politician's chief concern is judging the corollary effects. "Anyone who makes a pact with the means of violence," remarks Weber, "for whatever purpose--and every politician does this--is at the mercy of its specific consequences."[77] The "responsible" politician exhibits how principled beliefs and violent means mingle in a way that allows the one to bare the ethical limits of the other, sparking consequences of greater gravity than power itself. This "diabolical" couplet is what forever compels the politician "to be conscious of these ethical paradoxes and of his responsibility for what may become of *himself* under pressure from them."

The political significance of an ethic of responsibility thus manifests itself in the consequences that challenge the "inner defenses" of a politician. For instance, Weber rebukes the politician who, like some Bolsheviks and Spartacists, seeks "to establish absolute justice on earth" by paradoxically calling "for one *last* act of force to create the situation in which *all* violence will have been destroyed for ever."[78] He does not criticize the philosophical ground of their convictions, nor does he challenge their use of violent means to promote them. Stressing the "ethical paradoxes" that correspond to their deeds, Weber instead challenges the leaders of revolutionary

socialism insofar as they "remain unaware of the diabolical powers at work. They are inexorable, bringing about the consequences of their action, including consequences for their being, to which they will fall helpless victims if they remain blind to them."[79] Hence the gravity of these "paradoxical" outcomes defines the terrain where the politician faces the moral divide between violence and convictions. There the politician observes his ethical limit. He does so whether he stays "blind" to consequences and is "damaged and discredited for generations to come," or he gains an "unsparing gaze" and "withstand[s] even the defeat of all hopes" with judgment and passion intact.

Given Weber's critique of "conviction" politicians, the best hope for politics, the German nation, and political ethics appears in the person with the "unsparing gaze". However, this politician who adheres to the ethic of responsibility also points, I think, to some theoretical incongruities which ultimately cast doubt on the political relevance of such an ethic. First of all, by positing his ethic of responsibility on a person who is "trained" within the narrow confines of political struggle, Weber designates a political ethic for some but not all people. In doing so, he not only impedes the conditions for the possibility of politics, transforming the criteria of "the hard struggle of man with man" into a "responsibility for the *consequences*" of one's deeds. Weber also impedes Germany's reach for

national power, since his prerequisite of "political machinery" diminishes the value of "'occasional' politicians" in favor of more "responsible" "'*full*-time' politicians."[80] His idea of an ethic of responsibility no doubt suggests a provocative option to the blind feats of those "conviction-politicians" who comprise early-20th century German politics. Yet, with all its curative promise, Weber's idea does not absolve him for locating political ethics in those persons whose "inner being" supersedes morally the conceit, inconstancy, and immaturity of other persons in politics.

By grounding the "responsible" politician's "inner being" on "judgment," furthermore, I believe Weber points to another flaw in his idea of an ethic of responsibility. It reflects a flaw insofar as he depicts judgment as that "psychological" trait which allows the politician to discern "passion" for an ideal from the historical "realities" that often counter it and, thus, hinder one's ethical reach. The problem, though, has little to do with judgment *per se*. It is most apparent in that Weber's idea of judgment posits a "reality" in politics, a reality identified by other "things and people" who are also marked by the coupling of convictions and violence. By making judgment contingent upon such empirically specific phenomenon, he not only posits a narrow view of historical reality, but he theorizes a narrow understanding of political judgment. Indeed, in

his zeal to give sight to the "blind" disciples of an ethic of conviction, those politicians who--in vain--direct their gaze "into the void," Weber prescribes a clarity of vision in the form of his notion of judgment. Yet, though it helps the politician "maintain one's inner composure and calm," judgment's myopic focus on "things and people" still permits the same person to ignore the possible normative discrepancies in his own moral conviction. Unlike persons who submit blindly to a conviction, despite (or maybe because of) certain "realities," the responsible politician judges the ethical difference between a moral conviction and the historical struggle with reality. In other words, he chooses to make this sort of judgment rather than judging the very moral conviction for which he struggles with others in politics.

The ethic of responsibility thus reveals a restricted view of politics, one prioritizing a specific person who, with keen judgment, advances a principled conviction seemingly unaltered but by empirical events. Max Weber's theory of political ethics impedes the possibility of politics by qualifying it with the standard of responsibility. It is a limiting standard, not because it requires a person to exemplify the moral and ethical constancy of a saint, such as that demanded of one who follows an ethic of conviction. On the contrary, a person who typifies Weber's idea of responsibility accepts a

different, if not more difficult, charge. That person must anticipate ethical consequences in terms of "a quite inadequate, even paradoxical relation" between violent means and a moral conviction. Yet, like the ethic of conviction, most people are incapable of measuring up to an ethical standard of responsibility in politics, a task Weber compares to a "slow, strong drilling through hard boards."[81] Instead of a saint, Weber longs for a "hero" whose ethical posture can endure even the paradoxical repercussions of politics. Hence his idea of responsibility puts the prospect of politics beyond the "'occasional'," "official," and even "conviction" politicians, making it the sole domain of "heroic" politicians.

But more than that, Weber's theory of political ethics tends to hinder the prospects of German national greatness, and this is evident from at least two different angles. Inasmuch as his normative longing for "responsibility" restricts politics to the deeds of heroes, I think Weber tends to drain the German nation of its cosmopolitan, liberal, and democratic promise. His allocation of responsibility to heroic politicians rather than eager citizens indicates a serious diminution in the preconditions for the prospect of German national unity and power. Moreover, given the political significance he assigns to an ethic of responsibility, I think Weber unwittingly reveals a profound divide between the ideal of responsibility and his

principled conviction of German national greatness. If greatness presupposes "responsible" politicians, and if responsibility propels them to admit the tension between violence and ideals, then Weber's theory of political ethics undercuts his unflinching devotion to the German nation. His notion of political ethics does so in that it constrains the possibility of politics, which in turn hinders the German nation's advance toward historical glory. It also undercuts Weber's devotion insofar as political ethics necessitates a politician's self-scrutiny of his own principled convictions, even those that pertain to the elevated status of the German nation. Thus I think Weber confirms Nietzsche's claim the "the philosopher" lives "in contradiction to his today: his enemy was ever the ideal of today." Yet, though he "posits" a value "against" the idea of political ethics in German politics, Weber languishes in relation to Nietzsche's other hope that the philosopher of "tomorrow" becomes "'capable of being as manifold as whole, as ample as full.'"[82] Nietzsche's view of responsibility envisions numerous ethical postures, whereas Weber's view documents a similar sort of diversity, but only for the sake of exalting one ethic above all others in German politics.

The Ethical Paradoxes of Politics and Political Theory

At the end of his lecture on "The Profession and Vocation of Politics," Max Weber voices an opinion which

counters his earlier claims about the elevated status of the "responsible" politician. After expounding on the ethical qualities of the "leader" and "hero," he still concludes that "even those who are neither...must...put on the armour of that steadfastness of heart which can withstand even the defeat of all hopes."[83] Indeed, though he is clear about the political distinctions between leaders and citizens, Weber appears to qualify both with a capacity to judge one's own choices in the face of ethical paradoxes. The importance of this textual contrast manifests itself, I contend, in something more than just a lapse in Weber's approach to the individual sources of an ethic of responsibility. I think it surfaces, as well, in his own theoretical judgments relative to the impending consequences that confront the politician who abides by an ethic of responsibility. For the contrast between political heroes and everyday citizens underscores Weber's estimation that "the man fighting for a belief...needs a following in order to do so, a human 'apparatus'."[84] As a result of this "need," however, "the leader is entirely dependent on the functioning of his apparatus...dependent on *its* motives, not his own."[85] The impending consequences for the politician thus derive not solely from his capacity to judge his own political deeds. They also derive from other citizens who have the capacity to judge the politician.[86]

In addition to this constraint on the politician's ethic of responsibility, I think Weber's theory of political ethics reveals a constraint on the ethical posture of the political theorist. On the one hand, his efforts to theorize a notion of political ethics presuppose "the organisational *preconditions* for the emergence of leaders." On the other hand, they promise the German nation a leader who can "seize the spokes of the wheel of history." At this very point, where Weber locates the ethical clash between "morally dangerous means" and "'good' ends," he illuminates not just the "ethical paradoxes" that confront a responsible politician. By presupposing a politics based on "mechanical" force, while at the same time advocating the "principled conviction" of German glory, Weber's theory of ethics suggests a paradox in his political thinking. Though the paradox that confronts the politician is by far more menacing, given the impact of violence on a human following, the paradox that defies Weber nevertheless reveals an ethical limit in his theoretical enterprise. It signifies a limit not simply on the basis of a tension between his instrumental view of politics and his universal design of the nation. Nor does it do so merely on account of Weber's theory of political ethics, which tends to constrain the prospects of modern politics and German national glory. Rather, I think the paradox that confronts Weber indicates an ethical limit insofar as he fails to judge such

theoretical discrepancies and the impending consequences they pose for the vitality of his political thinking. For it is a failure of judgment that undercuts his scholarly "responsibility *before history*," a responsibility he believes "weighs even more heavily on us today."[87]

The role of judgment in revealing the ethical limits of the politician and the political theorist denotes yet another link between Weber and Nietzsche. Again, given Nietzsche's charge against philosophy in Twilight of the Idols, judgment stems from what he calls the "weariness of life," a "sound" clearly expressed by Socrates and Plato in their "logical" quests for truth. "Judgements," he asserts, "judgements of value...can, in the end, never be true: they have value only as symptoms...in themselves such judgements are stupidities."[88] This symptomatic feature of judgment is conceivable to Weber given his perspective on the modern world's "ethical irrationality," a view which notes the dilution of absolute ends in an ever-widening tide of empirical details. Yet, unlike Nietzsche, who values judgment only insofar as it informs the philosopher "*that the value of life cannot be estimated*," Weber identifies judgment as the prime measure of the paradoxical tensions between ends and means. He likens it to "that powerful control over the soul" which merges human "passion" for a cause with an acute perception of empirical "realities".[89] Thus Weber's desire to "control" that which Nietzsche

believes "*cannot be estimated*" again forces him to fall short of Nietzsche's standard for future philosophers. Indeed, near the end of The Gay Science, Nietzsche charges that the philosopher "must...'overcome'...not only his time but also his prior aversion and contradiction *against* this time, his suffering from this time, his un-timeliness, his *romanticism*."[90] In other words, I think Weber's faith in judgment reveals the "weariness" not only of the politician who occupies his theory of politics, but of Weber himself, a theorist who blinks at the sight of an ethical paradox.[91]

How does judgment operate within Max Weber's notion of an ethic of responsibility, such that it discloses the ethical limits of both the politician and the political theorist?

With regard to the politician, Weber's idea of judgment denotes ethical limits relative to the "human 'apparatus'" which the politician uses to advance his principled conviction. Among other things, judgment allows the "responsible" politician to discern his conviction from such political means as the "continuous administration" of a citizenry, law, finances, and military force by paid officials. Despite this function, however, the politician remains at the mercy of political "realities," mechanical forces that are often at odds with his duty to, say, justice, beauty, or even German national glory. To succeed at these sorts of endeavors, Weber argues, "things must be

emptied and made into matters-of fact (*Versachlichung*), and the following must undergo spiritual proletarianisation, in order to achieve 'discipline'."[92] Therefore, for all its ability to inform the politician of the ethical discrepancies between "'good'" ends and "violent" means, judgment nevertheless fails the politician. It fails to rid or even offset what Weber calls the "*everyday existence*" of the world, a "reality" which finds administrative functions draining passion from a politician's ultimate conviction. "This is why," warns Weber, "the following of a man fighting for a faith...tends to decline particularly easily into a quite ordinary stratum of prebendaries."[93]

By unveiling this flaw in the "unsparing gaze" of the responsible politician, Weber points to the ethical limits that the politician might encounter in modern politics. The responsible politician judges the distance between "things and people" and oneself, overcoming the "all-too-human" propensity toward common vanity. He judges, too, the distance between "the means of violence" and a principled conviction, accentuating the dissimilar purpose of each element in politics. He further judges the "ethical paradoxes" that are typically the consequence of these antithetical factors, anticipating "the diabolical powers" that might foil his ideal, as much as nullify the technical force of his means. More important, though, Weber's politician judges "that the eventual outcome of political

action frequently, indeed regularly, stands in a quite inadequate, even paradoxical relation to its original, intended meaning and purpose (*Sinn*)."[94] It is thus evident, I believe, that judgment detects the ethical bounds of a "responsible" politician. Indeed, judgment is what allows the politician to pull back the veil of his own principled convictions to reveal the mortal calculus of violent political means. As Weber indicates near the end of his "Vocation" lecture, these limits emerge most clearly when a politician admits, both to himself and to his following, nothing more than "'Here I stand, I can do no other.'"[95]

The weight of this admission, however, far exceeds the potential loss of a politician's office, prestige, power, or sense of passion for a cause. Insofar as the ethical limits of a responsible politician surface among "the ramifications of the ethical tension between ends and means," the weight comes down on Weber's theory of politics. On the one hand its impact appears, not so much in Weber's privileging the politician's "personality," but in Weber's illumination of the tragic fallout which politicians must confront in politics. By acting responsibly, the politician fights for an end only to the extent that he admits his collusion with the violent means that transgress it, suggesting a politics in which the politician withdraws from the fight for the sake of the end. On the other hand, the politician's

testimony to his ethical limits also suggests a politics in which other persons--be they "full-time" or "'occasional'" politicians--question the moral force of his actions. Hence the weight of admitting one's ethical limits falls on more than just the politician's shoulders, so to speak, a weight which imperils the sublime or earthly "rewards" for himself and others. I believe it also falls on Weber's theory of politics, in that the politician's judgment discloses the tragic finitude of politics, which in turn constricts the aim of German national glory. By the same token, the politician's judgment of his ethical limits implies the judgment of other citizens and politicians, a situation that further foils Weber's aim of German glory by augmenting the prospects of political struggle.[96]

The idea of judgment in Weber's theory of political ethics also portends the ethical limits of the political theorist. This is the case especially for theorists who, like Weber, champion a specific principled conviction over the course of their intellectual enterprises. For all of his resolute claims about "'the small number'" of "leaders" and "heroes" who ought to inhabit politics, Weber still concedes the political value of those persons "who are neither of these things." In fact, on the margins of Weber's theory of politics linger the "'occasional politicians'" and those persons who "put on armour of that steadfastness of heart which can withstand even the defeat

of all hopes."[97] Thus he himself occasionally perceives other persons who, though cordoned off from the "*small* leading groups" that comprise politics, represent nonetheless a mix of passion, judgment, and responsibility. However, the key distinction between the politician and the citizen is, of course, that the politician's ethical limits come to the fore by way of the political requisite of violence. But this distinction does not necessarily bar from politics someone like Weber who, as a citizen and political theorist, promotes his principled conviction by means other than violence. "We are all 'occasional' politicians," states Weber, in contrast to the "'professional politicians'" whom he believes thrive on modern politics. We are, he continues, insofar as "we post our ballot slips or express our will in some similar way, such as voicing approval or protest at a 'political' meeting, making a 'political' speech and so on."[98] Therefore the politician and, in Weber's particular case, the political theorist are both capable of judging the ethical incongruities between ends and means in their own deeds and in those of others.

Yet the theorist's judgment of the tension between, say, the ideal of German glory and the machinery of politics does not altogether verify his duty to an ethic of responsibility. Like the politician, the political theorist judges both the ethical distance between "'good' ends" and

"dangerous means" and the "ethical paradoxes" that issue from such unions. This latter faculty is what Weber appears to lack. It is lacking in his critical exchange with the ethical stands of Christianity, *Machtpolitik*, pacificism, and revolutionary socialism, such that each critique confirms the closure of politics for the sake of responsibility and, thus, German grandeur. Furthermore, it is absent insofar as he advances the cause of German nationalism with a theory of modern politics, the "mechanical" function of which violates the "final and decisive" rank he ascribes to the German nation. Whether he engages in an "'occasional'" struggle with his worldly opponents or a "scholarly" search for "the ethical home of politics," Weber appears oblivious to the "ethical paradoxes" that mar his theoretical enterprise. Perhaps such misjudgments are the result of his "common *vanity*," what Weber himself calls "a kind of occupational disease" within "academic and scholarly circles."[99] Though Weber also claims that such vanity "does not...interfere with the pursuit of knowledge," his devotion to the German nation seems to "tempt him to strive for the glittering appearance of power rather than its reality."[100] Weber's devotion does not necessarily interfere with his search for knowledge. Indeed, I think it propels his search, allowing him to ignore the rift between the "machinery" of politics

and the "grandeur" of nation as well as the breach between his theory of ethics and his ethical conduct as a theorist.

One consequence of Weber's misjudgment thus surfaces in his theory of political ethics, whereby a "responsible" politician must remove either himself or the ideal of the German nation from the domain of politics. If the politician remains in politics, then violence transgresses and alters his principled conviction. If he withdraws from the fight, the ultimate aim of the nation remains morally sound but politically weak. In each case the politician typifies, tragically, the extent to which the ethical criteria of "responsibility" narrows the prospect of politics in the modern world.

Another consequence manifests in relation to Weber's general project of political theorizing. Insofar as he posits politics on an instrumental foundation, as well as advocates its use as the chief means to the goal of German greatness, Weber confronts his own ethical limit as a political theorist in silence. He is quite vocal, however, when it comes to acknowledging the ethical flaws in the thinking of his scholarly and political opponents. But these unilateral critiques underscore, I believe, more than just the absence of judgment in Weber's theoretical approach to political ethics. They accentuate, too, the extent to which his ethical shortcomings as a theorist surface and speak, if not through Weber himself, then through the rivals

whom he subjects to the ethical standard of responsibility. Consequently, Weber's theory of politics falls short of his own ethical standard, illustrating a politician who imperils German glory and a theorist who fails to judge the ethical paradox in his political thinking.

Judging from Weber's theory of political ethics, the ethical flaws of the political theorist thus appear to emerge in the exchange between differing thinkers. This is evident when Weber challenges both the ethical posturings of Christianity, pacificism, and revolutionary socialism and the ethical vacuity of *Machtpolitik*. He dispels their political promise with the criteria of "responsibility," in turn further restricting the prospect of politics and, thus, his ultimate goal of German national greatness. He does so, too, while unknowingly highlighting the ethical incongruities that pervade his own political thinking.

The theorist's ethical flaws become evident, furthermore, in Weber's historical encounter with Nietzsche. It is Nietzsche who, with aspersions toward the "value" of "responsibility," defies Weber not for narrowing the scope of politics, but for narrowing theory with "judgements" that fail to "'overcome'" Weber's own ethical "timeliness." In a way, Weber epitomizes Nietzsche's belief about "men of knowledge" in his preface to <u>On the Genealogy of Morals</u>, that "we are necessarily strangers to ourselves, we do not comprehend ourselves." Indeed, Nietzsche continues, noting

also the manifold value of such limits, "we *have* to misunderstand ourselves, for us the law 'Each is furthest from himself' applies to all eternity."[101] As long as Weber's notion of political ethics evokes an encounter with his intellectual counterparts, it amplifies the ethical flaws in his theoretical enterprise, as well as it extends the paradoxical path of all succeeding political theorists.

In shouldering the ethical burden of "responsibility," the politician and political theorist convey the intricacies of Max Weber's theory of political ethics. The politician not only carries the weight of judgment in Weber's idea of an ethic of responsibility; he illustrates, as well, how judgment potentially restricts politics and the ideal of German national glory. Yet this is not the consequence Weber anticipates, since his chief concern entails theorizing a type of ethics that can revitalize German politics and, thus, facilitate the advance of the German nation. As a political theorist, moreover, Weber himself illustrates how the weight of judgment impacts his perspective on political ethics. Indeed, by challenging the dominant views on ethics and the legacy of Nietzsche, he reveals more than just the extent to which his lack of judgment unsettles his own theoretical approach to ethics. By positing "responsibility" as the groundwork of political ethics, Weber elects to "remain blind" to the consequences that manifest themselves in more constrained notions of

politics and German nationaliam. Such a misjudgment--or lack of responsibility as a political theorist--indicates, I believe, discrepancies in Weber's theory of political ethics in particular and the enterprise of theorizing in general.

Notes

[1]For a sampling of some of the more traditional interpretations of Max Weber's political thinking, see Introduction, endnote #1.

[2]Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, trans. Terence Irwin (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1985), 35. Max Weber's references to the political thought of Aristotle are rare, and what references he does makes appear in his scholarly inquiries into the ancient economies of Greece and Rome. Cf., Max Weber, The Agrarian Sociology of Ancient Civilizations, trans. R.I. Frank (London: Verso, 1988). Hereafter referred to as AGAC. The original German version of this text appears as "Agrarverhältnisse im Alterum" and "Die sozialen Gründen des Untergangs der antiken Kultur" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Sozial-und Wirtschaftgeschichte, Hrsg. von Marianne Weber (Tübingen: Mohr, 1988). Hereafter referred to as GASW. See also Paul Honigsheim, "Max Weber: His Religious and Ethical Ground and Development" in Church History 19 (1950): 219-239. Honigsheim claims that Weber's reference to the "*tragic religio-ethical dilemma*" differentiates him from Aristotle's ethical projects in the Ethics as well as the Politics. The lack of a tragic sense and a Christian theology in Aristotle's work confirm this point for Honigsheim, as well as for myself "In a word," he says, referring to Weber's ethical project, "the radical ethic is oriented toward the image of the saint; the ethic of responsibility toward that of the hero. The individual must choose between the two, and, by deciding for the one, the individual inevitably sins against the other precept," 232.

[3]Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace" in Kant: Political Writings, ed. Hans Reiss and trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 125. Hereafter referred to as KPW. There are several works that explore Weber's connection to the philosophical legacy of Kant. Cf., Martin Barker, "Kant as a Problem for Weber" in British Journal of Sociology 31 (1980): 224-245. Indeed, Barker critiques Weber for his lack of discernment between "noumenon and phenomenon, which is at the heart of the Kantian scheme of things...It is missing in Weber. Everything is phenomena. All we have for purposes of understanding, are useful fictions; and that is all we have for living," 242. A more nuanced look at the Kant-Weber nexus comes from Wolfgang Schluchter, Paradoxes of Modernity, trans. Neil Solomon (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996). Schluchter claims--and I tend to agree--that both Kant and Weber "demand that one think from the standpoints of all others involved. However, whereas in the first case this can occur in an ideal dialogue that is actually a monologue, in the second case a real dialogue is indispensable." For this reason, Schluchter concludes, Kant's

ideal dialogue constitutes "a principle of justification" and Weber's real dialogue reflects "a principle of critical examination," denoting two quite different theoretical orientations, 93. A similar case is made by Mark Warren, "Max Weber's Liberalism for a Nietzschean World" in American Political Science Review 1 (March 1988): 31-50. Finally, insofar as the lack of "tragic" component marks "the fundamental difference between Kant and Weber," see Paul Honigsheim, "Max Weber: His Religious and Ethical Ground and Development" in Church History 19 (1950): 219-239.

[4]Max Weber, "The Profession and Vocation of Politics" in Weber: Political Writings, eds. Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs and trans. Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 360. Hereafter referred to as WPW. The standard German version of this text appears as "Politik als Beruf" in Gesammelte politische Schriften, ed. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1958), 552. Hereafter referred to as GPS.

[5]WPW, 360; GPS, 552. For an interesting discussion of the long-running controversy surrounding the dates of Max Weber's "vocation" essays, see Guenther Roth and Wolfgang Schluchter, "Excursus: The Question of the Dating of 'Science as a Vocation' and 'Politics as a Vocation,'" in Max Weber's Vision of History (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 113-116. In relation to Weber's more sociological approach to the issue of ethics, see his "Religious Groups (The Sociology of Religion) in Economy and Society, eds. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 590-597. Hereafter referred to as ES. The original German version of this text appears as "Religionssoziologie (Typen religiöser Vergemeinschaftung) in Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, Besorgt von Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: Mohr, 1980), 355--360. Hereafter referred to as WuG. See also his "Religious Rejections of the World and Their Directions" in From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, eds. and trans. Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946), 323-359. Hereafter referred to as FMW. The original German version of this text appears as "Zwischenbetrachtung: Theorie der Stufen und Richtungen religiöser Weltablehnung" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie I (Tübingen: Mohr, 1988), 536-573. Hereafter referred to as GARS.

[6]WPW, 365; GPS, 557.

[7]Max Weber, "The Nation State and Economic Policy" in WPW, 27-28. The original German version of this text appears as "Der Nationalstaat und die Volkswirtschaftpolitik" in GPS, 24.

[8]There is a broad body of literature which addresses Max Weber's "ethical" approach to scholarship and science. I draw on only a few selective works. The most provocative is the work of Karl Löwith, Max Weber and Karl Marx, trans. Hans Fantel (London and New York: Routledge, 1993). He perceives Weber's ethical approach to science as "a 'platform of negativity' on which the human hero--'in a very modest sense of the word'--could develop his activity," It was this ethic of "'negativity'" that allowed Weber the scholar to challenge the "'objectivity'," not only of other scholars, but of the subjectively grounded ideals which informed the public direction of Wilhelmine German politics, 79. For a somewhat different interpretation of Weber's ethical ambitions as a scholar, see again Wolfgang Schluchter, Paradoxes of Modernity. It is Schluchter's contention--as well as my own--that Max Weber theorizes more than just a distinction between "an ethic of conviction and an ethic of responsibility" in his political thinking. Indeed, Weber's scholarly approach to politics indicates that extent to which he "adhered to an ethical position not only beyond fundamentalism, but also beyond naive relativism, which renders the wide-spread depiction of him as a moral agnositic hopelessly flawed," 101. Thus, I think it is important to emphasize Löwith's recognition of Weber's ethical "'negativity'" and Schluchter's location of Weber's ethical trajectory through the troubling terrain of "fundamentalism" and "relativism." However, I would contend that their insights fail to trace the political significance of Weber's scholarly ethic beyond the "value-sphere" of modern science, a critical point that will mark one of my chief ambitions in this chapter.

[9]Friedrich Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1989). Hereafter referred to as GM. For some other views of Weber's intellectual ties to Friedrich Nietzsche, see Wilhelm Hennis, "The Traces of Nietzsche in the Work of Max Weber" in Max Weber: Essays in Reconstruction, trans. Keith Tribe (London: Allen & Unwin, 1988), 146-62, who contends that the "lasting and central" element of Nietzsche's impact on Weber was Nietzsche's "'ethic of distinction'," one that provided individuals critical distance from the "herd" instincts indicative of modern democracies. Thus, according to Hennis, Weber "read him as a moralist" rather than a political thinker *per se*, 150. A similar case is made by Robert Eden, Political Leadership and Nihilism: A Study of Weber and Nietzsche (Tampa: University Press of South Florida, 1984). However, Eden departs from Hennis insofar as he claims that Weber's "defense of liberal democratic institutions became a defense of 'moral forces' against Nietzsche's nihilistic politics," 42. Moreover, inasmuch as Weber is perceived as appropriating Nietzsche's claim about the "absolute freedom for great men in their choice of values," see Wolfgang Mommsen, "Max Weber's

political sociology and his philosophy of world history" in International Social Science Journal 17 (1965), 23-45. "Yet," Mommsen continues, "Weber disagreed strongly with Nietzsche's view that the great man must dominate the mass, not for its own good, but solely from love of that power which is the indispensable basis of his aristocratic vitality," 36. In each case, therefore, Weber is perceived to be a political thinker who stops well short of Nietzsche's more radical moral aspirations. At best, he is seen as a thinker who seeks to temper Nietzsche's politically "impractical" moral desires. What is missing from the Weber literature on Nietzsche is, I think, a discussion that explores the extent to which Weber's theory of political ethics succumbs to the historical, cultural and moral maladies for which Nietzsche so forcefully rebuked modernity. Thus, rather than read Weber as a calming influence on Nietzsche, I read Nietzsche as an unsettling influence on Weber--especially as it relates to Weber's theory of political ethics.

[10]GM, 59-60. By relying on Nietzsche's characterization of "responsibility" in GM, I am in no way suggesting that this view represents the most specific or exhaustive rendering of the term in his theoretical endeavors. Indeed, the notion of responsibility he theorizes in GM is clearly at odds with the one he intimates in his chapter on "What is Noble" in Beyond Good and Evil, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), 201-237. Hereafter referred to as BGE. There, according to Nietzsche, "philosophers" reflect noble characters inasmuch as they are "never thinking of degrading our duties into duties for everybody; not wanting to delegate, to share, one's own responsibility; counting one's privileges and their exercise among one's *duties*." This is also the case in Nietzsche's "Twilight of Idols" in The Portable Nietzsche, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Penguin Books, 1954), 463-563. Hereafter referred to as Twilight. In that work, his notion of responsibility works at cross-purposes with the one he ascribes to the "herd instinct" in GM. Indeed, in Twilight Nietzsche views responsibility not so much in terms of either a "uniform" or "noble" quality. He instead views it in relation to man's leveling of a "punishment" against those persons who transgress a shared "ideal," against those persons who visit "suffering" upon others who commit themselves to the ideals as happiness, morality, and humanity, Twilight, 500 and 535. Given these different renderings of responsibility, I thus acknowledge the manifold and often contradictory meanings of the term in Nietzsche's thinking. Conversely, such varied interpretations--which I think reveal the rich and surprising character of Nietzsche's thought--in no way lessen the impact his critique of responsibility in GM has on Max Weber's idea of ethic of responsibility. For interesting view of Nietzsche's idea of responsibility, see Bonnie Honig, Political Theory and the Displacement of

Politics (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), esp. chapter 3, "Nietzsche and the Recovery of Responsibility." Honig contends that a Nietzschean responsibility struggles "to overcome the need to make sense of misfortune by linking it to blameworthy agents, to move beyond the self-destructive ressentiment of moral responsibility to the point where one is capable of affirming the past, not passively and fatalistically but creatively and redemptively," 52. Though I accept her general formulation of Nietzsche's notion of responsibility, it is nevertheless one that I find lacking insofar as she ignores a careful discussion of how a person's "creative" and "redemptive" interpretation of the past translates into a politics in the present. See, 74.

[11]GM, 59-60.

[12]Concerning the ethical tensions underlying Weber's political thinking, I direct the reader to at least three important sources, the first of which is Peter Breiner, Max Weber & Democratic Politics (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996). One of Breiner's chief contentions is that Weber's commitment to the German nation-state acts as a moral adhesive between the ethics of responsibility and conviction, because "it is the one ideal that is not injured when power backed by violence is deployed on its behalf," thus making it "into an impartial maxim almost equal to the ethic of responsibility itself," 196-198. However, Breiner tends to overlook the extent to which Weber premises his commitment to the nation-state on the rearrangement of the German nation's parliamentary mechanisms, a "technical change" the consequences of which "would be far-reaching" for "the vital interests of the nation." See, WPW, 133; GPS, 309. In short, Weber's maxim of the nation-state is not quite as "impartial" as Breiner makes it out to be, thus maintaining the prospect that an ethical tension informs not only Weber's characterization of the professional politician but Weber's stance as a scholar in Wilhelmine Germany. Second, I again direct the reader to Wolfgang Schluchter, Paradoxes of Modernity. Speaking metaphorically, Schluchter claims that Weber "did not present himself as the physician who knew the redeeming therapy. At most, he presented physicians, especially the theological and philosophical ones, with a difficult problem," 44. Of course, Weber never declared himself to be a moral prophet for the "disenchanted" moral universe of modernity. Such assertions would only countervail Weber's clearly articulate attacks against the like of Heinrich von Treitschke, Otto Gross, or Stefan George. However, these attacks did not keep Weber from theorizing an idea of an ethic that compelled these "physicians" of modernity to explain their "one-sided" remedies to the public. In this way, I would agree with Schluchter, that Weber was not seeking to remedy the maladies of modernity--i.e.,

rationalization, disenchantment, and ethical irrationality. However, I disagree with him insofar as I believe that Weber concocts a theoretical remedy of sorts that can contend with those ancillary conditions that correspond to the primary ailments of the modern world--i.e., a return to the myths of community, Prussian nationalism, and individualism. Hence, Weber the moral "physician" does not detach himself from an ethical diagnosis. Finally, there is the view held by Leo Strauss, Natural Right and History, who claims that Weber "could not reconcile his view that ethics is silent about the right social order with the undeniable ethical relevance of social questions, except by "relativizing' ethics," 44-45. Yet, what Strauss fails to acknowledge is the degree to which Weber spent much of his scholarly and personal life not just defending a particular notion of the "right social order" but critiquing, too, other notions that failed to meet certain ethical and moral criteria. For this reason, Weber's idea of ethics is not necessarily "relativist, but in fact mandates a diligent dialogue between persons such that the ethical limits of each propels and extends the dialogue. It is this criteria of ethical limits to which I subject Weber.

