

### III. THE PROSPECTS OF SCIENTIFIC POLITICS: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL THEORY AND POLITICAL PRACTICE

#### 1. WHY IS THERE NO SCIENCE OF POLITICS ?

The emergence and disappearance of problems on our intellectual horizon are governed by a principle of which we are not yet fully aware. Even the rise and disappearance of whole systems of knowledge may ultimately be reduced to certain factors and thus become explicable. There have already been attempts in the history of art to discover why and in what periods such plastic arts as sculpture, relief-modelling or other arts arise and become the dominant art-form of a period. In the same manner the sociology of knowledge should seek to investigate the conditions under which problems and disciplines come into being and pass away. The sociologist in the long run must be able to do better than to attribute the emergence and solution of problems to the mere existence of certain talented individuals. The existence of and the complex interrelationship between the problems of a given time and place must be viewed and understood against the background of the structure of the society in which they occur, although this may not always give us an understanding of every detail. The isolated thinker may have the impression that his crucial ideas occurred to him personally, independent of his social setting. It is easy for one living in a provincial and circumscribed social world to think that the events which touch him are isolated facts for which fate alone is responsible. Sociology, however, cannot be content with understanding immediate problems and events emerging from this myopic perspective which obscures every significant relationship. These seemingly isolated and discrete facts must be comprehended in the ever-present but constantly changing configurations of experience in which they actually are lived. Only in such a context do they acquire meaning. If the sociology of knowledge should have any measure of success in this type of analysis, many problems which hitherto, as regards their origins at least, have been unsolved, would be cleared up. Such

a development would also enable us to see why sociology and economics are of such recent birth and why they advanced in one country and were retarded and beset by so many obstacles in others. Likewise it will be possible to solve a problem which has always gone unanswered: namely why we have not yet witnessed the development of a science of politics. In a world which is as permeated by a rationalistic ethos, as is our own, this fact represents a striking anomaly.

There is scarcely a sphere of life about which we do not have some scientific knowledge as well as recognized methods of communicating this knowledge. Is it conceivable then, that the sphere of human activity on the mastery of which our fate rests, is so unyielding that scientific research cannot force it to give up its secrets? The disquieting and puzzling features of this problem cannot be disregarded. The question must have already occurred to many whether this is merely a temporary condition, to be overcome at a later date, or whether we have reached, in this sphere, the outermost limit of knowledge which can never be transcended?

It may be said in favour of the former possibility that the social sciences are still in their infancy. It would be possible to conclude that the immaturity of the more fundamental social sciences explains the retardation of this "applied" science. If this were so, it would be only a question of time until this backwardness were overcome, and further research might be expected to yield a control over society comparable to that which we now have over the physical world.

The opposite point of view finds support in the vague feeling that political behaviour is qualitatively different from any other type of human experience, and that the obstacles in the way of its rational understanding are much more insurmountable than is the case in other realms of knowledge. Hence, it is assumed that all attempts to subject these phenomena to scientific analysis are foredoomed to failure because of the peculiar nature of the phenomena to be analysed.

Even a correct statement of the problem would be an achievement of value. To become aware of our ignorance would bring considerable relief since we would then know why actual knowledge and communication are not possible in this case. Hence the first task is a precise definition of the problem which is—What do we mean when we ask: Is a science of politics possible?

There are certain aspects of politics which are immediately intelligible and communicable. An experienced and trained political leader should know the history of his own country, as well as the history of the countries immediately connected with his own and constituting the surrounding political world. Consequently, at the least, a knowledge of history and the relevant statistical data are useful for his own political conduct. Furthermore, the political leader should know something about the political institutions of the countries with which he is concerned. It is essential that his training be not only juristic but also include a knowledge of the social relations which underlie the institutional structure and through which it functions. He must likewise be abreast of the political ideas which mould the tradition in which he lives. Similarly he cannot afford to be ignorant of the political ideas of his opponents. There are still further though less immediate questions, which in our own times have undergone continual elaboration, namely the technique for manipulating crowds without which it is impossible to get on in mass-democracies. History, statistics, political theory, sociology, history of ideas, and social psychology, among many other disciplines, represent fields of knowledge important to the political leader. Were we interested in setting up a curriculum for the education of the political leader, the above studies would no doubt have to be included. The disciplines mentioned above, however, offer no more than practical knowledge which, if one happens to be a political leader, might be of use. But even all of these disciplines added together do not produce a science of politics. At best they may serve as auxiliary disciplines to such a science. If we understood by politics merely the sum of all those bits of practical knowledge which are useful for political conduct, then there would be no question about the fact that a science of politics in this sense existed, and that this science could be taught. The only pedagogical problem would consist, then, in selecting from the infinite store of existing facts those most relevant for the purposes of political conduct.

However, it is probably evident from this somewhat exaggerated statement that the questions "Under what conditions is a science of politics possible and how may it be taught?" do not refer to the above-mentioned body of practical information. In what then does the problem consist?

The disciplines which were listed above are structurally related only in so far as they deal with society and the state as if they

were the final products of past history. Political conduct, however, is concerned with the state and society in so far as they are still in the process of becoming. Political conduct is confronted with a process in which every moment creates a unique situation and seeks to disentangle out of this ever-flowing stream of forces something of enduring character. The question then is: "Is there a science of this becoming, a science of creative activity?"

The first stage in the delineation of the problem is thus attained. What (in the realm of the social) is the significance of this contrast between what has already become and what is in the process of becoming?

The Austrian sociologist and statesman, Albert Schäffle,<sup>1</sup> pointed out that at any moment of socio-political life two aspects are discernible—first, a series of social events which have acquired a set pattern and recur regularly; and, second, those events which are still in the process of becoming, in which, in individual cases, decisions have to be made that give rise to new and unique situations. The first he called the "routine affairs of state", *laufendes Staatsleben*; the second "politics". The meaning of this distinction will be clarified by a few illustrations. When, in the accustomed life of an official, current business is disposed of in accordance with existing rules and regulations, we are, according to Schäffle, in the realm of "administration" rather than of "politics". Administration is the domain where we can see exemplified what Schäffle means by "routine affairs of state". Wherever each new case may be taken care of in a prescribed manner, we are faced not with politics but with the settled and recurrent side of social life. Schäffle uses an illuminating expression from the field of administration itself to give point to his distinction. For such cases as can be settled by merely consulting an established rule, i.e. according to precedent, the German word *Schimmel*,<sup>2</sup> which is derived from the Latin *simile* is used, signifying that the case in hand is to be disposed of in a manner *similar* to precedents that already exist. We are in the realm of politics when envoys to foreign countries conclude treaties which were never made before; when parliamentary representatives carry through new measures of taxation; when an election campaign is waged;

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Schäffle, A., "Über den wissenschaftlichen Begriff der Politik," *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaften*, vol. 53 (1897).

<sup>2</sup> The German word *Schimmel* means "mould". [Translator's note.]

when certain opposition groups prepare a revolt or organize strikes—or when these are suppressed.

It must be admitted that the boundary between these two classes is in reality rather flexible. For instance, the cumulative effect of a gradual shift of administrative procedure in a long series of concrete cases may actually give rise to a new principle. Or, to take a reverse instance, something as unique as a new social movement may be deeply permeated with “stereotyped” and routinizing elements. Nevertheless the contrast between the “routine affairs of state” and “politics” offers a certain polarity which may serve as a fruitful point of departure. If the dichotomy is conceived more theoretically, we may say: Every social process may be divided into a rationalized sphere consisting of settled and routinized procedures in dealing with situations that recur in an orderly fashion, and the “irrational” by which it is surrounded.<sup>1</sup> We are, therefore, distinguishing between the “rationalized” structure of society and the “irrational” matrix. A further observation presents itself at this point. The chief characteristic of modern culture is the tendency to include as much as possible in the realm of the rational and to bring it under administrative control—and, on the other hand, to reduce the “irrational” element to the vanishing point.

A simple illustration will clarify the meaning of this assertion. The traveller of 150 years ago was exposed to a thousand

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of precision, the following remark should be added: The expression “settled routinized elements” is to be regarded figuratively. Even the most formalized and ossified features of society are not to be regarded as things held in store in an attic, to be taken out when needed for use. Laws, regulations, and established customs only have an existence in that living experiences constantly call them into being. This settledness signifies merely that social life, while constantly renewing itself, conforms to rules and formal processes already inherent in it and this constantly generates itself anew in a recurrent manner. Similarly, the use of the expression “rationalized sphere” must be taken in the broader sense. It may mean either a theoretical, rational approach, as in the case of a technique which is rationally calculated and determined; or it may be used in the sense of “rationalization” in which a sequence of events follows a regular, expected (probable) course, as is the case with convention, usage, or custom, where the sequence of events is not fully understood, but in its structure seems to have a certain settled character. Max Weber’s use of the term “stereotype” as the broader class might be used here, and two sub-classes of the stereotyping tendency then distinguished, (a) traditionalism, (b) rationalism. Inasmuch as this distinction is not relevant for our present purpose, we will use the concept “rationalized structure” in the more comprehensive sense in which Max Weber uses the general notion of stereotyping.

accidents. To-day everything proceeds according to schedule. Fare is exactly calculated and a whole series of administrative measures have made travel into a rationally controlled enterprise. The perception of the distinction between the rationalized scheme and the irrational setting in which it operates provides the possibility for a definition of the concept "conduct".

The action of a petty official who disposes of a file of documents in the prescribed manner, or of a judge who finds that a case falls under the provisions of a certain paragraph in the law and disposes of it accordingly, or finally of a factory worker who produces a screw by following the prescribed technique, would not fall under our definition of "conduct". Nor for that matter would the action of a technician who, in achieving a given end, combined certain general laws of nature. All these modes of behaviour would be considered as merely "reproductive" because they are executed in a rational framework, according to a definite prescription entailing no personal decision whatsoever. Conduct, in the sense in which we use it, does not begin until we reach the area where rationalization has not yet penetrated, and where we are forced to make decisions in situations which have as yet not been subjected to regulation. It is in such situations that the whole problem of the relations between theory and practice arises. Concerning this problem, on the basis of the analyses thus far made, we may even at this stage venture a few further remarks.

There is no question that we do have some knowledge concerning that part of social life in which everything and life itself has already been rationalized and ordered. Here the conflict between theory and practice does not become an issue because, as a matter of fact, the mere treatment of an individual case by subjecting it to a generally existing law can hardly be designated as political practice. Rationalized as our life may seem to have become, all the rationalizations that have taken place so far are merely partial since the most important realms of our social life are even now anchored in the irrational. Our economic life, although extensively rationalized on the technical side, and in some limited connections calculable, does not, as a whole, constitute a planned economy. In spite of all tendencies towards trustification and organization, free competition still plays a decisive role. Our social structure is built along class lines, which means that not objective tests but irrational forces of social competition and struggle decide the place and function of the individual

in society. Dominance in national and international life is achieved through struggle, in itself irrational, in which chance plays an important part. These irrational forces in society form that sphere of social life which is unorganized and unrationalized, and in which conduct and politics become necessary. The two main sources of irrationalism in the social structure (uncontrolled competition and domination by force) constitute the realm of social life which is still unorganized and where politics becomes necessary. Around these two centres there accumulate those other more profound irrational elements, which we usually call emotions. Viewed from the sociological standpoint there is a connection between the extent of the unorganized realm of society where uncontrolled competition and domination by force prevail, and the social integration of emotional reactions.

The problem then must be stated: What knowledge do we have or is possible concerning this realm of social life and of the type of conduct which occurs in it? <sup>1</sup> But now our original problem has been stated in the most highly developed form in which it seems to lend itself to clarification. Having determined where the realm of the political truly begins, and where conduct in a true sense is possible, we can indicate the difficulties existing in the relationship between theory and practice.

The great difficulties which confront scientific knowledge in this realm arise from the fact that we are not dealing here with rigid, objective entities but with tendencies and strivings in a constant state of flux. A further difficulty is that the constellation of the interacting forces changes continuously. Wherever the same forces, each unchanging in character, interact, and their interaction, too, follows a regular course, it is possible to formulate general laws. This is not quite so easy where new forces are incessantly entering the system and forming unforeseen combinations. Still another difficulty is that the observer himself does not stand outside the realm of the irrational, but is a participant in the conflict of forces. This participation inevitably binds him to a partisan view through his evaluations and interests. Furthermore, and most important, is the fact that not only is the

<sup>1</sup> It is necessary here to repeat that the concept of the "political" as used in conjunction with the correlative concepts, rationalized structure, and irrational field, represents only one of many possible concepts of the "political". While particularly suited for the comprehension of certain relationships, it must not be regarded as absolutely the only one. For an opposite notion of the "political" cf. C. Schmitt, "Der Begriff des Politischen," *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, vol. 58 (1928).

political theorist a participant in the conflict because of his values, and interests, but the particular manner in which the problem presents itself to him, his most general mode of thought including even his categories, are bound up with general political and social undercurrents. So true is this that, in the realm of political and social thinking, we must, in my judgment, recognize actual differences in styles of thought—differences that extend even into the realm of logic itself.

In this, doubtless, lies the greatest obstacle to a science of politics. For according to ordinary expectations a science of conduct would be possible only when the fundamental structure of thought is independent of the different forms of conduct being studied. Even though the observer be a participant in the struggle, the basis of his thinking, i.e. his observational apparatus and his method of settling intellectual differences, must be above the conflict. A problem cannot be solved by obscuring its difficulties, but only by stating them as sharply and as pronouncedly as possible. Hence it is our task definitely to establish the thesis that in politics the statement of a problem and the logical techniques involved vary with the political position of the observer.

## 2. THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF KNOWLEDGE

We shall now make an effort to show by means of a concrete example that political-historical thinking assumes various forms, in accordance with different political currents. In order not to go too far afield, we shall concentrate primarily on the relationship between theory and practice. We shall see that even this most general and fundamental problem of a science of political conduct is differently conceived by the different historical-political parties.

This may be easily seen by a survey of the various political and social currents of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As the most important representative ideal-types, we cite the following :—

1. Bureaucratic conservatism.
2. Conservative historicism.
3. Liberal-democratic bourgeois thought.
4. The socialist-communist conception.
5. Fascism.