[13]Here I draw on Sheldon Wolin's argument concerning the politics of Max Weber's theoretical enterprise in "Max Weber: Legitimation, Method, and the Politics of Theory" in Political Theory 9 (August 1981): 401-424. I accept Wolin's claim "that methodology, as conceived by Weber, was a type of political activity transferred to the only plane of action available to the theorist at a time when science, bureaucracy, and capitalism had clamped the world with the tightening grid of rationality," 406. However, where Wolin ascribes the political character of Weber's theoretical enterprise to specific historical and epistemological constraints of modernity, I tend to ascribe it to the ethical consequences issuing from his theoretical task, consequences that are paradoxical and limited in design and thus provoke an element of dissent that points to the prospect of differing notion of politics.

[14]Twilight, 490.

[15]Twilight, 490.

[16]Twilight, 477.

[17]WPW, 369; GPS, 560.

[18]WPW, 366; GPS, 557.

[19]WPW, 364; GPS, 556.

[20]WPW, 352; GPS, 545.

[21]WPW, 352; GPS, 545.

[22]WPW, 352; GPS, 545.

[23]Max Weber, "Parliament and Government in Germany under a New Political Order" in WPW, 270. The original German version of this text appears as "Parlament und Regierung im neugeordneten Deutschland" in GPS, 442-443.

[24]Concerning Max Weber's discernment between restricted and universal notions of suffrage, see "Suffrage and Democracy in Germany" in WPW, especially 105-109. The original German version of this passage appears as "Wahlrecht und Demokratie in Deutschland" in GPS, 268-272. With regard to his distinction between rationally and traditionally organized political parties, see WPW, 98-100; GPS, 261-263. On his exploration of the contrasts between bureaucratic and political leadership, see WPW, 203-206; GPS, 376-379. Finally, in relation to Weber's explanation of the dissimilarities between "negative politics" and "positive politics", see WPW, 165-166; GPS, 339-340.

[25]WPW, 270-71; GPS, 443.

[26]WPW, 353; GPS, 546.

[27]WPW, 367; GPS, 558.

[28]WPW, 269; GPS, 442.

[29]Twilight, 491.

[30]In other words, the responsible politician may transgress the ideals and lives of other people, including oneself; yet he or she still must acknowledge the paradox at hand. Despite Weber's inability to acknowledge his own transgressions as a scholar and public actor, the consequences of his thinking unwittingly point to the prospect of what William E. Connolly refers to as the "sense of critical responsiveness in The Ethos of Pluralization (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995). By this terms Connolly means that when a person "alters" their "recognition of difference," he or she revises the "terms of self-recognition. Critical responsiveness thus moves on two registers: to redefine its relation to others a constituency must also modify the shape of its own identity. In that sense critical responsiveness is always political," xvi.

[31]GM, 119.

[32]WPW, 355; GPS, 548.

[33]WPW, 355; GPS, 548.

[34]WPW, 357-358; GPS, 550.

[35]WPW, 358; GPS, 550.

[36]WPW, 358; GPS, 550.

[37]WPW, 358; GPS, 550.

[38]WPW, 356; GPS, 548.

[39]WPW, 356; GPS, 548.

[40]WPW, 356; GPS, 549.

[41]WPW, 356; GPS, 549.

[42]Weber's skeptical perspective on both the German Supreme Command and the Fatherland Party is noted further in Marianne Weber, Max Weber: A Biography, ed. and trans. Harry Zohn (Oxford: Transaction Books, 1988), 618-619. Hereafter referred to as MWB. In a December 1917 speech in Heidelberg, he not only made known his "very low estimate of the intelligence of the so-called *Vaterlandspartei*" but admonished the Supreme Command not to allow "that which you achieved with the sword to be ruined by letting yourselves be dragged into the bustle and onto the thin ice of domestic party struggles." Weber also refers to the Fatherland Party as a group of "irresponsible amateur politicians" in "Vaterland und Vaterlandspartei" in GPS, 229-232. Wolfgang Mommsen rightly notes how Weber, though loyal to the Supreme Command's military leadership during the war, reproached it about its political alliance with the Fatherland party in that such a union would impede Germany's national advance toward moderate democratic reforms, in Max Weber and German Politics: 1890-1920, 267-ff. Hans-Ulrich Wehler explores the ties between the German Supreme Command and its political proxy, the Fatherland Party, and their rise to power during and after the First World War in The German Empire: 1871-1918, trans. Kim Traynor (Providence: Berg Publishers, Limited, 1985), 215-221. On the alliance between the German Supreme Command and the Fatherland Party, and their concerted push for an "annexationist peace" near the end of the war, see Gordon Craig, Germany: 1866-1945 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 386-95.

[43]WPW, 354; GPS, 547.

[44]WPW, 354; GPS, 547.

[45]WPW, 354-355; GPS, 547.

[46]WPW, 354; GPS, 547.

[47]One of Weber's more notable discussions concerning the political limits of an ethic of pacificism appears in "Between Two Laws" in WPW, 75-79. The original German version of this text appears as "Zwischen zwei Gesetzen" in GPS, 142-145. In this text, which he wrote in defense of Gertrud Bäumer, a feminist and scholar who had been challenged by a Swiss pacificist on Germany's role in the First World War, Weber situates pacificism's ethical dilemma between maintaining the saintly consistency of Leo Tolstoy or enmeshing oneself in a political struggle with differing sets of values. Another notable discussion of this issue appears in Marianne Weber, MWB, 602-603. There, in 1918 letter to Professor Goldstein, an older pacifist from an earlier generation, Weber responded to student sentiments (conveyed to him by Goldstein) that he left little ethical space for those who advocated a political revolution in Germany after the war. "Either resist evil with force *nowhere*," he said, "and then live like Saint Francis or Saint Clare or an Indian monk or a Russian navordnik....Or else, desire to resist evil by force, because otherwise you *share the responsibility* for it. But it simply is and will continue to be a mystery to me why civil war or some other form of violence--such as any revolution employs at least, at the *very* least, as a 'means' toward an end--is supposed to be 'holy,' while just self-defense in war is *not*." Finally, Weber's more sociological discussion of the political limits of the ethical aspirations of Quakerism and other religions appears in ES, 590-597; WuG, 355-360. Further discussion of Weber's confrontation with such ethical alternatives, see Lawrence A. Scaff, Fleeing the Iron Cage (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 97-ff.

[48]WPW, 358; GPS, 550.

[49]WPW, 358; GPS, 550-551.

[50]Concerning Max Weber's relationship with such Pacificists as Eisner, Toller and Foerster, see Dittmar Dahlmann, "Max Weber's Relation to Anarchism and Anarchists: The Case of Ernst Toller" in Max Weber and His Contemporaries, eds. Wolfgang Mommsen and Jürgen Osterhammel (London: Allen and Unwin, 1987), 365-381. Hereafter referred to as MWC. His deep respect for and brief critique of Foerster's pacificism is evident in WPW, 362-363; GPS, 553-556.

[51]WPW, 358-359; GPS, 551.

[52]Max Weber quoted in Marianne Weber, MWB, 661.

[53]Given that Weber's "The Profession and Vocation of Politics" is a lecture--and not a thorough scholarly investigation of the themes he addresses--it is not surprising that he collapses Bolshevism, Syndicalism, and Spartacism into one another. Moreover, he tends to lump each group within the category of "revolutionary Socialism," insofar as each not only advances the moral aim of eradicating human violence against other humans but, because such an aim possibly precludes Germany's post-war capacity to develop an efficient industrialized economy, makes possible the invasion of foreign capital, the disunity of the German citizenry, and the defeat of German democratic reforms. It is important to note, however, that Weber understands these political groups as distinct in their origins, organization, tactics and consequences. For a discussion of Weber's critique of the political ethics of the Spartacist movement, a discussion which, in turn, questions Weber's idea of political ethics, see Peter Breiner, Max Weber and Democratic Politics, 179-182. For a similar exchange concerning his critique of the ethics of Bolshevism and Syndicalism, see David Beetham, Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics (London: Polity Press, 1985), 170-210. Finally, for an interpretation of Weber's views on Syndicalism, see Wolfgang Mommsen, Max Weber and German Politics, 280.

[54]Max Weber, "Socialism" in WPW, 272-303. The original German version of this text appears as "Der Sozialismus" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Soziologie und Sozialpolitik (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1988), 492-518. Hereafter referred to as GASS.

[55]WPW, 288; GASS, 505.

[56]WPW, 361; GPS, 553.

[57]WPW, 360; GPS, 552.

[58]WPW, 360; GPS, 552.

[59]I tend to share the view of Weber's sense of tragedy put forward by John Patrick Diggins, Max Weber: Politics and the Spirit of Tragedy (New York: BasicBook, 1996), 257-ff. It is a view that understands tragedy as having two specific parts. The first part involves a person "penetrating the illusions and rationalizations in the lives of people, who allow themselves to move toward power in the name of freedom." The second parts entails "an understanding that there is no true meaning to the world other than the interpretations and values we bring to it, and we choose our values 'through a glass darkly,' without objective knowledge and to the exclusion of other values and commitments." In this context, Weber not only dismisses the political actions of the *Machtpolitik*

pundits on account of their lack of a tragic sensibility. He underscores, moreover, the integral role of tragedy in politics in general, a role characterized by the subjective and contestable ground of a politician's principled conviction and, therefore, the struggle for political power as typically self-denying and not just life-affirming.

[60]Twilight, 500.

[61]Twilight, 500.

[62]BGE, 137.

[63]Bonnie Honig briefly touches on this distinction between Weber and Nietzsche on "responsibility" in Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics. "I prefer Nietzsche's formulation to Weber's," she states, insofar as Nietzsche's notion allows for the possibility "of performative self-fashioning" or "a self-overcoming" and Weber's idea indicates only "a non-negotiable, principled positioning." She mistakenly (I think) understands Weber's use of the phrase 'I can do no other' to signal not just "a submission to (an existential) destiny," but, more importantly, the lack of "a commitment to resist, subvert, or engage it, perpetually, in a practice of creative refashioning," 206. Honig not only fails to understand Weber's rhetorical use of Martin Luther's phrase. She also neglects to see the possibility for dialogue that stems from a person's tragic recognition of worldly limits, a recognition that also spurs the prospect of resistance, subversion, and change--either from the person in question or from others. This sort of transformative dialogue is central to Weber's idea of struggle in both politics and science, an idea that is premised on the malleable nature of human subjectivity.

[64]WPW, 355; GPS, 548.

[65]WPW, 359; GPS, 551.

[66]WPW, 361; GPS, 553.

[67]WPW, 364; GPS, 556.

[68]WPW, 360; GPS, 552.

[69]WPW, 354; GPS, 547.

[70]WPW, 353; GPS, 546.

[71]WPW, 354; GPS, 547. Relatively recent scholarly work has begun to focus on Weber's understanding of "*distanz*," a term he in part gleans from Nietzsche. For instance see David

Owen, "Autonomy and 'inner distance': a trace of Nietzsche in Weber" in History of the Human Sciences 4 (1991): 79-91. Owen claims that Nietzsche and Weber "manifest a common concern with the loss of distance on the part of the individual and the potential consequences of this loss for the development of *Menschentum*," 79. In addition to this diagnostic approach to the issue of "distance" in Weber's political thinking, Ralph Schroeder takes "the loss of distance" a step further in "'Personality' and 'inner distance': the conception of the individual in Max Weber's sociology" in History of the Human Sciences 4 (1991): 61-78. Indeed, he argues that "Weber develops a particular view of the individual, one which is encapsulated in his notions of 'personality' and 'inner distance' and explains "how a concern for individual self-expression lies at the very core of Weber's sociological thought," 61-62. In this way, they as well as I perceive "distance" and the lack thereof to be indicative not only Weber's view of modern politics but also his understanding of the modern enterprise of science, which he understood to be threatened by "subjectvist" scholars who were incapable of drawing theoretical distinctions between facts and values, the personal and the historical, selves and others.

[72]WPW, 353-354; GPS, 546-547.

[73]WPW, 353; GPS, 546.

[74]WPW, 360; GPS, 552.

[75]WPW, 359; GPS, 551.

[76]WPW, 368; GPS, 559.

[77]WPW, 364; GPS, 556.

[78]WPW, 361; GPS, 553.

[79]WPW, 366-367; GPS, 558.

[80]WPW, 316-317; GPS, 512.

[81]WPW, 369; GPS, 560.

[82]BGE, 137-139.

[83]WPW, 369; GPS, 560.

[84]WPW, 364; GPS, 556.

[85]WPW, 365; GPS, 556.

[86]On the implicit bond between the "responsible" politician and the possible "others" who may judge him or her, see H.H. Bruun, Science, Values and Politics in Max Weber's Methodology (Munksgaard: Copenhagen, 1972). Bruun contends that Weber's ethic of responsibility presupposes a particular "category of *knowledge*" and, thus, endows "each individual devoted to the value of scientific inquiry...with a double aspect, a fundamental ambivalence in relation to the political sphere." In other words, not only is the responsible politician dependent upon knowledge for the "attainment of his goal"; he also risks exposing "the full recognition of the tension between the political and other value spheres," such as science," 286.

[87]WPW, 27; GPS, 24.

[88]Twilight, 474.

[89]WPW, 353; GPS, 546.

[90]Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 342-343. Hereafter referred to as GS.

[91]The same offense with which I charge Weber mirrors a similar problem of political judgment addressed by Melissa A. Orlie, Living Ethically, Acting Politically (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997). In rebuking modern notions of judgment for failing to "interrogate the conditions" that inform and issue from it, Orlie seeks "not to disavow judgment (as if that were possible) but to call attention to the limits or reasonable, public judgment in the face of the thoughtlessness that founds ordered evil," 160-161. Though she raises some interesting points about the limits of judgment, here formulation is still a bit tenuous given that it presupposes a homogenous understanding of public judgment. My project in this chapter and the following one is not only to critique Weber's notion of political judgment, but to supplement it with other notions of judgment that connote a significant public impact, especially insofar as its perpetuates a constant interrogation of public judgments--political, scholarly, or otherwise.

[92]WPW, 365; GPS, 557.

[93]WPW, 365; GPS, 557.

[94]WPW, 355; GPS, 547.

[95]WPW, 367; GPS, 559.

[96]Again, Weber's ethical paradox alludes to similar themes theorized by William E. Connolly, Identity\Difference (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991). With regard to political ethics, Connolly charges that the "primary quest is not for a *command* that answers 'why' or a *ground* that establishes 'what' but for ways to cultivate care for identity and difference in the world already permeated by ethical proclivities and predispositions to identity." Like Nietzsche and, later, Foucault, Connolly contests the authoritarianism of the various "command" ethics that have populated Western thought with and "ethic of cultivation," which seeks "to draw agonistic care for difference from the abundance of life that exceeds any particular identity," 10. Such a theoretical contest might be found in Max Weber's rejection of an ethic of principled conviction (*Gesinnungsethik*), but clearly his ethic of responsibility (*Verantwortungsethik*) does more to close off rather than open up any notion of "agonism" beyond the dismissal of pacificist, socialist, or Christian ethical dispositions from politics.

[97]WPW, 316 & 369; GPS, 512 & 560.

[98]WPW, 316-317; GPS, 512.

[99]WPW, 354; GPS, 546.

[100]WPW, 354; GPS, 546.

[101]GM, 15.

CHAPTER IV

THE "INCONVENIENT" GROUND OF SCHOLARLY JUDGMENT

Introduction

Despite his condemnation of judgment in the Western philosophical tradition, Friedrich Nietzsche still finds the moral latitude to validate the judgments of Thucydides. "My recreation, my preference, my *cure* from all Platonism has always been *Thucydides*," he says, again in The Twilight of Idols.[1] By singling out the intellect of Thucydides, Nietzsche claims there is far more to Greek philosophy than just Socrates and Plato. He refuses to embrace such thinkers who, as the Athenian city-state grew detached from its "Homeric" cultural legacy, longed for moral comfort and stability within the logical framework of their ideas. Instead, Nietzsche contests both thinkers with one of their own, Thucydides: "the great sum, the last revelation of that strong, severe, hard factuality which was instinctive with the older Hellenes."[2] Thus his rejection of Socrates and Plato reveals a distaste for human judgments, but only those that masquerade as moral truths. It also reveals his esteem for the judgments of Thucydides, judgments which upset the universal ground of such moral truths with "untimely" factual details. "In the end," states Nietzsche, "it is *courage* in the face of reality that distinguishes a man like Thucydides from Plato: Plato is a coward before reality, consequently he flees into the ideal; Thucydides has control

of *himself*, consequently he also maintains control of things."[3]

Having "*courage* in the face of reality" is Nietzsche's way of saying Thucydides provides a differing approach to the idea of judgment. It is a view that confronts rather than evades the morally unsettled world which surrounded him. Thucydides contrived its theoretical design over the course of writing his forceful work of historical scholarship, The Peloponnesian War. As Athens and Sparta battled over the loyalty of Corcyra, Melos, and Sicily, as well as the meaning of the nexus between democracy and empire, Thucydides judges more than "the greatest disturbance" in the Hellenic world. He also questions the judgments of those historical inquiries which lead up to and through the war itself. Indeed, he claims Homer's poetic depictions of the Trojan War and Herodotus's mythological accounts of the Persian War make it such "that one cannot rely on every detail which has come down to us by way of tradition."[4] Conversely, Thucydides posits his judgments of Hellenic history on a ground of factual evidence, which includes personalized accounts of political speeches and corroborated reports of military engagements. "It is better evidence," he states, "than that of the poets, who exaggerate the importance of their themes, or of the prose chroniclers, who are less interested in telling the truth than in catching the attention of their public."[5]

Thucydides's notion of judgment, therefore, rests on the empirical rendering of "reality," one which informs his desire to contest the judgments that comprise the historical tradition to which he belonged.[6]

This so-called "*courage*" of Thucydides also indicates a shared affinity with Max Weber, a political thinker whose idea of judgment requires one "to look at the realities of life with an unsparing gaze."[7] In the previous chapter, I argued that Weber's theory of political ethics hinged in part on just such a notion of judgment. Judgment corresponded to the professional politician's detachment of empirical "reality" from "principled conviction," but only to the extent that one assumed "responsibility" for the former's material impact on the latter's idealistic underpinnings. More important, however, I claimed this notion of judgment marked a formidable source of tension in his theory of political ethics. By tethering ethical conduct to responsibility, Weber not only narrowed the scope and merits of political leadership; he also restricted the possibility of politics which, in turn, undercut the ideal of German national glory. The tension in his theory of political ethics thus emerged in the mix between a "responsible" politician whose judgments restricted politics and a scientist whose judgments defied a politician's "ethic of responsibility." Given this depiction of the double-edged blade of judgment, it appears Weber and Thucydides

share respect for the gravity of empirical details. It is also apparent that their respect for historical "reality" stems from both the formative and destructive effects such knowledge has on the permanence of human judgments.

This affinity between an Hellenic historian and a German social scientist ceases, however, when Thucydides judges his view of history to be one "done to last forever."[8] For Weber, who portrays political "judgment" (*Augenmaß*) as the upkeep of "one's inner composure and calm while being receptive to realities," such disregard for successive views of history would seem naive, even vain.[9] Furthermore, given the idea of scholarly judgment (*Urteil*) which looms in his 1917 "Science as a Vocation" lecture, Weber might desire greater distance from Thucydides's "monumental" aims.[10] In that lecture he contends that the social scientist's judgments are distinct from those rendered by either ancient Greek historians or professional politicians. According to Weber, such judgments are distinct insofar as the scientist concedes that they "will be antiquated in ten, twenty, fifty years...Every scientific 'fulfilment' raises new 'questions'; it *asks* to be 'surpassed' and outdated."[11] Despite Weber and Thucydides drawing on the same wellhead of factual details, the one diverges from the other in relation to the historical duration of judgments. Where Thucydides views facts as a retort to tradition, and thus the foundation of an absolute

history, Weber views them as a retort to all knowledge--including science--and thus the source of a struggle between differing scholars.

As I stress in this chapter, Weber's theory of judgment bares more than his departure from the thinking of Thucydides. By basing judgment on the foundation of "progress" (*Fortschritt*), meaning that what one "seizes is always something provisional and not definitive," I argue that Weber exposes a rift in his own thinking on politics.[12] On the one hand, his idea of political judgment points to a person who must "detach" oneself from worldly things, other persons, even his own vain desires. This person does so in order to "clear away the mechanical obstacles" which impede the advance of his cause, leading him to relegate judgment beneath, say, the ultimate aim of German national power. On the other hand, Weber's idea of scholarly judgment points to a person who, rather than submitting to a singular conviction, anticipates the conditional traits of all convictions. Based on this divide, I charge that Weber's idea of judgment displays the limited bounds of his theory of politics as well as the paucity of values which inform it. But I do so in a way that confirms at the same time how his notion of scholarly judgment extends the limits of politics by rendering "ultimate" judgments "provisional and not definite." As a conclusion, I suggest that Weber's theory of judgment points

to both a politician who circumscribes the prospects of politics and a scholar who struggles to extend them.

Political Judgment (*Augenmass*)

It is interesting to note that many of Max Weber's political writings first appeared as public declarations. They were either lectures delivered to audiences of scholars and students or newspaper articles written with the intention of swaying German public opinion. What was his 1895 essay on "The Nation State and Economic Policy" but an "inaugural lecture" symbolizing his acceptance of the Chair of Political Economy at the University of Freiburg.[13] In it he rebukes the German bourgeoisie for their lack of political experience, a class of citizens which no doubt comprised at least part of the scholarly audience. For that matter, his 1917 study of "Parliament and Government in Germany under a New Political Order" ran originally as five separate articles in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. They are articles in which Weber reproaches both the character of Kaiser Wilhelm II and the "official" minions who helped administer his monarchical government.[14] Finally, Weber's 1919 brochure on "The Profession and Vocation of Politics" was initially a lecture he delivered in Munich, a city which, at the time, was in the throes of a "soviet" rebellion. There, before the *Freistudentische Bund* and Munich's radical Bohemia, he chides those revolutionaries

who, in contrast to their elevated aim of social justice, use political violence to advance it.

What is interesting, however, is not so much Weber's proclivity to theorize politics before a live public audience. Rather it is his tendency to judge in a public setting those groups whom he perceives to be his theoretical and political opponents.[15] For with his judgments against the bourgeoisie, the monarchy, revolutionaries, and others, Weber unwittingly points to an unruly terrain on which his own notion of political judgment becomes prone to criticism, as well.

Unlike his political writings, Weber's works on the methodology of the social sciences reveal a different approach to audience and judgment alike. Except for the "Vocation" lecture on science, most of his methodological works speak to a "specialized" audience of scholars who confront him in the pages of academic journals. For instance, his 1904 essay on "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy" appears in the "exclusively scientific journal" *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*.[16] There, Weber--along with fellow editors Edgar Jaffe and Werner Sombart--claims the journal's "express purpose" is to couple "the education of judgment about practical social problems" with "the methods of scientific research."[17] Some 13 years later, Weber spoke to a similar audience on "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality' in Sociology and

Economics," which later appeared in the scholarly journal *Logos*.[18] In it he spurns the "widely accepted value-judgments" of both scientific positivists, who judge the world by way of abstract maxims, and cultural subjectivists, who judge it by virtue of personal experience. He instead implores social scientists of all stripes "to ask questions about these things which convention makes self-evident."[19] These instances depict, not only an audience defined by its scholarly rather than political interests, but a notion of judgment culled from inquiry rather than personal rebuke.

In light of these two distinct perspectives, the following questions ought to be raised with regard to Weber's theory of judgment: What are the philosophical sources which underlie his concepts of political and scholarly judgment, and how might they impact his theoretical project of politics?

It must be stressed that Weber's political writings offer far more than attacks against his foes, especially those writings in which he theorizes a notion of political judgment. In fact, Weber's 1919 "Vocation" lecture on politics provides a unique insight into his theoretical approach to the idea. Despite scolding revolutionary socialists and pundits of *Machtpolitik* for their lack of judgment, he conjectures a theory of judgment based on a subtle degree of "*distance* from things and people."[20] He does so, not for the sake of diminishing the political force

of his opponents, but for the purpose of restraining the "common *vanity*" of all persons who assume the weight of political leadership. "Only if one accustoms oneself to distance," Weber maintains, "can one achieve that powerful control over the soul which distinguishes the passionate politician from the 'sterile excitement' of the political amateur."[21]. The "'lack of distance'" between a politician's conviction and his vain desire to dominate others, denotes a type of judgment by which the struggle of politics "becomes a matter of purely personal self-intoxication instead of being placed entirely at the service of the 'cause'."[22] Though Weber's theory of political judgment parallels his disdain for flawed judgments, it still tends to fixate on the element of "distance," ensuring a politician's steady subservience to the advance of one specific ultimate goal.[23]

The goal which informs Weber's notion of political judgment is, of course, the expansion of German national power and greatness. This is not overly apparent in his "Vocation" lecture, but it is evident 24 years earlier in his Freiburg Inaugural address. In that work Weber's approach to political judgment departs from his critique of the German bourgeoisie, whom he perceives as a barrier to the prospect of national glory. He points out how the brilliant yet forceful rule of Count Otto von Bismarck afforded Germany a sense of national unity, a degree of

political prestige, and an opportunity to augment its role in world affairs. However, Weber also notes how Bismarck's "Caesarist" authority "almost seems to have been too strong for us, scorching the bourgeoisie's slowly developing capacity for political judgement."[24] The alternative to this Bismarckian "tragedy" mandates a new class of politicians whose sense of judgment is nurtured by an active and continuous engagement with opponents in Germany's struggle for national power. Moreover, Weber insists their judgments reflect "*political maturity*, which is to say their grasp of the nation's enduring economic and political *power* interests and their ability...to place these interests above all other considerations."[25] Hence his initial depiction of political judgment fails to underscore the importance of "distance" from things, people, and even oneself. However, it does emphasize the supreme aim of German national power, which, in turn, shapes Weber's notion of political judgment into an instrument for the advance of a particular end.

This function is also apparent in some of Weber's later writings, where he theorizes an idea of judgment capable of enduring Germany's political tumult during and after the First World War. In 1917, while surveying the possible problems of "a New Political Order" in Germany, Weber again faced the tragedy of "Bismarck's legacy." He repeats his claim that Bismarck "left behind a nation accustomed to *submit passively* and fatalistically to whatever was decided

on its behalf...."[26] But rather than merely yearn for a leader whose judgments display distance and maturity, he theorizes a set of parliamentary institutions which might cultivate sound political judgments among the German citizenry. For Weber the nation's "habit of sharing responsibility, through its elected representatives...is the only way [it] can...be trained in the exercise of political judgement."[27] He bases judgment on the distance and maturity of a politician, but he also locates each component within the "progressive democratisation" of post-war national politics. In this instance, judgment takes shape in "the *professional politician*" who trains in the "palaestra" of "parliamentary conflict," where "*great problems* are not only *discussed* but are *conclusively decided*."[28] But it does so only insofar as the politician assumes the duty "to sacrifice his office to his convictions" and secure the German nation its "decisive say" in world politics.

Even after the war, as the German nation haggled over its future at Versailles and Weimar, Weber continued to probe the functional design of political judgment. One month after his January 1919 lecture on the "vocation" of politics, he published an essay on "The President of the Reich" in the *Berliner Börsenzeitung*. In it he not only argues the merits of a plebiscitary president, "a *head of state* resting *unquestionably on the will of the whole*

people."[29] He is after something else, as well, a politician with more than just the power to save Germany from selfish parliamentary infighting, ill-advised partisan legislation, and vain demagogues. As Berlin was witnessing a Spartacist revolt, followed by *Freikorps* repression on behalf of a Socialist government, Weber argued for "a *bearer of the principle of the unity of the Reich*, a politician who "will create a dam to prevent such one-sided tendencies getting out of hand."[30] As a result, his depiction of the Reich's President underscores the criteria of distance and maturity which were central to his idea of political judgment. Yet it also reveals the extent to which Weber not only relegates political judgment beneath the goal of German national power, but links it to a single politician who judges in the name of the national citizenry.[31]

Based on these works, Weber's notion of political judgment appears to be similar to Thucydides's own idea of judgment in his survey of "The Policy of Pericles." Thucydides recounts how Pericles sought to put "fresh courage" into the Athenian citizenry, which had grown weary from failed military excursions, plague, and enemy invasions. Speaking before an assembly, Pericles was blunt; he told Athens that "courage alone" would not suffice in bearing the weight of empire, an empire that was "now like a tyranny." Athens requires an "'intelligence that confirms courage..., which proceeds not by hoping for the best...,

but by estimating what the facts are, and thus obtaining a clearer vision of what to expect.'"[32] In Pericles, Thucydides found a model of judgment based on: 1) a degree of distance between facts and ideals and 2) a level of maturity that recognizes the contrast between the two. Moreover, like Weber, he stresses how Pericles the political leader wields judgment, not for the sake of fostering democratic politics, but for the sake of advancing "the imperial dignity of Athens."[33] For Thucydides and Weber, judgment denotes a means to a politician's ultimate end, a means embodied but by a few persons willing to subsume themselves, and others, to the singular goal of collective power and glory.

By positing judgment on the normative groundwork of German greatness, Weber uncovers some of the theoretical affinities he shares with Thucydides. Yet Weber also turns away from "the Athenian" who "wrote the history of the war fought between Athens and Sparta," exposing, ironically enough, certain limits in his own approach to political judgment. In other words, though Thucydides conjectures a notion of political judgment similar to the sort theorized by Weber, he nevertheless arrives at that point while traveling towards a far loftier goal: crafting a history that will last forever. Hence the reason for Weber's aversion has little to do with Thucydides's dismissal of other thinkers, people who "will not take trouble in finding

out the truth, but are much more inclined to accept the first story they hear."[34] Instead, it has to do with the ultimate aim underlying Thucydides's method of scholarship, that is, an impermeable monument to Hellenic history. For such an aim potentially counters both the Athenian march towards "imperial dignity" and the chief purpose animating Weber's view of scholarship--"scientific 'progress.'" As Weber notes in his Freiburg lecture, "it is precisely the vocation of our science to say things people do not like to hear--to those above us, to those below us, and also to our own class."[35] Given this view of science, Weber's detachment from Thucydides's historical statuary is not surprising. What is even more interesting, however, is the extent to which such a view counteracts his own notion of political judgment.