The mode of thought of bureaucratic conservatism will be considered first. The fundamental tendency of all bureaucratic thought is to turn all problems of politics into problems of administration. As a result, the majority of books on politics in the history of German political science are *de facto* treatises on administration. If we consider the role that bureaucracy has always played, especially in the Prussian state, and to what extent the intelligentsia was largely an intelligentsia drawn from the bureaucracy, this oneness of the history of political science in Germany becomes easily intelligible.

The attempt to hide all problems of politics under the cover of administration may be explained by the fact that the sphere of activity of the official exists only within the limits of laws already formulated. Hence the genesis or the development of law falls outside the scope of his activity. As a result of his socially limited horizon, the functionary fails to see that behind every law that has been made there lie the socially fashioned interests and the *Weltanschauungen* of a specific social group. He takes it for granted that the specific order prescribed by the concrete law is equivalent to order in general. He does not understand that every rationalized order is only one of many forms in which socially conflicting irrational forces are reconciled.

The administrative, legalistic mind has its own peculiar type of rationality. When faced with the play of hitherto unharnessed forces, as, for example, the eruption of collective energies in a revolution, it can conceive of them only as momentary disturbances. It is, therefore, no wonder that in every revolution the bureaucracy tries to find a remedy by means of arbitrary decrees rather than to meet the political situation on its own grounds. It regards revolution as an untoward event within an otherwise ordered system and not as the living expression of fundamental social forces on which the existence, the preservation, and the development of society depends. The juristic administrative mentality constructs only closed static systems of thought, and is always faced with the paradoxical task of having to incorporate into its system new laws, which arise out of the unsystematized interaction of living forces as if they were only a further elaboration of the original system.

A typical example of the military-bureaucratic mentality is every type of the "stab in the back" legend, *Dolchstoßlegende* which interprets a revolutionary outbreak as nothing but a serious interference with its own neatly planned strategy.

The exclusive concern of the military bureaucrat is military action and, if that proceeds according to plan, then all the rest of life is in order too. This mentality is reminiscent of the joke about the specialist in the medical world, who is reputed to have said: "The operation was a splendid success. Unfortunately, the patient died."

Every bureaucracy, therefore, in accord with the peculiar emphasis on its own position, tends to generalize its own experience and to overlook the fact that the realm of administration and of smoothly functioning order represents only a part of the total political reality. Bureaucratic thought does not deny the possibility of a science of politics, but regards it as identical with the science of administration. Thus irrational factors are overlooked, and when these nevertheless force themselves to the fore, they are treated as "routine matters of state". A classic expression of this standpoint is contained in a saying which originated in these circles: "A good administration is better than the best constitution."<sup>1</sup>

In addition to bureaucratic conservatism, which ruled Germany and especially Prussia to a very great extent, there was a second type of conservatism which developed parallel to it and which may be called historical conservatism. It was peculiar to the social group of the nobility and the bourgeois strata among the intellectuals who were the intellectual and actual rulers of the country, but between whom and the bureaucratic conservatives there always existed a certain amount of tension. This mode of thought bore the stamp of the German universities, and especially of the dominant group of historians. Even to-day, this mentality still finds its support largely in these circles.

Historical conservatism is characterized by the fact that it is aware of that irrational realm in the life of the state which cannot be managed by administration. It recognizes that there is an unorganized and incalculable realm which is the proper sphere of politics. Indeed it focuses its attention almost exclusively on the impulsive, irrational factors which furnish the real basis for the further development of state and society. It regards these forces as entirely beyond comprehension and infers that, as such, human reason is impotent to understand or to control them. Here only a traditionally inherited instinct, "silently working" spiritual forces, the "folk spirit", *Volksgeist*, drawing

<sup>1</sup> Obituary of Böhlau by the jurist Bekker. *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung*. Germanist. Abtlg., vol. viii, p. vi ff.

their strength out of the depths of the unconscious, can be of aid in moulding the future.

This attitude was already stated at the end of the eighteenth century by Burke, who served as the model for most of the German conservatives, in the following impressive words: "The science of constructing a commonwealth or renovating it or reforming it, is like every other experimental science, not to be taught *a priori*. Nor is it a short experience that can instruct us in that practical science."<sup>1</sup> The sociological roots of this thesis are immediately evident. It expressed the ideology of the dominant nobility in England and in Germany, and it served to legitimize their claims to leadership in the state. The *je ne sais quoi* element in politics, which can be acquired only through long experience, and which reveals itself as a rule only to those who for many generations have shared in political leadership, is intended to justify government by an aristocratic class. This makes clear the manner in which the social interests of a given group make the members of that group sensitive to certain aspects of social life to which those in another position do not respond. Whereas the bureaucracy is blinded to the political aspect of a situation by reason of its administrative preconceptions, from the very beginning the nobility is perfectly at home in this sphere. Right from the start, the latter have their eyes on the arena where intra- and inter-state spheres of power collide with one another. In this sphere, petty textbook wisdom deserts us and solutions to problems cannot be mechanically deduced from premises. Hence it is not individual intelligence which decides issues. Rather is every event the resultant of actual political forces.

The historical conservative theory, which is essentially the expression of a feudal tradition<sup>2</sup> become self-conscious, is primarily concerned with problems which transcend the sphere of administration. The sphere is regarded as a completely irrational one which cannot be fabricated by mechanical methods but which grows of its own accord. This outlook relates everything to the decisive dichotomy between "construction according to calculated plan" and "allowing things to grow".<sup>3</sup> For the political leader it is not sufficient to possess merely the correct knowledge and the mastery of certain laws and norms. In

<sup>1</sup> Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, edited by F. G. Selby (London: Macmillan and Co., 1890), p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. "Das konservative Denken," loc. cit., pp. 89, 105, 133 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 472, n. 129.

addition to these he must possess that inborn instinct, sharpened through long experience, which leads him to the right answer.

Two types of irrationalism have joined to produce this irrational way of thinking : on the one hand, precapitalistic, traditionalistic irrationalism (which regards legal thinking, for instance, as a way of sensing something and not as mechanical calculation), and, on the other hand, romantic irrationalism. A mode of thought is thus created which conceives of history as the reign of pre- and super-rational forces. Even Ranke, the most eminent representative of the historical school, spoke from this intellectual outlook when he defined the relations of theory and practice.<sup>1</sup> Politics is not, according to him, an independent science that can be taught. The statesman may indeed study history profitably, but not in order to derive from it rules of conduct, but rather because it serves to sharpen his political instinct. This mode of thought may be designated as the ideology of political groups which have traditionally occupied a dominant position but which have rarely participated in the administrative bureaucracy.

If the two solutions thus far presented are contrasted, it will become clear that the bureaucrat tends to conceal the political sphere while the historicist sees it all the more sharply and exclusively as irrational even though he singles out for emphasis the traditional factors in historical events and in the acting subjects. At this stage we come to the chief adversary of this theory which, as has been pointed out, arose originally out of aristocratic feudal mentality, namely, the liberal-democratic bourgeoisie and its theories.<sup>2</sup> The rise of the bourgeoisie was attended by an extreme intellectualism. Intellectualism, as it is used in this connection, refers to a mode of thought which either does not see the elements in life and in thought which are based on will, interest, emotion, and *Weltanschauung*—or, if it does recognize their existence, treats them as though they were equivalent to the intellect and believes that they may be mastered by and subordinated to reason. This bourgeois intellectualism expressly demanded a scientific politics, and actually proceeded to found such a discipline. Just as the bourgeoisie found the first institutions into which the political struggle could be

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ranke, *Das politische Gespräch* (1836), ed. by Rothacker (Halle a.d., Saale, 1925), p. 21 ff. Also other essays on the same theme: "Reflexionen" (1832), "Vom Einfluss der Theorie," "Über die Verwandtschaft und den Unterschied der Historie und der Politik."

<sup>2</sup> For the sake of simplicity we do not distinguish liberalism from democracy, although historically and socially they are quite different.

canalized (first parliament and the electoral system, and later the League of Nations), so it also created a systematic place for the new discipline of politics. The organizational anomaly of bourgeois society appears also in its social theory. The bourgeois attempt at a thorough-going rationalization of the world is forced nevertheless to halt when it reaches certain phenomena. By sanctioning free competition and the class struggle, it even creates a new irrational sphere. Likewise in this type of thought, the irrational residue in reality remains undissolved. Furthermore, just as parliament is a formal organization, a formal rationalization of the political conflict but not a solution of it, so bourgeois theory attains merely an apparent, formal intellectualization of the inherently irrational elements.

The bourgeois mind is, of course, aware of this new irrational realm, but it is intellectualistic in so far as it attempts solely through thought, discussion, and organization to master, as if they were already rationalized, the power and other irrational relationships that dominate here. Thus, *inter alia*, it was believed that political action could without difficulty be scientifically defined. The science in question was assumed to fall into three parts :—

First—the theory of ends, i.e. the theory of the ideal State.

Second—the theory of the positive State.

Third—“politics,” i.e. the description of the manner in which the existing State is transformed into a perfect State.

As an illustration of this type of thought we may refer to the structure of Fichte's “Closed Commercial State” which in this sense has recently been very acutely analysed by Heinrich Rickert<sup>1</sup> who himself, however, completely accepts this position. There is then a science of ends and a science of means. The most striking fact about it is the complete separation between theory and practice, of the intellectual sphere from the emotional sphere. Modern intellectualism is characterized by its tendency not to tolerate emotionally determined and evaluative thinking. When, nevertheless, this type of thought is encountered (and all political thought is set essentially in an irrational context) the attempt is made so to construe the phenomena that the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rickert, Heinrich, “Über idealistische Politik als Wissenschaft. Ein Beitrag zur Problemgeschichte der Staatsphilosophie,” *Die Akademie*, Heft 4, Erlangen.

evaluative elements will appear separable, and that there will remain at least a residue of pure theory. In this the question is not even raised whether the emotional element may not under certain circumstances be so intertwined with the rational as to involve even the categorical structure itself and to make the required isolation of the evaluative elements *de facto* unrealizable. Bourgeois intellectualism, however, does not worry over these difficulties. With undaunted optimism, it strives to conquer a sphere completely purged of irrationalism.

As regards ends, this theory teaches that there is one right set of ends of political conduct which, in so far as it has not already been found, may be arrived at by discussion. Thus the original conception of parliamentarism was, as Carl Schmitt has so clearly shown, that of a debating society in which truth is sought by theoretical methods.<sup>1</sup> We know all too well and can understand sociologically wherein the self-deception in this mode of thought lay. To-day we recognize that behind every theory there are collective forces expressive of group-purposes, -power, and -interests. Parliamentary discussions are thus far from being theoretical in the sense that they may ultimately arrive at the objective truth: they are concerned with very real issues to be decided in the clash of interests. It was left for the socialist movement which arose subsequently as the opponent of the bourgeoisie to elaborate specifically this aspect of the debate about real issues.

In our treatment of socialist theory we are not for the time being differentiating between socialism and communism, for we are here concerned not so much with the plethora of historical phenomena as with the tendencies which cluster around the opposite poles that essentially determine modern thought. In the struggle with its bourgeois opponent, Marxism discovered anew that in historical and political matters there can be no "pure theory". It sees that behind every theory there lie collective points of view. The phenomenon of collective thinking, which proceeds according to interests and social and existential situations, Marx spoke of as ideology.

In this case, as so often in political struggles, an important discovery was made, which, once it became known, had to be followed up to its final conclusion. This was the more so since this discovery contained the heart of the problem of political

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Carl Schmitt, *Die geistesgeschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus*, 2nd edit. (Leipzig, 1926).

thought in general. The concept ideology serves to point out the problem, but the problem is thereby by no means solved or cleared up.<sup>1</sup> A thoroughgoing clarification is attainable only by getting rid of the one-sidedness inherent in the original conception. First of all, therefore, it will be necessary for our purpose to make two corrections. To begin with, it could easily be shown that those who think in socialist and communist terms discern the ideological element only in the thinking of their opponents while regarding their own thought as entirely free from any taint of ideology. As sociologists there is no reason why we should not apply to Marxism the perceptions which it itself has produced, and point out from case to case its ideological character. Moreover, it should be explained that the concept "ideology" is being used here not as a negative value-judgment, in the sense of insinuating a conscious political lie, but is intended to designate the outlook inevitably associated with a given historical and social situation, and the *Weltanschauung* and style of thought bound up with it. This meaning of the term, which bears more closely on the history of thought, must be sharply differentiated from the other meaning. Of course, we do not deny that in other connections it may also serve to reveal conscious political lies.

Through this procedure nothing that has a positive value for scientific research in the notion of ideology has been discarded. The great revelation it affords is that every form of historical and political thought is essentially conditioned by the life situation of the thinker and his groups. It is our task to disentangle this insight from its one-sided political encrustation, and to elaborate in a systematic manner the thesis that how one looks at history and how one construes a total situation from given facts, depends on the position one occupies within society. In every historical and political contribution it is possible to determine from what vantage point the objects were observed. However, the fact that our thinking is determined by our social position is not necessarily a source of error. On the contrary, it is often the path to political insight. The

<sup>1</sup> For what follows Part II should be referred to for further discussion of the problem, of which only the essentials will be repeated here. The concept of total, general, and non-evaluative ideology, as described earlier, is the one used in the present context (cf. p. 71 ff.). Part IV will deal with the evaluative conceptions of ideology and utopia. Henceforth the concept to be used will be determined by the immediate purposes of the investigation.

significant element in the conception of ideology, in our opinion, is the discovery that political thought is integrally bound up with social life. This is the essential meaning of the oft-quoted sentence, "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence but, on the contrary, their social existence which determines their consciousness."<sup>1</sup>

But closely related to this is another important feature of Marxist thought, namely a new conception of the relationship between theory and practice. Whereas the bourgeois theorist devoted a special chapter to setting forth his ends, and whereas this always proceeded from a normative conception of society, one of the most significant steps Marx took was to attack the utopian element in socialism. From the beginning he refused to lay down an exhaustive set of objectives. There is no norm to be achieved that is detachable from the process itself: "Communism for us is not a condition that is to be established nor an ideal to which reality must adjust itself. We call communism the actual movement which abolishes present conditions. The conditions under which this movement proceeds result from those now existing."<sup>2</sup>

If to-day we ask a communist, with a Leninist training, what the future society will actually be like, he will answer that the question is an undialectical one, since the future itself will be decided in the practical dialectical process of becoming. But what is this practical dialectical process?