The philosophical underpinnings of Weber's view of science are evident in his "Science as a Vocation" lecture, which he delivered in Munich in November 1917. In this lecture, which he also addressed to the *Freistudentische Bund*, Weber argues that the possibility of science in the early 20th century relies on some fairly daunting presuppositions. Countering the "German youth" who rebuffed science for the metaphysics of "experience," he stresses how "the 'way to true being,' the 'way to true art,' the 'way to true nature,' the 'way to true God,' the 'way to true happiness,' have been dispelled" by man's scientific mastery

of the material world.[36] For this reason, the presupposition of "disenchantment" circumscribes science within a narrow field of events, any understanding of which strictly depends on logic, method, and empirical evidence. Yet, despite its inability to substantiate universal truths, science still "further presupposes that what is yielded...is important in the sense that it is 'worth being known.'"[37] Thus science cannot confirm the essence of, say, truth, knowledge, beauty, or even national power--all of which can justify the aim of science in the modern world. As far as Weber is concerned, science "can only be *interpreted* with reference to its ultimate meaning, which we must reject or accept according to our ultimate position towards life."[38] His view of science, then, postulates not one but a multiplicity of possible truths, indicating an unsettled philosophical ground of moral difference and human conflict.[39]

This philosophical context of Weber's idea of science reflects the same sort of thinking that bolsters his idea of scholarly judgment. He is clear with regard to science being a "'vocation' organized in special disciplines in the service of self-clarification and knowledge of interrelated facts."[40] Insofar as a scientist acknowledges "the demon who holds the fibers of his very life," and discerns it from "statements of fact," scholarly judgments are not unlike those rendered by a responsible politician. What separates

the two is not so much the ultimate conviction which guides a person's judgment, be it the quest for knowledge or the quest for German glory. Rather, it has to do with Weber's claim concerning the scientist's recognition of the fate of "progress." With this shift comes the added presupposition that "the ultimately possible attitudes toward life are irreconcilable, and hence their struggle can never be brought to a final conclusion."[41] Scientists, especially ones who investigate the "cultural sciences," thus construct judgments on something more than the struggle issuing from scientific progress. Unlike the politician, who judges in relation to the advance of one value such as German national greatness, scientists judge in relation to a multiplicity of values which remind them "that others will advance further than we have."[42]

By positing scholarly judgment on the added foundation of progress, Weber not only accentuates the difference between it and his idea of political judgment. He also signals the extent to which scholarly judgment promotes conflict between various scholars, compelling them to "'question'" and '"surpass'" their own deeds as well as those of others. "The teacher," Weber declares before his student audience, "can confront you with the necessity of choice...He can...also tell you that if you want such and such an end, then you must take into the bargain the subsidiary consequences which according to all experience

will occur."[43] In other words, the aim behind the judgments of scholars is not to recruit, consolidate, and mobilize a party of followers committed to the advance of one particular ultimate goal. On the contrary, Weber identifies the "useful teacher" as he who teaches "his students to recognize 'inconvenient' facts--I mean facts that are inconvenient for their party opinions...for my own opinion no less than for others."[44] He even goes so far as "to apply the expression 'moral achievement'" to this duty, which ensures an increase in human conflict but also cultivates independent thinking, self-clarification and frank, public discussions.[45] In this context, the aim of scholarly judgment indicates more than a person's ability "to make a decisive choice" in a morally unsettled world. It signifies a desire to examine that choice in a way that perpetuates rather than stifles human conflict.

In another context, Weber's notion of scholarly judgment is diametrically opposed to his own notion of political judgment. Again in "Science as a Vocation," he claims "the qualities that make a man an excellent scholar and academic teacher are not the qualities that make him a leader to give directions in practical life or...in politics."[46] The qualities of the scientist are such that his value is not contingent upon him being a "leader" of people "in the vital problems of life" or "in matters of conduct." But it is contingent upon him acknowledging the

historical and philosophical force of scientific progress, which ultimately leads a scientist "to the aim of clarity." In light of this admission, Weber continues, the scientist "can force the individual...to give himself an *account of the ultimate meaning of his own conduct*."[47] Thus the scientist judges the world in way that provokes people to clarify the "internal structure" of their values, prompting them to recognize the gap between "'inconvenient' facts" and one's "ultimate position towards life." Conversely, the politician judges the world in a way that supplies people with a "principled conviction," one which privileges the German nation over the judgments of other citizens.

Though Weber premises his notions of scholarly and political judgment on quite divergent grounds, he still intimates the existence of a shared oppositional bond between the two. On the one hand, he posits political judgment in relation to the ultimate goal of German national power, locating its faculties in a politician who subsumes himself and others beneath such a goal. On the other hand, he establishes scholarly judgment on the shifting ground of progress, which reveals a scientist who welcomes a struggle over the interpretation of an array of ultimate ideals. At the heart of Weber's theory of judgment, therefore, resides a tension between the politician and the scientist, a tension concerning the moral prominence of the German nation. For the scientist, such a goal is more than just

one of many equally valid goals to which a person can commit oneself. It is also worthy of opposition insofar as "the ultimate and most sublime values" have suffered the untimely fate of "disenchantment." The politician admits to this "ethical irrationality of the world," but only to the extent that his sense of judgment maneuvers across its "paradoxical" terrain to advance one goal over all others. Given the chasm between science and politics, it is not enough to say that a tension is evident in Weber's theory of judgment. If the scientist judges the politician and his "ultimate meaning towards life," then Weber's theory of judgment also divulges a tension at the heart of his theoretical project of politics.

Scholarly Judgment (*Urteil*)

Max Weber's notion of scholarly judgment (*Urteil*) stems in part from his theoretical battles with other influential schools of scientific thought during the late-19th and early-20th centuries. If Weber was not challenging "scientific positivists," who claimed that judgment helped form moral convictions on the basis of empirical details, then he was contesting "cultural subjectivists," who believed judgment infused history with principled convictions. In each case, the problem was not one concerned with the theoretical meaning of judgment *per se*. It was concerned with the degree of "distance" between

judgment, a moral conviction, and the empirical constraints of history. For Weber, the notion of judgment expressed by positivists revealed too much distance, whereas the notion expressed by subjectivists revealed too little. From 1903 until 1917; during which he wrote essays on, among other things, "'Objectivity' in Social Science" and "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality,'" Weber engaged both schools with regard to the role of judgment in modern science. The result was not a theory of judgment which superseded other designs of the idea, but a scholarly discussion from which a theory of judgment spurred conflict rather than uniformity around one ultimate goal of "truth" or "experience."

Such discussions once again stress Weber's link to the political thinking of Thucydides, who, in his account of "The Mytilenian Debate," denotes an idea of judgment based on the public dialogue among Athenian citizens. With Athens in a quandary over how to punish the Mytilenians for rebelling against Athenian rule, Thucydides highlights a debate which matches the realities of empire against the promise of democracy. He first traces the reasoning of Cleon, who, as a proponent of "imperial power" and punishment "by death," argues that Athens has become overly enamored with "competitive displays" of speech-making. Cleon perceives such "displays" as evidence of a growing Athenian desire to act "more like an audience sitting at the feet of a professional lecturer than a parliament discussing

matters of state."[48] Conversely, as the advocate of "wise decisions" and "moderation in our punishments," Diodotus claims Athens is in need of debate if the empire is to flourish beyond its predicament with the Mytilenes. For with "'words,'" he declares, "'it is possible to deal with the uncertainties of the future'"[49], reminding Athens further "that the question is not so much whether they [the Mytilenians] are guilty as whether we are making the right decision for ourselves."[50] Thus, by altering a debate on "punishment" into one on the value of debate, Thucydides privileges conflict as the cornerstone of judgment, whether it involves Cleon's drive for imperial power or Diodotus's push for democracy.[51]

The same can be said about Weber's inquiries into the meaning of science. However, where Thucydides witnesses a debate between two dissimilar proponents of Athenian glory, Weber observes a debate between two differing views of science. As a result of his observations, Weber's own interpretation indicates a notion of judgment informed, not by the ultimate end of glory, but by the perpetuation of human conflict involving a multiplicity of ends. If conflict and struggle mark the substance of Weber's approach to scholarly judgment, then what is its purpose in relation to his theoretical project of politics?

The purpose of scholarly judgment manifests itself in various forms over the course of Weber's writings on science

and scientific methodology. In "Science as a Vocation," he claims science "is not the gift of grace of seers and prophets dispensing sacred values and revelations, nor does it partake of the contemplation of sages and philosophers about the meaning of the universe."[52] Science, and the judgments which accompany it, involves itself in a far more difficult task. As Weber understands it, science is an enterprise by which scholars unearth conditional truths which are subject to the tumults of progress. They also take part in a task to compel people--including the scientists themselves--to "clarify" the distance between "this or that ultimate *weltanschauliche* position" and the "'inconvenient' facts" which counteract them. "Again," Weber remarks, "I am tempted to say of a teacher who succeeds in this: he stands in the service of 'moral' forces."[53] This "'moral'" thrust of science, this "duty" to raze rather than elevate values and truths, this "unceasing struggle" between differing persons--each informs the goal of scholarly judgment in its own way. The force of each emerges when Weber battles the "positivist" legacy of the German Historical School, as well as the "subjectivist" bent of younger scholars who question the rational artifice of science.

Max Weber's battles with the German Historical School began when he arrived at the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* in 1887. At the *Verein*, a group of scholars, business men, and

officials who worked to sway the economic policies of the German state, Weber encountered such "strictly scientific" individuals as Gustav Schmoller and Carl Menger.[54] It was not until 1904, however, as the editor of the *Verein's* journal, *Archiv*, that he challenged his older colleagues on the naive claim of "'objectivity'" buttressing their notion of scientific inquiry. As a *Verein* member, Weber acknowledged his intellectual tie to what he called "our science," the "sole purpose" of which "was the attainment of value-judgments concerning measures of State economic policy. It was a 'technique'."[55] This "'technique'" was such that scholars understood the garnering and ordering of "empirical" details to be the source, not the consequence, of "value-judgments" in modern science.[56] He labeled their approach a "confused opinion," for they perceived value-judgments to be "'deduced'" from empirical evidence yet assumed such a method to be "'objective'" and void of "'one-sided' viewpoints." As a backer of a "new 'science'," Weber wanted to "reject this view in principle." He did so because "it can never be the task of an empirical science to provide binding norms or ideals from which directives for immediate practical activity can be derived."[57]

By contesting the scientific purpose of the Historical School, among others, Weber proposes a notion of scientific "'objectivity'" based on a different set of principles. First, he predicates it on the claim that there is "no

absolutely 'objective' scientific analysis of culture" distinct from the value-judgments undergirding a scholar's perception of the world. Hence he in no way professes "that value-judgments are to be withdrawn from scientific discussion in general simply because...they rest on certain ideals and are therefore 'subjective' in origin."[58] On the contrary, his "new 'science'" aims at clarifying the distance between a scholar's empirical analysis of culture and one's uniquely individual viewpoint, ensuring at least an analytical link between facts and values. But more than just clarifying the scientific location of value-judgments, Weber believes the scholar "can also 'judge' them critically. This criticism can...have only a dialectical character, i.e., it can be no more than a formal logical judgment of historically given value-judgments and ideas, a testing of the ideals according to the postulate of the internal *consistency* of the desired end."[59] Based on "one's own *Weltanschauung*" and the prospect of "judgments" being levelled against it, Weber's notion of "'objectivity'" thus departs from the methodological creed of the German Historical School. In doing so he points to an alternative method which, instead of generating "binding norms and ideals," measures the distance between them and a scholar's "ordering of empirical social reality."

The basis of this method rests, furthermore, on what Weber refers to as "heuristic means," which allow a scholar

to judge "the *confrontation*" of facts with ideals. Again departing from the Historical School, which deduced law-like ends from empirical details, he theorizes "a conceptual construct (*Gedankenbild*) which is neither historical reality nor even the 'true' reality."[60] Instead, what he proposes is an "*ideal-type*." With ideal-types, Weber conjectures "not the *end* but rather the *means* of knowledge," using them to illuminate how a scholar's individually-configured viewpoint impacts the ordering of "a finite segment" of empirical reality.[61] Consequently, he claims it was "a purely ideal *limiting* concept" which aids the scholar in appraising only the analytical link between "the real situation or action" and "certain of its significant components."[62] This "limiting" trait marks the pivotal function of his methodology of the social sciences, for it does more than isolate the discord between historical facts and human values in a given inquiry. It provides, too, the preconditions for a struggle among scholars, all of whom use distinctly "one-sided" forms of the ideal-type to interpret the world around them. "By means of this category," notes Weber, "the adequacy of our imagination, oriented and disciplined by reality, is *judged*."[63] With it he rebukes the "'objectivity'" of his opponents, as well as embraces a method of inquiry concerned more with the contingencies than the necessities of human knowledge.

In his essay on "'Objectivity' in Social Science," therefore, Weber contests the German Historical School's use of "concepts" as "the *reproduction* of 'objective' social reality" in science. The consequence of this critique, however, manifests itself in his own "reformulation anew of concepts on the foundations thus transformed."[64] This is Weber's idea of "progress" in the social sciences, and it allows him to shift the focus of science away from "the 'actual' interconnections of 'things'" and on to "the *conceptual* interconnections of *problems*."[65] With the latter approach, his notion of science becomes an enterprise in which the purpose of a scholar's judgment is not to produce a series of "'completed'" and "binding" norms from specific historical facts. Insofar as it makes "a sharp, precise distinction" between values and facts, while engaged in "the perpetual reconstruction" of ideas, the aim of a scholar's judgment reveals the "individual character" of the "*objective* validity of all empirical knowledge" in science.[66] Weber labels this aim "the *elementary duty of scientific self-control*," underscoring the scholar's moral expedition to remind oneself and others of the "hairline" proximity of knowledge to faith. It is an expedition which, not only unsettles the "'objectivity'" of the Historical School, but contests any endeavor to elevate an ideal on the basis of it being complete, binding, and true.

If Weber's criticism of the German Historical School focuses on the excess of distance between values and facts, his rebuke of "subjectivism" in science fixes on the lack of it. This latter appraisal is evident in his essay on "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality' in Sociology and Economics." There Weber challenges "a large number of officially accredited prophets" who, rather than face public scrutiny, "enunciate their evaluations on ultimate questions 'in the name of science' in governmentally privileged lecture halls in which they are neither controlled, checked by discussion, nor subject to contradiction."[67] It is a challenge not so much aimed at the ideological viewpoints of certain scholars, for Weber is known to chide both the nationalist zealotry of Treitzschke and the socialist fervor of George Sorel or George Simmel.[68] As editor of the *Archiv*, Weber rejected such "one-sided" manuscripts as that sent to him by Otto Gross, a student of Freud whose "'new ethics'" of "sexual communism" revolved around one's personal quest for pleasure.[69] Weber's distrust is also evident in his friendship with Stefan George, whom he lauds for "real greatness" but scolds as "striving for *self-deification*, for the immediate enjoyment of the divine in his own soul."[70] Thus his charge appears to have little to do with the content of what a person values about the world. On the contrary, it has a lot to do with a scholar's inability to

separate clearly one's "own evaluations" from "personally uncomfortable" facts.

Unlike the positivist traits of the Historical School, the attributes of subjectivism reveal themselves to Weber in a blatant disregard for empirical analysis. Without naming specific names, he witnessed this scholarly neglect occurring among "the proponents of the assertion of professorial evaluations," scholars who mingled value-judgments with factual assertions. In the past, Weber admits, a scholar's mix of facts and values typically derived from a single Kantian imperative of justice which was thought to be both "unambiguous" and "impersonal."[71] But in early 20th century Germany, he continues, "it is now done in the name of a patchwork of cultural values, i.e., actually subjective demands on culture, or...in the name of the alleged 'rights of the teacher's personality.'"[72] For this reason, Weber's critique of subjectivism stems neither from a desire to return to the "great epoch" of "objective" imperatives nor from an aversion to the "ethical irrationality" of the modern world. What sparks the critique is his "fear that a lecturer who makes his lectures stimulating by the insertion of personal evaluations will, in the long run, weaken the students' taste for sober empirical analysis."[73] It is a fear which leads him to propose, not the erasure of values from science, but the

formation of a method which affirms the impact of facts on a scholar's value-judgments.

The method Weber has in mind is not unlike the one he theorizes in response to the Historical School's efforts to render "completed" values from empirical details. However, with regard to the advocates of "professorial evaluations," Weber's methodological aim is somewhat different. Indeed, he seeks to "vigorously oppose (*bestreiten*)" them on account of their "view that one may be 'scientifically' contented with the conventional self-evidentness of very widely accepted value-judgment."[74] What Weber rejects is the claim that such values as moral "progress," social "justice," or personal "'experience'" ought to act as the only guidepost for a scholar's analysis of empirical reality. For, he notes, when a scholar's value-judgment confronts a series of facts, it undergoes a "re-adjustment" in terms of its historical direction, baring a provisional rather than immutable design. As a response, Weber premises his own method on a scholar's capacity to perform three specific duties:

> "(1) to fulfill a given task in a workmanlike fashion; (2)...to recognize facts, even those which may be personally uncomfortable, and to distinguish them from his own evaluations; (3) to subordinate himself to his task and to repress the impulse to exhibit his personal tastes...unnecessarily."[75]

By opposing subjectivism, he is not doubting the moral or historical weight of certain ends but the method by which

scholars allow them to outweigh, even dismiss, the value of empirical analysis.

Again Weber recommends the "ideal-type" as the methodological device for maintaining distance between value-judgments and factual assertions. In contrast to the Historical School, whose accent on empirical analysis sought to deduce fixed ideals from facts, Weber extols the ideal-type as a "heuristic means" to the end of clarifying the provisional design of ideals. Yet, in response to the pundits of subjectivism, he utilizes it to show the extent to which a scholar's value-judgments alone fail as a proxy for the solid explication of facts. "Its function," he repeats, "is the comparison with empirical reality in order to establish its divergences or similarities, to describe them with the *most unambiguously intelligible concepts*, and to understand and explain them causally."[76] The technical aim of Weber's ideal-type, therefore, is not directed at negating the ethical, religious, legal or aesthetic ends of the scholar. Nor is it fixed on deifying the scientific function of empirical analysis. Its aim is to help the scholar "make relentlessly clear to his audience, and especially to himself, which of his statements are statements of logically deduced or empirically observed facts and which are statements of practical evaluations."[77] This is Weber's way of stressing the "hairline" distance

between "value-judgments and judgments of fact" in the work of scholars who conflated, and thus confused, the two.

In addition to uncovering the "uncomfortable" facts which defy a scholar's value-judgment, Weber's notion of the ideal-type helps perpetuate a struggle among scholars. Given that ideal-types promise at least an analytical discernment of values from facts, Weber claims that scholars face the demanding task of constantly rethinking the union between each element. Hence, on the basis of this shifting ground, he also designates the concern of such scholars to be "a question not only of alternatives between values but of an irreconcilable death-struggle, like that between 'God' and the 'Devil.' Between these, neither relativization nor compromise is possible."[78] This struggle occurs, Weber believes, within the "souls" of individual persons and among the scholars who adhere to the varied "procedures" of science. With regard to his rebuke of the advocates of "professorial evaluations," struggle is not dependent on the scholar's utilization of ideal-types *per se*, for struggle symbolizes the human quest for knowledge at least as far back as Plato. However, ideal-types seek to promote the prospect of human struggle within those souls and among those scholars who have grown accustomed to the "conventional self-evidentness" of their own particular value-judgments. It fosters a scholar's "understanding of what one's opponent--or one's self--really means--i.e., in

understanding the evaluations which really...separate the discussants and consequently in enabling one to take up a position with reference to this value."[79] Ideal-types thus mark Weber's attempt to nourish struggle within science, in spite of trends among scholars who--absent a discussion--revel in their "'personally' tinted professorial type of prophecy."

In light of his critique of subjectivism, Weber reveals the extent to which the purpose of scholarly judgment was to induce a struggle among persons with divergent ideals. The means to this end of struggle is, of course, his notion of the ideal-type, which allows the scholar to judge not only the empirical confines of value-judgments but the requisite analytical distance between each component. By contesting the "'German ideas of 1914,'" the "'socialism of the future,'" or the "spirit of German philosophy," Weber perceives what he understands to be a lack of judgment on the part of the scholarly champions of these ideals.[80] As a response to this deficiency, he conjectures a notion of judgment premised on something more significant than just the configuration of ideal-types and the rebirth of human struggle in science. He premises the aim of scholarly judgment on the idea that, though one's values may derive from profoundly subjective sources, the objective element of empirical details did not necessarily validate them for the rest of the world. Quite the contrary, for he assumes the

analysis of "empirical 'reality'" entailed countervailing forces which required the scholar to "re-adjust" his or her value-judgments. While pondering "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality,'" therefore, Weber declares the aim of scholarly judgment to be the perpetuation of struggle, which presupposes both the unruly vigor of facts and the historical limits of human values.

By musing over the meaning of "'objectivity," moreover, Weber understands the purpose of scholarly judgment to be the source of human struggle in science. Yet he reaches that conclusion by challenging the positivist legacy of the German Historical School rather than the subjectivist claims of scholars who pride themselves on their "professorial evaluations." For Weber, life's "irrational reality" and "inexhaustable store of possible meanings" discloses how the positivist zeal for fact-based ideals collapses as others remain "in flux, ever subject to change in the dimly seen future of human culture."[81] In this case, his notion of scholarly judgment shows more than a proclivity to spur a human struggle in science. It also reveals the extent to which such a purpose derives from the claim that empirical knowledge "rests exclusively" on the subjective and entirely intangible traits of what a person happens to value in the world. Unlike his 1917 challenge to the backers of subjectivism, which highlights the value of empirical analysis, Weber's dispute with the Historical School

stresses the epistemological force and elasticity of human values. At the intersection of both critiques, what stands out is a notion of scholarly judgment, the purpose of which is to acknowledge the distance between values and facts, a distance which ensures the possibility of human struggle.

The Limits of Scholarly Judgment

If these two works on the methodology of the social sciences reveal anything about Max Weber's notion of scholarly judgment, it is that progress and human struggle buttress its theoretical design. By "scientific 'progress,'" Weber means something other than the Enlightenment understanding of the term, one which posits human reason as the source of economic, political, aesthetic, even moral advancement. Insofar as reason utilizes objective means to attain a subjectively desired end, he instead perceives progress to be more than a "'technical'" advance, but an open door to a tense nexus between means and ends. Moreover, given his belief in an "irreconcilable death-struggle," Weber discerns at least one consequence of such progress: ultimate ends often rebut and help shift the historical trajectory of technical advancement, and vice-versa. Thus the struggle indicative of science not only presupposes the likelihood of progress, it also anticipates the "readjustment" of ends, means, and the fragile union between the two. With regard to Weber's

idea of scholarly judgment, progress and struggle denote its theoretical design alright, but they do so while also stressing the gravity of historical and moral contingencies.

The theoretical design of scholarly judgment, however, points to more than just the contingencies bequeathed to it by the specter of progress and struggle. In fact, while arguing for an alternative view of "'Objectivity' in Social Science" in 1904, Weber situates his views in part on an Enlightenment and Liberal groundwork of human reason.[82] "The transcendental presupposition of every *cultural science* lies," he professes, "in the fact that we are *cultural beings*, endowed with the capacity and the will to take a deliberate attitude towards the world and to lend it *significance*."[83] By marking "*cultural beings*" with a capacity to inscribe value on the world, a value based in part on rational calculation, Weber claims "it will lead us to judge certain phenomena" in relation to that specific value. Yet, while rethinking "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality'" 13 years later, he strays from his initial presupposition, asserting instead the prospect that those persons endowed with scholarly judgment are but a few in number. The basis of this later claim derives from what he terms the "shallowness of our routinized daily existence," which allows persons to "avoid the choice between 'God' and 'Devil' and their own ultimate decision as to which of the conflicting values will be dominated by the one, and which

by the other."[84] Though Weber posits his idea of scholarly judgment on the provisional forces of progress and struggle, he still circumscribes its use to technically trained persons within a particular historical context.

Judging from these divergent qualities, it seems as though Weber's idea of scholarly judgment entails a degree of tension, one which issues from his thoughts on progress and struggle. What are the theoretical formations of scientific progress and human struggle, and how do they prompt the tension in Weber's notion of scholarly judgment?

In positing his idea of scholarly judgment on the groundwork of "scientific 'progress,'" Weber does more than simply denote the "fate" of modern science. He assumes, too, that the orientation of science conforms to a perception of history which, though fortuitous in its outcome, establishes *a priori* the "increasing intellectualization and rationalization" of human knowledge. This is evident insofar as he traces an historical path from Plato's "discovery" of "the *concept*" to Bacon's mastery of "the rational experiment" to the modern scientist's sober deployment of the "tools" of methodology.[85] With the addition of his own configuration of the "ideal-type," Weber lengthens the path one step further, stressing the instrumental aim of the ideal-type in differentiating facts from values. Each "rational" device is thought to constitute a larger historical project by which human beings

seek "to bring order into the chaos" of the creaturely world around them. Yet, for Weber, the uniqueness of this history is not to be found in a teleological aim toward greater knowledge or a more insightful understanding of the world. "The intellectual apparatus," he counters, "which the past has developed through...the analytical rearrangement of the immediately given reality...is in constant tension with the new knowledge which we can and *desire* to wrest from reality."[86] Thus the history of rationality which colors Weber's idea of progress secures itself, not to any one absolute end, but to a faith in the technical supremacy of analytical constructs.

By grounding scientific progress on the history of rationality, Weber tends to confine science to a domain in which methodological "tools" mark the source of theoretical engagement between scholars. This is the case in his disputes with both the German Historical School, which compiled concepts on the basis of strictly positive ends, and the proponents of subjectivism, who did so without weighing the empirical force of facts. Hence Weber's claim in 1904 that science "cannot tell anyone what he *should* do--but rather what he *can* do--and under certain circumstances--what he wishes to do."[87] Given that a construct such as the ideal-type is one of many scientific tools, it fails to ascertain the ultimate normative value of science itself, or any other worldly enterprise, for that matter. The merit of

these ideal-types, he believes, "consists in the insight that every single important activity and ultimately life as a whole...is a series of ultimate decisions through which the soul...chooses its own fate, i.e., the meaning of its activity and existence."[88] From this perspective, Weber views the historical path of science as strewn with those constructs inept at ordering a given "'reality'" rather than the ultimate ends which govern their epistemological direction. The "'progress'" of science, therefore, which colors scholarly judgment, indicates not only a history of rationality but a history in which rationality divulges its instrumental limits.

This assumption about the rational design of history thus features at least one significant limit within Weber's theoretical configuration of scholarly judgment. With its focus fixed on analytical tools, the history of "scientific 'progress'" remains, as far Weber is concerned, "the dissolution of the analytical constructs so constructed through the expansion and shift of the scientific horizon."[89] However, the continuity of this process follows from him granting epistemological supremacy to the rational function of analytical constructs, particularly his own rendering of the ideal-type.

For this reason, Weber's approach to scientific progress assumes a history symbolized by the rational development of heuristic devices. But it does so in a way

that limits the focus of science itself. Insofar as progress stresses the changing constellations of these devices--devices which allow a scientist to order only the empirical world--the enterprise of science focuses on the means rather than the ends of human knowledge. By focusing on the means of knowledge, science waives its ability to "learn the *meaning* of the world from the results of its analysis," entrusting that task to the forces of faith. As a result, Weber limits the scope of scholarly judgment to the divide between facts and values, but only insofar as that divide reveals itself in the rational structure of ideal-types.

If Weber's idea of progress signifies one restriction on the prospect of scholarly judgment, his notion of human struggle in science suggests another. In that he perceives the enterprise of science to involve an "irreconcilable death-struggle" between scholars, Weber assumes that it privileges a particular type of person who can endure the ever-shifting landscape of human knowledge. He is adamant about this point in his 1917 "Science as a Vocation" lecture, when he designates science "a 'vocation' organized in special disciplines in the service of self-clarification and knowledge of interrelated facts."[90] Science is neither a gateway to "sacred values and revelations" nor an "evasion of the plain duty of intellectual integrity," both which symbolize a type of person incapable of bearing the weight

of scientific conflict. Unlike the scientist-scholar, Weber states in his 1917 essay on "'Ethical Neutrality,'" such persons spend most of their lives not only refraining from the choice between good and evil, but also evading the deleterious consequences which correspond to such a choice. The human struggle so central to Weber's view of science thus signifies a person who not only endures the "common fate" of specialization, progress, and personal frustration. This person, unlike others, embraces the uncertainties corresponding to the struggle of science with passion, with a clear picture of empirical details, and with judgment enough to distinguish one from the other.

Given these characteristics and abilities of those persons who engage in the struggle of science, Weber does not necessarily prevent others from participating in the modern enterprise of science. "Yet," he remarks, again in his "Vocation" lecture on science, "I have found that only a few men could endure this situation without coming to grief."[91] He refers to science, moreover, as "the affair of an intellectual aristocracy," the members of which are persons who draw strength from an "inner devotion" to a specific scientific venture. This "psychological" quality, what Weber also calls "the *inward* calling for science," emphasizes the degree to which a person adheres to a scholarly passion despite the impersonal drudgery of scientific specialization. It allows the scholar to

withstand "a struggle against *another's* ideals from the standpoint of one's *own*," ensuring not the supremacy of one's ideal but the chance that it, and the empirical studies it colors, extends the breadth of scientific discussion. Thus, as he assumed editorial control of the journal *Archiv*, Weber asserted: "Whoever cannot bear this or who takes the viewpoint that he does not wish to work, in the service of scientific knowledge, with persons whose other ideals are different from his own, is free not to participate."[92] Accordingly, human struggle exhibits Weber's desire to populate science not with just any scholar, only those with mettle enough to subject their analyses and corresponding values to the scrutiny of other scholars.

By postulating science on the notion of struggle, which in turn allows "only a few men" to possess scientific dispositions, Weber unveils the other constraint on the prospect of scholarly judgment. It is a limitation insofar as those scholars who follow their "calling" for science constitute the primary agency of judgment within the enterprise of modern science. This is the case, not because they willingly embrace the "death-struggle" of science, but because they distinguish with "clarity" the analytical distance between the facts and values which are at least one source of that struggle. Indeed, the scholar's desire "to gain *clarity*" on the rifts between "antagonistic persons,"

among "mutually loving persons," or within "the individual's own mind" comprises the unique quality he brings to bear on scientific struggles. Most people, Weber surmises, "do not become aware, and above all do not wish to become aware" of the antagonisms stemming from the mix of facts and values, consigning such tensions instead to "the intellectual aristocracy" of science.[93] His idea of scholarly judgment contains far more than a faith in the function of analytical constructs, which confines scholarly judgment to the limited epistemological landscape of instrumental rationality. Weber's idea of scholarly judgment also imparts a view that such a faculty is the domain of unique persons, persons who not only endure the struggle of science but perpetuate it by underscoring the distance between facts and values.

The specters of rationality and an intellectual aristocracy thus symbolize the extent to which Weber's theoretical approach to scholarly judgment entails certain formidable limits. With the former constraint, his idea of scholarly judgment tends to privilege such heuristic devices as the ideal-type, circumscribing the chaos of human knowledge with analytical means aimed towards a particular end. However, Weber's trust in the rational ordering of knowledge also tends to incite a scholar's judgment in a way that marks analytical constructs for criticism and, thus, lengthens the trajectory of "'progress'" in modern science. "The greatest advances in the sphere of the social

sciences," he remarks, near the end of his essay on "'Objectivity' in Social Science, "are substantively tied up with the shift in practical cultural problems and take the guise of a critique of concept-construction."[94] Hence the very constraint of rationality not only limits scholarly judgment to a technical domain, in which the divergent elements of facts and values conform to purely "mental" constructs. Of greater weight, it enables the scholar to judge the inadequacies and limits of empirical analyses, ultimate ideals, and even the privileged foundation of rationality itself. This ironic twist allows Weber to perceive the "great attempts at theory-construction" as "always useful for revealing the limits of the significance of those points of view which provided their foundations."[95] Thus his idea of scholarly judgment acknowledges as well as challenges the supremacy of rationality in modern science, underscoring a propensity for epistemological disruptions and their matching struggles.