It signifies that we cannot calculate *a priori* what a thing should be like and what it will be like. We can influence only the general trend of the process of becoming. The ever-present concrete problem for us can only be the next step ahead. It is not the task of political thought to set up an absolute scheme of what should be. Theory, even including communist theory, is a function of the process of becoming. The dialectical relationship between theory and practice consists in the fact that, first of all, theory arising out of a definitely social impulse clarifies the situation. And in the process of clarification reality undergoes a change. We thereby enter a new situation out of which a new theory emerges. The process is, then, as follows: (1) Theory is a function of reality; (2) This theory leads to a certain kind

<sup>1</sup> Marx, Karl, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, tr. by N. I. Stone (Chicago, 1913), pp. 11-12.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Marx-Engels Archiv*, ed. by D. Ryazanov (Frankfurt a.M.), vol. i, p. 252.

of action ; (3) Action changes the reality, or in case of failure, forces us to a revision of the previous theory. The change in the actual situation brought about by the act gives rise to a new theory.<sup>1</sup>

This view of the relationship between theory and practice bears the imprint of an advanced stage in the discussion of the problem. One notes that it was preceded by the one-sidedness of an extreme intellectualism and a complete irrationalism, and that it had to circumvent all the dangers which were already revealed in bourgeois and conservative thought and experience. The advantages of this solution lie in the fact that it has assimilated the previous formulation of the problem, and in its awareness of the fact that in the realm of politics the usual run of thought is unable to accomplish anything. On the other hand, this outlook is too thoroughly motivated by the desire for knowledge to fall into a complete irrationalism like conservatism. The result of the conflict between the two currents of thought is a very flexible conception of theory. A basic lesson derived from political experience which was most impressively formulated by Napoleon in the maxim, "*On s'engage, puis on voit*,"<sup>2</sup> here finds its methodological sanction.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, political thought cannot be carried on by speculating about it from the outside. Rather thought becomes illuminated when a concrete

<sup>1</sup> "When the proletariat by means of the class struggle changes its position in society and thereby the whole social structure, in taking cognizance of the changed social situation, i.e. of itself, it finds itself face to face not merely with a new object of understanding, but also changes its position as a knowing subject. The theory serves to bring the proletariat to a consciousness of its social position, i.e. it enables it to envisage itself—simultaneously both as an object and a subject in the social process." (Lukács, Georg, *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein*, Berlin, 1923.)

"This consciousness in turn becomes the motive force of new activity, since theory becomes a material force once it seizes the masses." (Marx-Engels, *Nachlass*, i, p. 392.)

<sup>2</sup> Indeed both Lenin and Lukács, as representatives of the dialectical approach, find justification in this Napoleonic maxim.

<sup>3</sup> "Revolutionary theory is the generalization of the experiences of the labour movement in all countries. It naturally loses its very essence if it is not connected with revolutionary practice, just as practice gropes in the dark if its path is not illumined by revolutionary theory. But theory can become the greatest force in the labour movement if it is indissolubly bound up with revolutionary practice, for it alone can give to the movement confidence, guidance, strength, and understanding of the inner relations between events and it alone can help practice to clarify the process and direction of class movements in the present and near future." (Joseph Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, rev. ed. New York and London, 1932, pp. 26-7.)

situation is penetrated, not merely through acting and doing, but also through the thinking which must go with them.

Socialist-communist theory is then a synthesis of intuitionism and a determined desire to comprehend phenomena in an extremely rational way. Intuitionism is present in this theory because it denies the possibility of exact calculations of events in advance of their happening. The rationalist tendency enters because it aims to fit into a rational scheme whatever novelty comes to view at any moment. At no time is it permissible to act without theory, but the theory that arises in the course of action will be on a different level from the theory that went before.<sup>1</sup> It is especially revolutions that create a more valuable type of knowledge. This constitutes the synthesis which men are likely to make when they live in the midst of irrationality and recognize it as such, but do not despair of the attempt to interpret it rationally. Marxist thought is akin to conservative thought in that it does not deny the existence of an irrational sphere and does not try to conceal it as the bureaucratic mentality does, or treat it in a purely intellectual fashion as if it were rational, as liberal-democratic thinkers do. It is distinguished from conservative thought, however, in that it conceives of this relative irrationality as potentially comprehensible through new methods of rationalization.<sup>2</sup> For even in this type of thought,

<sup>1</sup> Revolution, particularly, creates the situation propitious to significant knowledge: "History in general, the history of revolutions in particular, has always been richer, more varied, and variform, more vital and 'cunning' than is conceived of by the best parties, by the most conscious vanguards of the most advanced classes. This is natural, for the best vanguards express the consciousness, will, passions, and fancies of but tens of thousands, whereas the revolution is effected at the moment of the exceptional exaltation and exertion of all the human faculties—consciousness, will, passion, phantasy, of tens of millions, spurred on by the bitterest class war." (N. Lenin, "*Left*" *Communism: an Infantile Disorder*, published by the Toiler, n.d. pp. 76-7, also New York and London, 1934.)

It is interesting to observe that from this point of view revolution appears not as an intensification of the passions resident in men nor as mere irrationality. This passion is valuable only because it makes possible the fusion of the accumulated rationality tested out experimentally in the individual experiences of millions.

<sup>2</sup> Thus, fate, chance, everything sudden and unexpected, and the religious view which arises therefrom, are conceived of as functions of the degree in which our understanding of history has not yet reached the stage of rationality.

"Fear of the blind forces of capitalism, blind because they cannot be foreseen by the masses of the people, forces which at every step in the lives of the proletariat and the small traders threaten to bring and do bring 'sudden', 'unexpected', 'accidental' disaster and ruin, converting

the sphere of the irrational is not entirely irrational, arbitrary, or incomprehensible. It is true that there are no statically fixed and definite laws to which this creative process conforms, nor are there any exactly recurring sequences of events, but at the same time only a limited number of situations can occur even here. And this after all is the decisive consideration. Even when new elements in historical development emerge they do not constitute merely a chain of unexpected events; the political sphere itself is permeated by tendencies which, even though they are subject to change, through their very presence do nevertheless determine to a large extent the various possibilities.

Therefore, the first task of Marxism is the analysis and rationalization of all those tendencies which influence the character of the situation. Marxist theory has elaborated these structural tendencies in a threefold direction. First, it points out that the political sphere in a given society is based on and is always characterized by the state of productive relations prevailing at the time.<sup>1</sup> The productive relations are not regarded statically as a continually recurring economic cycle, but, dynamically, as a structural interrelationship which is itself constantly changing through time.

Secondly, it sees that changes in this economic factor are most closely connected with transformations in class relations, which involves at the same time a shift in the kinds of power and an ever-varying distribution of power.

But, thirdly, it recognizes that it is possible to understand the inner structure of the system of ideas dominating men at any period and to determine theoretically the direction of any change or modification in this structure.

Still more important is the fact that these three structural patterns are not considered independently of one another.

them into beggars, paupers, or prostitutes, and condemn them to starvation; these are the roots of modern religion, which the materialist, if he desires to remain a materialist, must recognize. No educational books will obliterate religion from the minds of those condemned to the hard labour of capitalism, until they themselves learn to fight in a united, organized, systematic, conscious manner the roots of religion, the domination of capital in all its forms." (*Selections from Lenin—The Bolsheviki Party in Action, 1904-1914*, ii. From the essay, "The Workers' Party and Religion," New York, pp. 274-5.)

<sup>1</sup> "The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life." Marx, *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, tr. by N. I. Stone (Chicago, 1913), p. 11.

It is precisely their reciprocal relations which are made to constitute a single group of problems. The ideological structure does not change independently of the class structure, and the class structure does not change independently of the economic structure. And it is precisely the interconnection and intertwining of this threefold formulation of the problem, the economic, the social, and the ideological, that gives to Marxist ideas their singularly penetrating quality. Only this synthetic power enables it to formulate ever anew the problem of the structural totality of society, not only for the past but also for the future. The paradox lies in the fact that Marxism recognizes relative irrationality and never loses sight of it. But unlike the historical school it does not content itself with a mere acceptance of the irrational. Instead it tries to eliminate as much of it as possible by a new effort at rationalization.

Here again the sociologist is confronted with the question of the general historical-social form of existence and the particular situation from which the mode of thought peculiar to Marxism arose. How can we explain its singular character which consists in combining an extreme irrationalism with an extreme rationalism in such a manner that out of this fusion there arises a new kind of "dialectical" rationality?

Considered sociologically, this is the theory of an ascendent class which is not concerned with momentary successes, and which therefore will not resort to a "putsch" as a means for seizing power, but which, because of its inherent revolutionary tendencies, must always be sensitive and alert to unpredictable constellations in the situation. Every theory which arises out of a class position and is based not on unstable masses but on organized historical groups must of necessity have a long range view. Consequently, it requires a thoroughly rationalized view of history on the basis of which it will be possible at any moment to ask ourselves where we are now and at what stage of development does our movement find itself.<sup>1</sup>

Groups of pre-capitalistic origin, in which the communal element prevails, may be held together by traditions or by common sentiments alone. In such a group, theoretical reflection is of entirely secondary importance. On the other hand, in groups which are not welded together primarily by such organic bonds of community life, but which merely occupy similar

<sup>1</sup> "Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement." Lenin, *What Is To Be Done?* New York and London, 1931.

positions in the social-economic system, rigorous theorizing is a prerequisite of cohesion. Viewed sociologically this extreme need for theory is the expression of a class society in which persons must be held together not by local proximity but by similar circumstances of life in an extensive social sphere. Sentimental ties are effective only within a limited spatial area, while a theoretical *Weltanschauung* has a unifying power over great distances. Hence a rationalized conception of history serves as a socially unifying factor for groups dispersed in space, and at the same time furnishes continuity to generations which continuously grow up into similar social conditions. In the formation of classes, a similar position in the social order and a unifying theory are of primary importance. Emotional ties which subsequently spring up are only a reflection of the already existing situation and are always more or less regulated by theory. Despite this extreme rationalizing tendency, which is implicit in the proletarian class position, the limits of the rationality of this class are defined by its oppositional, and particularly, by its allotted revolutionary position.

Revolutionary purpose prevents rationality from becoming absolute. Even though in modern times the tendency toward rationalization proceeds on such an extensive scale that revolts,<sup>1</sup> which originally were only irrational outbursts, are organized on this plane after a bureaucratic fashion, still there must remain somewhere in our conception of history and our scheme of life a place for the essential irrationality which goes with revolution.

Revolution means that somewhere there is an anticipation of and an intent to provoke a breach in the rationalized structure of society. It necessitates, therefore, a watchfulness for the favourable moment in which the attack must be risked. If the whole social and political sphere were conceived of as thoroughly rationalized, it would imply that we would no longer have to be on the lookout for such a breach. The moment, however, is nothing more than that irrational element in the "here and now", which every theory, by virtue of its generalizing tendency, obscures. But since, so long as one needs and wants revolution, one cannot allow this favourable moment, during which the

<sup>1</sup> "The armed uprising is a special form of the political struggle. It has developmental laws of its own and these must be learned. Karl Marx expressed this with extraordinary vividness when he wrote that 'the revolt is just as much an art as war'." (Lenin, *Ausgewählte Werke*, Wien, 1925, p. 448.)

breach occurs, to pass, there develops a gap in the theoretical picture which indicates that the irrational element is valued for what it really is—is valued essentially in its irrationality.

All this dialectical thinking begins by rationalizing what seemed to the historical-conservative groups totally irrational; it does not, however, go so far in its rationalizing tendency as to yield a totally static picture of what is in process of becoming.

This element of the irrational is embodied in the concept of dialectical transformation. The dominant tendencies in the political sphere are not here construed as mathematically calculable combinations of forces, but rather as capable, at a certain point, of sudden transformation when thrown out of the orbit of their original tendencies. Naturally, this transformation is never subject to prediction; on the contrary, it always depends on the revolutionary act of the proletariat. Thus intellectualism is by no means deemed legitimate in all situations. Quite on the contrary, there appear to be two occasions in which the intuition necessary to comprehend the situation is aroused. First, it always remains incalculable and is left for political intuition to ascertain when the situation is ripe for revolutionary transformation and, second, historical events are never so exactly determinable in advance that it is superfluous to invoke action to change them.

Marxist thought appears as the attempt to rationalize the irrational. The correctness of this analysis is vouched for by the fact that to the extent that Marxian proletarian groups rise to power, they shake off the dialectical elements of their theory and begin to think in the generalizing methods of liberalism and democracy, which seek to arrive at universal laws, whilst those who, because of their position, still have to resort to revolution, cling to the dialectical element (Leninism).

Dialectical thinking is in fact rationalistic but it culminates in irrationalism. It is constantly striving to answer two questions:—first, what is our position in the social process at the moment? second, what is the demand of the moment? Action is never guided simply by impulse but by a sociological understanding of history. Nevertheless it is not to be assumed that irrational impulses can be entirely eliminated by a logical analysis of the situation and of momentary occurrences. Only through acting in the situation do we address questions to it, and the answer we derive is always in the form of the success or failure of the action. Theory is not torn from its essential

connection with action, and action is the clarifying medium in which all theory is tested and develops.

The positive contribution of this theory is that out of its own concrete social experience it shows more and more convincingly that political thought is essentially different from other forms of theorizing. This dialectical mode of thought is further significant in that it has incorporated within itself the problems of both bourgeois rationalism and the irrationalism of historicism.

From irrationalism it has derived the insight that the historical-political sphere is not composed of a number of lifeless objects and that therefore a method which merely seeks laws must fail. Furthermore this method is fully cognizant of the completely dynamic character of the tendencies that dominate the political realm and since it is conscious of the connection between political thinking and living experience, it will not tolerate an artificial separation of theory and practice. From rationalism, on the other hand, it has taken over the inclination to view rationally even situations which have previously defied rational interpretation.

As a fifth claimant to a place among modern currents of thought we should mention fascism, which first emerged in our own epoch. Fascism has its own conception of the relations of theory and practice. It is, on the whole, activistic and irrational. It couples itself, by preference, with the irrationalist philosophies and political theories of the most modern period. It is especially Bergson, Sorel, and Pareto who, after suitable modification of course, have been incorporated into its *Weltanschauung*. At the very heart of its theory and its practice lies the apotheosis of direct action, the belief in the decisive *deed*, and in the significance attributed to the initiative of a leading *élite*. The essence of politics is to recognize and to grapple with the demands of the hour. Not programmes are important, but unconditional subordination to a leader.<sup>1</sup> History is made neither by the masses, nor by ideas, nor by "silently working" forces, but by the *élites* who from time to time assert themselves.<sup>2</sup> This is a complete

<sup>1</sup> Mussolini: "Our programme is quite simple; we wish to rule over Italy. People are always asking us about our programme. There are too many already. Italy's salvation does not depend on programmes but on men and strong wills. (Mussolini, *Reden*. ed. by H. Meyer (Leipzig, 1928), p. 105. Cf. also pp. 134 ff.)

<sup>2</sup> Mussolini (loc. cit., p. 13): "You know that I am no worshipper of the new god, the masses. At any rate, history proves that social changes have always been first brought about by minorities, by a mere handful of men."

irrationalism but characteristically enough not the kind of irrationalism known to the conservatives, not the irrational which is at the same time the super-rational, not the folk spirit (*Volksgeist*), not silently working forces, not the mystical belief in the creativeness of long stretches of time, but the irrationalism of the deed which negates even interpretation of history. "To be youthful means being able to forget. We Italians are, of course, proud of our history, but we do not need to make it the conscious guide of our actions—it lives in us as part of our biological make-up."<sup>1</sup>

A special study would be necessary to ascertain the different meanings of the various conceptions of history. It would be easy to show that the diverse intellectual and social currents have different conceptions of history. The conception of history contained in Brodrero's statement is not comparable either to the conservative, the liberal-democratic, or the socialistic conceptions. All these theories, otherwise so antagonistic, share the assumption that there is a definite and ascertainable structure in history within which, so to speak, each event has its proper position.

<sup>1</sup> From a statement by Brodrero at the Fourth International Congress for Intellectual Co-operation, Heidelberg, October, 1927.

It is rather difficult to organize fascist ideas into a coherent doctrine. Apart from the fact that it is still undeveloped, fascism itself lays no particular weight upon an integrally knit theory. Its programme changes constantly, depending on the class to which it addresses itself. In this case, more than in most others, it is essential to separate mere propaganda from the real attitude, in order to gain an understanding of its essential character. This seems to lie in its absolute irrationalism and its activism, which explain also the vacillating and volatile theoretical character of fascist theory. Such institutional ideas as the corporative state, professional organizations, etc., are deliberately omitted from our presentation. Our task is to analyse the attitude towards the problem of theory and practice and the view of history which results therefrom. For this reason, we will find it necessary from time to time to give some attention to the theoretical forerunners of this conception, namely Bergson, Sorel, and Pareto. In the history of fascism, two periods may be distinguished, each of which has had distinct ideological repercussions. The first phase, about two years in length, during which fascism was a mere movement, was marked by the infiltration of activistic-intuitive elements into its intellectual-spiritual outlook. This was the period during which syndicalist theories found entrance to fascism. The first "fasci" were syndicalist and Mussolini at that time was said to be a disciple of Sorel. In the second phase, beginning in November, 1921, fascism becomes stabilized and takes a decisive turn towards the right. In this period nationalistic ideas come to the fore. For a discussion of the manner in which its theory became transformed, in accordance with the changing class basis, and especially the transformations since high finance and large-scale industry allied themselves to it, cf. Beckerath, E. v., *Wesen und Werden des fascistischen Staates* (Berlin, 1927).

Not everything is possible in every situation.<sup>1</sup> This framework which is constantly changing and revolving must be capable of comprehension. Certain experiences, actions, modes of thought, etc., are possible only in certain places and in certain epochs. Reference to history and the study of history or of society are valuable because orientation to them can and must become a determining factor in conduct and in political activity.

However different the picture which conservatives, liberals, and socialists have derived from history, they all agree that history is made up of a set of intelligible interrelations. At first it was believed that it revealed the plan of divine providence, later that it showed the higher purpose of a dynamically and pantheistically conceived spirit. These were only metaphysical gropings towards an extremely fruitful hypothesis for which history was not merely a heterogeneous succession of events in time, but a coherent interaction of the most significant factors. The understanding of the inner structure of history was sought in order to derive therefrom a measuring-rod for one's own conduct.

While the liberals and socialists continued to believe that the historical structure was completely capable of rationalization the former insisting that its development was progressively unilinear, and the latter viewing it as a dialectical movement, the conservatives sought to understand the structure of the totality of historical development intuitively by a morphological approach. Different as these points of view were in method and content, they all understood political activity as proceeding on an historical background, and they all agreed that in our own epoch, it becomes necessary to orient oneself to the total situation in which one happens to be placed, if political aims are to be realized. This idea of history as an intelligible scheme disappears in the face of the irrationality of the fascist apotheosis of the deed. To a certain degree this was already the case with its syndicalist forerunner, Sorel,<sup>2</sup> who had already denied the idea of evolution

<sup>1</sup> In contrast to this, Mussolini said: "For my own part I have no great confidence in these ideals [i.e. pacifism]. Nonetheless, I do not exclude them. I never exclude anything. Anything is possible, even the most impossible and most senseless" (loc. cit., p. 74).

<sup>2</sup> As regards Mussolini's relations with Sorel: Sorel knew him before 1914 and, indeed in 1912, is reported to have said the following concerning him: "Mussolini is no ordinary Socialist. Take my word, some day you will see him at the head of a sacred battalion, saluting the Italian flag. He is an Italian in the style of the fifteenth century—a veritable condottiere. One does not know him yet, but he is the only man active enough to be capable of curing the weakness of the government." Quoted

in a similar sense. The conservatives, the liberals, the socialists were one in assuming that in history it can be shown that there is an interrelationship between events and configurations through which everything, by virtue of its position, acquires significance. Not every event could possibly happen in every situation. Fascism regards every interpretation of history as a mere fictive construction destined to disappear before the deed of the moment as it breaks through the temporal pattern of history.<sup>1</sup>

That we are dealing here with a theory which holds that history is meaningless is not changed by the fact that in fascist ideology, especially since its turn to the right, there are found the ideas of the "national war" and the ideology of the "Roman Empire". Apart from the fact that these ideas were, from the very first, consciously experienced as myths, i.e. as fictions, it should be understood that historically oriented thought and activity do not mean the romantic idealization of some past epoch or event, but consist rather in the awareness of one's place in the historical process which has a clearly articulated structure. It is this clear articulation of the structure which makes one's own participation in the process intelligible.

The intellectual value of all political and historical knowledge *qua* knowledge, disappears in the face of this purely intuitional approach, which appreciates only its ideological and mythological aspect. Thought is significant here only in so far as it exposes the illusory character of these fruitless theories of history and unmasks them as self-deceptions. For this activist intuitionism, thought only clears the way for the pure deed free from illusions. The superior person, the leader, knows that all political and historical ideas are myths. He himself is entirely emancipated from them, but he values them—and this is the obverse side of his attitude—because they are "derivations" (in Pareto's

from Pirou, Gaëtan, *Georges Sorel (1847-1922)*, Paris (Marcel Rivière), 1927, p. 53. Cf. also the review by Ernst Posse in *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung*, vol. 13, pp. 431 ff.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the essay by Ziegler, H. O., "Ideologienlehre" in *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, 1927, vol. 57, pp. 657 ff. This author undertakes from the point of view of Pareto, Sorel, etc., to demolish the "myth of history". He denies that history contains any ascertainable coherence and points out various contemporary currents of thought which also affirm this unhistorical approach. Mussolini expressed the same thought in political-rhetorical form: "We are not hysterical women fearfully awaiting what the future will bring. We are not waiting for the destiny and revelation of history" (loc. cit., p. 129) and further—"We do not believe that history repeats itself, that it follows a prescribed route."

sense) which stimulate enthusiastic feelings and set in motion irrational "residues" in men, and are the only forces that lead to political activity.<sup>1</sup> This is a translation into practice of what Sorel and Pareto<sup>2</sup> formulated in their theories of the myth and which resulted in their theory of the role of the *élites* and advance guards.

The profound scepticism towards science and especially cultural sciences which arises from the intuitional approach is not difficult to understand. Whereas Marxism placed an almost religious faith in science, Pareto saw in it only a formal social mechanics. In fascism we see the sober scepticism of this representative of the late bourgeois epoch combined with the self-confidence of a movement still in its youth. Pareto's scepticism towards the knowable is maintained intact, but is supplemented by a faith in the deed as such and in its own vitality.<sup>3</sup>

When everything which is peculiarly historical is treated as inaccessible to science, all that remains for scientific research is the exploration of that most general stratum of regularities which are the same for all men and for all times. Apart from social mechanics, social psychology alone is recognized. The knowledge of social psychology is of value to the leaders purely as a technique for manipulating the masses. This primitive deep-lying stratum of man's psyche is alike in all men whether we deal with the men of to-day, or of ancient Rome, or of the Renaissance.

We find here that this intuitionism has suddenly fused with the quest of the contemporary bourgeoisie for general laws. The result was the gradual elimination from positivism, as represented by Comte for instance, of all traces of a philosophy of history in order to build a generalizing sociology. On the other hand, the beginnings of the conception of ideology which marks the theory of useful myths may be traced largely to Marxism. There are, nevertheless, upon closer examination essential differences.

Marxism, too, raises the issue of ideology in the sense of the "tissue of lies", the "mystifications", the "fictions" which

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sorel, G., *Réflexions sur la violence* (Paris, 1921), chap. 4, pp. 167 ff.

<sup>2</sup> A concise statement of Pareto's sociological views may be found in Bousquet's *Précis de sociologie d'après Vilfredo Pareto* (Paris, 1925).

<sup>3</sup> Mussolini, in one of his speeches, said: "We have created a myth. This myth is a faith, a noble enthusiasm. It does not have to be a reality [!], it is an impulse and a hope, belief, and courage. Our myth is the nation, the great nation which we wish to make into a concrete reality." (Quoted from Carl Schmitt, *Die geistesgeschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus*, p. 89.)

it seeks to expose. It does not, however, bring every attempt at an interpretation of history into this category but only those to which it is in opposition. Not every type of thought is labelled "ideology". Only social strata who have need for disguises and who, from their historical and social situation will not and cannot perceive the true interrelations as they actually exist, necessarily fall victims to these deceptive experiences. But every idea, even a correct one, through the very fact that it can be conceived, appears to be related to a certain historical-social situation. The fact that all thought is related to a certain historical-social situation does not, however, rob it of all possibility of attaining the truth. The intuitional approach on the other hand, which so repeatedly asserts itself in fascist theory, conceives of knowledge and rationalizability as somewhat uncertain and of ideas as of altogether secondary significance.<sup>1</sup> Only a limited knowledge about history or politics is possible—namely that which is contained in the social mechanics and social psychology referred to above.

For fascism, the Marxian idea of history as a structural integration of economic and social forces in the final analysis is also merely a myth. Just as the character of the historical process is, in the course of time, disintegrated, so the class conception of society is rejected too. There is no proletariat—there are only proletariats.<sup>2</sup> It is characteristic of this type of thought and this mode of life that history dissolves itself into a number of transitory situations in which two factors are decisive; on the one hand, the *élan* of the great leader and of the vanguard or *élites* and on the other the mastery of the only type of knowledge which it is believed possible to obtain concerning the psychology of the masses and the technique of their manipulation. Politics is then possible as a science only in a limited sense—in so far, namely, as it clears the way for action.

It does this in a twofold manner: first, by destroying all the illusions which make us see history as a process; and, secondly, by reckoning with and observing the mass-mind, especially its power-impulses and their functioning. Now to a great extent this mass psyche does, in fact, follow timeless laws because it itself stands outside the course of historical development. By

<sup>1</sup> "Temperaments divide men more than ideas." Mussolini, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Beckerath, E. v., *op. cit.*, p. 142. Also Mussolini, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

way of contrast, the historical character of the social psyche is perceptible only to groups and persons occupying a definite position in the historical social structure.

In the final analysis, this theory of politics has its roots in Machiavelli, who already laid down its fundamental tenets. The idea of *virtù* anticipates the *élan* of the great leader. A disillusioning realism which destroys all idols, and constant recourse to a technique for the psychic manipulation of the deeply despised masses, are also to be found in his writings, even though they may differ in detail from the fascist conceptions. Finally, the tendency to deny that there is a plan in history and the espousal of the theory of direct intervention of the deed are likewise anticipated. Even the bourgeoisie has often made room in its theory for this doctrine concerning political technique and placed it, as Stahl quite rightly saw, alongside the idea of natural law, which served a normative function,<sup>1</sup> without, however, connecting the two. The more bourgeois ideals and the corresponding view of history were in part realized and in part disintegrated by disillusionment through the accession to power of the bourgeoisie, the more this rational calculation, without any consideration for the historical setting of facts, was recognized as the only form of political knowledge. In the most recent period, this totally detached political technique became associated with activism and intuitionism which denied the intelligibility of history. It became the ideology of those groups who prefer a direct, explosive collision with history to a gradual evolutionary change. This attitude takes many forms—appearing first in the anarchism of Bakunin and Proudhon, then in the Sorelien syndicalism, and finally in the fascism of Mussolini.<sup>2</sup>

From a sociological point of view this is the ideology of "putschist" groups led by intellectuals who are outsiders to the liberal-bourgeois and socialist stratum of leaders, and who hope to seize power by exploiting the crises which constantly beset modern society in its period of transformation. This period of transformation, whether it leads to socialism or to a capitalistically planned economy, is characterized by the fact that it offers intermittent opportunities for the use of putschist tactics. In the degree that it contains within itself the irrational factors

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Stahl, F. J., *Die Philosophie des Rechts*, vol. i, 4th ed., book 4, chap. 1, "Die neuere Politik."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Schmitt, *Parlamentarismus*, ch. 4.

of modern social and economic life, it attracts the explosive irrational elements in the modern mind.