With regard to an intellectual aristocracy, furthermore, Weber's notion of scholarly judgment refers to persons with human qualities unlike those of most other people. This exclusionist axiom encloses the prospect of scholarly judgment not by virtue of mandatory psychological criterion alone, that is, "prerequisites" which entail the scholar's merger of "enthusiasm and work" into a scientific venture. It hinders scholarly judgment insofar as the

scholar measures one's own deeds by making "explicit just where the arguments are addressed to the analytical understanding and where to the sentiments."[96] By requiring scholars to typify these paradoxical traits, Weber's idea of scholarly judgment suggests a burdensome struggle for the few who heed "the call" for science. Yet, if these aristocrats represent the agents of scholarly judgment, then they also reflect, as did Weber, the ability to discern the fact of hierarchy in science from the ideal of the "specifically particular character" of science. Only with this prospect of immanent critique can science, like other cultural pursuits, "change" what Weber labels "its standpoint and its analytical apparatus and to view the streams of events from the heights of thought."[97] The elitist underpinnings of scholarly judgment, therefore, mandate rare human qualities, but they are qualities that simultaneously summon a "readjustment" in the thrust of judgment and, quite possibly, the order of modern science.

By factoring in the ideas of "scientific 'progress'" and "human struggle," Max Weber lays bare a few of the theoretical shortcomings in his notion of scholarly judgment. Though these limits mark a tension at the crux of scholarly judgment, one between epistemological promise and historical agency, they nevertheless confirm the gravity of judgment in Weber's methodological works. In one instance, he situates scholarly judgment on the ground of progress,

tethering its critical faculties to the historical development of rational "methods of thinking, the tools and the training for thought." In anchoring scholarly judgment to the idea of progress, however, Weber not only restricts its faculties to the realm of rationality. He also unveils the conditions by which the scholar, using judgment, denotes the distance between the liberal goal of lending the world "*significance*" and the narrow means of rationality which fosters "the 'disenchantment of the world.'" In another instance, he posits scholarly judgment on the ground of human conflict, such that it privileges the judgments of those "few" persons who are "able to countenance the stern seriousness of our fateful times." Yet, Weber not only anchors the prospect of scholarly judgment to an "intellectual aristocracy;" he highlights, as well, the struggle of progress which reminds the aristocracy of its own "provisional and not definitive" fate. Thus Weber's idea of scholarly judgment exemplifies certain theoretical limits alright, but they are limits which nevertheless foreshadow openings within science itself and towards the narrow confines of professional politics.

Judgment and Political Theory

In his introduction to the history of The Peloponnesian War, Thucydides bestows on future generations of scholars a vexing perspective on the gravity of judgment. This

perspective conveys the extent to which he thought of judgment as both a means to induce the judgments of successive scholars and an end to all subsequent judgments concerning politics, war, and history. On the one hand, he hopes "these words of mine are judged useful by those who want to understand clearly the events which happened in the past and which (human nature being what it is) will, at some time or other and in much the same ways, be repeated in the future."[98] This is typified by his idea of the Athenian "way of life" in the chapter on "Pericles' Funeral Oration," the "future" of Athenian democracy in "The "Mytilenian Debate" between Cleon and Diodotus, and Alcibiades's role in "the downfall" of Athens in the chapter on "Launching of the Sicilian Expedition." Thucydides, however, understands that his "work" is "not a piece of writing designed to meet the taste of an immediate public, but was done to last forever."[99] His rich chronicle of the war between Sparta and Athens represents, as well as imposes, a formidable standard of judgment, one which confines its critical and factual orientations to the Hellenic world. Consequently, Thucydides's approach to historical judgment exposes a tension between his desire to spur on future judgments and his wish to obviate them.[100]

Max Weber's approach to scholarly judgment embodies a theoretical tension not unlike that displayed in the work of Thucydides. Weber proposes "ideal-types" as a way of

promoting the "formal logical judgment of historically given value-judgments and ideas, a testing of the ideals according to the postulate of the internal *consistency* of the desired end."[101] This approach concurs with his typologies of, among other things, "rationalization" in the "Protestant Ethic" essays, "national leadership" in certain political writings, and "social science" in the methodological works. Yet Weber's desire to sustain scientific discussions fails to acknowledge the restrictive assumptions underlying his views on progress and struggle, assumptions which limit discussion to the function of ideal-types among a few qualified scholars. Thus there is his vexing depiction of scholarly judgment as both the source of and obstruction to the possibility of human struggle in modern science. Unlike Thucydides, though, who hoped his judgment of Hellenic history might "last forever," Weber hopes "the professional thinker" can "keep a cool head in the face of the ideals prevailing at the time...and if necessary...'to swim against the stream.'"[102] This aspiration allows Weber to situate scholarly judgment in contrast to Thucydides's monumental project of history as well as his theoretical foes in modern science. It allows him, too, to challenge the dominant judgments and ultimate ends which comprise the wholly unscientific enterprise of modern professional politics.

Having held out the prospect of resisting the self-evident ideals of early-20th century German society, how

might Weber's notion of scholarly judgment constitute a plausible challenge to the modern profession of politics?

One consistent point throughout Weber's methodological writings is that he perceives the scholar and the politician as two persons who perform entirely separate tasks in the world. Weber is adamant about this distinction insofar as he witnesses the scholar working in "governmentally privileged lecture halls" and the politician laboring in "public places or in sectarian conventicles." It is likewise the case when he claims the instrument of science to be "a *utopia*" which "cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality" and that of politics to be "the ethically dangerous" force of "violence." Finally, Weber signals this distinction when, in "Science as a Vocation," he notes that "[t]o take a practical political stand is one thing, and to analyze political structures and party positions is another."[103] Yet, despite these claims concerning the distance between science and politics, Weber deems science and the scholar to be a valuable "service" to politics. The "scientific worker," he argues, "can tell you that if you want such and such an end, then you must take into the bargain the subsidiary consequences which according to all experience will occur."[104] In other words, the scholar "can confront you with the necessity of this choice."[105] By judging the distance between facts and values, which in turn discloses the limited scope of a person's worldly

options, the scientist-scholar thus exhibits, not necessarily an aptitude for politics, but merely a capacity to oppose it.

This oppositional element of scholarly judgment fails to put Weber at ease, however, since it is at odds with the "self-confinement" he requires of those scholars who recognize life's "inexhaustible" meanings. Although scholarly judgment aids in clarifying the logical incongruities and ethical inadequacies allied with persons, parties, and other institutions, Weber still seeks to keep its focus trained on "the methods of scientific research." Despite this tension, he intensifies it when he proclaims, at the outset of his "'Objectivity'" essay, "the express purpose of the *Archiv*" to be "the education of judgment about practical social problems" as much as "the criticism of practical social policy, extending even as far as legislation."[106] Contrary to the professional politician, the modern scholar does not rely on violence, demagoguery, and compromise as means to the specific ultimate end of, say, German national glory and power. Weber's depiction of the scholar does not reveal a commitment to any one particular goal other than the perpetuation of struggle among persons who mirror an endless flow of possible ends. It is a goal which differentiates the scholar from the seemingly myopic foresight of the professional politician. What the scholar also has is judgment, which, in clarifying

the "hairline" distance between the "infinite variety" of facts and the "individual character" of "*cultural values*," uncovers the limits of a multitude of *Weltanschauungen*. The scope of scholarly judgment, therefore, stretches beyond the battles with scientific positivism and cultural subjectivism to include encounters with, among others, Socialism, *Machtpolitik*, Pacficism, and even German nationalism.

Based on this potentially broad reach, Weber's idea of scholarly judgment intimates an orientation towards a world which contests the ends of politics, even though it concedes the ethically distinct traits of such a profession. To illustrate this orientation, Weber addresses the possible nexus between "an ethically neutral science" and the political enterprise of "syndicalism," which he finds to be both "ruthless" and steeped in "*romanticism*."[107] He does so in his 1917 essay on "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality,'" one year prior to Socialist rebellions in Munich and Berlin. In that essay, Weber states "the analysis of syndicalism" is "completed when it has reduced the syndicalistic standpoint to its most rational and internally consistent form and has empirically investigated the pre-conditions for its existence and its practical consequences."[108] The "task" is to judge, not simply the logic of an ideal that mirrors a "new society" of class-conscious trade unionists, or the historical force of "the general strike and terror" which seeks to paralyze

capitalist production and subvert even Socialist parliamentarians. More important, as Weber notes in his "'Objectivity'" essay, it is to judge the degree to which "all action and...inaction imply in their consequences the espousal [*Parteinahme*] of certain values--and herewith...the rejection of certain others."[109] Hence his notion of scholarly judgment moves beyond science towards politics, bringing with it a distrust of absolute political ends and, thus, a faith in the prospect of struggle over the significance of such ends.

The way scholarly judgment rouses the prospect of struggle in politics is similar to the way it does so in the profession of science: rendering "ultimate" ends as "provisional and not definite." While lecturing on the subject of "Science as a Vocation" to an audience of aspiring scholars in November of 1917, Weber speaks in blunt terms about the historical condition on which he posits the scholarly quest for distance and clarity. He believes science takes "its point of departure from the one fundamental fact, that so long as life remains immanent and is interpreted in its own terms, it knows only of an unceasing struggle of...gods with one another."[110] This view of the historical trajectory of science confirms the degree to which Weber perceives more than just the empirical limits of cultural subjectivism or the subjective constraints on scientific positivism. Indeed, it also

permits him and other scholars to approach the ultimate ends of modern politics with an eye towards judging their empirical as well as subjective underpinnings. From this viewpoint, Weber's idea of scholarly judgment signifies a capacity to subject all "gods," even science, to an evaluation of the bond between normative ambition and historical impediments. It demonstrates his conviction, furthermore, that "the ultimately possible attitudes toward life are irreconcilable, and hence their struggle can never be brought to a final conclusion."[111] The potential impact of scholarly judgment on politics points, therefore, to the prospect of a struggle based, not on the advance of one particular end, but on the provisional character of all ultimate ends.

As a scholar and scientist, Weber understands the provisional character of the gods, and other assorted human values, as an historical moment imbued with promise. His belief in the "common fate" of "'progress'" specifies a time when "one can...master all things by calculation," while at the same time it validates the "strange intoxication" of persons who devote themselves to science with great enthusiasm.[112] This paradoxical mix of worldly "'disenchantment'" and individual "passion" promise the scholar anything but a simple choice between the sterile rigors of empirical analysis and the unfettered reach of human values. If scholars use clear judgment in their

scientific ventures, they will recognize the distinction between facts and values, but only insofar as such distinctions reflect one of only a multitude of worldly viewpoints. In fact, Weber insists the "belief which we all have in some form or other, in the meta-empirical validity of ultimate and final values...is not incompatible with the incessant changefulness of the concrete viewpoints, from which empirical reality gets its significance. Both these views are, on the contrary, in harmony with each other."[113] Such predicaments promise the scholar, if not knowledge of the ultimate value a person *ought* to follow, then an understanding of the limits which define the value one *chooses* to follow. Scholarly judgment thus aims to accentuate the "hairline" distance between any ultimate end and the shifting stream of empirical details which underlies it, suggesting at least a possible contestation of those values mirrored in modern politics.

The sort of struggle which Weber associates with scholarly judgment involves neither the violence nor the demagoguery he ascribes to the human struggle of politics. His idea of scholarly judgment affords modern politics an alternative form of struggle which, instead of merely advancing a more forceful ultimate end at the expense of others, tends to advance the value of human struggle itself. By "'Understanding all'" values, however, Weber "does not mean 'pardoning all' nor does mere understanding of

another's viewpoint as such lead, in principle, to its approval." On the contrary, he believes scholarly judgment and its related struggles lead "at least as easily, and often with greater probability to the awareness of the issues and reasons which prevent agreement."[114] It forces politicians into a struggle, not for the purpose of maintaining "the binding force of an ethical 'imperative,'" but for the sake of ensuring the possibility of future "'discussions of evaluations.'" In this way, Weber's notion of scholarly judgment confirms "that the attainment of such an ethic is externally, at least, impeded by the relativizing effects of such discussions."[115] Though it promises little aid in the maintenance of the supremacy of a particular ideal, scholarly judgment still offers "insight" into the "unbridgeably divergent ultimate evaluations" in science, economics, religion, aesthetics, and even politics.

In addition to its impact on politics, which counters a person's desire to limit politics to the advance of a specific end, Weber's idea of scholarly judgment hints at a political theorist who questions the confines of politics. This is quite a departure from an earlier stance Weber assumes in his 1895 Freiburg Inaugural Address, when he claims "[t]he science of political economy" to be "a *political* science."[116] At this early moment in his academic career, he designates science, and the judgments which accompany it, as a vehicle for the advance of an

explicitly "one-sided" value. In particular, science acts as "a servant of politics, not the day-to-day politics of the persons and classes who happen to be ruling at any given time, but the enduring power-political interests of the nation."[117] Yet, with the Wilhelmine German nation growing increasingly more divided over issues of class, suffrage, party politics, and war, his view of science tends to grow more inclusive with regard to the type of ends a scholar might hope to advance. By 1904, Weber no longer views the German nation as the sole end of science; instead, he espouses a science based on the "assumption that only a finite portion" of an "infinite multiplicity of...events" constituted valuable knowledge.[118] With this shift from the universality of the nation to the individuality of ends, it is no wonder that by 1917 he perceives science as being composed "not only of alternatives between values" but of cases in which "the value-spheres cross and interpenetrate."[119]

In many of Weber's intellectual endeavors, the intersection between science and politics is laid out in such a way as to demonstrate the forceful reach of the scientist-scholar. As one who questions "the significance of *theory* and theoretical conceptualization...for our knowledge of cultural reality," Weber finds himself on a path which leads to "the *confrontation* of empirical reality with the ideal-type." He rejects the idea that a scholar

rely solely on "'the facts themselves'" as the result of some "naive" attempt to quash one's own convictions, without which "there would be no principle of selection of subject-matter and no meaningful knowledge of the concrete reality."[120] Nor is he content to traverse a "'*middle course*'" which, for instance, maintains "that through the synthesis of several party points of view, or by following a line between them, practical norms of *scientific validity* can be arrived at."[121] The path he chooses as a scientist and scholar leads up to and abuts the outer edge of modern politics, leaving him--and those others who succeed him--to face options other than those of moral silence or violent action. By engaging in "the perpetual reconstruction of...concepts through which we seek to comprehend reality," Weber denotes the option to judge not merely the "ideals and value-judgments" of other persons, including politicians. He judges, too, these ends in relation to the "uncomfortable facts" that, in light of "their starkness," inspire at most "'discussions of evaluations'" between scientists and the persons they face in politics.

At the very least, Weber's notion of scholarly judgment grants to successive theorists an insight into the limits of his own theory of politics. On the one hand, he postulates his idea of politics on the ground of human struggle, one that entails a multiplicity of ideals yet, ultimately, privileges the end of a dynamic and powerful German nation.

A problem emerges insofar as the aim of German national glory supersedes and, potentially, obviates the struggles of modern politics, thus illuminating a tension between Weber's ultimate end and the means he theorizes so as to advance it. On the other hand, he conjectures an idea of science on the basis of "'progress,'" which mirrors a human struggle only to the degree that it leads, not to the establishment of one viewpoint, but to the displacement of all viewpoints. The impetus behind these struggles manifests itself in scholarly judgment, a critical accounting of the distinctions between the facts and values which form, and reform, the perspectives constituting science as much as politics. It appears "as not so trifling a thing to do," remarks Weber, referring to the scholar who "succeeds" in helping others as well as oneself assess "*the ultimate meaning*" of their conduct in the world. As far as he is concerned, such a person "stands in the service of 'moral' forces; he fulfils the duty of bringing about self-clarification and a sense of responsibility."[122] His idea of scholarly judgment, therefore, and the science of which it is part, is not a proxy for a type of politics tethered to a specific ultimate end. If anything, it is simply an option which allows a scholar to contest the moral limits of modern politics and the epistemological confines of political theory.

Notes

[1]Friedrich Nietzsche, "Twilight of the Idols" in Basic Writings of Nietzsche, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: The Modern Library, 1968), 558. Hereafter referred to as Twilight.

[2]Twilight, 558-559.

[3]Twilight, 558-559.

[4]Thucydides, The History of the Peloponnesian War, trans. Rex Warner (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), 46. Hereafter referred to as History.

[5]History, 47.

[6]If the reader is after more detailed inquiries into Thucydides's approach to judgment, knowledge, or historical method, there are a variety of works from which to draw. The following works have informed my own reading of Thucydides's History. First, there is Gregory Crane, Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). Crane's chief concern involves "the limits of political realism" in Thucydides's notion of history. However, he does not critique Thucydides's allegedly "perfect objectivity" nor his "chimerical goal" of Athenian glory. He instead explores the tension between "the boldness of his objectives and the degree to which he ruthlessly includes in his own narratives the problems and contradictions that he never resolved," 14. A more relevant work to my own reading of Thucydides is Marc Cogan, The Human Thing (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981). He claims that Thucydides's History reveals "not specific events but a specific process of deliberation in which all actions are begun." Hence, according to Cogan, Thucydides's idea of judgment is premised on a public and collective context which "is dependent on other simultaneous, sometimes counter-, actions, and is also dependent on chance--that is, on factors which cannot be systematized," 234. I think the strength of Cogan's work is that it reveals Thucydides to be political thinker, whose idea of judgment is conditioned not simply by the bold characters of Pericles, Cleon, Alcibiades, or Thucydides himself, but by the necessity of rhetorical and political struggles. Finally, as it relates to the weaknesses that underlie Thucydides's idea of judgment, see George Cawkwell, Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War (London: Routledge, 1997). The thrust of Cawkwell's argument is premised on what he perceives to be Thucydides's critique of Cleon's judgment, especially during "The Mytilenian Debate," a critique that makes Cawkwell "uneasy" about "the critical judgement" of Thucydides. "In politics," Cawkwell claims, "we

may agree with Thucydides that Cleon did not judge well. Of war, Thucydides's own judgement is suspect," 74. The significance of these three works, therefore, is not so much their depiction of Thucydides as a political thinker who validates in part a "realist" perspective, a "process of deliberation," or a weakness in the "critical judgement" of Thucydides. Rather, it has to do with each thinker locating Thucydides's approach to judgment within the context of human conflict, political difference, and historical contingency.

[7]Max Weber, "The Profession and Vocation of Politics" in Weber: Political Writings, eds. Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs, and trans. Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 367. Hereafter referred to as WPW. The original German version of this text appears as "Politik als Beruf" in Gesammelte politische Schriften (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1958), 558. Hereafter referred to as GPS. It is also important to note here, I think, that Weber's historical engagement with the works of Thucydides, Aristotle, Plato, or Socrates is limited at best. In fact, his most significant inquiries into the intellectual legacy of ancient Greece and Rome dealt with the structural designs of economy, religion and political institutions, relying on Thucydides and Aristotle as sources of empirical information rather than as theorists who might provide insight into the meaning of political judgment. See Max Weber, The Agrarian Sociology of Ancient Civilizations, trans. R.I. Frank (London: Verso, 1988). Hereafter referred to as AGAC. The original German version of this text appears as "Agrarverhältnisse im Alterum" and "Die sozialen Gründen des Untergangs der antiken Kultur" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Sozial-und Wirtschaftgeschichte, Hrsg. von Marianne Weber (Tübingen: Mohr, 1988). Hereafter referred to as GASW. See also Max Weber, "The City (Non-Legitimate Domination) in ES, especially 1339-1372. The original German version of this text appears as "Die nichtlegitime Herrschaft" in WuG, 796-814.

[8]History, 48.

[9]WPW, 353; GPS, 546.

[10]Here I want to note the subtle differences between Weber's use of the term "*Augenmass*" in his theory of politics and his use of the term "*Urteil*" in his theory of scientific scholarship. With regard to the first term it is typically translated as an ability to judge on the basis of visual estimations, which, in the case of Weber's political thinking, is another way of estimating the possible means required to advance a particular goal. Given this translation, as well as the "irrational" context within which the politician pursues his convictions, it appears as though *Augenmass* indicates a political judgment devised in a moment of flux. With regard

to the term *Urteil*, it is commonly translated to mean a formed opinion or view concerning a particular issue, event or position, suggesting a more methodical, cogent, and logical estimation of what Weber refers to as the "knowledge of interrelated facts." Clearly, both concepts presuppose the importance of distance. However, I think where *Augenmass* presupposes distance for the sake of separating politicians from "things and people" within a specific moment in time, *Urteil* presupposes distance for the sake of allowing scholars a greater duration--though no less contingent--to differentiate and "clarify" factually grounded means from subjectively grounded convictions. Cf., Peter Breiner, Max Weber & Democratic Politics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), especially chapter 2: "The Sociological Clarification of Action: Weberian Political Judgment." Breiner's chief contention "is that Weber deploys his concept of purposive reason as a neutral critical standard against which all attempts to translate values into action are to be judged," 61. However, by positing "purposive reason" as the fundamental standard of Weber's theory of political judgment, Breiner tends to conflate scientific and political judgment under the same category. Though I would agree with Breiner that purposive reason informs scientific and political notions of judgment, I am not convince that the postulate of reason effectively corrals the differing goals of the scientist and the professional politician. See also Wilhelm Hennis, Max Weber: Essays in Reconstruction, trans. Keith Tribe (London: Allen & Unwin, 1988). Though I disagree with Hennis's general desire to locate the "'central question'" of "*Menschentum*" in Max Weber's political thinking, I still agree with his rendering of Weber's approach of judgment, which reveals an intermeshing of political and scholarly elements. "It is his characteristic power of political judgement," notes Hennis, referring to Weber, "not necessarily his being right in every judgement, but rather his *mode of thinking* that makes his political writings still such fascinating reading today," 188.

[11]Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation" in From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, eds. and trans. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946), 138. Hereafter referred to as FMW. The standard German version of this text appears as "Wissenschaft als Beruf" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaft (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1988), 592. Hereafter referred to as GAW.

[12]FMW, 140; GAW, 595. I want to clarify a point concerning the degree to which Weber's idea of scientific progress (*Fortschritt*) departs from the legacy of a modern, Enlightenment view of progress. On the one hand, Weber acknowledges the impact of the both the Renaissance and the European Enlightenment on the direction of technical progress in modern science. One need only refer to his claims in

"Science as a Vocation" concerning such thinkers as Leonardo, Galileo and Bacon and their contributions relative to the "rational experiment." Or consider Weber's appreciation in The Protestant Ethic theses for the technical advances of modern medicine, jurisprudence, the historical and cultural sciences, and economic productivity. These advances in the variety of scientific paradigms, the number of products, the types of societal conveniences say a lot about the technical "progress" of modern society, a progress grounded squarely on the cultural dominance of "purposive rationality." Contrary to this sort of technical progress, which also posits the teleological goal of material and epistemological order, Weber's notion of scientific progress posits no such goal. The principle or "fate" that he will postulate is, however, one that states how the judgments a scholar or scientist makes today are open to contestation, and thus reformulation, tomorrow. This is a decidedly different approach to "progress," one that necessarily unsettles not only the idea of progress itself but the ideas of rationality, ethics, and nation that inform Weber's views of science and politics. Cf., Ernst Robert Curtius, "Max Weber on Science as a Vocation" in Max Weber's 'Science as a Vocation', eds. Peter Lassman, Irving Velody, and Hermino Martins (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 70-75. Hereafter referred to as MWSV. See also Peter Lassman and Irving Velody, "Max Weber on Science, Disenchantment and the Search for Meaning" in MWSV, 159-204.

[13]Max Weber, "The Nation State and Economic Policy" in WPW, 1-28. The standard German version appears as "Der Nationalstaat und die Volkswirtschaftpolitik" in GPS, 1-25.

[14]Max Weber, "Parliament and Government in Germany under a New Political Order" in WPW, 130-271. The standard German version of this text appears as "Parlament und Regierung im neugeordneten Deutschland" in GPS, 306-443.

[15]This point is similar to the one made by Guenther Roth, "Weber's Political Failure" in Telos 78 (Winter 1988-89): 136-149, when he claims that "Weber flaunted his scholarly objectivity as a political gesture to such an extent that it influenced the form of his scholarship," 149.

[16]Max Weber, "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy" in The Methodology of the Social Sciences, eds. and trans. Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (New York: The Free Press, 1949), 50. Hereafter referred to as MSS. The standard German version of this text appears as "Die 'Objektivität' sozialwissenschaftlicher und sozialpolitischer Erkenntnis" in GAW, 147.

[17]MSS, 50; GAW, 147.

[18]Max Weber, "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality' in Sociology and Economics" in MSS, 5. The original German version of this text appears as "Der Sinn der 'Wertfreiheit' der soziologischen und ökonomischen Wissenschaften" in GAW, 493-494. It is also important to note that the theoretical seeds of this essay were sown at the 1909 convention of the *Verein für Sozialpolitik*. There Weber began to scold publicly his scholarly peers claiming knowledge of "*scientifically*" demonstrable ideals." Weber says he attacks such scholars for "the jumbling of what ought to be with what exists" not because "I underestimate the question of what ought to be. On the contrary, it is because I cannot bear it if problems of world-shaking importance--in a certain sense the most exalted problems that can move a human heart--are here changed into a technical-economic problem of production and made the subject of a scholarly discussion." Quoted in Marianne Weber, MWB, 418.

[19]MSS, 13; GAW, 502.

[20]WPW, 353; GPS, 546.

[21]WPW, 353; GPS, 546.

[22]WPW, 354; GPS, 547.

[23]On Weber's use of the term "*distanz*," see chapter 3, endnote #71.

[24]WPW, 24; GPS, 21.

[25]WPW, 20-21; GPS, 18.

[26]WPW, 144-145; GPS, 319.

[27]WPW, 144; GPS, 319.

[28]WPW, 145; GPS, 320.

[29]Max Weber, "The President of the Reich" in WPW, 304-305. The original German version of this text appears as "Der Reichspräsident" in GPS, 498.

[30]WPW, 307; GPS, 500.

[31]Cf., Wolfgang Mommsen, Max Weber and German Politics, trans. Michael Steinberg (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 371-ff. Mommsen describes a provocative political context informing Weber's changing thoughts on "The President of the Reich," a context that included Weber's growing distrust of parliamentary power and his own unsuccessful bid for political power as candidate for the

German Democratic Party in 1918-1919. Concerning the historical details of this latter event, see 303-ff.

[32]History, 161. For a discussion on the extent to which Thucydides's idealization of Pericles's political leadership clouded his own judgment of the Peloponnesian War, see George Cawkwell, Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War, 1997), especially chapter 4: Thucydides, Pericles and the 'Radical Demagogues'.

[33]History, 161.

[34]History, 47.

[35]WPW, 23; GPS, 20.

[36]FMW, 143; GAW, 598.

[37]FMW, 143; GAW, 599.

[38]FMW, 143; GAW, 599.

[39]The standard critique of this view is, of course, Leo Strauss, Natural Right and History (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950). It is Strauss's contention that Weber's presupposition about the "ethical irrationality" of the modern world manifests itself in "categoric imperative" that "means 'Follow thy demon, regardless of whether he is a good or evil demon.' For there is an insoluble, deadly conflict between the various values among which man has to choose. What one man considers following God another will consider, with equal right, following the Devil," 45. Hence this is the basis of Strauss's sweeping dismissal of modern political thinking, an "imperative" that dilutes Weber's work with the twin poisons of "positivism" and "historicism." In some ways, I think Strauss is right to anticipate the possible "nihilistic" and "totalitarian" consequences that might issue from such an alleged imperative. However, I also believe that such fears on the part of Strauss and others blind them to the prospect of a more fruitful dialogue--both scholarly and political--that corresponds to the decentralization of ideals in Weber's political thinking. Though this "democratic" possibility is something Strauss is willing to overlook as just another indication of modern historicism, it is not something I am willing to forego for the sake of the so-called "right, or the good, political order." See also Leo Strauss, "What is Political Philosophy?" in What is Political Philosophy? (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 9-55. For some other, more provocative discussions concerning the "irrational" underpinnings of Weber's theoretical project, see Sven Eliaeson, "Max Weber and His Critics: Critical Theory's Reception of Neo-Kantian Methodology" in International Journal

of Politics, Culture, and Society 3 (1990): 513-537; George Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1985); and Georg Lukacs, "Max Weber and German Sociology" in Economy and Society 1 (1972): 386-398.

[40]FMW, 152; GAW, 609.

[41]FMW, 152; GAW, 608.

[42]FMW, 138; GAW, 592.

[43]FMW, 151; GAW, 607.

[44]FMW, 147; GAW, 603.

[45]FMW, 147; GAW, 603.

[46]FMW, 150; GAW, 606-607.

[47]FMW, 152; GAW, 608.

[48]History, 214.

[49]History, 218.

[50]History, 219.

[51]With regard to Thucydides's depiction of the debate between Cleon and Diodotus, I draw on Marc Cogan, The Human Thing. He maintains that the "speeches are not needed to make the battles important, the battles are important in their own right. Yet we can correctly say both that the speeches add emphasis and attract attention to the event, and also that by utilizing *speeches* for this purpose Thucydides simultaneously exhibits the deliberateness of the event," 175.

[52]FMW, 152; GAW, 609.

[53]FMW, 152; GAW, 608.

[54]Cf., Marianne Weber, MWB, 127-128 and 415. See also Wilhelm Hennis, "A Science of Man: Max Weber and the Political Economy of the German Historical School" in Max Weber and His Contemporaries, eds. Wolfgang Mommsen and Jürgen Osterhammel (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 25-58. Hereafter referred to as MWC. See also Manfred Schon, "Gustav Schmoller and Max Weber" in MWC, 59-70.

[55]MSS, 51; GAW, 148.

[56]MSS, 73; GAW, 171-172.

[57]MSS, 52; GAW, 149.

[58]MSS, 52; GAW, 149.

[59]MSS, 54; GAW, 151.

[60]MSS, 93; GAW, 194.

[61]The scholarly literature on Max Weber's theory of "'ideal types'" is ample to say the least, as are the debates surrounding the significance of such "Neo-Kantian" methodological components in Weber's social and political thought. See Wolfgang Schluchter, The Rise of Western Rationalism, trans. Guenther Roth (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), especially chapter 3: The Philosophical Background of Weber's Developmental History. Contrary to "the emanationism of concrete values" associated with Hegelian philosophy, Schluchter locates Weber within the Kantian "*hiatus irrationalis* between concept and subject matter," an epistemological break that "cannot be resolved." At the same time, Schluchter continues, Weber "shares the Neo-Kantian critique of Kant--that an abstract value scheme does not suffice to comprehend reality. Rather, reality must be understood in terms of concrete historical value schemes," 14-15. On the intellectual relationship between Heinrich Rickert, Emil Lask, and Max Weber and its influence on Weber's theory of ideal types, see Guy Oakes, Weber and Rickert: Concept Formation in the Cultural Sciences (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1988). Oakes paints with a broad brush when he argues that "much of the philosophical vocabulary of Weber's methodological writings is borrowed from Rickert. The concepts of the irrationality of reality, the *hiatus irrationalis* between concept and reality, the historical individual; and value-relevance...are all drawn from Rickert's work," 7. Finally, for a critique of Oakes's broad claim, see Stephen Turner, "Weber and His Philosophers" in International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society 3 (1990): 539-553, who argues that Weber "was exposed to neo-Kantianism in many ways, long before Rickert made any distinctive contribution to neo-Kantianism, and by other neo-Kantians after Rickert began his career," 541.

[62]MSS, 93; GAW, 194.

[63]MSS, 93; GAW, 194.

[64]MSS, 105; GAW, 207.

[65]MSS, 68; GAW, 166.

[66]MSS, 110-111; GAW, 213-214.

[67]MSS, 4; GAW, 492.