The correctness of the interpretation of this ideology as the expression of a certain social stratum is proved by the fact that historical interpretations made from this point of view are oriented towards the irrational sphere referred to above. Being psychologically and socially situated at a point from which they can discern only the unordered and unrationalized in the development of society, the structural development and the integrated framework of society remain completely hidden from their view.

It is almost possible to establish a sociological correlation between the type of thinking that appeals to organic or organized groups and a consistently systematic interpretation of history. On the other hand, a deep affinity exists between socially uprooted and loosely integrated groups and an a-historical intuitionism. The more organized and organic groups are exposed to disintegration, the more they tend to lose the sense for the consistently ordered conception of history, and the more sensitive they become to the imponderable and the fortuitous. As spontaneously organized putschist groups become more stable they also become more hospitable to long range views of history and to an ordered view of society. Although historical complications often enter into the process, this scheme should be kept in mind because it delineates tendencies and offers fruitful hypotheses. A class or similar organic group never sees history as made up of transitory disconnected incidents; this is possible only for spontaneous groups which arise within them. Even the unhistorical moment of which activism conceives and which it hopes to seize upon is actually torn out of its wider historical context. The concept of practice in this mode of thought is likewise an integral part of the putschist technique, while socially more integrated groups, even when in opposition to the existing order, conceive of action as a continuous movement toward the realization of their ends.<sup>1</sup>

The contrast between the *élan* of great leaders and *élites* on the one hand and the blind herd on the other reveals the marks of an

<sup>1</sup> Mussolini himself speaks convincingly concerning the change which the putschist undergoes after attaining power. "It is incredible how a roving, free-lance soldier can change when he becomes a deputy or a town official. He acquires another face. He begins to appreciate that municipal budgets must be studied, and cannot be stormed." (Op. cit., p. 166.)

ideology characteristic of intellectuals who are more intent on providing justifications for themselves than on winning support from the outside. It is a counter-ideology to the pretensions of a leadership which conceives itself to be an organ expressing the interests of broad social strata. This is exemplified by the stratum of conservative leaders who regarded themselves as the organ of the "people",<sup>1</sup> by the liberals who conceived of themselves as the embodiment of the spirit of the age (*Zeitgeist*), and by the socialists and communists who think of themselves as the agents of a class-conscious proletariat.

From this difference in methods of self-justification, it is possible to see that groups operating with the leader-mass dichotomy are ascendant *élites* which are still socially unattached, so to speak, and have yet to create a social position for themselves. They are not primarily interested in overthrowing, reforming, or preserving the social structure—their chief concern is to supplant the existing dominant *élites* by others. It is no accident that the one group regards history as a circulation of *élites*, while for the others, it is a transformation of the historical-social structure. Each gets to see primarily only that aspect of the social and historical totality towards which it is oriented by its purpose.

In the process of transformation of modern society, there are, as has already been mentioned, periods during which the mechanisms which have been devised by the bourgeoisie for carrying on the class struggle (e.g. parliamentarianism) prove insufficient. There are periods when the evolutionary course fails for the time being and crises become acute. Class relations and class stratification become strained and distorted. The class-consciousness of the conflicting groups becomes confused. In such periods it is easy for transitory formations to emerge, and the mass comes into existence, individuals having lost or forgotten their class orientations. At such moments a dictatorship becomes possible. The fascist view of history and its intuitional approach which serves as a preparation for immediate action have changed what is no more than a partial situation into a total view of society.

With the restoration of equilibrium following the crisis, the organized, historical-social forces again become effective. Even if the *élite* which has come to the top in the crisis is able

<sup>1</sup> Savigny in this sense created the fiction for evolutionary conservatism that the jurists occupied a special status as the representatives of the folk spirit. (*Vom Beruf unserer Zeit zur Gesetzgebung und Rechtswissenschaft*, Freiburg, 1892, p. 7.)

to adjust itself well to the new situation, the dynamic forces of social life nevertheless reassert themselves in the old way. It is not that the social structure has changed, but rather that there has been a reshuffling—a shift in personnel among the various social classes within the frame of the social process which continues to evolve. An example of such a dictatorship has, with certain modifications, already been witnessed in modern history in the case of Napoleon. Historically this signified nothing more than the rise of certain *élites*. Sociologically it was an indication of the triumph of the ascendant bourgeoisie which knew how to exploit Napoleonic imperialism for its own purposes.

It may be that those elements of the mind which have not as yet been rationalized become crystallized ever anew in a more stable social structure. It may be, too, that the position which underlies this irrationalistic philosophy is inadequate to comprehend the broad trends of historical and social development. None the less the existence of these short-lived explosions directs attention to the irrational depths which have not as yet been comprehended and which are incomprehensible by ordinary historical methods. That which has not yet been rationalized here joins with the non-historical and with those elements in life which cannot be reduced to historical categories. We are given a glimpse of a realm which up to the present appears to have remained unchanging. It includes the blind biological instincts which in their eternal sameness underlie every historical event. These forces can be mastered externally by a technique, but can never reach the level of meaning and can never be internally understood. Besides this sub-historical biological element a spiritual, transcendental element is also to be found in this sphere. It is of this element which is not fully embodied in history, and which, as something unhistorical and alien to our thought, eludes understanding, that the mystics spoke. Although the fascists do not mention it, it must nevertheless rank as the other great challenge to the historical rationalism.

All that has become intelligible, understandable, rationalized, organized, structuralized, artistically, and otherwise formed, and consequently everything historical seems in fact to lie between these two extreme poles. If we attempt to view the interrelations of phenomena from this middle ground, we never get to see what lies above and below history. If, on the other hand, we stand at either of these irrational, extreme poles, we completely lose sight of historical reality in its concreteness.

The attractions of the fascist treatment of the problem of the relations between theory and practice lie in its designation of all thought as illusion. Political thought may be of value in arousing enthusiasm for action, but as a means for scientific comprehension of the field of "politics" which involves the prognostication of the future it is useless. It seems nothing less than remarkable that man, living in the blinding glare of the irrational, is still able to command from instance to instance the empirical knowledge necessary to carry on his everyday life. Sorel once remarked apropos of this: "We know that the social myths do not prevent men from being able to take advantage of all the observations made in the course of everyday life, nor do they interfere with their execution of their regular tasks." In a footnote he added: "It has often been noted that American and English sectarians, whose religious exaltation is sustained by apocalyptic myths, are none the less in many cases very practical people."<sup>1</sup> Thus man can act despite the fact that he thinks.

It has often been insisted that even Leninism contains a tinge of fascism. But it would be misleading to overlook the differences in emphasizing the similarities. The common element in the two views is confined merely to the activity of aggressive minorities. Only because Leninism was originally the theory of a minority uncompromisingly determined to seize power by revolutionary means did the theory of the significance of leading groups and of their decisive energy come to the fore. But this theory never took flight into a complete irrationalism. The Bolshevik group was only an active minority within a class movement of an increasingly self-conscious proletariat so that the irrational activist aspects of its doctrines were constantly supported by the assumption of the rational intelligibility of the historical process.

The a-historical spirit of fascism can be derived in part from the spirit of a bourgeoisie already in power. A class which has already risen in the social scale tends to conceive of history in terms of unrelated, isolated events. Historical events appear as a process only as long as the class which views these events still expects something from it. Only such expectations can give rise to utopias on the one hand, and concepts of process on the other. Success in the class struggle, however, does away with the utopian element, and forces long range views into the background the better to devote its powers to its immediate tasks. The

<sup>1</sup> Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

consequence is that in place of a view of the whole which formerly took account of tendencies and total structures, there appears a picture of the world composed of mere immediate events and discrete facts. The idea of a "process" and of the structural intelligibility of history becomes a mere myth.

Fascism finds itself serenely able to take over this bourgeois repudiation of history as a structure and process without any inconvenience, since fascism itself is the exponent of bourgeois groups. It accordingly has no intention of replacing the present social order by another, but only of substituting one ruling group for another within the existing class arrangements.<sup>1</sup> The chances for a fascist victory as well as for the justification of its historical theory depend upon the arrival of junctures in which a crisis so profoundly disorganizes the capitalist-bourgeois order, that the more evolutionary means of carrying on the conflict of interests no longer suffice. At moments like these, the chances for power are with him who knows how to utilize the moment with the necessary energy by stimulating active minorities to attack, thus seizing power.

### 3. SYNTHESIS OF THE VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES AS A PROBLEM OF POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY.

In the preceding pages we attempted to show concretely how one and the same problem, namely the relation between theory and practice, took a different form in accordance with the differing political positions from which it was approached. What holds true for this basic question of any scientific politics is valid also for all other specific problems. It could be shown in all cases that not only do fundamental orientations, evaluations, and the content of ideas differ but that the manner of stating a problem, the sort of approach made, and even the categories in which experiences are subsumed, collected, and ordered vary according to the social position of the observer.

If the course of political struggles thus far has decisively shown that there is an intimate relationship between the nature of political decisions and intellectual perspective, then it would seem to follow that a science of politics is impossible. But it is

<sup>1</sup> As regards Mussolini's attitude towards capitalism: ". . . the real history of capitalism will now begin. Capitalism is not just a system of oppression—on the contrary it represents the choice of the fittest, equal opportunities for the most gifted, a more developed sense of individual responsibility," *op. cit.*, p. 96.

precisely at this point, where the difficulties become most pronounced, that we reach a turning point.

It is at this juncture that two new possibilities emerge and at this stage in the formulation of the problem we see two paths which may be followed. On the one hand it is possible to say : Since in the realm of politics the only knowledge that we have is a knowledge which is limited by the position which we occupy, and since the formation of parties is structurally an ineradicable element in politics, it follows that politics can be studied only from a party viewpoint and taught only in a party school. I believe, in fact, that this will prove one road from which immediate developments will follow.

But it has become evident and promises to become more so that, owing to the complicated character of contemporary society, the traditional methods of training the next generation of political leaders, which have had hitherto a largely accidental character, are not adequate to supply the present-day politician with the requisite knowledge. The political parties will therefore find it necessary to develop their party schools with increasing care and elaborateness. Not only will they provide the factual knowledge which will enable prospective political leaders to formulate factual judgments concerning concrete problems, but they will also inculcate the respective points of view from which experience may be organized and mastered.

Every political point of view implies at the same time more than the mere affirmation or rejection of an indisputable set of facts. It implies as well a rather comprehensive *Weltanschauung*. The significance that political leaders attach to the latter is shown by the efforts of all parties to mould the thinking of the masses, not only from a party standpoint, but also from the point of view of a *Weltanschauung*. Political pedagogy signifies the transmission of a particular attitude towards the world which will permeate all aspects of life. Political education to-day signifies further a definite conception of history, a certain mode of interpreting events, and a tendency to seek a philosophical orientation in a definite manner.

This cleavage in modes of thought and *Weltanschauungen* and this increasing differentiation according to political positions has been going on with an increasing intensity since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The formation of party schools will accentuate this tendency, and carry it to its logical conclusion.

But the formation of party schools and the development

of party theories is only one of the inevitable consequences of the present situation. It is one which will appeal to those who, because they occupy an extreme position in the social order, must cling to their partisanship, must conceive of antagonisms as absolutes, and suppress any conception of the whole.

The present situation provides still another possibility. It rests, so to speak, on the reverse side of the fundamentally partisan character of political orientation. This alternative, which is at least as important as the other, consists in the following: not only the necessary partisan character of every form of political knowledge is recognized, but also the peculiar character of each variety. It has become incontrovertibly clear to-day that all knowledge which is either political or which involves a world-view, is inevitably partisan. The fragmentary character of all knowledge is clearly recognizable. But this implies the possibility of an integration of many mutually complementary points of view into a comprehensive whole.

Just because to-day we are in a position to see with increasing clarity that mutually opposing views and theories are not infinite in number and are not products of arbitrary will but are mutually complementary and derive from specific social situations, politics as a science is for the first time possible. The present structure of society makes possible a political science which will not be merely a party science, but a science of the whole. Political sociology, as the science which comprehends the whole political sphere, thus attains the stage of realization.

With this there comes the demand for an institution with a broader base than a party school where this science of the political totality may be pursued. Before going into the possibility and structure of this type of investigation, it is necessary to establish more firmly the thesis that each particular point of view needs to be complemented by all the others. Let us recall the instance which we used to illustrate the partisan setting of every problem.

We found that only certain limited aspects and areas of historical and political reality reveal themselves to each of the various parties. The bureaucrat restricted his range of vision to the stabilized part of the life of the state, historical conservatism could see only the regions in which the silently working *Volksgeist* was still operating, in which as in the realm of custom and usage, in religious and cultural association organic and not organized forces were at work. Historical conservatism also

was aware that there was a place for a peculiar type of rationality in this sphere of organic forces: it had to decipher the inherent tendencies of growth. Even though the one-sidedness of historical conservatism consisted in the exaggeration of the significance of the irrational elements in the mind and of the irrational social forces corresponding to it in social-historical reality it did nevertheless bring out an important point which could not have been perceived from another standpoint. The same is true of the remaining points of view. Bourgeois-democratic thought both discovered and developed the possibility of a rational means of carrying on the conflict of interests in society which will retain its reality and function in modern life as long as peaceful methods of class conflict are possible.

The development of this approach to political problems was an historical and lasting achievement of the bourgeoisie, and its value may be appreciated even though the one-sidedness of its intellectualism has been completely laid bare. The bourgeois mind had a vital social interest in concealing from itself, by means of this intellectualism, the limits of its own rationalization. Hence it acted as if real conflicts could be fully settled by discussion. It did not realize, however, that closely connected with the realm of politics there arose a new kind of thinking in which theory could not be separated from practice nor thought from intent.

Nowhere is the mutually complementary character of socially-politically determined partial views more clearly visible than here. For here it becomes once more apparent that socialist thought begins at that point where bourgeois-democratic thought reaches its limits, and that it threw new light on just those phenomena which its predecessors, because of the intimate connection with their own interests, had left in the dark. To Marxism belongs the credit for discovering that politics does not consist merely in parliamentary parties and the discussions they carry on, and that these, in whatever concrete form they appear, are only surface expression of deeper-lying economic and social situations which can be made intelligible to a large extent through a new mode of thought. These discoveries signalize the raising of the discussion to a higher level from which a more extensive and more inclusive view of history and a clearer conception of what actually constitutes the domain of politics can be obtained. The discovery of the phenomenon of ideology is structurally closely bound up with this discovery.

Although quite one-sided, it represents the first attempt to define the position of socially bound thought as over against "pure theory".

Finally, to return to the last antithesis, whereas Marxism focussed its attention too sharply on and overemphasized the purely structural foundation of the political and historical realm, fascism turned its attention to the amorphous aspects of life, to those "moments" in critical situations which are still present and still have significance, in which class forces become disjointed and confused, when the actions of men, acting as members of transitory masses, assume significance, and when the outcome entirely depends on the vanguards and their leaders who are dominating the situation at the moment. But here, too, it would be overemphasis of a single phase of historical reality to regard these eventualities, even though they are of frequent occurrence, as the essence of historical reality. The divergence of political theories is accounted for mainly by the fact that the different positions and social vantage points as they emerge in the stream of social life enable each one from its particular point in the stream to recognize the stream itself. Thus, at different times, different elementary social interests emerge and accordingly different objects of attention in the total structure are illuminated and viewed as if they were the only ones that existed.

All points of view in politics are but partial points of view because historical totality is always too comprehensive to be grasped by any one of the individual points of view which emerge out of it. Since, however, all these points of view emerge out of the same social and historical current, and since their partiality exists in the matrix of an emerging whole, it is possible to see them in juxtaposition, and their synthesis becomes a problem which must continually be reformulated and resolved. The continuously revised and renewed synthesis of the existing particular viewpoints becomes all the more possible because the attempts at synthesis have no less a tradition than has the knowledge founded upon partisanship. Did not Hegel, coming at the end of a relatively closed epoch, attempt to synthesize in his own work the tendencies which hitherto had developed independently? Even though these syntheses time and again turned out to be partial syntheses, and disintegrated in the course of subsequent development, producing, e.g., left and right Hegelianism, though they were, nevertheless, not absolute but

relative syntheses, as such they pointed in a very promising direction.

A demand for an absolute, permanent synthesis would, as far as we are concerned, mean a relapse into the static world view of intellectualism. In a realm in which everything is in the process of becoming, the only adequate synthesis would be a dynamic one, which is reformulated from time to time. There is still the necessity, however, to solve one of the most important problems that can be posited, namely, that of furnishing the most comprehensive view of the whole which is attainable at a given time.

Attempts at synthesis do not come into being unrelated to one another, because each synthesis prepares the road for the next by summarizing the forces and views of its time. A certain progress towards an absolute synthesis in the utopian sense may be noted in that each synthesis attempts to arrive at a wider perspective than the previous one, and that the later ones incorporate the results of those that have gone before.

At this stage of the discussion two difficulties arise even in connection with the relative synthesis.

The first comes from the fact that we can no longer conceive of the partiality of a point of view as merely being a matter of degree. If the cleavage in political and philosophical perceptions consisted merely in the fact that each was concerned with another side or section of the whole, that each illuminated only a particular segment of historical events, an additive synthesis would be possible without further ado. All that would be necessary would be to add up these partial truths and to join them into a whole.

But this simplified conception is no longer tenable when we have seen that the determination of particular viewpoints by their situations is based not only on the selection of subject-matter, but also on the divergence in aspects and in ways of setting the problem, and finally in the divergence of categorical apparatus and principles of organization. The question then is this: is it possible for different styles of thought (by which we mean the differences in modes of thinking just described) to be fused with one another and to undergo synthesis? The course of historical development shows that such a synthesis is possible. Every concrete analysis of thinking which proceeds sociologically and seeks to reveal the historical succession of thought-styles

indicates that styles of thought undergo uninterrupted fusion and interpenetration.

Moreover, syntheses in thought-styles are not made only by those who are primarily synthesists, and who more or less consciously attempt to comprehend a whole epoch in their thinking (as e.g. Hegel). They are achieved also by contending groups in so far as they try to unify and reconcile at least all those conflicting currents which they encounter in their own limited sphere. Thus Stahl essayed to bring together in conservatism all the hitherto existing contributory tendencies of thought, as, for example, connecting historicism with theism. Marx devoted himself to the fusion of the liberal-bourgeois generalizing tendency in thinking with Hegelian historicism, which itself was of conservative origin. It is clear then that not merely the contents of thought but also the basis of thought itself is subject to synthesis. This synthesis of hitherto separately developing thought-styles seems to be all the more necessary, since thinking must constantly aim to broaden the capacity of its categorical formal scope if it is to master the problems which daily grow in number and difficulty. If even those whose standpoints are party-bound are finding it necessary to have a broader perspective, this tendency should be all the more pronounced among those, who from the beginning have sought the most inclusive possible understanding of the totality.

#### 4. THE SOCIOLOGICAL PROBLEM OF THE "INTELLIGENTSIA"

The second difficulty arising at the present stage of the problem is this: How are we to conceive of the social and political bearers of whatever synthesis there is? What political interest will undertake the problem of synthesis as its task and who will strive to realize it in society?

Just as at an earlier period we should have slipped back into a static intellectualism if instead of aiming at a dynamic relative synthesis we had leaped into a super-temporal absolute one, similarly here we are in danger of losing sight of the hitherto constantly emphasized interest-bound nature of political thought and of assuming that the synthesis will come from a source outside the political arena. If it be once granted that political thought is always bound up with a position in the social order, it is only consistent to suppose that the tendency towards a total synthesis must be embodied in the will of some social group.

And indeed a glance at the history of political thought shows that the exponents of synthesis have always represented definite social strata, mainly classes who feel threatened from above and below and who, out of social necessity, seek a middle way out. But this search for a compromise from the very beginning assumes both a static as well as dynamic form. The social position of the group with which the carriers of the synthesis are affiliated determines largely which of these two alternatives is to be emphasized.

The static form of mediation of the extremes was attempted first by the victorious bourgeoisie, especially in the period of the bourgeois monarchy in France, where it was expressed in the principle of the *juste milieu*. This catch-phrase, however, is rather a caricature of a true synthesis than a solution of it, which can only be a dynamic one. For that reason it may serve to show what errors a solution must avoid.

A true synthesis is not an arithmetic average of all the diverse aspirations of the existing groups in society. If it were such, it would tend merely to stabilize the *status quo* to the advantage of those who have just acceded to power and who wish to protect their gains from the attacks of the "right" as well as the "left". On the contrary a valid synthesis must be based on a political position which will constitute a progressive development in the sense that it will retain and utilize much of the accumulated cultural acquisitions and social energies of the previous epoch. At the same time the new order must permeate the broadest ranges of social life, must take natural root in society in order to bring its transforming power into play. This position calls for a peculiar alertness towards the historical reality of the present. The spatial "here" and the temporal "now" in every situation must be considered in the historical and social sense and must always be kept in mind in order to determine from case to case what is no longer necessary and what is not yet possible.

Such an experimental outlook, unceasingly sensitive to the dynamic nature of society and to its wholeness, is not likely to be developed by a class occupying a middle position but only by a relatively classless stratum which is not too firmly situated in the social order. The study of history with reference to this question will yield a rather pregnant suggestion.

This unanchored, *relatively* classless stratum is, to use Alfred Weber's terminology, the "socially unattached intelligentsia"

(*freischwebende Intelligenz*). It is impossible in this connection to give even the sketchiest outline of the difficult sociological problem raised by the existence of the intellectual. But the problems we are considering could not be adequately formulated, much less solved, without touching upon certain phases of the position of the intellectuals. A sociology which is oriented only with reference to social-economic classes will never adequately understand this phenomenon. According to this theory, the intellectuals constitute either a class or at least an appendage to a class. Thus it might describe correctly certain determinants and components of this unattached social body, but never the essential quality of the whole. It is, of course, true that a large body of our intellectuals come from rentier strata, whose income is derived directly or indirectly from rents and interest on investments. But for that matter certain groups of the officials and the so-called liberal professions are also members of the intelligentsia. A closer examination, however, of the social basis of these strata will show them to be less clearly identified with one class than those who participate more directly in the economic process.

If this sociological cross-section is completed by an historical view, further heterogeneity among the intellectuals will be disclosed. Changes in class relationships at different times affect some of these groups favourably, others unfavourably. Consequently it cannot be maintained that they are homogeneously determined. Although they are too differentiated to be regarded as a single class, there is, however, one unifying sociological bond between all groups of intellectuals, namely, education, which binds them together in a striking way. Participation in a common educational heritage progressively tends to suppress differences of birth, status, profession, and wealth, and to unite the individual educated people on the basis of the education they have received.

In my opinion nothing could be more wrong than to misinterpret this view and maintain that the class and status ties of the individual disappear completely by virtue of this. It is, however, peculiarly characteristic of this new basis of association that it preserves the multiplicity of the component elements in all their variety by creating a homogeneous medium within which the conflicting parties can measure their strength. Modern education from its inception is a living struggle, a replica, on a small scale of the conflicting purposes and tendencies which rage in society at large. Accordingly the educated man, as concerns his intellectual horizon, is determined in a variety of ways. This acquired

educational heritage subjects him to the influence of opposing tendencies in social reality, while the person who is not oriented toward the whole through his education, but rather participates directly in the social process of production, merely tends to absorb the *Weltanschauung* of that particular group and to act exclusively under the influence of the conditions imposed by his immediate social situation.

One of the most impressive facts about modern life is that in it, unlike preceding cultures, intellectual activity is not carried on exclusively by a socially rigidly defined class, such as a priesthood, but rather by a social stratum which is to a large degree unattached to any social class and which is recruited from an increasingly inclusive area of social life. This sociological fact determines essentially the uniqueness of the modern mind, which is characteristically not based upon the authority of a priesthood, which is not closed and finished, but which is rather dynamic, elastic, in a constant state of flux, and perpetually confronted by new problems. Even humanism was already largely the expression of such a more or less socially emancipated stratum, and where the nobility became the bearer of culture it broke through the fixedness of a class-bound mentality in many respects. But not until we come to the period of bourgeois ascendancy does the level of cultural life become increasingly detached from a given class.

The modern bourgeoisie had from the beginning a twofold social root—on the one hand the owners of capital, on the other those individuals whose only capital consisted in their education. It was common therefore to speak of the propertied and educated class, the educated element being, however, by no means ideologically in agreement with the property-owning element.<sup>1</sup>

There arises, then, in the midst of this society, which is being deeply divided by class cleavages, a stratum, which a sociology oriented solely in terms of class either can only slightly comprehend. Nevertheless, the specific social position of this stratum can be quite adequately characterized. Although situated between classes it does not form a middle class. Not, of course, that it is suspended in a vacuum into which social

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Fr. Brüggemann, "Der Kampf um die bürgerliche Welt- und Lebensanschauung in der deutschen Literatur des 18. Jahrhunderts," *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, iii (Halle, 1925), pp. 94 ff. This affords a good treatment of the periodic recrudescence of the supra-bourgeois element in the bourgeois literary circles of the eighteenth century.

interests do not penetrate ; on the contrary, it subsumes in itself all those interests with which social life is permeated. With the increase in the number and variety of the classes and strata from which the individual groups of intellectuals are recruited, there comes greater multiformity and contrast in the tendencies operating on the intellectual level which ties them to one another. The individual, then, more or less takes a part in the mass of mutually conflicting tendencies.

While those who participate directly in the process of production—the worker and the entrepreneur—being bound to a particular class and mode of life, have their outlooks and activities directly and exclusively determined by their specific social situations, the intellectuals, besides undoubtedly bearing the imprint of their specific class affinity, are also determined in their outlook by this intellectual medium which contains all those contradictory points of view. This social situation always provided the potential energy which enabled the more outstanding intellectuals to develop the social sensibility that was essential for becoming attuned to the dynamically conflicting forces. Every point of view was examined constantly as to its relevance to the present situation. Furthermore, precisely through the cultural attachments of this group, there was achieved such an intimate grasp of the total situation, that the tendency towards a dynamic synthesis constantly reappeared, despite the temporary distortions with which we have yet to deal.

Hitherto, the negative side of the “unattachedness” of the intellectuals, their social instability, and the predominantly deliberate character of their mentality has been emphasized almost exclusively. It was especially the politically extreme groups who, demanding a definite declaration of sympathies, branded this as “characterlessness”. It remains to be asked, however, whether in the political sphere, a decision in favour of a dynamic mediation may not be just as much a decision as the ruthless espousal of yesterday’s theories or the one-sided emphasis on to-morrow’s.

There are two courses of action which the unattached intellectuals have actually taken as ways out of this middle-of-the-road position : first, what amounts to a largely voluntary affiliation with one or the other of the various antagonistic classes ; second, scrutiny of their own social moorings and the quest for the fulfilment of their mission as the predestined advocate of the intellectual interests of the whole.

As regards the first way out, unattached intellectuals are to be found in the course of history in all camps. Thus they always furnished the theorists for the conservatives who themselves because of their own social stability could only with difficulty be brought to theoretical self-consciousness. They likewise furnished the theorists for the proletariat which, because of its social conditions, lacked the prerequisites for the acquisition of the knowledge necessary for modern political conflict. Their affiliation with the liberal bourgeoisie has already been discussed.

This ability to attach themselves to classes to which they originally did not belong, was possible for intellectuals because they could adapt themselves to any viewpoint and because they and they alone were in a position to choose their affiliation, while those who were immediately bound by class affiliations were only in rare exceptions able to transcend the boundaries of their class outlook. This voluntary decision to join in the political struggles of a certain class did indeed unite them with the particular class during the struggle, but it did not free them from the distrust of the original members of that class. This distrust is only a symptom of the sociological fact that the assimilability of intellectuals into an outside class is limited by the psychic and social characteristics of their own. Sociologically this peculiarity of belonging to the intelligentsia accounts for the fact that a proletarian who becomes an intellectual is likely to change his social personality. A detailed case-study of the path taken by the intellectual confronted by this distrust would not be in place here. We wish merely to point out that the fanaticism of radicalized intellectuals should be understood in this light. It bespeaks a psychic compensation for the lack of a more fundamental integration into a class and the necessity of overcoming their own distrust as well as that of others.