[68]Max Weber's contempt for his former teacher, Heinrich von Treitschke, is obvious when he rebukes Treitschke not only for his zealous loyalty to the Prussian nation-state and the Hohenzollern dynasty, but also for "'the decidedly disagreeable effect'" his "'personal influence'" had "'on the students' modesty of judgment, their judiciousness and sense of justice.'" Despite this rebuke of Treitschke's "glaring instances of one-sidedness," Weber still defends a scholar's expression of intellectual freedom, perhaps signaling Weber's growing interest in "the meaning of ethical neutrality." See Marianne Weber, MWB, 119-120. With regard to the "epistemological" agreements and "political" disputes between Max Weber and George Sorel, see J.G. Merquior, "George Sorel and Max Weber in MWC, 159-169, who charges that "it is the liberal-conservative Weber, not...the radical Sorel, who...seems closer to the reservoir of romantic ideology tapped by revolutionism and the counterculture." Finally, an interesting inquiry into Max Weber's relationship with George Simmel is provided by Lawrence A. Scaff, Fleeing the Iron Cage (Berkeley:.University of California Press, 1989), who argues that "both were caught up in a maelstrom of essentially *cultural* problems associated with 'modernity'," 123.

[69]Max Weber quoted in Marianne Weber, MWB, 378-79. For a more thorough discussion of Max Weber's connection to Otto Gross and other members of the "'erotic movement'," see Wolfgang Schwentker, "Passion as a Mode of Life: Max Weber, the Otto Gross Circle and Eroticism" in MWC, 483-498.

[70]Max Weber quoted in Marianne Weber, MWB, 458-59. For some of Weber's more personal musings on such charismatic personalities as Stefan George and Rainer Maria Rilke, see Marianne Weber, MWB, 454-564.

[71]MSS, 3-4; GAW, 491-492. On Max Weber's ambivalent relationship to the intellectual legacy of Kant, see chapter 3, endnote #3.

[72]MSS, 4: GAW, 492.

[73]MSS, 9; GAW, 498.

[74]MSS, 13; GAW, 502.

[75]MSS, 5; GAW, 493-494.

[76]MSS, 43; GAW, 535-536.

[77]MSS, 2; GAW, 490.

[78]MSS, 17-18; GAW, 507-508.

[79]MSS, 14; GAW, 503.

[80]MSS, 47; GAW, 540.

[81]MSS, 111; GAW, 213.

[82]Several works capture the problematic underpinnings of Max Weber's theory of reason and rationality: Rogers Brubaker, The Limits of Rationality (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984); Donald L. Levine, "Rationality and Freedom: Weber and Beyond" in Sociological Inquiry 51 (1981): and 5-25; Herbert Marcuse, "Industrialization and Capitalism in the Work of Max Weber" in Negations (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), 201-226.

[83]MSS, 81; GAW, 180-181.

[84]MSS, 17-18; GAW, 507-508.

[85]FMW, 140-143; GAW, 595-599.

[86]MSS, 105; GAW, 207.

[87]MSS, 54; GAW, 151.

[88]MSS, 18; GAW, 507-508.

[89]MSS, 105; GAW, 207.

[90]FMW, 152; GAW, 609.

[91]FMW, 134; GAW, 588.

[92]MSS, 61; GAW, 158.

[93]MSS, 18; GAW, 507.

[94]MSS, 105-106; GAW, 207-208.

[95]MSS, 105-106; GAW, 207-208.

[96]MSS, 60; GAW, 157.

[97]MSS, 112; GAW, 214.

[98]History, 48.

[99]History, 48.

[100]A similar point is made again by Gregory Crane, Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity, when he charges that such "realist" assumptions as the balance of power, the agency of the group over the individual, and the human desire for power "limit Thucydides' view, blinding him to many factors at work and constricting his intellectual range," 295. Though he directs his critique at the realist components of Thucydides's thought--components which are not necessarily my chief concern in this chapter--Crane nevertheless uncovers a tension between judgments of fact and judgments of value that are crucial to my interest in the bond between Thucydides and Weber.

[101]MSS, 54; GAW, 151.

[102]MSS, 47; GAW, 540.

[103]FMW, 145; GAW, 601.

[104]FMW, 151; GAW, 607.

[105]FMW, 151; GAW, 607.

[106]MSS, 50; GAW, 147.

[107]Max Weber, "Socialism" in WPW, 296-98. The original German version of this text appears as "Der Sozialismus" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Soziologie und Sozialpolitik (Tubingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1988), 512-514. Hereafter referred to as GASS. For a clarification concerning the distinctions between Weber's characterizations of Bolshevism, Syndicalism, and Spartacism, see chapter 3, endnote #54.

[108]MSS, 24-25; GAW, 514-515.

[109]MSS, 53; GAW, 150.

[110]FMW, 152; GAW, 608.

[111]FMW, 152; GAW, 608.

[112]FMW, 134-ff; GAW, 587-ff.

[113]MSS, 111; GAW, 213.

[114]MSS, 14; GAW, 503.

[115]MSS, 14; GAW, 503-504.

[116]WPW, 16; GPS, 14.

[117]WPW, 16; GPS, 14.

[118]MSS, 72; GAW, 171.

[119]MSS, 18; GAW, 507.

[120]MSS, 82; GAW, 182.

[121]MSS, 58; GAW, 155.

[122]FMW, 152; GAW, 608.

CHAPTER V

THEORIZING AGAINST POLITICS

Introduction

By now I think it obvious that Max Weber epitomizes the degree to which political theorizing differs from the practice of politics. The dividing line Weber draws between the "vocations" of politics and science underscores "the use of violence" on the one side and "the aim of clarity" on the other, respectively. In fact, he lived much of his own professional life struggling to abide by this divide, castigating professors for being demagogues in the lecture hall and politicians for being blind to the diabolical force of power.[1] However, though each vocation (*Beruf*) deviates from the other in terms of its ethical bearing, Weber still contends that politicians and scholars confront one another under certain circumstances. These often involve a politician who, for reasons of ethical doubt, entreats scholars who aid others in deciphering the possible consequences that issue from a political mix of violent means and moral ends. Max Weber thus perceives science and politics as two distinct "value spheres," each with a unique ethical disposition. But he does so without obviating an encounter between the spheres, suggesting that scholars and politicians--though ethically distinct--signal a possible intersection of political theory and political practice.[2]

Jürgen Habermas's theoretical enterprise posits a view of contemporary philosophy not unlike the one Weber derives from the "modern times" of the Occident. In his work The Theory of Communicative Action, Habermas accepts Weber's view of the conditions which divide philosophy from other ways of being in the world, including politics. This is the case inasmuch as Habermas discerns that the "[t]heoretical surrogates for worldviews have been devalued, not only by the factual advance of empirical science but even more by the reflective consciousness accompanying it."[3] Accordingly, like Weber, he observes the modern world to be a place of moral fragmentation and ethical strife. Unlike Weber, however, Habermas charges that from this metaphysical turmoil might loom the prospect of a new bond between philosophy and other worldly pursuits. He believes that "the way is opening to a new constellation in the relationship of philosophy and the sciences."[4] This "new constellation" rejects Weber's allusions to the rational "disenchantment" of the modern world.[5] It instead points to an "intersubjective understanding or communication" between dissimilar persons, even theorists and politicians.

A more provocative response to the divide between theory and politics surfaces, I think, in the work of Michel Foucault. It is provocative in that Foucault, unlike Weber and Habermas, declares contemporary political theory a failed enterprise. In his lecture on "The Political

Technology of Individuals," Foucault contends "the failure of political theories is probably due neither to politics nor to theories but to the type of rationality in which they are rooted."[6] What vexes him is not so much modernity's push toward rationalization, a push that also disturbs the likes of Weber, Habermas, and especially Theodor Adorno. Foucault warns against an "increasing individualization" that, in the name of an emancipated self, validates rationalization and, paradoxically, the technical reach of the total state. He contends that political theory "nowadays must lead not to a nonpolitical way of thinking but to an investigation of what has been our political way of thinking during this century."[7] Hence Foucault does not seek to challenge politics *per se* with political theory; instead, he seeks to confront the rationality of theory through a particular type of political practice.[8]

Theodor Adorno also submits an interesting rejoinder to the breach between theory and practice. The interesting aspect of Adorno's project is not that he concurs with Weber's view of the rationalization of the world's value spheres. His "Dedication" in Minima Moralia notes "the true field of philosophy...the teaching of the good life," has, since its "conversion into method," suffered through "intellectual neglect, sententious whimsy and finally oblivion."[9] Despite this "melancholy" view of philosophy's empirical trappings, Adorno rejects Weber's claim that

rationalization tends to fragment the value spheres of modern life. On the contrary, Adorno charges that technical rationality leads, not to the splintering of values, but to their consolidation under the totalizing cultural scope of commodity capitalism.[10] "What the philosophers once knew of life," he argues, "has become the sphere of private existence and now of mere consumption, dragged along as an appendage of the process of material production, without autonomy or substance of its own."[11] Hence a tension between theory and practice appears absent in Adorno's thinking insofar as the practical reason of capitalism privileges the empirical remains of human life. Yet, what is present is a desire to transgress the totalizing reach of instrumental practice. This desire manifests itself in Adorno's idea of "critical theory, which can "scrutinize...the objective powers that determine individual existence even in its most hidden recesses."[12] In short, it critiques the factual foundations of scientific positivism, commodity capitalism, and reifed thought which combine to constrict the prospects of human subjectivity.

Clearly the theoretical projects of Habermas, Foucault, and Adorno do not exhaust Max Weber's impact on the enterprise of contemporary political theorizing. After all, his theoretical reach touches the work of other thinkers, such as Lukacs, Mannheim, Merleau-Ponty, Strauss, Arendt, and even Bataille. Neither do I suggest, therefore, that

Habermas, Foucault and Adorno adequately reflect the manifold scope of contemporary political theory. What I will suggest is that each of the three theorists reveal a unique relationship with Max Weber's theoretical corpus, one that departs from the concept of rationalization. Though they all depart from this comparatively unique concept, each theorist ultimately turns against both Weber's theoretical project and the contemporary enterprise of political theory.

It is thus important to underscore, I believe, the degree to which each thinker perceives contemporary political theory to be a barrier to any fruitful union of politics and theory. Yet, their varied perceptions ought not to goad other theorists into thinking they can mend the divide between politics and theory, recede from politics altogether, or forfeit theory to the empirical reality of political practice. I contend that contemporary political theory permits the theorist, not a gateway into politics, but a critical posture against the enterprise of politics. It compels one to think in the breach between politics and theory for the sake of theorizing against rather than for a political practice that often ignores the democratic merits of critical thought.[13] The support for my claim stems from Weber's political thinking, inasmuch as the "ethical paradoxes" undercutting his thought also point to the possible source of a critical dialogue between scholars, politicians, and citizens. In addition to this instructive

flaw in Weber's thinking, the works of Habermas, Foucault and Adorno further confirm, in differing ways, how theorists both confront and transform the practical confines of contemporary politics. As a conclusion I will discuss, not so much the political aspects of theorizing, but the educational prospects that provoke differing theoretical interpretations of politics, such that they countervail political practice.[14] Unlike Weber's idea of "*political* education," which targets "the *ruling and rising* classes" of the German nation, I defend an education in theory that provokes politicians, citizens, and theorists to think about politics in a different light.

Max Weber and the Limits of Theory

Despite his many contributions to contemporary political thinking, Max Weber's legacy lingers in the shadows of more recent thinkers. It is apparent that Weber's thinking bears on Habermas's probe into the problematic meaning of "purposive rationality." Yet, Habermas's approach entails a specific reading of Weber's sociological works, omitting those works that address politics and the shifting interpretations of rationality.[15] For that matter, Foucault confronts Weber on the basis of the structural limits underpinning Weber's view of rationality.[16] Foucault overlooks, however, the extent to which Weber's methodology of the social sciences might

anticipate his own critique of the powers that nourish what he calls the "human sciences." Furthermore, Adorno critiques Weber on the basis of his "unrealistic" theories of rationality and scientific methodology. But even he fails to address the controversial dimensions of Weber's political thinking, except to relegate it to the vast category of bourgeois subjectivism.[17] It is my contention, therefore, that Weber's contributions tend to issue, not so much from his thoughts on politics, but from his views on science and methodology. It does so in that Weber's idea of science unknowingly exposes the "ethical paradoxes" in his own political thinking, reminding subsequent theorists that such flaws open up rather than preclude a dialogue between scholarship and politics.

Though Weber's idea of science broadens the view of his theory of politics, it still consists of several incongruities that diminish its value to contemporary theorizing. Indeed his approach to science confronts such controversial issues as "progress," "methodology," "'objectivity'," and the "ethical neutrality" of university teachers. However, by confronting and affirming these very issues, Weber also imposes weighty standards on both his own theoretical approach to politics and opposing theorists. By analyzing Weber's theory of politics through the critical prism of his idea of science, at least three discrepancies become apparent in his theoretical corpus. They include the

"'principle of the small number'," the precept of a world of "various spheres of values," and the axiom that "the use of *violence*" is essential to politics.

With regard to the first of these discrepancies, Max Weber's idea of politics never ceases to postulate select criteria for those persons who engage in politics. Notable among them is the politician's capacity to weather the ethical tumult that corresponds to any coupling of good ends with violent means. This condition is central to Weber's argument in "The Profession and Vocation of Politics," in which he articulates his theoretical design of the politician. Of course, he dismisses the idea of a politician who holds to an "ethics of conviction" (*Gesinnungsethik*), since such persons fail to acknowledge "the ethical irrationality of the world." To contend with this "irrationality," Weber insists a politician must be conscious "that the achievement of 'good' ends is in many cases tied to the necessity of employing morally suspect or at least morally dangerous means."[18] Furthermore, he continues, the politician "must reckon with the possibility or even likelihood of evil side-effects."[19] In this way, Weber qualifies the politician on the basis of something other than an impassioned duty to a cause or principled conviction. There is also the element of "*judgement*" (*Augenmass*), which Weber refers to as "the decisive psychological quality of the politician."[20] Without it, he

concludes, the politician contributes little to the enterprise of politics beyond either the "pure conviction" of a syndicalist or the "empty pose" of *Machtpolitik*.

Aside from the "personal" trait of "judgment," Weber stipulates that the politician must also anticipate a decidedly turbulent ethical fate. In other words, it is not enough for a politician "to be conscious of these ethical paradoxes and of his responsibility for what may become of *himself* under pressure from them."[21] The politician must be conscious of the possible alterations in the meaning of his cause or principled conviction, given that he couples it with the morally dubious means of physical force. He must concede, says Weber, "that the eventual outcome of political action frequently, indeed regularly, stands in a quite inadequate, even paradoxical relation to its original, intended meaning and purpose (*Sinn*)."[22] Therefore, the person who pursues a path into politics is unique not only in the sense that his powers of judgment discern the "distance" between morally good ends and violent means. The politician is unique, moreover, in the sense that judgment allows him to anticipate the disruption of and challenge to the ultimate ideal that marks his ethical path through politics. This proviso of judgment clearly divulges an element of elitism in Weber's theory of politics. Yet, I believe it is an element that nevertheless relies on the unique qualities of other persons, thus indicating the

degree to which his idea of politics might very well threaten the elevated status of modern politicians.

Indeed I think Max Weber's idea of the politician reveals something more intriguing than a person's psychological and historical insights into the meaning of ethical paradoxes. It seems as though the politician sometimes relies on the insights of others, notably persons with specifically scholarly qualifications. In fact, from his 1895 "Freiburg Address" to his 1917 lecture on "Science as a Vocation," Weber denotes in various ways how scholars might inform the ethical bearings of politicians. In the "Freiburg Address," he characterizes the scholar as "a servant of politics" who promotes "the enduring power-political interests of the nation."[23] In his essay on "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy," he contends that a scholar can "aid the acting willing person in attaining self-clarification concerning the final axioms from which his desired ends are derived."[24] Finally, when he speaks before fellow scholars in Munich of 1917, Weber declares that "if we are competent in our pursuit...we can force the individual, or at least we can help him, to give himself an *account of the ultimate meaning of his own conduct*."[25] Given the politician's sense of judgment, which admits to the prospect of modified and differing ideals, the scholar, therefore, can help him clarify his ethical options or challenge him to explain the consequences

of his political deeds. In any case, I think Weber's "'principle' of the small number" is a problematic one. It is problematic, not just because it narrows the scope of politics, but because it allows some scholars to alter possibly the ethical and practical design of politics.

In addition to positing politics on the basis of a unique trait of judgment, Weber postulates politics as one of several "spheres of values," revealing what I believe to be another discrepancy in his political thinking. The source of fragmentation among these spheres, Weber argues, appears in the historical and cultural process of "rationalization." In his 1906 essay on "The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism," he ascribes this modern process to a religious proclivity, one that pushes "inner- and other-worldly values towards rationality, towards the conscious endeavor, and towards sublimation by *knowledge*."[26] However, inasmuch as a religious value of, say, "salvation" plays itself out in the rational mediums of commerce, aesthetics, science, or politics, Weber also observes a significant "tension." This tension surfaces in a paradox, which reflects the transgression of divine salvation by the "impersonality" of the market, the "appeal to violence" in politics, or the "empirical refutations" of science. He also believes it surfaces in "man's relations to the various spheres of values," such that over time these relations "have...pressed towards making conscious the

internal and lawful autonomy of the individual spheres."[27] By positing this view of the world as a series of value spheres, Weber reveals his neo-Kantian commitment to rationality while confirming his belief in the practical differences between science and politics.[28]

As result of rationalization, the value spheres of politics and science thus distinguish their separate vocational boundaries. According to Weber, they also "drift into those tensions" which result from each sphere's own sense of "*internal and lawful autonomy*," suggesting struggles that extend beyond those with religion. This distinction and tension between politics and science is evident in Weber's lecture on "Science as a Vocation." "To take a practical stand is one thing," he remarks, referring to the conduct of the politician, "and to analyze structures and party positions is another."[29] This latter conduct, which Weber ascribes to the scholar, is unlike the conduct of the politician, whose "words" are hardly "plowshares to loosen the soil of contemplative thought; they are swords against the enemies: such words are weapons."[30] The scholar, though, struggles to "abstain" from such political maneuvers and flagrant expressions of one's ultimate ideals. The task of the scholar, says Weber, "is to serve the students with his knowledge and scientific experience and not to imprint upon them his personal political views."[31] Yet, though the conduct of the scholar is separate from that

of the politician, they still share a common domain in terms of the "cultural values" which politicians propound and scholars critique. Such a domain indicates, I think, a countervailing claim against Weber's premise of distinct "spheres of value."[32]

The most formidable demarcation between the "spheres" of politics and science, however, involves the politician's necessary use of physical violence. While depicting the scope of politics, Weber notes that "[i]t is only this very appeal to violence that constitutes a political association," and that "the state" is what claims "the monopoly of the *legitimate use of violence*."[33] By positing the sphere of politics on the basis of violence, therefore, he not only constricts the ethical conduct of the politician. He implies, as well, that politics prohibits other worldly conducts by virtue of the distance between them and violence, eliminating, among others, artists, clerics, and scholars. Yet, interestingly enough, the violence which Weber ascribes to the sphere of politics evokes at least one particular aim. That aim has to do with something other than just the "constitution" of the unique traits of the political sphere. It has to do, I think, with the "absolutely essential" claim that "every political association" appeals "to the naked violence of coercive means in the face of outsiders as well as in the face of internal enemies."[34] In other words, violence constitutes

the unique design of politics, but it also represents that which bridges politics to differing value spheres, suggesting a fusion rather than a separation of spheres.

Another apparent dividing line between politics and science is somewhat more subtle than the politician's use of violence. That element pertains to the scholar's disclosure of "'inconvenient' facts" in the face of ultimate ends. Central to Weber's characterization of "The Intellectual Sphere" is, of course, the rational push toward factual explanations of events, ideas, and other phenomena. This trajectory also indicates a provocative consequence, not the least of which is that each "increase of rationalism in empirical science increasingly pushes religion from the rational into the irrational realm."[35] Indeed it impacts value spheres other than those of religion. Yet, the rational thrust of science has little interest in value spheres *per se*; its chief concern involves the values themselves, regardless of the sphere in which they dwell. Weber submits, therefore, that "the empirical as well as the mathematically oriented view of the world develops refutations of every intellectual approach which in any way asks for a 'meaning' of inner-worldly occurrences."[36] Though the sphere of science derives its singular design by clarifying and refuting ultimate ideals, it still reaches beyond its designated scope to infiltrate other spheres which propound such questionable ideals. Given this

critical nexus, I thus believe the "various spheres of values" which comprise Weber's view of the modern world, reflect not a strict separation but an occasional confrontation between differing spheres.

One other inconsistency undercuts Weber's standing in contemporary theory. It again concerns the degree to which he postulates violence as the fundamental element of politics. Given the criterion of political "judgment" and the "rational" fragmentation of the value spheres, it is no wonder that violence is the chief feature of Weber's theory of politics. For these reasons, and others, he charges in the "Science as a Vocation" lecture "that as long as life remains immanent and is interpreted in its own terms, it knows only of an unceasing struggle of these gods with one another."[37] Under these circumstances, the politician has no choice but to fight for his ultimate ends, to struggle for a cause he deems both invaluable to the world and incomparable to other convictions. Violence thus represents the chief means of the politician who seeks to advance such ends in the modern world. However, insofar as Weber claims that "the ultimately possible attitudes toward life are irreconcilable, and hence their struggle can never be brought to a final conclusion,"[38] violence is also available to persons outside the sphere of politics. It is available, I believe, not because Weber inscribes the other spheres with violent means. On the contrary, he does no

such thing. Rather, it is available to other spheres on the basis of life's "irreconcilable" elements, which suggest that the political sphere's "monopoly on *the legitimate use of violence*" is at best a contestable claim.

Therefore, though violence is the defining feature of Weber's theory of politics, the ethical repercussions of violence still reach beyond the sphere of politics. They reach toward "The Intellectual Sphere" when a politician either relies on scholars for their ethical "clarity" or attacks them on the basis of their status as "inconvenient" outsiders. I thus believe Weber's political thinking points to an interesting confrontation between politicians and political theorists. In this breach between the "spheres," between "the means of violence" and "the aim of clarity," between the practice and theory of politics--this is where the scholar meets the politician. This is one place where, according to Weber, the scholar "stands in the service of 'moral' forces; he fulfills the duty of bringing about self-clarification and a sense of responsibility."[39] This possible confrontation, however, does not stem from Weber's theory of politics, which postulates an elite number of persons, separate spheres of value, and a monopoly on the use of physical violence. It derives from the scholar's duty to articulate the ethical clarity between "'good' ends" and "morally suspect" means, as well as from the scholar's desire to undercut all convictions with "inconvenient'

facts." Hence, the limits of Weber's theory of politics emerge in contrast to his idea of scholarship, which suggests a likely encounter between politicians and political theorists.

Because his theory of science points to the theoretical confines of politics, I think it provides the enterprise of contemporary political theory a different interpretation of Max Weber's political thinking.[40] It is different in the sense that the flaws and paradoxes in his political thought do more than validate the critical components he ascribes to the scholar. They also demonstrate the degree to which scholars undercut claims about the "'principle of the small number'" and the monopoly on "the use of *violence*" in politics, thus obscuring the lines that separate "the various spheres of value." For this reason, I further contend that Weber's theoretical approach to politics offers contemporary political theory a critical alternative. It is an alternative in that political theory can now provide something other than a vehicle by which to advance such a narrow cause as German national power or a neo-Kantian divorce from the practice of politics. In light of Weber's flawed project, I believe contemporary political theory promises a confrontation between the practice of theorizing and that of politics. This is not to say that I think theory represents a practice more political than politics, but only that it exhibits practices and ideas which undercut

the practical sanctity of politics. It is to say, simply, that the purpose of contemporary political theory is to provoke new ways of thinking about both the practice of politics and the critical distance between it and political theory. In order to illustrate this purpose in more detail, I now turn to the contemporary theoretical projects of Habermas, Foucault, and Adorno.

Habermas and the Rationality of Theory

Jürgen Habermas has taken on an intellectual role in contemporary German society similar to the one Max Weber assumed during the Wilhelmine period. Like Weber, Habermas defends publicly a specific view of the role of science and scholarship in the modern university. However, contrary to Weber's view of the "bureaucratized" university life, Habermas believes the university still symbolizes "a discursive debate that carries with it the promissary note of the surprising argument."[41] In the well-respected weekly *Die Zeit*, moreover, Habermas rebuked the "revisionist" tendencies of several prominent German historians who, after decades of "distance" from the Holocaust, equilibrated it with the American bombings of Dresden and the Stalinist purges. This scholarly "balancing of accounts" led him to champion something other than "an ideologically closed milieu to which reality no longer has access."[42] Rather, he defended the "mediators and the mass

media" who criticize such "scholarly results" in "the public flow of the appropriation of tradition...It is here, in the public sphere, that comparisons can be used to settle damages."[43] The public role Habermas assumes is thus reminiscent of Weber's encounters with a mass German audience. Yet, when it comes to Habermas's specific theoretical ambition, Weber plays an altogether dissimilar role as Habermas's adversary.

For the last two decades, Habermas has formulated, advocated, and clarified what he refers to as a "theory of communicative action." It is part of a theoretical enterprise that expressly departs from certain facets of Weber's sociological work, notably his idea of "rationalization." In particular, Habermas critiques Weber's theory of "purposive-rational action" insofar as Weber defines its instrumental push through the world as "universalist" in design. Habermas rejects this design because it regards the "multiplicity of forms of life as limited to *cultural contents*, and...asserts that every culture must share certain *formal properties* of the modern understanding of the world."[44] In contrast, he theorizes an idea of "communicative" reason that points "to a symbolically structured lifeworld that is constituted in the interpretative accomplishments of its members and only reproduced through communication."[45] Given this pluralization of reason, I thus submit that though Habermas

rejects Weber's theory of rationalization, he still concedes to a notion of philosophy that presupposes the absolute necessity of rationality. Indeed, in light of his loyalty to rationality--albeit "communicative"--I contend that Habermas reveals a fusion of theory and practice such that it foils the critical element of each particular craft.[46]

The difficulty which Habermas accentuates in Weber's thinking consists of the "universal" reach Weber ascribes to "purposive rationality." It is evident, though, that Habermas comes to Weber with a significant degree of respect for his impact on contemporary social and political thinking. In Theory of Communicative Action, he esteems Weber as a theorist "who broke with both the premises of the philosophy of history and the basic assumptions of evolutionism" that comprised late modern European social thinking.[47] Despite these breaks, Habermas approaches Weber with caution, portraying him as one "who...wanted to conceive of the modernization of old European society as the result of a universal-historical process of rationalization."[48] This element of "rationalization" constitutes a problem for Habermas. It does so for several reasons, not the least of which has to do with what Habermas labels as Weber's "largely unclarified" and "restricted idea of purposive rationality [*Zweckrationalität*]."[49] The more significant flaw has to do with the degree to which Weber's idea of rationality is "not complex enough to capture all

those aspects of social actions to which societal rationalization can attach."[50] Accordingly, Habermas does not dispute rationalization *per se*, only the breach between Weber's theory of rationality and the manifold social actions of the lifeworld of modernity.

The point of Habermas's critique focuses, therefore, on what he perceives to be the "universalist" ambitions underlying Weber's theory of rationality. Although he admits that "Weber himself did not draw universalistic consequences without reservations," Habermas seeks "to defend the thesis that a universalist position follows from Weber's conceptual approach."[51] By "universalist position," he means the extent to which Weber imputes to rationality more than just a worldly action that advances an ultimate end with objective means and a sense of proportion between that end and means. It involves, too, Weber's contention that such an action represents the "*formal properties*" of all manifestations of purposive rationality in the modern world. This is so, proceeds Habermas, despite Weber's "culturalist position." Such a position "requires that for every *form* of rationality it is possible to specify *on the same level* at least one abstract point of view from which this form could at the same time be described as 'irrational.'"[52] He thus charges that Weber admits to a "universalist" as much as "culturalist" view of rationality, hinting at a possible tension that might at least undermine

rationality's technical push toward universalism. Habermas rebuffs this prospect, however, since he claims Weber ultimately gauges the "progress" of these cultural spheres "by the culture-invariant of successful disposition over natural and social processes encountered as something in the objective world."[53] Habermas critiques the flawed "universalist" design of Weber's theory of purposive-rationality. He does so, not for the sake of expelling it from contemporary theorizing, but for the sake of reclaiming the "culturalist" traits that linger within the worldly scope of theory.

The discrepancy between the universal scope of rationality and its particular cultural manifestations marks Habermas's chief point of contention with Weber. He attributes this flaw to Weber's narrow methodological view of the "universal-historical process of rationalization." It is a view that "takes into consideration the *horizon of possibilities* opened by the modern understanding of the world *only* to the extent that it serves to explain the core phenomenon he [Weber] identified in advance."[54] In short, the weakness in Weber's theory of rationality is such that he elevates the idea of universal rationalization over the empirical evidence that might refute it. "Thus," says Habermas, "Weber starts *immediately* from the actually existing forms of Occidental rationalism, without viewing them against the counterfactually projected possibilities of

a rationalized lifeworld."[55] By failing to assess universal rationalization against the empirical signs that defy it, Weber ignores the culturally nuanced variants of rationality. They are the variants of science, politics, religion, aesthetics, and the economy that take shape in distinct and separate value spheres despite a shared normative duty to means-end rational thinking. Thus, Weber appears to ignore a profound rift between his theory of rationalization and its practical and empirical forms in the cultural spheres of modern society. These oversights, or what Habermas calls the "repressed problems" in Weber's theoretical project, make themselves known when they "turn up again" in Weber's "reflections on the state of our times."[56]

What troubles Habermas most about Weber's project is not the foreshadowing of a "disenchanted" society indicative of the increasing depletion of individual autonomy. Rather, it has to do with Weber's problematic postulate of universal rationalization which undergirds this bleak depiction of modern society. On the one hand, Habermas notes how Weber "sees the sign of the age in the return of a new polytheism, in which the struggle among the gods takes on the depersonified, objectified form of an antagonism among irreducible orders of value and life."[57] Hence, Weber points to his "culturalist" notion of purposive rationality, even though its "universalist" design precludes, in theory,

such a struggle by mandating the same "*formal properties*" for all value spheres. On the other hand, Habermas notes how Weber sees rationalization as a "threat" to a person's "inner autonomy," since "within modern society there is no longer any legitimate order that could guarantee the cultural reproduction of the corresponding value orientations and action dispositions."[58] Thus, Weber denotes the "universalist" reach of purposive rationality, even though its "culturalist" traits demonstrate, in practice, a capacity to inscribe a disenchanted world with myriad of values. Given this theoretical tension in Weber's thinking, Habermas doubts Weber's view of "disenchantment" and its role in the depletion of an individual's autonomy.

I believe that the main problem with Habermas's critique of Weber exists, therefore, in a form other than his dismay at the "rational" depletion of an individual's autonomy. It appears in Habermas's alarm over the divide in Weber's thinking, between his "universalist" design of rationalization and his empirical confirmation of its "culturalist" displays in modern society. He rebukes Weber for failing to "engage in counterfactual reflections," such that they aid him in clarifying the discrepancies in his theoretical approach to rationality and rationalization. However, Habermas's critique makes its own push toward universalism in that he claims "Weber considers societal rationalization explicitly from the perspective of purposive

rationality. At the level of institutions, he does not apply the comprehensive concept of rationality upon which he bases his investigations of cultural tradition."[59] Habermas rarely delves into Weber's less sociological works to spur the "counterfactual reflections" that might reveal a more contentious view of rationalization. In fact, Weber's view of the institutions of science and politics would confirm that rationalization, though "purposive" in its design, still encounters persons who infuse rationality with "substantive" values. In this way, the divide between his theory of rationalization and its cultural manifestations in the modern lifeworld appears less spacious than Habermas perceives it to be. It appears cramped, suggesting that Weber's notion of rationalization underscores the clash between its theory and practice in the modern world.[60]

As a rejoinder to the limits of Weber's theory of rationalization, Habermas conjectures of course a theory of communicative action. The purpose of this rejoinder is to "mobilize the rationality potential...expressly for the cooperatively pursued goal of reaching understanding."[61] Yet, I think Habermas's response is a problematic one, in that he seeks to resurrect "rationality" from the ruins of Weber's theoretical enterprise. By positing action on a theory of communicative "rationality" Habermas seeks to marry what Weber divorces: theory and practice. He replaces purposive rationality, which presumes a means-end dichotomy,

with a communicative rationality that reflects "the intersubjective relation" between objects, subjects, and their shared social world. In other words, communicative rationality denotes "a concept expressing the interconnection of those moments of reason that become separated in the modern world."[62] Given this theoretical ambition, Habermas clearly diverges from Weber's enterprise. But in doing so, he postulates an overarching ideal that indicates a universal language, such that it orchestrates relations between differing subjects, differing value spheres, and the differing practical actions of daily life. A problem surfaces, therefore, not solely in the universal overture of communicative rationality. It surfaces in Habermas's desire to obviate the divide between contentious interpretations of the lifeworld.

Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action thus possesses another problematic dimension. This problem surfaces, I believe, insofar as "process of reaching understanding" presupposes an idea of rationality that spurs dialogue across seemingly incommensurable value spheres. Habermas claims "the interpretive accomplishments on which cooperative processes of interpretation are based represent the mechanism for *coordinating* action."[63] He is also quick to claim that "communicative action is *not exhausted* by the act of reaching understanding in an interpretative manner."[64] Hence, Habermas declares his "communicative"

project an open-ended one, anticipating the prospects of modification, clarification, and reinterpretation that correspond to the "process" of human communication. Despite these conditions, Habermas maintains a theoretical commitment to "understanding," which "refers to communication aimed at achieving a valid agreement."[65] This end point of agreement, at which a theory of communicative action aims, may include change and reinterpretation, but only insofar as they advance the goal of rational agreement. The prospect of disagreement, of an incongruity between interpretations of the lifeworld, seems perfunctory within--if not entirely absent from--Habermas's theory of communicative action.

In light of these theoretical tensions, I think it is apparent that Habermas's critical view of Weber leaves a lot to be desired. His view of Weber's idea of rationality, though accurate in its detection of a rift between theory and practice, responds with a theory of "communicative" rationality that, like Weber's, reveals a universalist ambition. Thus, where Weber's theory of rationality affords a critical gap in which to judge the degrees of disagreement between theory and practice, Habermas's theory of communicative rationality engenders a march toward linguistic understanding and agreement. This aversion to theoretical discrepancies, human conflicts, and differing perceptions of the world reveals, I contend, not only the

universal reach of Habermas's project. I believe it also reveals how his theory of communicative action disarms the oppositional and quarrelsome traits of human interaction, relinquishing the prospect of difference for the sake of a coordinated understanding. These traits are especially indicative of scholars and politicians, who, in very different ways, strive for clarity and understanding but who still value the creative contingencies lingering in human disagreements and misunderstandings. Indeed, they often stem from an unquestioning commitment to purposive rationality. But they also derive from the substantive values that correspond to and influence rationality, in either its purposive or communicative form. Given Habermas's staunch commitment to "rational" understanding, I thus perceive the prospects of a dialogue between contentious interpretations, between theory and practice, to be limited by the overarching quest for a singular notion of understanding. His idea of "communicative action" does not merge theory and practice as much as nullify their distinctions, which provoke multiple dialogues about the meaning of the contemporary lifeworld.

Foucault and the Power of Theory

Unlike Jürgen Habermas, who directly contests Max Weber's theory of rationality, Michel Foucault approaches Weber's theoretical corpus in a more oblique manner. "I

don't think I am a Weberian," Foucault once remarked at a roundtable talk with other European intellectuals, "since my basic preoccupation isn't rationality considered as an anthropological invariant."[66] Like Habermas, he spurns Weber's theory of rationality in that it, not only posits "an absolute value inherent in reason," but uses "the term empirically in a completely arbitrary way."[67] Foucault departs from Habermas, though, when he relegates rationality "to an instrumental and relative meaning," choosing instead "to resituate the production of true and false at the heart of historical analysis and political critique."[68] By turning away from Weber's theory of rationality, Foucault moves closer to a critique of the "production of truth," a locution for power he ascribes to the likes of philosophers, psychiatrists, and political statesmen. Foucault reveals his connection to Weber insofar as he rejects the structural rigidity undergirding Weber's idea of rationality.

I therefore contend that the focus of Foucault's critique of Weber is not the idea of rationality *per se*, but the rational "truths" that support it and Weber's legacy in contemporary political theory. Indeed, Foucault is not interested in the "difference...between the purity of the ideal and the disorderly impurity of the real."[69] As it relates to Weber's idea of rationality, he is more interested in the "different strategies...which can perfectly well be understood in terms of their rationality,

even though they don't conform to the initial programming."[70] Rationality thus represents a departure point for Foucault, spurring a critique from the standpoint of such traits as madness, sexuality, and discipline which defy the theoretical structure of the ideal in question. Given this critique of the structural limits of theory, Foucault obscures the fine lines that divide the rational from the irrational, science from politics, theory from practice. Accordingly, I believe that Foucault's critical project entails a rethinking of the rationality that braces the discourse of contemporary political theory. However, this "strategy" is somewhat problematic. For I further contend that, insofar as he rethinks the rationality of theory, Foucault politicizes theory more than he theorizes a distinct notion of politics.[71]

Many of Foucault's early writings--notably his structural inquiries into insanity, the human sciences, and the prison--tend to stress the philosophical impact of Enlightenment thinking. In "What is Enlightenment," Foucault outlines a philosophical tradition stretching from Kant in the 18th century to his own theoretical aims at the end of the 20th century. Drawing on Kant's own essay of the same title, Foucault locates Kant's Enlightenment legacy "at the crossroads of critical reflection and reflection on history. It is a reflection by Kant on the contemporary status of his own enterprise."[72] Foucault thus also claims

that Kant's interpretation of *Aufklärung* confronts contemporary thinkers with a difficult choice. He underscores this choice in a 1983 lecture entitled "The Art of Telling the Truth." Since Kant, Foucault charges, modern thinkers "may opt for a critical philosophy that will present itself as an analytic philosophy of truth in general" or "a critical thought that will take the form of an ontology of ourselves, an ontology of the present."[73] Kant's Enlightenment thinking obliges modernity to work toward either "true knowledge" or a critique of "truth" as the basis of the alleged reality of the present. It is the latter project that, says Foucault, "has founded a form of reflection in which I have tried to work."[74]

The chief aim of Foucault's theoretical enterprise manifests itself in a critique, not of a metaphysical past or future, but of the historical present. Again, with regard to Kant's essay on "What is Enlightenment," Foucault claims that its uniqueness appears in "a reflection by Kant on the contemporary status of his own enterprise."[75] Rather than sustain a philosophical search for truth, Kant affords the philosopher an alternative type of inquiry which scrutinizes the enterprise of philosophy itself. This inquiry unfolds relative to something other than the metaphysical ambitions of philosophy, ambitions that reach from the ancient Greeks to the modern Europeans and decree a philosophical uniformity between past and present. "It is,"

Foucault states, "in the reflection on 'today' as difference in history and as motive for a particular philosophical task that the novelty of this text appears to me to lie."[76] Thus, Foucault's theoretical project takes shape in a critical disposition outside, but in relation to, the transhistorical confines of modern philosophy. Its target is not the metaphysical design of truth, justice, or beauty *per se*, but the contemporary practices of a philosophical tradition that perpetuate them.

Michel Foucault's project demonstrates the extent to which Kant's idea of Enlightenment informs his own desire to think against modern philosophy and its contemporary legacy. But to think against philosophy does not necessarily mean one must discard or ignore its historical impact on the present. After all the production of "truths" and "true knowledge," which extend beyond mere statements to include an intricate web of established practices, represents the departure point of Foucault's project. Indeed, Foucault "problematizes" more than "man's historical mode of being, and the constitution of the self as an autonomous subject," a task that affirms his commitment to a modern notion of "philosophical interrogation."[77] He also seeks to prompt "the permanent reactivation of an attitude...a philosophical ethos that could be described as a permanent critique of our historical era," confirming his desire to think against the project of modern philosophy.[78] Consequently, Foucault's

critical task signifies at least two unsettling components, both of which contest the established practice of philosophy. The first has to do with its critical orientation "toward what is not or no longer indispensable for the constitution of ourselves as autonomous subjects."[79] The other, which issues from the first, entails a recasting of "the critique conducted in the form of necessary limitation into a practical critique that takes the form of a possible transgression."[80] In other words, each element targets the ontological foundations of contemporary philosophy: subjectivity and necessity.

Countering the Enlightenment's sway over philosophy, Foucault contests the legacy that perpetuates necessary "truths" about past and future notions of human subjectivity. "The critical ontology of ourselves," concludes Foucault, "has to be conceived as...a philosophical life in which the critique of what we are is at one and the same time the historical analysis of the limits that are imposed on us and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them."[81] This critique of present-day philosophy, however, indicates a narrowing of the theoretical scope of the philosophical enterprise. It is one thing to heed Foucault's claim that an "escape from the system of contemporary reality" for the sake of "another way of thinking...has led only to the return of the most dangerous traditions."[82] It is another thing altogether to

heed his claim that "the critical ontology of ourselves" constitutes a "work carried out by ourselves upon ourselves as free beings."[83] The problem with this last point is not, I believe, one that concerns Foucault's critical desire to broaden the philosophical issue of human freedom. Rather, I think the problem lies in his desire to localize the critical force of philosophy against itself. His critical ontology thus points to a fruitful turbulence within the enterprise of contemporary philosophy, but I am not sure if it engenders a compelling theory of politics.[84] This problem becomes more apparent in Foucault's examination of The History of Sexuality.

Michel Foucault's chief task in The History of Sexuality involves discerning what is typically understood to be sex from that which he perceives to be the discourse of sexuality. Put differently, his theoretical concern is not the degree to which persons indulge in or abstain from sex. Nor is he interested in the manifold interpretations of sex as they reveal themselves in history and across cultures. According to Foucault, the "central issue" is "to account for the fact that it is spoken about...What is at issue, briefly, is the over-all 'discursive fact,' the way in which sex is 'put into discourse.'"[85] His exploration thus entails something more than sex; it entails, too, the relationships of power that correspond to sex. He explores the language of the persons who talk about sex. He

investigates the institutions that sustain these persons as well as archive and disseminate their discourses. More important, he contends that the seemingly indefinite qualities of sex give way, over time, to the peculiar discourse of sexuality. "Under the authority of a language that had been carefully expurgated so that it was no longer directly named," Foucault charges, "sex was taken charge of, tracked down as it were, by a discourse that aimed to allow it no obscurity, no respite."[86] Hence, the critical force of his exploration takes aim at the discourse of sexuality, which is another way of saying it targets the marriage of sex and power.

The discursive structures underlying the expansion of sexuality confirm, therefore, not the repression of sexual pleasure, but its stimulation within technically advanced societies. Foucault contests a Freudian tradition which posits the productive capacities of society on the repression of sexual desire, pleasure, and excess--traits that, it was thought, distracted persons from more socially virtuous pursuits. "We must...abandon," he charges, "the hypothesis that modern industrial societies ushered in an age of increased sexual repression."[87] He justifies this claim insofar as history and, more important, discourse reveal something other than a modern technological denial of pleasure, or vice-versa. Indeed, as far as Foucault is concerned, "[p]leasure and power do not cancel or turn back

against one another; they seek out, overlap, and reinforce one another. They are linked together by complex mechanisms and devices of excitation and incitement."[88] Accordingly, he perceives the expansion of sexuality inasmuch as the institutions of science, law, the state, and the economy forge discourses from, ironically, their attempt to moderate and control it. "We have not only witnessed a visible explosion of unorthodox sexualities," remarks Foucault. But, he continues, we have seen also "a deployment quite different from the law" of repression, one that "has ensured...the proliferation of specific pleasures and the multiplication of disparate sexualities."[89] Sexual pleasure has not been diminished in the least; it has been transformed and amplified in conjunction with power.

As a result of this discursive ordering of sexuality, Foucault contends that an affirmation of the human body and subjectivity constitutes the primary duty of modern institutions. Again, he challenges an essential precept of modern political thinking, one that postulates fear and violence as the chief means that link rulers and ruled. Corresponding to the expansion of sexuality, what took shape "was a political ordering of life, not through an enslavement of others, but through an affirmation of self."[90] Modern power thus converts from a source of pain, consternation, and suffering into one of possible pleasure. It reveals a multi-faceted character, furthermore, that has

learned how to control subjects by knowing and caring for their many pleasures rather than by modifying them into objects of technical force. According to Foucault, modern power "provided itself with a body to be cared for, protected, cultivated, and preserved from the many dangers and contacts, to be isolated from others so that it would retain its differential value."[91] Sexuality appears to augment political power, extending its reach below the exterior of subjects and into their precarious biological and emotional environs. It demonstrates, too, the degree to which Foucault's critique disrupts the modern theoretical approach to political power.[92]

Michel Foucault's critique of sexuality theorizes, therefore, not so much an agency of power that negates life, but one that controls it by administering human desires and bodily pleasures. "Power," he charges, is no longer concerned with "legal subjects over whom the ultimate dominion [is] death, but with living beings, and the mastery it would...exercise over them would have to be applied at the level of life itself."[93] A theory of politics, however, or a set of human practices (discursive or otherwise) which strive to acquire, maintain, or contest this power over life, appears absent from Foucault's exploration of sexuality. It is clear that "life" plays a central role in his view of politics, especially when he claims that "modern man is an animal whose politics places

his existence as a living being in question."[94] What is not so clear is the theoretical design Foucault ascribes to the politics and "political struggles" that correspond to this questioning of life, pleasures, needs, rights, or sense of happiness. He establishes the discursive controls of sexuality such that they manifest themselves in, say, laws against sodomy, scholarship on deviance, or the shifting demographics of pregnancy. He also confirms the conversion of power over death into a power over life. Yet, I believe Foucault fails to explicate a political nexus between discourse and power, such that the critique of "truths" moves beyond the pinched realm of archivists, psychologists, administrators, and scholars.

In his work on "governmentality," though, Foucault tries to flesh out a theory of politics that highlights the provocative bond between discourse and power. Moreover, it represents his most direct confrontation with the theoretical legacy of Max Weber. Departing from a tradition of thinking that stretches from Machiavelli to Weber, Foucault rejects the claim that violence constitutes the essential ground of political power. Unlike his view of power in The History of Sexuality, where he ascribes it to a web of discursive institutions, Foucault's view of "governmentality" locates power in one specific discursive practice. In his essay on "The Subject and Power," Foucault stresses how "power is less a confrontation between two

adversaries or the linking of one to the other than a question of government."[95] Power entails, he continues, "guiding the possibility of conduct and putting in order the possible outcome."[96] Foucault thus moves beyond, say, Machiavelli's notion of princely "*virtù*," Hobbes's idea of forceful "covenants," or Weber's claim about the state's "*monopoly of legitimate physical violence*." Indeed, he seeks to reveal something different about power. He points to "the possible field of action of others" whereby "free subjects" confront "government," the chief aim of which is to direct the various conducts of individuals and groups. He seeks a notion of power that cannot "be sought on the side of violence or of struggle, nor on that of voluntary linking...but rather in the area of the singular mode of action...which is government."[97]

The more interesting element of Foucault's idea of governmentality concerns the degree to which he grounds it on antecedents other than those of a political design. He contends, rather, that it emerges in conjunction with specific economic practices. In his 1978 lecture on "Governmentality," Foucault draws on the 16th century literary quarrels surrounding Machiavelli's publication of The Prince to support his claim. "The art of government," he notes, referring to Machiavelli and, later, La Mothe Le Vayer, "is essentially concerned with answering the question of how to introduce economy...how to introduce this

meticulous attention of the father towards his family into the management of the state."[98] More specifically, Foucault is interested in the economy as it reveals a paternal component indicative of administering the possible actions of children, wives, mistresses, wealth, and other relevant "resources." In light of these familial intrusions into the field of power, he further contends that, by the 18th century, the discourse of government prioritizes the value of economy. Relying on Rousseau and the Physiocrat Quesnay, Foucault notes how the "word 'economy'" begins to signify not only "a level of reality" but, more important, "a field of intervention" which broadens the discursive scope of government.[99] The discourse of government reveals a managerial quality distinct from that of physical violence or legal contracts.

Given the economic discourse of governmentality, Foucault rejects the idea of the modern state as an agency defined by its functional unity and political totality. He again contests both Weber and the foundations of modern political theory, claiming that "the state is no more than a composite reality and a mythicized abstraction, whose importance is a lot more limited than many of us think. Maybe what is really important...for our present...is not so much the *etatisation* of society, as the 'governmentalization' of the state."[100] By "*etatisation* of society," Foucault refers to the ever-increasing

functionality of the state to dominate and manage the multitude of desires that compose modern society. Yet he also refers to the state inasmuch as its functional reach becomes the "target" of opposition, thanks to those persons who perceive themselves to be the opponents of the state's impersonal force. Hence, he departs from a feature that is central to Weber's notion of a bureaucratic state, Marx's idea of bourgeois state, and even Hegel's theoretical depiction of an Enlightened state.[101] The "governmentalization of the state is...the only real space for political struggle and contestation," since "it is the tactics of government which make possible the continual definition and redefinition of what is within the competence of the state and what is not."[102] The totality of the state is thus a fiction as long as government inscribes it with a discourse that reflects, not only free subjects, but free subjects who challenge the discursive boundaries of the government.

With his theory of governmentality, Foucault underscores neither a monolith of total power nor the absence of human freedom. Rather, he points to the fissures that characterize the modern concept of power, such that they undermine any reach for totality and the negation of human freedom. Again, in his lecture on "The Subject and Power," Foucault reminds us that "[a]t the very heart of the power relationship, and constantly provoking it, are the

calcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom."[103] Though he alludes to governmentality as the chief source of modern political struggles, Foucault still fails to explain its theoretical design. The most he provides is a reference to "'agonism'," or what he calls "a relationship which is at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle; less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyzes both sides than a permanent provocation."[104] His idea of governmentality, therefore, points to a theoretical space in which the agon of politics occurs. However, I think this agon tends to advance not the aim of politics, which possibly imperils the structure of government, but the aim of government itself, which entails the power to constrain the prospects of politics. In other words, Foucault's idea of agonistic politics appears anchored to the structures and discourses of government rather than the discourses of an agon which might reveal a differing notion of politics. Hence he not only falls short of theorizing a politics, but he appears to deviate from his desire to augment the discourses of governmentality.

I thus believe Foucault's idea of agonism reveals, at best, a "political task" whereby a person partakes in "the analysis, elaboration, and bringing into question" the "governmental" desire to administer human conduct. Yet, his theoretical insights into the agon still presuppose the necessity of a governmental discourse, suggesting that he

not only views government as "indispensable" but constrains the discursive field of "possible transgression." In this way, Foucault offers us little in the way of thinking against the very modern liberal democratic institutions that constitute contemporary politics. Indeed, with the exception of his recasting of "power" in terms of life over death, he appears to validate their pluralistic structures and ambitions. At its worst, moreover, I believe Foucault's idea of agonism indicates a narrow field of "strategies" that push toward the aim of power at the risk of diminishing the prospect of resistance. The is the case, not only because he posits government as the primary site of agonism, but because he postulates power as the primary ambition of agonistic politics. Though a reach for power may "provoke" a desire to resist it, recalling James Madison's warning that "[a]mbition must be made to counteract ambition," Foucault's theory of agonism nonetheless elevates the goal of power over all others. Thus, Foucault's critical enterprise reveals a theory of politics. The question remains, however, whether it stems from a "critical ontology of ourselves" or echoes an affirmation of "man's historical mode of being."

Michel Foucault confirms how Kant's Enlightenment thinking turns against its own rational aspirations, suggesting that thought itself might reveal the limits of public power. He explained, too, how the discourses of

sexuality constitute a novel approach to "bio-power": the administrative expansion of human desires and bodily pleasures. Even his approach to "governmentality" documents the degree to which power represents a clash between willful subjects and the disciplinary aims of government. But Foucault, whose theoretical aim is to advance a "critical ontology of ourselves," tends to underscore the traits of historical "others" rather than the theoretical limits of contemporary politics. This is not to say his project lacks a critique of the way theorists approach the subject of politics. Nor does it mean his project lacks a differing approach to thinking about politics. Instead, I think Foucault demonstrates the extent to which his critique engenders, not so much a theory of politics *per se*, but a politics that impacts the enterprise of political theory. This impact appears in his own thinking against the allegedly "indispensable" discourses of rational "truth," "sexuality," and "government." But it is most evident in that Foucault's project adheres to an scholarly discourse, which disrupts the meaning of theory yet still affirms the pluralist aim of a liberal political practice.

Adorno and the Dialectics of Theory

Max Weber's impact on the early members of the Frankfurt School at the *Institut für Sozialfurschung* spurred neither a "critical ontology of ourselves" nor a theory of

"inter-subjectivity." What Weber did contribute to the "critical theories" of Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, and Theodor Adorno, among others, was their interest in his idea of rationalization.[105] In various ways, each thinker appropriated Weber's idea insofar as it posited the dominant role of "*Zweckrationalität*" under industrial capitalism. They also departed from his idea of rationalization, given what they percieved to be Weber's intellectual surrender to market capitalism, bourgeois political institutions, and scientific positivism. The last of these limits is the one Adorno tends to stress in Dialectic of Enlightenment, Minima Moralia, and Negative Dialectics.[106]

The chief issue that spurs Theodor Adorno's critique of scientific positivism derives from a legacy he inherited, not only from Weber, but principally from Hegel and Marx. That legacy involves the troubled ties between theory and practice. In Minima Moralia, for instance, Adorno perceives the rational push of positivism as a force that has "set aside" Utopia and "demanded" the transparency of theory and practice. Consequently, he believes "we have become all too practical. Fear of the impotence of theory supplies a pretext for bowing to the almighty production process, and so fully admitting the impotence of theory."[107] The thrust of Adorno's project surfaces, therefore, in an attempt to rescue theory from the empirical and instrumental advance of rational practice, which he thinks gradually annihilates the

critical force of theory. In Negative Dialectics, Adorno even turns to the "positivistic" scholarship of Weber, seizing what he calls "constellations" for "the conversion into objectivity, by way language, of what has been subjectively thought and assembled."[108] He seeks to promote a tension between theory and practice, one that validates the critical power of theory while it subverts the totalizing grasp of practice. I contend, however, that though Adorno's enterprise points to the fruitful mix of theory and practice in "constellations," it still leaves the "critical" theorist detached from any vital encounter with the practice of politics.[109] This becomes apparent, I further charge, inasmuch as Adorno's project of "negative dialectics" postulates a "totality" that obviates, not only theory, but any such theoretical task that seeks to subvert the cultural dominance of rational practice.[110]

Like Michel Foucault who succeeded him, Adorno locates the flaw of modern philosophy in the achievements of Enlightenment thinking. Yet, where Foucault finds a thriving "philosophical ethos" in the Enlightenment, Adorno locates quite the opposite.[111] One of his chief contentions in Dialectic of Enlightenment turns on the claim that Enlightenment thinking contradicts its own emancipatory ambitions. "Men," Adorno explains, referring to the Enlightenment's anthropological underpinnings, "have always had to choose between their subjection to nature or the

subjection of nature to the Self."[112] Given this rigid choice, he further notes that "[t]he essence of enlightenment is the alternative whose ineradicability is that of domination."[113] Of course, modern man opts for the second choice, dominating nature in a way that allows him to transform the world from a place of subjective apprehension and ignorance to one of objective order and empirical truth. Despite this "rational" orchestration, man's "enlightened" path is not necessarily paved with the glowing remnants of his liberation from nature. "With the extension of the bourgeois commodity economy," counters Adorno, "the dark horizon of myth is illumined by the sun of calculating reason, beneath whose cold rays the seed of the new barbarism grows to fruition."[114] For Adorno the Enlightenment represents, therefore, not just the growth of man's subjective sovereignty, but also its complicity in the social and cultural displays of rational domination.

In light of this paradox, Adorno details the extent to which man's rational liberation from nature reveals the eradication of one's own treasured subjectivity. By using reason to control the contingencies of nature and secure the end of self-preservation, man gains an objective knowledge of the natural world around him. Man does so, however, at the cost of neglecting the nature of his own subjectivity. "As soon as man discards his awareness that he himself is nature," Adorno charges, "all the aims for which he keeps

himself alive--social progress, the intensification of all his material and spiritual powers, even consciousness itself--are nullified."[115] They are nullified because the means of instrumental reason supersede the ultimate goal of self-preservation. Consequently, man renounces the very elements of his nature that defy reason: passion, indeterminacy, chance. "Man's domination over himself," claims Adorno, "is almost always the destruction of the subject in whose service it is undertaken."[116] This eradication of subjectivity thus derives not solely from man's technical control of the objective elements of nature. It occurs because "the substance which is dominated, suppressed, and dissolved by virtue of self-preservation is none other than that very life as functions of which the achievements of self-preservation find their sole definition and determination."[117] Hence, man's struggle to free himself from the "irrational" elements of the world underscores more than just his technical control of nature. Integral to Adorno's project, it also accentuates man's gradual depletion of the human desires, ideals, stories, and theoretical ambitions that stem from incalculable sources.

Theodor Adorno contends that the profound distinction of Enlightenment thinking thus manifests itself, not in the growth of human thought, but in the dissipation of its critical faculties. If the Enlightenment cannot move beyond the confines of instrumental reason, then modern thought

entails far more than the renunciation of nature and human subjectivity. According to Adorno, it assumes the "reified form of mathematics, machine, and organization," confirming the degree to which thinking "avenges itself" on the persons who comprise modern society and culture.[118] Indeed, in that the Enlightenment took "everything unique and individual under its tutelage, it left the uncomprehended whole the freedom, as domination, to strike back at human existence and consciousness by way of things."[119] To envision a manner of thinking beyond instrumental reason, beyond the empirical objectification of nature--including one's own subjective self--is thus unfathomable. Adorno refers to such thinking as "the oppressor's fortress," a narrow domain in "which even revolutionary imagination despises itself as utopism and decays to the condition of pliable trust in the objective tendency of history."[120] Its architecture shields man and reason from irrationality. Yet, by shielding both, Enlightenment thinking obstructs the view of the world beyond the fortress, beyond the clutches of instrumental reason.

Judging from Adorno's Dialectic of Enlightenment, modern society appears to leave little--if any--critical space within which persons might theorize against instrumental reason. This is evident in his notion of the "culture industry," which reflects the subordination of "all areas of intellectual creation" to the "same end" of

Zweckrationalität. It demonstrates how thinking aspires to a cultural uniformity that, not only affirms the consequent commodity of reason, but soothes the persons who make themselves numb within the bourgeois system of commodity capitalism. "What is decisive today," notes Adorno, "is the necessity inherent in the system not to leave the customer alone, not for a moment to allow him any suspicion that resistance is possible."[121] The confines of society become increasingly rigid and narrow given the absence of theoretical prospects that provide a countervailing force against the "totality" of the culture industry. However, I think the extent to which Adorno posits this "totality" on a human duty to the "same end" marks the limit of his own thinking in Dialectic of Enlightenment. If Enlightenment thinking obviates critical resistance, if it "dictates" that man's "needs should be so predetermined that he feels himself to be the eternal consumer,"[122] then Adorno's project can only follow one of two paths. His project manifests itself either as a critique of Enlightenment, which in turn possibly foils the claim of "totality," or as another entertaining product of the culture industry, which nullifies its critical impact. In either case, the force of Adorno's project appears constrained by its own theoretical designs.

If there is an effective force behind Adorno's theoretical approach, it appears in his critique of modern

science. He outlines this particular task in Minima Moralia, a series of aphorisms through which he formulates a notion of "dialectical thought." It constitutes his critical charge against what he believes to be the most perilous repercussion of the Enlightenment: the reified thinking of scientific positivism. Like the Dialectic of Enlightenment, Adorno's task in Minima Moralia involves a critique of instrumental reason as it reflects, not only the uniformity of human subjectivity, but the scientific objectification of human experience. This latter trait, by which a "hardened plaster-cast of events take the place of events themselves," represents Adorno's understanding of reification. Reification signifies the positivist tendency of modern science, a tendency that exalts the empirical design of objects as the genuine embodiment of human subjectivity. Countering this naive and dehumanizing drift, Adorno rejects not only "the last traces of a deductive system, together with the last advocatory gestures of thought. Dialectical thought opposes reification in the further sense that it refuses to affirm individual things in their isolation and separateness: it designates isolation as precisely a product of the universal."[123] Accordingly, Adorno theorizes a "dialectical" perception of the world that thinks against the modern reified mind, which, he says, "pays for its absolute judgements by loss of the experience of the matter judged."[124]

In this way Adorno stresses the chief shortcoming of positivism and reification: the lack of "distance" between thinking subjects and empirical objects. He locates this shortcoming in the false transparency between human experience and methodological representations. As a theorist, Adorno struggles to think against this instrumental muddying of the philosophical waters, so to speak, advocating an infusion of critical "gaps" between subjects and objects. The "value of thought," he states, highlighting the flaws of reification, "is objectively devalued as this distance is reduced; the more it approximates to the preexisting standard, the further its antithetical function is diminished."[125] Thus, for Adorno, locating the gaps that exhibit the differences between diverse subjects and empirical objects, represents an integral element of the "dialectical" enterprise. Contrary to the "totality" toward which positivism and reification lean, Adorno contends that "knowledge comes to us through a network of prejudices, opinions, innervation, self-corrections, presuppositions and exaggerations."[126] Equally important, it comes to us "through the dense, firmly-founded but by no means uniformly transparent medium of experience."[127] If there is a way to resist the "totality" of Enlightenment thinking, to resist reified thinking, it occurs through the act of theorizing the oppositional distinctions between subjects and objects.

Dialectical thought symbolizes Adorno's attempt to counteract the expansion of reified thinking with increasing degrees of theoretical distance.[128] Indeed, his notion of critical theory postulates a degree of dissonance between thinking and the facts that correspond to it. According to Adorno, thought "relates to facts and moves by criticizing them, its movement depends no less on the maintenance of distance. It expresses exactly what is, precisely because what is never quite as thought expresses it."[129] The enterprise of critical theory finds its most provocative voice in revealing the philosophical limits of the culture industry and the quests for reification that nurture its totality. As a consequence of this enterprise, Adorno reveals a distinct theoretical approach to thinking and being in the modern world. "Distance is not a safety-zone," he cautions, "but a field of tension," a place "to prove, by criticism of knowledge, the impossibility of a coincidence between the idea and what fulfills it."[130] In Minima Moralia, Adorno's critical task seeks to reject outright the totalizing aims of reified thought, countering it with a theory that differentiates the absolute yet fragile bounds of the culture industry. He seeks to theorize not only a view different from that of modernity's reach for totality, but a way of thinking that relates to totality from an oppositional locality.

The consequences of this distance do not appear in a simple Cartesian divide between thinking subjects and empirical objects. They appear, according to Adorno, in the critical space that rejects the totality of reified thought. Within this space, critical thinkers do not theorize alternative or utopian paths to Enlightenment thinking and the culture industry. Rather, they theorize in ways "that displace and estrange the world, reveal it to be, with its rifts and crevices, as indigent and distorted as it will appear one day in the messianic light."[131] However, Adorno is well aware of the obstacles facing the theorist who chooses to inhabit this space. In fact, he declares that a "dialectic" approach to theorizing "is also the utterly impossible thing, because it presupposes a standpoint removed, even though by a hair's breadth, from the scope of existence."[132] Hence, Adorno's theory of dialectics confronts something other than a totalizing culture industry, the aim of which nullifies theoretical strategies of resistance. It also encounters a distance that, despite its pledge of a fruitful clash between theory and practice, still situates dialectical thinking within reach of the culture industry. Therefore all thought, even Adorno's dialectics, appears "marked...by the same distortion and indigence which it seeks to escape."[133] Given this postulate of "distance," I think it is again evident that Adorno's quest to circumvent the practical reach of

Enlightenment thinking fails to evade its fundamentally invasive drift. If Adorno hopes to promote a critical theory at odds with the culture industry, he must rethink the "gaps" between such differing environs.