— One could of course condemn the path taken by individual intellectuals and their endless wavering, but our sole concern here is to explain this behaviour by means of the position of intellectuals in the whole social structure. Such social dereliction and transgression may be regarded as no more than a negative misuse of a peculiar social position. The individual, instead of focussing his energies on the positive potentialities of the situation, falls victim to the temptations potential in the situation. Nothing would be more incorrect than to base one's judgment of the function of a social stratum on the apostatic behaviour of some of its members and to fail to see that the frequent

“lack of conviction” of the intellectuals is merely the reverse side of the fact that they alone are in a position to have intellectual convictions. In the long run, history can be viewed as a series of trial and error experiments in which even the failings of men have a tentative value and in the course of which the intellectuals were those who through their homelessness in our society were the most exposed to failure. The repeated attempts to identify themselves with, as well as the continual rebuffs received from, other classes must lead eventually to a clearer conception on the part of the intellectuals of the meaning and the value of their own position in the social order.

The first way, then, out of the predicament of the intellectuals, namely, the direct affiliation with classes and parties, shows a tendency, even though it is unconscious, towards a dynamic synthesis. It was usually the class in need of intellectual development which received their support. It was primarily the conflict of intellectuals which transformed the conflict of interests into a conflict of ideas. This attempt to lift the conflict of interests to a spiritual plane has two aspects: on the one hand it meant the empty glorification of naked interests by means of the tissues of lies spun by apologists; on the other hand, in a more positive sense, it meant the infusion of certain intellectual demands into practical politics. In return for their collaboration with parties and classes, the intellectuals were able to leave this imprint upon them. If they had no other achievement to their credit, this alone would have been a significant accomplishment. Their function is to penetrate into the ranks of the conflicting parties in order to compel them to accept their demands. This activity, viewed historically, has amply shown wherein the sociological peculiarity and the mission of this unattached social stratum lie.

The second way out of the dilemma of the intellectuals consists precisely in becoming aware of their own social position and the mission implicit in it. When this is achieved, political affiliation or opposition will be decided on the basis of a conscious orientation in society and in accordance with the demands of the intellectual life.

One of the basic tendencies in the contemporary world is the gradual awakening of class-consciousness in all classes. If this is so, it follows that even the intellectuals will arrive at a consciousness—though not a class-consciousness—of their own general social position and the problems and opportunities it

involves. This attempt to comprehend the sociological phenomenon of the intellectuals, and the attempt, on the basis of this, to take an attitude towards politics have traditions of their own quite as much as has the tendency to become assimilated into other parties.

We are not concerned here with examining the possibilities of a politics exclusively suited to intellectuals. Such an examination would probably show that the intellectuals in the present period could not become independently politically active. In an epoch like our own, where class interests and positions are becoming more sharply defined and derive their force and direction from mass action, political conduct which seeks other means of support would scarcely be possible. This does not imply, however, that their particular position prevents them from achieving things which are of indispensable significance for the whole social process. Most important among these would be the discovery of the position from which a total perspective would be possible. Thus they might play the part of watchmen in what otherwise would be a pitch-black night. It is questionable whether it is desirable to throw overboard all of the opportunities which arise out of their peculiar situation.

A group whose class position is more or less definitely fixed already has its political viewpoint decided for it. Where this is not so, as with the intellectuals, there is a wider area of choice and a corresponding need for total orientation and synthesis. This latter tendency which arises out of the position of the intellectuals exists even though the relation between the various groups does not lead to the formation of an integrated party. Similarly, the intellectuals are still able to arrive at a total orientation even when they have joined a party. Should the capacity to acquire a broader point of view be considered merely as a liability? Does it not rather present a mission? Only he who really has the choice has an interest in seeing the whole of the social and political structure. Only in that period of time and that stage of investigation which is dedicated to deliberation is the sociological and logical locus of the development of a synthetic perspective to be sought. The formation of a decision is truly possible only under conditions of freedom based on the possibility of choice which continues to exist even after the decision has been made. We owe the possibility of mutual interpenetration and understanding of existent currents of thought to the presence of such a relatively unattached

middle stratum which is open to the constant influx of individuals from the most diverse social classes and groups with all possible points of view. Only under such conditions can the incessantly fresh and broadening synthesis, to which we have referred, arise.

Even Romanticism, because of its social position, had already included in its programme the demand for a broad, dynamic mediation (*dynamische Vermittlung*) of conflicting points of view. In the nature of the case, this demand led to a conservative perspective. The generation that followed Romanticism, however, supplanted this conservative view with a revolutionary one as being in accord with the needs of the time. The essential thing in this connection is that only in this line of development did there persist the attempt to make this mediation a living one, and to connect political decisions with a prior total orientation. To-day more than ever it is expected of such a dynamic middle group that it will strive to create a forum outside the party schools in which the perspective of and the interest in the whole is safeguarded.

It is precisely to these latent tendencies that we owe our present realization that all political interest and knowledge are necessarily partisan and particular. It is only to-day, when we have become aware of all the currents and are able to understand the whole process by which political interests and *Weltanschauungen* come into being in the light of a sociologically intelligible process, that we see the possibility of politics as science. Since it is likely, in accord with the spirit of the age, that more and more party schools will arise, it is all the more desirable that an actual forum be established whether it be in the universities or in specialized higher institutions of learning, which shall serve the pursuit of this advanced form of political science. If the party schools address themselves exclusively to those whose political decisions have been made in advance by parties, this mode of study will appeal to those whose decision remains yet to be made. Nothing is more desirable than that those intellectuals who have a background of pronounced class interests should, especially in their youth, assimilate this point of view and conception of the whole.

Even in such a school it is not to be assumed that the teachers should be partyless. It is not the object of such a school to avoid arriving at political decisions. But there is a profound difference between a teacher who, after careful deliberation, addresses his students, whose minds are not yet made up,

from a point of view which has been attained by careful thinking leading to a comprehension of the total situation and a teacher who is exclusively concerned with inculcating a party outlook already firmly established.

A political sociology which aims not at inculcating a decision but prepares the way for arriving at decisions will be able to understand relationships in the political realm which have scarcely even been noticed before. Such a discipline will be especially valuable in illuminating the nature of socially bound interests. It will uncover the determining factors underlying these class judgments, disclosing thereby the manner in which collective forces are bound up with class interests, of which everyone who deals with politics must take account. Relationships like the following will be clarified: Given such and such interests, in a given juncture of events, there will follow such and such a type of thinking and such and such a view of the total social process. However, what these specific sets of interest will be depends on the specific set of traditions which, in turn, depends on the structural determinants of the social situation. Only he who is able to formulate the problem in such a manner is in a position to transmit to others a survey of the structure of the political scene, and to aid them in getting a relatively complete conception of the whole. This direction in research will give a better insight into the nature of historical and political thought and will demonstrate more clearly the relationships that always exist between conceptions of history and political points of view. Those with this approach, however, are too sophisticated politically to believe that political decisions themselves are teachable or that they can, while they are still prevailing, be arbitrarily suspended. To summarize: whatever your interests, they are your interests as a political person, but the fact that you have this or that set of interests implies also that you must do this or that to realize them, and that you must know the specific position you occupy in the whole social process.<sup>1</sup>

While we believe that interests and purposes cannot be taught, the investigation and communication, however, of the structural relationship between judgment and point of view, between the

<sup>1</sup> Max Weber formulated the problems of political sociology somewhat similarly, although he started from entirely different premises. His desire for impartiality in politics represents the old democratic tradition. Although his solution suffers from the assumption of the separability of theory and evaluation, his demand for the creation of a common point of departure for political analysis is a goal worthy of the greatest efforts.

social process and the development of interest, is possible. Those who demand of politics as a science that it teach norms and ends should consider that this demand implies actually the denial of the reality of politics. The only thing that we can demand of politics as a science is that it see reality with the eyes of acting human beings, and that it teach men, in action, to understand even their opponents in the light of their actual motives and their position in the historical-social situation. Political sociology in this sense must be conscious of its function as the fullest possible synthesis of the tendencies of an epoch. It must teach what alone is teachable, namely, structural relationships; the judgments themselves cannot be taught but we can become more or less adequately aware of them and we can interpret them.

#### 5. THE NATURE OF POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE

The question, whether a science of politics is possible and whether it can be taught, must, if we summarize all that we have said thus far, be answered in the affirmative. Of course our solution implies a quite different form of knowledge from one customarily conceived. Pure intellectualism would not tolerate a science which is so intimately tied up with practice.

The fact that political science in its spontaneous form does not fit into the existing framework of science, as we understand it, and that it is in contradiction with our present-day conception of science does not mean that politics is at fault. Rather it should be a stimulus to the revision of our conception of science as a whole. Even a passing glance at contemporary notions of science and its institutional organization will show that we have not been able to deal satisfactorily with theories where the science in question is closely concerned with practical problems. There is no more of a science of pedagogy than there is a scientific politics. Still, there would be nothing gained if, after having realized that we have not been able to resolve the most important problems in these branches of science, we were to dismiss what is peculiarly pedagogical and political as "arts" or "intuitive skills". All that would be accomplished thereby would be an escape from problems which must be faced.

Actual experience shows that in teaching as well as in politics it is precisely in the course of actual conduct that specific and relevant knowledge is attainable in increasing measure, and

under certain conditions communicable. Consequently, it appears that our conception of science is much narrower than the scope of present-day knowledge; and that attainable and communicable knowledge by no means ends at the boundaries of established present-day sciences.

If, however, it is true, that life affords possibilities of knowledge and understanding even where science plays no part, it is no solution to designate such knowledge as "prescientific" or to relegate it to the sphere of "intuition", simply in order to preserve the purity of an arbitrary definition of "science". On the contrary, it is above all our duty to inquire into the inner nature of these still unformulated types of knowledge and then to learn whether the horizons and conceptions of science cannot be so extended as to include these ostensibly pre-scientific areas of knowledge.

The difference between "scientific" and "pre-scientific" depends of course on what we presuppose the limits of science to be. It should be evident by now that hitherto the definition has been too narrow, and that only certain sciences, for historical reasons, have become models of what a science should be. It is, for instance, well known how modern intellectual development reflects the dominant role of mathematics. Strictly speaking, from this point of view, only what is measurable should be regarded as scientific. In this most recent epoch, the ideal of science has been mathematically and geometrically demonstrable knowledge, while everything qualitative has been admissible only as a derivative of the quantitative. Modern positivism (which has always retained its affinity with the bourgeois-liberal outlook and which has developed in its spirit) has always adhered to this ideal of science and of truth. At the most, what it added in the way of a worthy form of knowledge was the quest for general laws. In accord with this prevailing ideal the modern mind has been permeated by measurement, formalization, and systematization on the basis of fixed axioms. This was quite successful for certain strata of reality which were accessible to a formal quantitative approach, or at least subsumption under generalizations.

Pursuing this mode of investigation it became obvious that it was adapted to the scientific comprehension of a homogeneous level of subject-matter, but that this subject matter by no means exhausted the fullness of reality. This one-sidedness is particularly apparent in the cultural sciences in which, in the

nature of the case, we are not so much concerned with the narrow sphere of subject-matter which can be reduced to laws as with the wealth of unique, concrete phenomena and structures which are familiar to practical men of affairs but which are not attainable through the axioms of positivistic science. The upshot of this was that the practical man dealing with concrete situations, and applying his knowledge informally, was more intelligent than the theorist who observed only a limited sphere because he was imprisoned by the presuppositions of his science. It became more and more obvious that the former had some knowledge in realms where the latter—i.e. the modern intellectual theorist—long ago ceased to have any knowledge. It follows from this that the model of modern mathematical-natural science cannot be regarded as appropriate to knowledge as a whole.

The first feature to be displaced by this modern rationalist style of thought, which was, sociologically, closely tied up with the capitalist bourgeoisie, was the interest in the qualitative. But since the fundamental tendency of modern science was analytical, and since nothing was regarded as scientific unless it had been reduced to its constituent elements, the interest in the immediate and direct perception of totalities disappeared. It is no accident that Romanticism was the first to take up those tendencies in thought which showed a renewed emphasis on the specific cognitive value of qualitative knowledge and knowledge of the whole. And Romanticism, it should be recalled, represented the modern counter-current which in Germany delivered, even in the realm of politics, the counter attack against the bourgeois-rationalistic world outlook. Similarly, it is no accident that to-day the *Gestalt* theory of perception, and the theories of morphology and characterology, etc., which constitute a scientific and methodological counter attack against positivistic methodology, are coming to the fore in an atmosphere which derives its *Weltanschauung* and political outlook from neo-romanticism.

It is not our task here to give a detailed account of the interplay between political movements and currents in scientific methodology. However, the argument up to this point shows that the intellectualistic conception of science, underlying positivism, is itself rooted in a definite *Weltanschauung* and has progressed in close connection with definite political interests.

From the standpoint of the sociology of knowledge we have not fully revealed the essential character of this style of thinking

when we have indicated its analytical and quantitative tendencies. We must refer back to the political and social interests which are expressed by these methodological tenets. This will be possible only after an examination of the basic criterion of reality assumed by the exponents of this style of thought. This is contained in the thesis that nothing is regarded as "true" or "knowable" except what could be presented as universally valid and necessary—these two requirements being predicated without further ado as synonymous. It was simply assumed without further analysis that only that is necessary which is universally valid, i.e. communicable to everyone.

Making these two synonymous, however, is not necessarily correct, since it is easily possible that there are truths or correct intuitions which are accessible only to a certain personal disposition or to a definite orientation of interests of a certain group. The democratic cosmopolitanism of the ascendant bourgeoisie denied the value and the right to existence of these insights. With this, there was revealed a purely sociological component in the criterion of truth, namely, the democratic demand that these truths should be the same for everyone.