His rejoinder to this theoretical inadequacy assumes its most definite shape in Negative Dialectics.[134] In this work Adorno delineates a problem that encompasses more than the reification of philosophical thought--i.e., the troubled bond between theory and practice. Adorno presumes that philosophy has "broken its pledge to be as one with reality or at the point of realization," rendering its new task as one that would "inquire whether and how there can still be a philosophy at all."[135] Based on this presumption, which he derives in part from the "historical" ruins of 20th-century fascism, capitalism, and Soviet Marxism, Adorno confirms the subservient relation of theory to practice.[136] "The call for unity of theory and practice," he repeats, "has irresistibly degraded theory to a servant's role, removing the very traits it should have brought to that unity."[137] The critical force of theory has been sacrificed for the sake of solidifying, say, claims to racial, ideological, or methodological superiority. It diminishes theory's capacity to countervail the ambitions of practice. In turn, Adorno renews his charge that practice is "nonconceptual," given that it lacks the critical distance by which to perceive distinctions between theory and practice, thus becoming what

he calls "the prey of power." As a consequence, he proposes to explore the idea of a "constellation in science," such that it holds in an ever-changing oppositional bond both critical theory and rational practice. "This is why," Adorno declares, "theory is legitimate and why it is hated."[138]

In Dialectic of Enlightenment and Minima Moralia, Adorno inscribes dialectics with the task of theorizing against the reified concepts of the culture industry, even though this totality tends to obviate such resistance. With Negative Dialectics, however, Adorno modifies the same task with a specific notion of theoretical constellations. In order to reinvigorate the critical force of theory, Adorno does not detach it entirely from practice, nor does he seeks to conflate each endeavor. Instead, he hopes to restore the tension between theory and practice by exploring thought in terms of constellations, "a knowledge mindful of the historic positional value of the object in its relation to other objects."[139] They represent Adorno's attempt to theorize beyond the rational concept reflected in the couplet of a thinking subject and an empirical object, to render both susceptible to more than one single interpretation. In doing so, he turns "to a scholar of so positivistic a bent as Max Weber, who did...understand 'ideal types' as aids in approaching the object, devoid of any inherent substantiality and capable of being reliquified

at will."[140] Drawing on Weber's notion of "'ideal types'" for the social and cultural sciences, Adorno claims he has found a way of thinking "beyond the alternative of positivism and idealism." Indeed, he contends that "a close look" at Weber's ideal types "will show that these...are not mere conceptual fixations. Rather, by gathering concepts round the central one that is sought, they attempt to express what that concept aims at, not to circumscribe it to operative ends."[141] In this way, constellations transform thinking from a technical instrument into a valued end, whereby the pursuit of totality encounters theoretical scrutiny.

The impact of thinking through constellations manifests itself in something more than a trace of subjectivity in otherwise wholly reified objects. It appears in the form of a contradiction, such that it frustrates the Enlightenment's rationally practical reach for a totalizing identity. By theorizing constellations, Adorno points to the possibility of thinking as something other than a conceptual validation of instrumental reason, something other than an absolute transparency between thinking subjects and empirical objects. He wants to emphasize "that objects do not go into their concepts without leaving a remainder, that they come to contradict the traditional norm of adequacy...the fact that the concept does not exhaust the thing conceived."[142] Adorno's approach to constellations thus reveals a type of

theoretical practice that, contrary to the totalizing identity of the culture industry, fixates on the fruitful contingencies of contradiction. "Contradiction is," Adorno states, "nonidentity under the aspect of identity; the dialectical primary of the principle of contradiction makes the thought of unity the measure of heterogeneity." Put simply, it provides the theorist not so much a particular perspective but a field of possibilities that defy any overture toward totality. Such contradictions, which derive from a constellation, promise that "the heterogeneous collides with its limit," allowing for a type of thought that "exceeds itself."[143]

The underlying ambition of Negative Dialectics surfaces, therefore, in Adorno's affirmation of theoretical prospects in the increasingly narrow design of the culture industry. Furthermore, the strength of this work is not so much Adorno's vexing diagnosis of modern philosophical thinking. Nor does it stem from his resuscitation of Weber's theory of ideal types, a thinker whom Adorno links to the Enlightenment's legacy of scientific positivism. Instead, I think the strength of Negative Dialectics is Adorno's belief that even though we may theorize in a critical manner, "the words we use will remain concepts. Their precision substitutes for the thing itself, without quite bringing its selfhood to mind; there is a gap between words and the thing they conjure."[144] Yet, the very

strength that corresponds to Adorno's theory of "constellations" also mirrors a significant flaw. It indicates a flaw, I believe, in that constellations presuppose not only the totality of the culture industry, but a strict divide between subjects and objects, theory and practice. Like Weber's theory of ideal types, Adorno's idea of constellations maintain an insightful tension that countervails any overture toward ideological and practical absolutism. Unlike Weber, though, who at most sought to contest the one-sided views of historical materialism and scientific positivism, Adorno seeks to contest a monolithic mind-set which encompasses all views. Thus, constellations may reveal the possible margins of Enlightenment thinking, but in turn they cannot avoid its certain assault against the design of constellations.

I would also argue that the critical distance between subjective expression and objective representation represents another weakness in Adorno's project. It does so by the fact that "negative dialectics" employs the promise of "possibility" to betray "a gap between words and the thing they conjure."[145] The very "possibility" of negative dialectics confirms, therefore, not just a challenge to the reifed grasp of the culture industry, but, more important, the dispersion of Adorno's postulate of "totality." In this way, Adorno finds himself in a theoretical bind. If Adorno presupposes the totalizing reach of Enlightenment thinking,

then he risks nullifying the critical force of negative dialectics. If he invests critical theory with a forceful element, an element indicative of constellations, then he risks dispelling the very totality that spurs negative dialectics in the first place. The other "possibility" lies between the totality of Enlightenment thinking and the force of negative dialectics, a prospect that compels theorists to question the presupposition of totality and the hope of negative dialectics. This prospect confirms, not so much the limit of Adorno's theory of negative dialectics, but its confinement to the practice of theory, thus revealing the subversion of his own philosophical enterprise.

The Contemporary Purpose of Political Theory

If Max Weber's theoretical corpus underscores anything about political thinking, it is that the rift between theory and practice remains an onerous obstacle for contemporary political theorists. It is evident in Adorno's idea of "dialectics," such that his desire to think against practical reason leaves him lacking either a "totality" to critique or a "critical theory" by which to resist it. Even Habermas, who seeks to mend the rift between theory and practice with "communicative reason," confronts a barrier by anchoring theory to the practical cause of "intersubjectivity." Finally, Foucault confronts an obstacle insofar as his theory of a "critical ontology"

tends to unsettle, not the practice of politics *per se*, but the practice of contemporary political theory. In each case, the divide between political theory and political practice remains intact.[146]

It is important to note, I think, that this divide spurs significant tensions in the work of Weber, Adorno, Habermas, and Foucault, tensions that reveal quite divergent views of political practice and theory. I have argued, furthermore, that such tensions do not diminish the political force of contemporary theory, nor do they invite the theorist into the practical routines of politics. Instead, I believe they provide insight to theorists who seek to rethink the critical purpose of contemporary political theory.[147] These insights appear in such scholarly ethics as Weber's appeal to "'inconvenient' facts," Foucault's request for "permanent provocation," Adorno's search for a "field of tension," and even Habermas's request for "a valid agreement." Given these insights, I would contend that the purpose of contemporary political theory is not so much to theorize a new type of political practice, nor to politicize the traditional enterprise of political theory. Rather, in light of the vexing rift between theory and practice, I perceive the critical purpose of contemporary political theory to be primarily an instructive one.[148] By instructive I mean that a theory of politics allows a theorists to challenge

the very value of political practice, inciting a discussion between theorists and others that disrupts the meaning of politics in theory as well as practice. Consequently, I contend that this sort of instruction divulges a theorist's particular approach to politics, scholarship, and ethics, an approach that engenders varied political implications.

The enterprise of contemporary political theory appears most provocative when an idea of politics confronts the empirical weight of political practice. This challenge is, I believe, the hallmark of Max Weber's theoretical enterprise.[149] It is evident in that he insists on postulating a theory of politics that directly opposes the given political landscape of Wilhelmine Germany. This oppositional proclivity is apparent at the outset of his theoretical endeavors, when, in his 1895 Freiburg address, he situates himself between Germany's provincial past and its idealized future. He rejects both the Prussian Junker's view of a "patriarchal" politics and the German proletariat's reach toward a "classless" politics. In fact, Weber even rebukes those growing voices who advocate the political project of liberal democracy, claiming that "the vital interests of the nation take precedence even over democracy or parliamentary rule."[150] Yet, he still underscores the necessity of democratic institutions, though he theorizes their design as an instrument of national power rather than a goal that might rival the German nation. Thus

Weber concedes that "if parliament were to fail and, as a result, the old system were to return, the consequences would be far-reaching indeed."[151] Given this difficult position between Germany's dying traditions and its fledgling reach toward the future, Weber's theory of politics provides more than an alternative to each political camp. It offers itself up as a force that unsettles the standard concepts of politics in Wilhelmine Germany.

In terms of Weber's theoretical successors, the more sanguine approach to theorizing comes from the work of Habermas. Indeed, he seeks to defy the instrumental drift of modern society and politics with a pluralistic notion of communicative action. His theoretical opposition to politics is more subtle than Weber's, a theorist who clearly and publicly articulates a notion of politics at odds with the historical drift toward liberal-democratic axioms. In theorizing a notion of communicative action, Habermas indirectly questions something other than the modern institutional design of liberal-democratic politics. He contests the philosophical postulates of a technically rational subjectivity, postulates that support such a contemporary political design.[152] He claims that "communicative reason does not simply encounter ready-made subjects and systems" which are the central tenets of liberal politics. Rather, he continues, "it takes part in structuring what is to be preserved," thus challenging

liberal-democratic politics to embrace a more fluid and participatory design.[153] His project, though, still tends to reach beyond the past and present limits of contemporary politics to embrace a utopian politics in which individual subjects strive for shared understandings rather than partisan differences. Ultimately, he seeks a notion of "subjectivity" that "resists the denaturing of the self for the sake of self-preservation...a symbolically structured lifeworld that is constituted in the interpretative accomplishments of its members and only reproduced through communication."[154] For this reason, Habermas's theoretical project of politics defies contemporary approaches to politics, not by critiquing them directly, but by reaching beyond them toward some utopian future.[155]

Michel Foucault's theoretical approach to politics is more intricate than Weber's and clearly more provocative than Habermas's. Indeed, Foucault's idea of power disputes the notion of a centralized or even disengaged agency, positing instead a provisional one in which various foes contest one another's schemes of domination.[156] Contrary to many contemporary forms of politics, which either affirm the state as the epitome of power or diagnose the citizen as a victim of it, Foucault envisions a politics in which those very forms constitute the source of conflict. He notes that "every intensification, every extension of power relations to make the insubordinate submit can only result in the

limits of power."[157] Yet this notion of decentralized power, I believe, is limited by something more than the ambiguities and vagaries of Foucault's lexicon. It is also limited by a subtle affinity with traditional notions of liberal democratic politics.[158] This is evident insofar as he declares that "between a relationship of power and a strategy of struggle there is a reciprocal appeal, a perpetual linking and a perpetual reversal. At every moment the relationship of power may become a confrontation between two adversaries."[159] Clearly, Foucault's theory of politics compels us to rethink the empirical designs of our contemporary commitment to liberal-democratic political institutions. The more important question is, however, whether a return to past notions of political "agonism" can bear fruit for contemporary politics rather than just for those persons who engage in the shifting discourses of political theory.

The often obscure theoretical endeavors of Adorno nevertheless clearly divulge, I believe, the principal theoretical challenge to the contemporary practice of politics. Like Weber in many ways, Adorno is honest enough to see the naive ambitions of a utopian design of politics, as well as the desperate turn toward the past for romanticized ideals of an agonistic democracy. His chief target is the politics of the present. His approach to politics "considers actual or imagined differences as

stigmas indicating that not enough has yet been done; that something has still been left outside its machinery, not quite determined by its totality."[160] This is not to say that his theoretical task, his dialectical opposition to the present state of politics, epitomizes the critical force of political theory. Indeed, an explicit theory of politics is absent from his understanding of critical theory. He simply states that politics "should point to the bad equality of today...and conceive the better state as one in which people could be different without fear."[161] Insofar as "dialectical thought" maintains critical "gaps" between a theory of politics and political practice, Adorno precludes a return to the past and discounts a reach to the future by struggling to remain in the present.

These contemporary acts of theorizing against politics thus signify, not a political practice *per se*, but a scholarly venture that potentially engenders political consequences. Though he advances an idea of politics against the totality of the culture industry, Adorno still concedes that theorizing confronts an obstacle in the form of reification. The very act of theorizing against the totality of the culture industry presupposes elements of thinking that stem from the Enlightenment underpinnings of that peculiar totality. "When oppositional intellectuals endeavor," he asserts, "to imagine a new content for society, they are paralyzed by the form of their own

consciousness, which is modelled in advance to suit their needs of this society."[162] The theorist's critical engagement with the world thus comes with a significant cost, one that reminds him or her of the distance between theory and practice. In other words, critical thinking "has forgotten how to think for itself, it has...become its own watchdog. Thinking no longer means anything more than checking at each moment whether one can indeed think."[163] The consequence of theory, therefore, not only underscores the paradoxical limits of the theorist's scholarly practice, but reveals at least one perspective on the theoretical edge of contemporary politics. It provokes others to consider whether a paradox or philosophical tension informs their own interpretation of politics.[164]

Max Weber also points to the sort of cultural closure to which Adorno alludes. Unlike Adorno, though, Weber's approach to theorizing presupposes a type of conscious struggle which he ascribes to politics: Where the politician struggles for power, the scholar struggles over the meaning of theoretical concepts. The critical force of theorizing thus concerns, not so much the practical conduct of, say, politics, but the conceptual elements which inform, perpetuate, and renew it. The scholar's practical domain entails "the analytical rearrangement of the immediately given reality," a domain that necessarily mirrors a "constant tension with the new knowledge which we can and

desire to wrest from reality."[165] According to Weber, however, the practice of the theorist remains distinct from that of the politician; still, the repercussions of a theoretical struggle allude to the practical "reality" of politics. The scholar is after all integral to "a continuous process passing from the attempt to order reality analytically through the construction of concepts...and the reformulation anew of concepts on the foundations thus transformed."[166] The practical direction of theory is thus contrary to an idea of politics, and for that reason constitutes a challenge to any practical notion of politics.

In many ways Habermas shares Weber's commitment to scholarly conflict, but he rejects any notion of struggle that, like Weber's, presupposes the primacy of sovereign individuals. Indeed, Habermas rejects the philosophy of consciousness he believes underlies modern notions of subjectivity, and thus the growing rational disenchantment with the contemporary world. For this reason, he claims that theorists no longer need to be concerned with explicating "the knowledge and mastery of an objective nature. The more important theoretical inquiry concerns theoretical clarification of "the intersubjectivity of possible understanding and agreement--at both the interpersonal and intrapsychic levels."[167] The distinction between Habermas and Weber becomes apparent insofar as Habermas's theoretical reach for communicative action

reflects, not a critical struggle, but a common understanding among different persons. According to Habermas, "communicative actors move in the medium of a natural language, draw upon culturally transmitted interpretations, and relate simultaneously to something in the one objective world, something in their common social world, and something in each's own subjective world."[168] Hence, Habermas's theoretical project signifies the possibility of a worldly engagement between theorists and politicians, yet this engagement reveals no direct challenge to the contemporary practice of politics. It precludes the prospect of dissension for the sake of valid agreement.

Michel Foucault's theoretical charge against politics corresponds in many ways to Weber's own scholarly disposition. It does so by targeting, I think, not so much the act of politics itself, but the ideas and values that sustain such acts. In this way, Foucault also distinguishes his project from that of Habermas's theoretical quest for "understanding," which presupposes a shared rational language rather than a discernment of marked differences. Foucault does so, more specifically, when his theoretical project reflects a critique, not of politics *per se*, but of the knowledge that helps maintain the self-evident qualities of a contemporary notion of political practice. "It's a matter of shaking this self-evidence," he declares, "of demonstrating its precariousness, of making visible not its

arbitrariness, but its complex interconnection with a multiplicity of historical processes."[169] Again, his approach to theory is primarily a scholarly one, but a scholarly endeavor with a significant political consequence. For Foucault seeks to unsettle the very meaning of politics by "making visible a *singularity* at places where there is a temptation to invoke a historical constant...an obviousness which imposes itself uniformly on all."[170] In short, he seeks to exploit the "breach of self-evidence" underlying the contemporary political practices we take for granted. Therefore Foucault's "critical ontology," which thwarts the epistemological uniformity of theorizing, represents a critical force. It is forceful in that it vexes, not the practice of politics, but the theorist who contends that practice and theory represent either two distinct domains or one ambiguous quest for power.[171]

One significant consequence of contemporary political thinking thus emerges, I believe, in an ethical disposition that acts against the dominant approach to present-day politics.[172] It is also important to note that the ethical posture of contemporary theory derives in part from the theoretical distinction Weber makes between politics and science. For Weber, this posture is not reflected in or founded upon the daily practice of politics, where the struggle between persons necessarily entails the use of violence. The words of a politician, repeats Weber, "are

not means of scientific analysis but means of canvassing votes and winning over others...they are swords against the enemies: such words are weapons."[173] However, the ethical posture of the theorist derives, not from the confines of science *per se*, but from the more fluid enterprise of teaching. As a teacher, the theorist differentiates "that it is one thing to state facts...while it is another thing to answer questions of the *value* of culture and its individual content and the question of how one should act in the cultural community and in political association."[174] It is thus important to note that Weber's approach to theory entails more than a broad catalogue of ideas stretching from the varying degrees of *Herrschaft* to the opposing "vocations" of science and politics. His approach to theory reveals, I believe, an ethical stance that provokes a possible rethinking of what we as citizens take for granted about the boundaries of political practice.

If there is one obstacle that defies the theorist's ethical orientation it undoubtedly stems from Adorno's view of the culture industry. The obstacle for Weber was clearly what he perceived to be the sense of "disenchantment" indicative of the "iron cage" of modern culture, a condition whereby the likes of scholarship and politics remain insulated within their own distinct spheres. According to Adorno, however, the "culture industry" represents a broader and more formidable obstacle than the "iron cage,"

especially insofar as it negates the line between political practice and theory. In other words, "the irreconcilable elements of culture, art and distraction, are subordinated to one end and subsumed under one false formula: the totality of the culture industry."[175] The ethical stance of the critical theorist, therefore, manifests itself in his or her capacity to undermine rather than simply establish dominant perceptions of the contemporary world--including politics. The theorist cannot expect to contest the culture industry's "influence over the consumers" with an "outright decree," an influence bolstered by the pleasurable allure of "entertainment." Instead, according to Adorno, the theorist must reveal "the hostility inherent in the principle of entertainment to what is greater than itself."[176] Clearly, Adorno's critical enterprise and public act as a theorist advocates an ethical stance that defines itself as oppositional. The more important facet of this stance, though, is not the practical struggle against the culture industry, but the critique of thinking that spurs at least the possibility of a dialogue of differences.

There is an ethical alternative to Adorno's dour view of political theory's promise. That option manifests itself in Habermas's "communicative" resistance against bourgeois society's "self-conscious" philosophical impulse. The ethical dimension of Habermas's theoretical project takes shape, moreover, in relation to his ultimate ideal, in which

a society of relatively autonomous persons who, through critical dialogues, come to share understandable ends. This is Habermas's way of saying that the modern quest for "self-preservation...becomes dependent on the integrative accomplishments of subjects who coordinate their action via criticizable validity claims."[177] It is an ethical disposition that recognizes the limits of instrumental reason and the promise embodied in the communicative ambitions of all persons, despite their differing ideals and ambitions. As far as Habermas is concerned, it "reproduces itself *both* through the media-controlled purposive-rational actions of its members *and* through the common will anchored in the communicative practice of all individuals."[178] His theoretical task thus represents an ethical approach to the world, not for the purpose of advancing the struggle of differing ideas, but for the sake of advancing the struggle as a means to the end of a common understanding.

I believe there is another option, however, one that diverges from Habermas's idealistic theoretical ambitions. Indeed Foucault's idea of an ethos of contemporary theorizing indicates a struggle that moves, not toward a community of subjects, but the dissipation of subjectivity altogether. Perhaps Foucault best articulates the theorist's ethical disposition in a way that Weber, Habermas and Adorno could not, in a way that clearly articulates the critical perspective of the ethical theorist. "Maybe the target

nowadays is not to discover what we are," he suggests, "but to refuse what we are."[179] However, this ethical disposition does not impact the theorist alone. Besides spurring conflict within the identity of the individual theorist, it encourages a prospective tension between theorists and politicians. Thus, Foucault concludes, "the political, ethical, social, philosophical problem of our day is not to try to liberate the individual from the state." Rather, the more urgent task of the political theorist is "to liberate us both from the state and from the type of individualization which is linked to the state."[180] Foucault's ethical stance as theorist, therefore, reminds us that contemporary political theory is not about provoking a news idea of politics. It is about provoking new ideas about the self that result in rethinking how such selves approach both political theory and the practice of politics.

The implication of this ethos of contemporary theorizing manifests itself, I contend, not in a political practice *per se*, but in an educational one that unsettles the practical ambitions of citizens and politicians alike. This instructive element is indicative of Adorno's critical project insofar as it challenges political theorists not to succumb to the simplistic oppositions that constitute the sparse political practices of the culture industry. A similar component can be found in Habermas's work, even though he departs from Adorno's claims concerning the

direction of "negative dialectics." Indeed, if there is a political consequence underlying Habermas's theoretical project, it is not one concerned with perpetuating a dialogue of differences or a "field of tension." Its instructional promise reveals, at best, the theorist's complicity in the perpetuation of a political practice premised on epistemological order as opposed to possibility. For that matter, Foucault's project instructs theorists and others about the "antagonistic reactions" that are integral to a contemporary idea of politics, even a political practice that denies the prospect of differing reactions.

I also believe each theorist reveals, therefore, an instructive element that is integral to Weber's theoretical enterprise, one that involves his push for a political education of the German nation. He made this point quite clear at the outset of his academic and, in many ways, political career in the Freiburg address, in which he advocates a particular type of political education. At the end of his Freiburg address, Weber remarks that "there is no more serious duty for each of us in our narrow spheres of activity than to be aware of *this* task of contributing to the *political* education of our nation."[181] But more importantly, what is central to his instructive tasks--both early in his career and later--is a notion of education that transforms people into something other than what they were in the past or are in the present. "We shall not succeed in

exorcising the curse that hangs over us," he declares, referring to the "unpolitical spirit" of Wilhelmine Germany, "unless we discover how to become something different: the precursors of an even greater epoch."[182] Though Weber's theoretical enterprise seeks to instruct the German nation, it nevertheless provides insight into a type of education, the focus of which is an idea and practice of politics that is fundamentally contingent, contestable, and open to multiple interpretations.

Notes

[1]The tendency to blur the lines between Weber's scholarly and political lives is evident in Sheldon Wolin, "Political Theory and Political Commentary" in Political Theory and Political Education, ed. Melvin Richter (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 190-203. According to Wolin, the "continuity" between Weber's "theoretical preoccupations" and his "political commentaries is a reminder that the theorist-turned-commentator has not shed his theoretical view. Rather, he has used the theory to inform his commentary and he has made of commentary an intimation of his theory," 191. For an alternative view of this bond between science and politics, see Edward B. Portis, "Political Action & Social Science: Max Weber's Two Arguments for Objectivity" in Polity 12 (Spring 1979): 409-427, who claims that Weber's idea of science "is distinguished as a 'calling' by a commitment to justify one's view of reality to oneself. This requires the kind of humility that the politician cannot afford, that is, a personal admission that his fundamental beliefs may be wrong," 426.

[2]Concerning the fragile tie between theory and practice in Weber's political thinking, see Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "The Crisis of Understanding" in Adventures in the Dialectic, trans. Joseph Bien (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 9-29. Merleau-Ponty reminds us that Weber "is in favor of professors who become engaged in politics," though he also notes how Weber cautions that the "academic soliloquy should not be fraudulently used for purposes of propaganda." For this reason, says Merleau-Ponty, Weber "holds both ends of the chain. Thus he makes truth work together with decision, knowledge with struggle. Thus he makes sure that repression is never justified in the name of freedom," 27. A more specific project which addresses the political impact of Weber's theoretical endeavors is Lawrence A. Scaff, "Max Weber's Politics and Political Education" in The American Political Science Review 67 (1973): 128-141. According to Scaff, Weber understood that "the inevitable, necessary conflict between truth and politics could never be finally resolved, for...to 'say what is' was not always to say what is politically productive or valuable," 140. For differing approach to the same issue, see Guenther Roth, "Weber's Political Failure" in Telos 78 (Winter 1988-89): 136-149, who charges that, after a series of political shortcomings, Weber's return to single-minded scholarship was not only an act of renunciation in an obvious sense, but in some way also a continuation of his political war with other means," 145.

[3]Jurgen Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume I, ."Reason and Rationalization of Society," trans.

Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), 1. Hereafter referred to as TCA.

[4]TCA, .2.

[5]There is a wealth of scholarly literature that addresses the theoretical connections between Max Weber and Jürgen Habermas. Yet most of this literature tends to focus on the chief problem between the two thinkers, the conceptualization of purposive rationality or reason. This point of contention is discussed by Steven Lukes, "Of Gods and Demons: Habermas and Practical Reason" in Habermas: Critical Debates, eds. John B. Thompson and David Held (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1982), 134-148. According to Lukes, the thrust of Habermas's project is "to provide further grounding for his positive claim to establish a determinate rational basis for critical theory," one that rejects both "'decisionism'" and Weber's view of rationality as the instigatory of an "'irresoluble pluralism of competing value systems and beliefs'," 147. This point is explored in more detail by Asher Horowitz, "The Comedy of Enlightenment: Weber, Habermas, and the Critique of Reification" in The Barbarism of Reason: Max Weber and the Twilight of Enlightenment, eds. Asher Horowitz and Terry Maley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 195-222. Similar to Lukes, Horowitz locates the divide between Habermas and Weber at the point where Weber's idea of purposive rationality renders "value spheres as incompatible, as fomenting a new polythesism in which there would be an endless struggle between different gods and demons." On the other hand, notes Horowitz, Habermas contends that "'the pluralism of value *contents* has nothing to do with the differences among the aspects of *validity* under which questions of truth, justice and taste can be differentiated out and rationally dealt with as such'," 200.

[6]Michel Foucault, "The Political Technology of Individuals" in Technologies of the Self, eds. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 161. Hereafter referred to as Technologies.

[7]Technologies, 161.

[8]The scholarly work discussing the relationship between Max Weber and Michel Foucault is spotty. However, a recent increase in the number of such explorations can be detected, especially in relation to Foucault's later works on "governmentality" and "governmental rationality." With regard to their different views of "rationality," see John O'Neill, "The disciplinarian society: from Weber to Foucault" in The British Journal of Sociology 37 (1986), 42-60. He contends that in many ways "certain developments in Foucault's studies

of the disciplinary society...may complement Weber's formal analysis of the modern bureaucratic state and economy." However, O'Neill adds, the two thinkers diverge in light of "Foucault's different conception of social rationality," which manifests itself in a historical "strategy" of power as opposed to a monolothic abstract "structure," 42. It is important to note, as well, that the Foucaultian critique of Weber tends to presuppose that Weber theorizes rationality as a universal totality, which is not necessarily the case. On this problem of Weber's allegedly universal notion of rationality, see Donald N. Levine, "Rationality and Freedom: Weber and Beyond" in Sociological Inquiry 51 (1981): 5-25. Cf., David Owen, Maturity and Modernity: Nietzsche, Weber, Foucault, and the Ambivalence of Reason (London: Routledge, 1994).

[9]Theodor Adorno, Minima Moralia, trans. E.F.N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 1997), 15. Hereafter referred to as MM.

[10]Like Habermas, Adorno's chief contention with Max Weber concerns his allegedly narrow conceptualization of purposive rationality. However, it is also important to point out that Habermas rejects Adorno's characterization of rationality, especially insofar as Adorno attributes rationality to the dehumanizing force of technical domination. On the differences between Max Weber, Adorno, and other early members of the Frankfurt School, see Bryan S. Turner, For Weber: Essays on the Sociology of Fate, 2nd ed. (London: Sage, 1996), especially chapter 3: Weber and the Frankfurt School. They reject "Weber's pessimism," says Turner. More specifically, they "reject the equation of instrumental rationality with rationality as such," which is another way of saying that "rational discourse cannot be separated from normative issues of freedom and responsibility," 70-71. Thus, according to Turner, Adorno and the Frankfurt School repudiate the "relativist" direction of Weber's notion of purposive rationality for the sake of maintaining "the emancipatory interest" which they believe underlies their broader notion of rationality, 70-71. See also Martin Jay, The Dialectical Imagination (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973). "The Frankfurt school did not deny the trend towards bureaucratic rationality and legal formalism," Jay states, referring to Weber's influence on his German intellectual successors. "What they did find inadequate was the reduction of rationality to its formal, instrumental side." Jay goes on to attribute this difference to the Frankfurt School's attachment to Hegelian philosophy, as opposed to Weber's more neo-Kantian bent, 120.

[11]MM, 15.

[12]MM, 15.

[13]My claim is not that different from the one put forward by William E. Connolly, The Terms of Political Discourse, 3rd edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). What is most important is, I believe, the extent to which Connolly predicates his approach to political theory on the basis of a "lag between inherited terms of discourse and changing constellations of social life," a lag which he believes "contributes both to the contestability of core concepts and the inherently creative dimension of political conceptualization," 220. In many ways, Connolly appears to draw on the philosophical legacy of Sheldon Wolin, especially inasmuch as Wolin claims that "political theory exhibits a twofold complexity: theoretical perspectives change in response to a changing political world and theoretical perspectives can differ even when viewing the same world." Where Wolin and Connolly tend to diverge occurs, I think, along the faultline of empirical emphasis, for Wolin further contends that theory's function "is not to amass new facts but to disclose hitherto unsuspected relationships between them. This disclosure is achieved by looking at the facts differently, that is, from a new theoretical perspective." See Sheldon Wolin, "Political Theory: Trends and Goals" in International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. 12, ed. David L. Sills (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 318-331. Finally, I think it is important to note that divulging a "lag" or a "tension" between theory and politics is not the chief purpose of political theory. Rather, like Connolly and Wolin, I contend that it is the creative departure point of political theory, one that allows the theorist "to understand what is possible." On this point see Bernard Crick, Political Theory and Practice (New York: Basic Books, 1973), who "would thus deny that there is any valid sense of political theory such that to study it in any meaningful way does not have some implications, intended or unintended, positive or negative, either for policy or for more specific discussions about whether a particular thing is practicable or likely to stay practicable," 29.

[14]This politically barbed aspect of education is central to the legacy of political theory at least since Socrates. As for its significance in the enterprise of contemporary political theory, I refer the reader to Sheldon S. Wolin, Politics and Vision (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960). This is evident inasmuch as he charges that political theory "ought not to be viewed as a fund of absolute political wisdom, but rather as a continuously evolving grammar and vocabulary to facilitate communication and to orient the understanding." He never fails to remind others "that the validity of an idea cannot be divorced from its effectiveness as a form of communication," 27. I think another element of this educative task is apparent in George Kateb, Political Theory: Its Nature and Uses (New York: St. Martin's Press,

1968), given that he associates political theory with a "moral commitment, one that "is the source of vitality, and vitality is the source of rhetorical strength, and hence of the capacity to educate and enlighten," 83. Finally, insofar as the educative thrust of political theory impacts the political theorist, I think it is worth referring to Tracy Strong, The Idea of Political Theory (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990). "Properly understood," Strong declares, "the theorist is not one who imposes his or her order on the world, but rather one who makes available the particular limitations of different ways of being in the world...I am asserting here that to do theory is to be changed and that one cannot do theory without change happening," 122-123.

[15]Cf., Jürgen Habermas, "Discussion on Value-Freedom and Objectivity" in Max Weber and Sociology Today, ed. Otto Stammler and trans. Kathleen Morris (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 59-66.

[16]Concerning the distinction between Foucault and Weber, see endnote #8.

[17]On Adorno's appropriation of Weber see endnote #9. Moreover, insofar Adorno differentiates himself from other Neo-Marxists relative to Weber's theoretical ambitions, see Gillian Rose, The Melancholy Science (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1978). She makes the important point, one with which I concur, that "Adorno does not indict Weber's notion of goal-rationality for being an apology for the instrumentality of capitalist society." Rather, according to Rose, Adorno thought Weber's diagnosis of Western rationalization was "correct but unrealistic," since such a society is fundamentally averse to Weber's own idea of the willful and rational individual," 82-83.

[18]WPW, 360; GPS, 552.

[19]WPW, 360; GPS, 552.

[20]WPW, 353; GPS, 546.

[21]WPW,. 365; GPS, 557.

[22]WPW, 355; GPS, 547.

[23]WPW, 16; GPS, 14.

[24]MSS, 54; GAW, 151.

[25]FMW, 152; GAW, 608.

[26]FMW, 328; GAR, 541-542.

[27]FMW, 328; GAR, 541-542.

[28]On the Kantian and Neo-Kantian tendencies in Max Weber's political thought see chapter 3, endnote 3.

[29]FMW, 145-146; GAW, 601-602.

[30]FMW, 145; GAW, 601.

[31]FMW, 145-146; GAW, 601-602.

[32]On the problem of value spheres in Max Weber's social and political thinking, see Lawrence A. Scaff, Fleeing the Iron Cage (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). "Modern rebels," says Scaff, "repelled by the dehumanized orders of acquisitiveness and the bureaucratic state, can not only flee *from* but also *into* politics. They will never find salvation there, but they may find a close second, 'a pathos and a sentiment of community,'" 96. What Scaff ignores, however, is the extent to which the relations between value-spheres allow other such rebels to act *against* politics. For this reason, Scaff tends to maintain the strict analytical boundaries between the sphere, compelling persons to choose one sphere or the other. I think there are other ways of perceiving Weber's notion of value-spheres, ways that allow us to see them not as separate and distinct, but fluid and prone to contestations from other spheres. Cf., Rogers Brubaker, The Limits of Rationality (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984), who contends that though "the value spheres have an objective existence, conflicts among them can be resolved, for any given individual, only through purely subjective choice," 74. In other words, as far as Brubaker is concerned, value spheres are forever being crossed for a variety of subjective reasons, none of which are necessarily subject to or derived from a specific rationally-ordered value sphere.

[33]Max Weber, "Religious Rejections of the World and Their Directions" in FMW, 334. The original German version of this text appears as "Zwischenbetrachtung" in GAR, 547.

[34]FMW, 334; GAR, 547.

[35]FMW, 351; GAR, 564.

[36]FMW, 351; GAR, 564.

[37]FMW, 152; GAW, 608.

[38]FMW, 152; GAW, 608.

[39]FMW, 152; GAW, 608.

[40]Other political theorists who approach Max Weber's thinking with regard to its impact on contemporary political thinking include, Sheldon Wolin, "Max Weber: Legitimation, Method, and the Politics of Theory" in Political Theory 9 (August 1981): 401-424. This is the case for Wolin given that what he calls "Weber's prophecies...reveal him deeply engaged with the powers that dominate the soul of modern man: bureaucracy, science, violence, and the 'intellectualism' that has destroyed the spiritual resources on which humankind has fed for three thousand years or more," 421. From a more traditional perspective, Wilhelm Hennis situates Weber in a legacy of "modern political thought" that includes Machiavelli, Rousseau and Tocqueville. In this vein of thinkers, Hennis perceives a deep "liberal" concern for "the unfolding of the power of the soul, an unfolding that appeared to be possible not on an individual basis, but rather communally, associatively, ultimately in the ancient sense of *politics*." See Wilhelm Hennis, Essays in Reconstruction (London: Allen & Unwin, 1988), 196. Like Wolin, David Owen situates Weber within the enterprise of contemporary political theory; however, Owen departs from Wolin in that he locates a more distinct project than prophecy in Weber's political thinking. Indeed, Owen lumps together Weber, Nietzsche and Foucault insofar as they "are all centrally concerned with constructing a form of historical thinking which reconstructs the relationship between autonomy and its conditions of realisation in modern culture in order to critically articulate the conditions of maturity," 214. See David Owen, Maturity and Modernity (London: Routledge, 1994).

[41]Jürgen Habermas, "The Idea of the University" in The New Conservatism, ed. and trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990), 125. Hereafter referred to as Conservatism.

[42]Jürgen Habermas, "On the Public Use of History" in Conservatism, 237.

[43]Conservatism, 237.

[44]TCA, 180.

[45]TCA, 398.

[46]A similar point is made by Rick Roderick, Habermas and the Foundations of Critical Theory (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), who characterizes Habermas's project of communicative action as both "overly harmonistic" and dismissive of "the possibility of internal criticism." However, I tend to distance myself from Roderick's claims in

that he seeks to remedy Habermas's lack of "critical standards" by directing it toward "a new investigation of class, power and political organisation," 165. I am not entirely convinced that a commitment to such normative criterion necessarily lead to the prospect of a form of critical thinking capable of scrutinizing the limits of such criterion.

[47]TCA, 143.

[48]TCA, 143.

[49]TCA, 143.

[50]TCA, 145.

[51]TCA, 179-180.

[52]TCA, 181.

[53]TCA, 182.

[54]TCA, 221.

[55]TCA, 222.

[56]TCA, 222.

[57]TCA, 246.

[58]TCA, 247.

[59]TCA, 254.

[60]Cf., Seyla Benhabib, Critique, Norm, and Utopia (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986). Benhabib contends that Weber is at best inconclusive about the philosophical dimensions of Western rationalization, shifting between a desire to mark "the legacy of cultural modernity" as "a binding one" and "a certain sympathy toward...defiant acts of will." In any case, she understands that "Habermas' fundamental concern in developing a theory of communicative action and rationality is to warn against the nihilism which may result from this ambivalent relation to the legacy of the moderns," 255-ff.

[61]TCA, 99.

[62]TCA, 392.

[63]TCA, 101.

[64]TCA, 101.

[65]TCA, 392.

[66]Michel Foucault, "Questions of method" in The Foucault Effect, eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 78-79. Hereafter referred to as FE.

[67]FE, 79.

[68]FE, 79. One of the more formidable critiques of Foucault's theoretical approach to rationality appears in Nancy Fraser "Foucault on Modern Power: Empirical Insights and Normative Confusions" in Praxis International 3 (1981): 272-287. Her main contention is that "Foucault's discussion of political rationality...contains...no positive normative pole. Rationality for him is a either a neutral phenomenon or (more often) an instrument of domination *tout court*," 280. See also Foucault and Political Reason. eds. Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne and Nikolas Rose (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996).

[69]FE, 80.

[70]FE, 80-81.

[71]This point is similar to the one made by Sheldon Wolin, "On the Theory and Practice of Power" in After Foucault: Humanistic Knowledge, Postmodern Challenges, ed. Jonathon Arac (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1988), 179-201. According to Wolin, the source of the problem concerning Foucault's political project of theory involves the conflation of "knowledge and power." Thus, for Wolin, "it is difficult to say whether Foucault's legacy is primarily a politics of discourse rather than a discourse about politics or whether it is a discourse in which each is absorbed into the other and transformed by it: politics becomes discourse and discourse politics," 185. Where Wolin witnesses a conflation of knowledge and power, Jon Simon sees a fruitful interchange--and thus an affirmative interpretation of this couplet in Foucault's thinking. See Jon Simon, Foucault and the Political (London: Routledge, 1995). He departs from the Foucaultian presupposition "that thought has material effect on government." Hence, he contends that if political theorists wish "to uncover all the thought behind the rules that govern our collective life, we should address the discourses of knowledge consisting of the human sciences, which are accounts of the disciplinary techniques according to which we are governed," 56. In the meantime, however, Simon fails to address the complicated nuances of the knowledge-power nexus, nor does he question the Foucaultian

presupposition that the legacy of political thought is simply subservient to or merely an effect of government. In other words, he tends to overlook the aspect of political thinking that reveals a steady confrontation with government, thinking exemplified in some ways by Socrates, Machiavelli, Tocqueville, Nietzsche--among others.

[72]Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment" in The Foucault Reader, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 38. Hereafter referred to as FR.

[73]Michel Foucault, "The Art of Telling the Truth" in Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings of Michel Foucault, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman (London: Routledge, 1988), 95. Hereafter referred to as PPC.

[74]PPC, 95.

[75]FR, 38.

[76]FR, 38.

[77]FR, 42.

[78]FR, 42.

[79]FR, 43.

[80]FR, 42-45.

[81]FR, 50.

[82]FR, 46.

[83]FR, 47.

[84]On this problem of totalizing the enterprize of political theory, particularly in relation to its alleged perpetuation of a narrow idea of political rationality, see Sheldon Wolin, "Theory and Practice of Power" in After Foucault: Humanistic Knowledge, Postmodern Challenges, who argues that Foucault himself falls prey to the totalizing tendency for which he rebukes political theory. As Wolin sees it, Foucault "offers no hope of escape" from the "imprisoning structures of knowledge and practice...There is no exit because Foucault has closed off any possibility of a privileged theoretical vantage point that would not be infected by the knowledge/power syndrome and would not itself be the expression of a Nietzschean will-to-power," 186. John Rajchman makes the same point in Michel Foucault: The Freedom of Philosophy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), when he notes how "Foucault's deep critical analysis not only

does not entail any single solution or alternative, but tends to render existing proposals for change even more problematic," 47.

[85]Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), 11. Hereafter referred to as Sexuality.

[86]Sexuality, 20.

[87]Sexuality, 49.

[88]Sexuality, 48.

[89]Sexuality, 48-49.

[90]Sexuality, 123.

[91]Sexuality, 123.

[92]Cf., Nancy Fraser, "Foucault on Modern Power: Empirical Insights and Normative Confusions" in Praxis International 3 (1981): 272-287. Again, she question's Foucault's analysis of power insofar as it fails to draw "careful distinctions" between a variety of concepts and instead lumps them "under his catchall concept of power. As a consequence, the potential for a broad range of normative nuances is surrendered, and the result is a certain normative one-dimensionality," 232.

[93]Sexuality, 142-143.

[94]Sexuality, 143.

[95]Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power" in Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, eds. and trans. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 221. Hereafter referred to as BSH.

[96]BSH, 221.

[97]BSH, 221.

[98]Michel Foucault, "Governmentality" in The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality, eds. Burchell, Gordon, and Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 92-93. Hereafter referred to as FE.

[99]FE, 93.

[100]FE, 103.

[101]Concerning Foucault's conscious break with the tradition of political theory and political science, see John Rajchman, Michel Foucault: The Freedom of Philosophy. "Instead of proposing a new science of politics," Rajchman notes, Foucault "tries to understand how a political science itself could emerge and assume its hold over our current practices" that hold sway over "the individual, the state, the people, the population, as self-evident, whole, real entities. Foucault tries to reverse this self-evidence, asking how such entities have been 'really and materially' constituted or objectivized," 57-58. See also Jon Simon, Foucault and the Political (London: Routledge, 1995), 53.

[102]FE, 103.

[103]BSH, 221-222.

[104]BSH, 221-222.

[105]This point is made evident in Seyla Benhabib, Critique, Norm and Utopia. Her basic claim, like many other theorists who approach the history of the Frankfurt School, is that "while accepting Weber's diagnosis of the *dynamics* of societal rationalization in the West, they criticize this process from the standpoint of a non-instrumental paradigm of reason." More important, however, Benhabib proceeds to demonstrate how the early members of the Frankfurt School inevitably encounter a limit in that "this non-instrumental reason can no longer be anchored immanently in actuality and assumes an increasingly utopian character," 163.

[106]On Adorno's critique of scientific positivism see Martin Jay, Adorno (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), who notes that, for Adorno, "positivism failed to recognize the active, constitutive power of subjectivity in creating the world...and thus was complicitous with a passive, contemplative politics which accepted the world as finished reality, a 'second nature'," 58. Given this critique of positivism, Adorno and his Frankfurt School colleagues sought to theorize in various ways a countervailing force that might emancipate modernity from such philosophical strictures. On this point see David Held, Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980). "In order to sustain their critique of positivism and positivist philosophy," notes Held, "the Frankfurt theorists had to elaborate their own notions of 'reason', 'objectivity' and 'truth'," 174.

[107]MM, 44.

[108]ND, 165. Susan Buck-Morss provides an interesting discussion concerning Adorno's philosophical and aesthetic approach to "constellations," underscoring the extent to which Adorno draws on the theoretical work of Walter Benjamin and Edmund Husserl. See Susan Buck-Morss, The Origin of Negative Dialectics (New York: The Free Press, 1977). Out of this particular context, she states, "Adorno's constellations...were constructed according to principles of differentiation, nonidentity, and active transformation." Thus constellations not only sought "to break apart the apparently identical by means of specific differentiation," but struggled "to juxtapose seemingly unrelated, unidentical elements, revealing the configuration in which they congealed or converged," 98-99. Insofar as Adorno approach "constellation" from the perspective of Max Weber's theory of "ideal-types," see Gillian Rose, The Melancholy Science (London: The MacMillan Press Ltd, 1978), who charges that "Adorno cites Weber's use of ideal-types, not as mere methodological devices, but as a series of approximate presentations of an object which is not directly accessible," 90-91.

[109]Cf., Susan Buck-Morss, The Origin of Negative Dialectics. "The fact of the matter is," she says, "that Adorno's talk of the mediation between intellectual praxis and political praxis remained abstract and vague, with no explication of the social medium which might serve as a conduit for this mediation, once the role of the Party was rejected," 42. For a differing view of this claim concerning Adorno's detachment from political practice, see Gillian Rose, The Melancholy Science. Rose's contention is that cries for social and political action on the part of critical theorists, especially Adorno, only perpetuates the "social reality of advanced capitalist society." The trick for Adorno, notes Rose, is not to fall prey to a theory which supports such a society with prescriptions and remedies. Rather, Adorno's "melancholy science is not resigned, quiescent or pessimistic...His 'morality' is a praxis of thought not a recipe for social and political action," 148.

[110]Concerning the problematic dimensions of Adorno's critical approach to "totality," see Fredric Jameson, Late Marxism (New York: Verso, 1996). It is Jameson's claim that Adorno "retains the concept of the system and even makes it, as target and object of critique, the very center of his own anti-systematic thinking. However, the critical purpose of postulating this totalizing system of capitalism is to remind us "of our imprisonment within system, the forgetfulness or repression of which binds us all the more strongly to it, in ways reminiscent of the illusions of identity, with which it is of course in one sense virtually synonymous," 27. According to Jameson, therefore, Adorno destines modernity and

even "negative dialectics" to a seemingly endless confrontation with totality, an historical and philosophical fate of sorts which is, I believe, capable of unsettling the totality with non-identity thinking but nonetheless still ultimately subject to its intrusive identity. For a differing,. somewhat more nuanced interpretation of this problem of "totality" in Adorno's work, see Gillian Rose, The Melancholy Science (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1978), 79.

[111]For a discussion on the differences between Foucault's and Adorno's interpretations of Enlightenment, see Axel Honneth, "Foucault's Theory of Society: A Systems-Theoretic Dissolution of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*" in Critique and Power, ed. Micheal Kelly (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1994), 178.

[112]Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, trans. John Cumming (New York: Continuum, 1993), 32. Hereafter referred to as DoE.

[113]DoE, 32.

[114]DoE, 32.

[115]DoE, 54.

[116]DoE, 54.

[117]DoE, 54-55.

[118]On Adorno's critical approach to "reification," see Martin Jay, Adorno (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984). Jay clarifies the philosophical tradition from which Adorno derives his particular critique, a tradition that includes departures from the critical theories of Marx and Lukacs. "Although at times in his own work an apparently Lukacsian usage did appear," says Jay, "reification for Adorno was not equivalent to the alienated objectification of subjectivity, the reduction of a fluid process into a thing. Instead, and here Adorno's debt to Nietzsche on the origin of exchange was particularly evident, reification, when he used it in a pejorative sense, meant the suppression of heterogeneity in the name of identity," 68.

[119]DoE, 41.

[120]DoE, 41-42.

[121]DoE, 141-142.

[122]DoE, 141-142.

[123]MM, 71.

[124]MM, 71.

[125]MM, 80.

[126]MM, 80.

[127]MM, 80.

[128]One source of these critical "gaps" and degrees of "distance" seems linked to Adorno's rejection of Hegel's reach toward philosophical totality. On this subject, see David Held, Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980). "Against Hegel's notion of a cognitive process that unfolds into a unity in the absolute idea (the complete identity of subject and object), Adorno's understanding suggests only negativity--that the difference between subject and object cannot be abolished," 204.

[129]MM, 126.

[130]MM, 127.

[131]MM, 247.

[132]MM, 247.

[133]MM, 247.

[134]For a rich discussion concerning Adorno's desire "to keep criticism alive" by way of "negative anthropology," see Susan Buck-Morss, The Origin of Negative Dialectics (New York: The Free Press, 1977). Buck-Morss clarifies the degree to which Adorno understood how the consequence of theorizing often ran "the risk of reproducing the commodity structure within consciousness...The purpose of what in Adorno's case could be called 'antitheories' was to avoid such conformism at all costs," 186.

[135]Theodor W. Adorno, Negative Dialectics, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 1973), 3-4. Hereafter referred to as ND.

[136]Concerning this point in the work of Adorno and other early members of the Frankfurt School, see Martin Jay, The Dialectical Imagination, 216-217.

[137]ND, 143.

[138]ND, 143.

[139]ND, 163.

[140]ND, 164.

[141]ND, 165-166.

[142]ND, 5.

[143]ND, 5.

[144]ND, 52-53.

[145]ND, 52-53.

[146]It remains intact, I think, for at least one significant reason. The divide between theory and practice unsettles the absolute claims of each, claims which tend to compel the present to accept what is "familiar" and "habitual" about politics in both its theoretical or practical designs. On this point see Terence Ball, "Political Theory and Conceptual Change" in Political Theory, ed. Andrew Vincent (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 28-44. Ball approaches the enterprise of political theory as one that purposely "serves to alert us to features of our world that familiarity has obscured," supplying "us with the distant mirror of past practices and beliefs that seem strange and alien to our modern (or perhaps postmodern) eyes." The point of this confrontation with "strangeness," concludes Ball, is "not to make it less strange or different, but to make it more comprehensible," 43. My only reservation about Ball's project of "conceptual theory" is that maybe the purpose of theory is not necessarily comprehension, which presupposes a reach toward epistemological order, but also the cultivation of contingency, which makes all claims prone to difference, contestability, and ultimately a shifting dialogue on the meaning of theory and politics.

[147]What comes to mind is the work of William E. Connolly, Identity\Difference (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991). In particular, I think of Connolly's tenacious desire "to acknowledge [the paradox of difference] and to convert it into a politics of the paradoxical, into a conception of the political as the medium through which the interdependent antinomies of identity and difference can be expressed and contested." One ought to pause, however, when Connolly underscores the direction of this "politics of the paradoxical," since he associates it with "liberalism, an alternative, militant liberalism both indebted to and competitive with other liberalisms and nonliberalisms contending for presence in late-modern life," 92-94. For this reason, we can see his attempt to rethink the monolithic discourse of liberalism from a different, more decentralized

perspective. Yet, we can also detect that his idea of "the politics of the paradoxical" is firmly ensconced in the liberal tradition, one which tends to privilege subjectivity, juridical recourse, and institutional closure. For a more thorough critique of such resurgent liberalisms, see Wendy Brown, States of Injury (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[148]I think contemporary political theory is instructive, moreover, insofar as it cultivates what Sheldon Wolin refers to as "political theory as a vocation." Among its many ramifications is that it can "sharpen our sense of the subtle, complex interplay between political experience and thought, engendering "the task of political initiation; that is, of introducing new generations of students to the complexities of politics and to the efforts of theorists who confront its predicaments." See Sheldon Wolin, "Political Theory as a Vocation" in The American Political Science Review 63 (1969): 1077.

[149]On this topic see Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "The Crisis of Understanding" in Adventures of the Dialectic, trans. Joseph Bien (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 9-29. On the degree to which "the political failure" of Wilhelmine Germany sabotaged the critical components of Weber's theoretical project, see Lawrence A. Scaff, "Max Weber's Politics and Political Education" in The American Political Science Review 67 (March 1973): 128-141.

[150]WPW, 133; GPS, 309.

[151]WPW, 133; GPS, 309.

[152]With regard to how Habermas in particular and "communicative ethics" in general spur a challenge to contemporary politics and philosophy, see Seyla Benhabib, "Communicative Ethics and Current Controversies in Practical Philosophy" in The Communicative Ethics Controversy, eds. Seyla Benhabib and Fred Dallmayr (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990), 330-369. The task of such thinkers, says Benhabib, "is concerned with the unmasking of such mechanisms of continuing political ideology and cultural hegemony...The emphasis now is less on *rational agreement*, but more on sustaining those normative relationships within which reasoned agreement *as a way of life* can flourish and continue," 340-346. Hence the Habermasian communicative approach confronts the limits of political rationality by infusing society and politics with "normative" conditions that mandate reason without succumbing to the amoralism of technical rationality, which is increasingly the hallmark of advanced liberal democratic societies. However, my main point of contention with this perspective is not the distinction drawn between

rationality and reason; rather, it is the necessity of "agreement" underlying the Habermasian philosophical project as well as the project of communicative ethics.

[153]TCA, 398.

[154]TCA, 398.

[155]See Seyla Benhabib in Critique, Norm, and Utopia. Her contention derives from a comparison of the early members of the Frankfurt School and Habermas. Indeed, she states that "if the problem with early critical theory seemed to be that their conception of utopian reason was so esoteric as not to allow embodiment in the present, the difficulty with Habermas' concept is that it seems like such a natural outcome of the present that it is difficult as to what would constitute an emancipatory break with the present if communicative rationality were fulfilled," 277. For a somewhat more optimistic and "aesthetic" rendering of the "utopian" impulse in Habermas's philosophical project, see David Ingram, Habermas and the Dialectic of Reason (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), who claims that "an ideal balance of strategic and communicative action sphere that cannot be established formally" in Habermas's work. "Of all discursive enterprises, philosophy seems especially well suited to performing this balancing act, since on Habermas's reading, the sort of rational reconstruction that it engages in manages to slide across the boundaries separating formally distinct spheres of rationality," 178-179.

[156]Cf., Nancy Fraser, "Foucault on Modern Power: Empirical Insights and Normative Confusions" in Praxis International 3 (1981): 272-287. Contrary to Fraser, Lois McNay finds Foucault's theory of power not only easy to categorize but "essentially *positive*" in that it rejects modern "uni-directional and repressive" notions of power. "Repression is not the paradigmatic form of power," she states; "it is only one in a multiplicity of positive and negative effects generated through the interplay of power relations." See Lois McNay, Foucault: A Critical Introduction (New York: Continuum, 1994), 90-91. In addition to this affirmative notion of power, McNay nevertheless rightfully contends that "Foucault's work finishes in an unresolved contradiction between a view of social relations as fragmented and contestable and a vision of a totally administered society," 111.

[157]BSH, 225-226.

[158]On the "liberal" element in Foucault's political thinking, I direct the reader to Jon Simon, Foucault and the Political (London: Routledge, 1995), who questions whether "a liberal democratic polity is implicit in Foucault's political

thought. The answer is both yes and no...Actually existing liberal democracy might be a necessary condition for the aesthetics of the self, but it is also the sufficient condition for the forms of subjection targeted by Foucault's oppositional politics...Its humanist limits preclude the attainment of agonal subjectivity," 117-118. Cf., Lois McNay, Foucault: A Critical Introduction (New York: Continuum, 1994). who rejects outright the possibility of a conception of liberalism in Foucault's theoretical approach to politics. "First," she notes, "Foucault's assertion that power and freedom are inextricably mixed differs fundamentally from the liberal view that places power and freedom in opposition...Foucault still understands the individual as an effect of power relations rather than as a 'primitive atom' upon which 'power comes to fasten or against which it happens to strike.' Individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application," 130-131. Despite these important insights, I am not entirely comfortable with the equation of individual subjects as "vehicles of power" and the lack of a liberal impulse in Foucault's political thinking. Finally, see Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne, and Nikolas Rose, "Introduction" in Foucault and Political Reason ed. Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne, and Nikolas Rose (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996). They characterize Foucault's approach to liberalsm "not so much as a substantive doctrine or practice of government in itself, but as a restless and dissatisfied ethos of recurrent critique of State reason and politics...Hence liberalism is not about governing less but about the continual injunction that politicians and rulers should govern cautiously, delicately, economically, modestly," 8.

[159]BSH, 225-226.

[160]MM, 102-103.

[161]MM, 102-103.

[162]MM, 197.

[163]MM, 197.

[164]Such provocations are integral to the recent work of William E. Connolly, The Ethos of Pluralization (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995). According to Connolly, the central theoretical project of this text concerns his idea of a "politics of enactment," which "involves the struggle to cross both of these boundaries together--the barrier posed by the resistance of disrupted identities and that posed by difficulty. the movement faces in clearing sufficient institutional space to articulate a positive identity," 183. In other words, such a politics requires a simultaneous

interchange not only between "other" identities, an interchange which is at best unsettling, but also within the limited scope of a particular identity, an interchange which can bring about both personal and political renewal.

[165]MSS, 105; GAW, 207.

[166]MSS, 105; GAW, 207.

[167]TCA, 392.

[168]TCA, 392.

[169]FE, 75.

[170]FE, 76.

[171]Sheldon Wolin advocates the same sort of critical diligence, especially in relation to what he calls "Foucault's rejection of theoretical truth independent of practices." See Sheldon Wolin, "Theory and Practice of Power" in After Foucault: Humanistic Knowledge, Postmodern Challenges. He further cautions that "[i]f theory is absorbed into the discourse of action so as to become inseparable, it will be impossible for it to perceive when action has fallen short of what it should be...Theory can only perform that critical function if it attains a separate identity... Political practice, like its close companion religion, does not simply apply ideal truths but diminishes them," 192-193. For a more sympathetic view of Foucault's conflation of theory and practice, see John Rajchman, Michel Foucault: The Freedom of Philosophy, 79.

[172]Cf., Melissa Orlie, Living Ethically, Acting Politically (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997).

[173]FMW, 145-146; GAW, 601-602.

[174]FMW, 145-146; GAW, 601-602.

[175]DoE, 136.

[176]DoE, 136.

[177]TCA, 398.

[178]TCA, 398.

[179]BSH, 216.

[180]BSH, 216.

[181]WPW, 27-28; GPS, 24.

[182]WPW, 27-28; GPS, 24.

CONCLUSION

The chief purpose of this dissertation has been to rethink the intricate bond between morality and politics in Max Weber's political thinking. I demonstrate how Weber's moral ambition of German national glory constrains his theory of politics in a way that depletes the prospect of the very human struggle which begets such glory. I also confirm the degree to which his notions of vocational and parliamentary politics transgress the moral design of the German nation. Accordingly, this study underscores an ethical paradox in Weber's political thinking, one that entraps the politician and the political theorist within the ambiguous interchange of political means and moral end. In addition to this ethical tumult, I analyze how a contending moral ambition manifests itself in Max Weber's theory of science, one which compels the scholar toward "clarity." This becomes evident since "clarity," which necessitates critical distinctions between human values, technical means and corresponding consequences, exposes the ethical limits not only of the politician in Weber's theory of politics, but of Max Weber himself, the political theorist. Finally, I conclude with an inquiry into Max Weber's place within the project of contemporary political theory, claiming that his political thinking inspires us, not to theorize a type of politics, but to theorize against all conceptions of politics--theoretical or practical.

Another aim of this project has been to provide the vast field of Weber studies with a differing interpretation of his political thinking. This is evident, in that my project did not simply establish a moral unity, indifference, or ambiguity in Max Weber's political thinking, positions which comprise both traditional and more contemporary views of his work. Unlike Mommsen's fix on the nation, Hennis's reach for the "'central question'" of "*Menschentum*," Owen's detection of a "genealogical" enterprise or Breiner's perception of the "impartiality" problematic, I have done more than mark a moral quest in Weber's theoretical project of politics. Indeed I have turned Weber's varied moral ambitions against each other. As a consequence, I have portrayed Weber not so much as a nationalist, moralist or even a potential democrat, but as a political theorist whose moral quest for national glory worked at cross-purposes with his moral aim of scientific clarity. Thus, by turning Weber against himself, I have confirmed how his quest for clarity undercuts his quest for German glory, revealing the extent to which his scholarly enterprise unknowingly perpetuates that which his theory of politics constrains: the prospect of human struggle. In short, I have underscored the political promise, not of Weber's theory of politics, but of his approach to modern scholarship--an interpretation that clearly broadens our approach to Weber's political thinking.

This brings me to the third purpose of this dissertation, which has been to augment the enterprise of contemporary political theory with a differing approach to Weber's political thinking. I am not interested in contesting the Straussian view of Weber as an instigator of nihilism, for I charge that Weber's political thinking posits the "ethical irrationality" of the modern world for the sake of nurturing difference, not indifference. Nor has it been my task to situate Weber within the Parsonian concern for the "methodological" value of "'ideal-types'," "value-freedom" or "*Verstehen*," since I stress primarily the political importance of Weber's theory of science. Finally, it has not been the purpose of this study to place Weber in the pantheon of modern "liberal" thinkers, given that I underscore both his relatively anti-liberal idea of politics and his contestable notion of individual subjectivity that informs his theory of science. Rather, my project seeks to locate Max Weber's political thinking within the legacy of critical theory, such that it informs as well as reforms Habermas's "communicative ethic," Foucault's "critical ontology" and Adorno's "negative dialectics." As a result, I have maintained that contemporary theory can glean from Weber's flaws an instructive impulse to turn theory, not against itself, but against politics. The limits of Weber's political thinking aid us in perpetuating a dialogue that unsettles our differing perceptions of politics.

Finally, in a more circuitous way, my purpose has been to challenge the field of political science to rethink both Max Weber's theoretical contributions and our contemporary perceptions of politics. If we have understood Weber to be a scholar trapped by an ethical paradox, and if we have perceived him to be one whose immanent tensions impart a cautionary approach to the future, then thinkers of all stripes have reason to turn toward Weber. Political scientists have often turned toward Max Weber, relying on his theories of "legitimacy" in comparative politics, his idea of "*Machtpolitik*" in international relations, and his studies of "bureaucracy" in American politics and public administration. Yet, I further suggest in this dissertation that Weber's political thinking can provide us with far more than structural, methodological, or theoretical avenues by which to extend our scholarly enterprises. I note the degree to which his political thinking provides us with a way of looking at politics relative to our scholarly ambitions, a perception that accents the critical divide between scholarship and political. I have not prescribed this tension in Weber's scholarship as a remedy for the contemporary ills that plague the academic study of politics. At most, I have merely hinted that it affords future scholars insight into the possibility of seeing politics in a way that is unlike the view we often take for granted as the theoretical and practical standard.

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