This demand for universal validity had marked consequences for the accompanying theory of knowledge. It followed therefrom that only those forms of knowledge were legitimate which touched and appealed to what is common in all human beings. The elaboration of the notion of a "consciousness in itself" is no more than a distillation of those traits in the individual human consciousness which we may assume to be the same in all men, be they Negroes or Europeans, medievals or moderns. The primary common foundation of this common consciousness was found first of all in the conceptions of time and space, and in close connection therewith, in the purely formal realm of mathematics. Here, it was felt, a platform had been erected which every man could share. And, similarly, it was felt that an economic man, a political man, etc., irrespective of time and race, could be constructed on the basis of a few axiomatic characteristics. Only what could be known by the application of these axioms was considered as knowable. Everything else was simply due to the perverse "manifoldness of the real", concerning which "pure" theory need not worry itself. The foremost aim of this mode of thought was a purified body of generally valid knowledge which is knowable by all and communicable to all.

All knowledge which depended upon the total receptivity of men, or upon certain historical-social characteristics of men in the concrete, was suspect and was to be eliminated. Thus, in the first place, all experience was suspect which rested upon the purely personal perceptions of the individual. The repudiation of qualitative knowledge, which has already been mentioned, grew out of this. Since the sense-perception of the individual, in its concrete and unique form, is a function of the living subject as a whole, and since this sense-perception could be communicated only with difficulty, one was inclined to deny it any specific value whatsoever.

Similarly, every kind of knowledge which only certain specific historical-social groups could acquire was distrusted. Only that kind of knowledge was wanted which was free from all the influences of the subject's *Weltanschauung*. What was not noticed was that the world of the purely quantifiable and analysable was itself only discoverable on the basis of a definite *Weltanschauung*. Similarly, it was not noticed that a *Weltanschauung* is not of necessity a source of error, but often gives access to spheres of knowledge otherwise closed.

Most important, however, was the attempt to eliminate the interests and values which constitute the human element in man. In the characterization of bourgeois intellectualism, attention was directed to the endeavour to eliminate interests even from politics and to reduce political discussion to a kind of general and universal consciousness which is determined by "natural law".

Thereby the organic connection between man as an historical subject and as a member of society on the one hand and his thought on the other hand was arbitrarily severed. This constitutes the chief source of the error with which, in this context, we must first deal. It may be said for formal knowledge that it is essentially accessible to all and that its content is unaffected by the individual subject and his historical-social affiliations. But, on the other hand, it is certain that there is a wide range of subject-matter which is accessible only either to certain subjects, or in certain historical periods, and which becomes apparent through the social purposes of individuals.

An illustration of the first is that only one who loves or hates gets to see in the loved or hated object certain characteristics which are invisible to others who are merely spectators. Furthermore, there is a type of knowledge which can never be conceived

within the categories of a purely contemplative consciousness-as-such, and whose first assumption is the fact that we come to know our associates only in living and acting with them, not only because it takes time to observe things, but because human beings do not have "traits" which can be viewed apart from them and which, as we are erroneously accustomed to say, "automatically come to light." We are dealing here with a dynamic process in man, in that his characteristics emerge in the course of his concrete conduct and in confrontation with actual problems. Self-consciousness itself does not arise from mere self-contemplation but only through our struggles with the world—i.e. in the course of the process in which we first become aware of ourselves.

Here self-awareness and awareness of others are inseparably intertwined with activity and interest and with the processes of social interaction. Whenever the product is isolated from the process and from the participation in the act, the most essential facts are distorted. This, however, is the fundamental feature of the kind of thinking which is oriented towards a dead nature, in that it wishes at all costs to cancel out the subjective, volitional and processual relations from active knowledge in order to arrive at pure, homogeneously co-ordinated results.

The example just cited shows a case of the situational determination of knowledge as it operates in the relationship between specific types of personalities and specific forms of knowledge. But there are also certain domains of knowledge whose accessibility is not a matter of specific personalities, but rather of certain definite historical and social pre-conditions. Certain events in history and in the psychic life of men become visible only in certain historical epochs, which through a series of collective experiences, and a concurrently developed *Weltanschauung*, open up the way to certain insights. Furthermore, to return to our original theme, there are certain phenomena the perception of which depends upon the presence of certain collective purposes which reflect the interests of specific social strata. It appears then that clear-cut and readily objectifiable knowledge is possible in so far as it is a question of grasping those elements in social reality which, to begin with, we described as settled and routinized components of social life. There does not seem to be any obstacle to the formulation of laws in this domain, since the objects of attention themselves obey a recurrent rhythm of regular sequence.

When, however, we enter the realm of politics, in which everything is in process of becoming and where the collective element in us, as knowing subjects, helps to shape the process of becoming, where thought is not contemplation from the point of view of a spectator, but rather the active participation and reshaping of the process itself, a new type of knowledge seems to emerge, namely, that in which decision and standpoint are inseparably bound up together. In these realms, there is no such thing as a purely theoretical outlook on the part of the observer. It is precisely the purposes that a man has that give him his vision, even though his interests throw only a partial and practical illumination on that segment of the total reality in which he himself is enmeshed, and towards which he is oriented by virtue of his essential social purposes.

In such cases we must never sever interest, evaluation, and *Weltanschauung* from the product of thought, and must even, in case it has already been severed, establish the relationship anew. This is the task of sociology in so far as it is the science of the political. It accepts no theoretical contention as absolutely valid in itself, but reconstructs the original standpoints, viewed from which the world appeared thus and such, and tries to understand the whole of the views derived from the various perspectives through the whole of the process.

Politics as a science in the form of a political sociology is never a closed and finished realm of knowledge which can be separated from the continuous process out of which it developed. It is always in the process of becoming and is always nevertheless bound to the stream from which it derives. It arises in the dynamic unfolding of conflicting forces. Consequently it may be built either upon quite one-sided perspectives reflecting the interrelations of events as a given political party sees them, or it may appear in its most advanced form—as a constantly renewed attempt at synthesis of all the existent perspectives aiming at a dynamic reconciliation.

It may well be that our intellectualism will repeatedly stimulate in us the longing for a point of view beyond time and history—for a “consciousness as such” out of which there arise insights independent of particular perspectives, and capable of formulation into general laws which are eternally valid. But this objective cannot be attained without doing violence to the subject-matter. If we seek a science of that which is in process of becoming, of practice and for practice, we can realize it only by discovering

a new framework in which this kind of knowledge can find adequate expression.

#### 6. THE COMMUNICABILITY OF POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE

The original impetus to research in the problem of ideology has sprung from political life itself in its most recent developments. It does not represent a science which has been conjured up out of hairsplitting, intellectualistic subtleties. We have already too many such formulations of problems and it would indeed be harmful to increase their number. On the contrary, the student of ideology is merely trying to think out a problem which people have stumbled upon in the course of their effort to orient themselves in the everyday life of society. This problem consists essentially of the inescapable necessity of understanding both oneself and one's adversary in the matrix of the social process.

It is imperative at this point to introduce some reflections concerning the external forms of such a science, its communicability, and the requirements for its transmission to coming generations. It is evident from what has already been said that, as concerns the external form of the science, that part of political science which is made up of concrete factual knowledge is not subject to the problematic considerations just mentioned. What is peculiarly problematical in politics as science and in politics proper does not begin until we reach that sphere of life in which our interests and our perceptions are closely bound up with one another, and which makes what has gone before appear in a new light.

It has been shown that here too there are relationships which can be investigated, but which, just because they are in constant flux, can be taught only if, in the case of every phase to be communicated, there is taken into account the observational position which makes these interrelations assume their definite certain character. Every view should be equated with the social position of the observer. If possible, it should be investigated in every case why the relations appear as they do from every given standpoint. We cannot emphasize too much that the social equation does not always constitute a source of error but more frequently than not brings into view certain interrelations which would otherwise not be apparent. The peculiar one-sidedness of a social position is always most apparent when this position

is seen in juxtaposition to all the others. Political life, involving, as it always does, thinking which proceeds from opposite poles, is modified in the course of its own development by toning down the exaggeration due to one point of view by what is revealed through another. In every situation, it is, therefore, indispensable to have a total perspective which embraces all points of view.

The greatest danger to an adequate representation of the relationships which concern us in the political sphere proper lies, however, in the assumption on the part of the investigator of a passive, contemplative attitude which tends to destroy the actual interrelations which, as such, interest the man of politics. It should always be kept in mind that behind all scientific work (impersonal as it may seem) there are types of mentality which to a large extent influence the concrete form of the science. Let us consider for a moment a neighbouring discipline which deals theoretically with non-theoretical materials—namely the history of art. The fundamental attitude of this discipline represents a fusion of the individual attitudes of connoisseurs, collectors, philologists, and historians of ideas. The histories of art would be quite different if they were written by artists for artists or from the standpoint of the appreciative spectator. The latter situation obtains for the most part only in contemporary art criticism.

Similarly, the theorizing subject is liable to be misled in the study of politics because his own contemplative attitude tends to subordinate his politically active attitude, thus concealing fundamental relationships rather than emphasizing them and tracing out their ramifications. The fact that sciences are cultivated in academic surroundings constitutes a danger in that the attitudes adequate to the understanding of an actual sector of human experience are suppressed in the contemplative atmosphere which prevails in academic institutions. To-day we almost take it for granted that science begins when it destroys our original approach and replaces it by one which is foreign to living experience. This is the most important reason why practice cannot profit by this kind of theory. This creates a tension between theory and practice which is increasingly aggravated by modern intellectualism. Summing up the main difference between this contemplative, intellectualistic point of view and the living standpoint which is accepted in the realm of practice, we might say that the scientist always approaches his

subject-matter with an ordering and schematizing tendency, whereas the practical man—in our case the political person—seeks orientation with reference to action. It is one thing to aim at a schematically ordered bird's eye view ; it is quite another thing to seek a concrete orientation for action. The desire for concrete orientation leads us to view things only in the context of the life-situations in which they occur. A schematically ordered summary tears apart the organic interconnection in order to arrive at an ordered system which, although artificially constructed, is nevertheless occasionally useful.

An illustration will further illuminate this central distinction between the schematically ordering and actively orienting attitudes. There are three possible approaches to modern political theories : first, they may be presented by means of a typology which is detached from the historical moments and the concrete social situations to which they refer. This typology ranges the theories in an indifferent sort of series, and at best attempts to discover some purely theoretical principle for differentiating between them. This sort of typology, which is to-day very much in fashion, may be called a "surface" typology, because it represents an attempt to present the manifoldness of life upon an artificially uniform level. The only sensible justification such a scheme could possibly have is that there are different ways of life, and following one or the other of these is simply a matter of choice. This offers a survey, of course, but it is a purely schematic survey. According to this scheme, one can give names to the theories and attach labels to them, but their real interconnections are thereby obscured, since the theories originally are not modes of life in general, but merely ramifications of concrete situations. A somewhat more complex form of this two-dimensional typology is that already referred to which seeks to discover a basis of differentiation upon some principle—preferably a philosophical one. Thus, for instance, Stahl,<sup>1</sup> the first theorist and systematizer of the German party system, classified the different political tendencies of his time into variants of two theoretical principles—the principle of legitimism and the principle of revolution. His classification offers not merely a survey of, but also an insight into, existing party-ideologies. In reducing them to a philosophical dichotomy, no doubt, he deepens our understanding. The temptation of such a philosophical deduction is that it lays an undue stress on a theoretical principle which, of course, is

<sup>1</sup> Stahl, *Die gegenwärtigen Parteien in Staat und Kirche* (Berlin, 1863).

present in the development of the nineteenth century, but which happens not to be decisive. Typologies of that kind create the impression that political thought represents the working out of purely theoretical possibilities.

The first mode of exposition represents that of the collector, the second that of the philosophical systematizer. What happens in both cases is that the forms of experience of contemplative types of men are arbitrarily imposed upon political reality.

A further mode of presentation of political theories is the purely historical one. This procedure does not, of course, tear theories out of the immediate historical context in which they developed in order to juxtapose them upon an abstract level, but it commits the opposite error of clinging too closely to the historical. The ideal type of historian is interested accordingly in the unique complex of causes that account for these political theories. To arrive at these, he brings into the picture all the antecedents in the history of ideas and links the theories with the unique personalities of creative individuals. As a result, he becomes so involved in the historical uniqueness of the events that any sort of general conclusions about the historical and social process are impossible. Indeed, historians have even taken pride in the thesis that nothing can be learned from history. If, on the other hand, the first two types of presentation mentioned above erred by being so far removed from concrete events that it was impossible to find one's way back from the generalizations, types, and systems into history, the last mentioned historical approach is so bound up with the immediacies of history that its results hold only for the specific concrete situations with which it has dealt.

As over against these two extremes, there is a third possibility which consists in selecting the middle road between abstract schematization on the one hand and historical immediacy on the other. It is precisely in this third path that every clear-sighted political person lives and thinks, even though he may not always be aware of it. This third course proceeds by attempting to comprehend the theories and their mutations in close relation to the collective groups and typical total situations out of which they arose and whose exponents they are. The inner connections between thought and social existence must in this case be reconstructed. It is not "consciousness in itself" which arbitrarily chooses from several possible alternatives, nor does the single individual construct an *ad hoc* theory to suit the needs

of a given single situation ; but it is rather that social groups having a certain type of structure formulate theories corresponding to their interests as perceived by them in certain situations. As a result, for each specific social situation there are discovered certain modes of thinking and possibilities of orientation. It is only because these structurally conditioned, collective forces continue to exist beyond the duration of a single historical situation that the theories and possibilities of orientation also carry over. It is not until their structural situations change and are gradually displaced by others that the need for new theories and new orientations arises.

Only he is able to follow the course of events intelligently who comprehends the structural alignment which underlies and makes possible a given historical situation and event. Those, however, who never transcend the immediate course of historical events, as well as those who so completely lose themselves in abstract generalities that they never find the way back to practical life, will never be able to follow the changing meaning of the historical process.

Every political figure operating on this level of consciousness which is appropriate to our present stage of intellectual development thinks—implicitly, if not explicitly—in terms of structural situations. This type of thinking alone gives meaning and concreteness to action oriented towards some far-off goal, though momentary decisions may well rest on momentary orientations. Thus, he is protected against empty and schematic generalities and is at the same time given sufficient flexibility so that he will not be overimpressed by some single event of the past as an inadequate model for future action.

The man who is purposefully active will never ask how some revered leader acted in a past situation, but rather how he would really orient himself to the present situation. This ability to reorient oneself anew to an ever newly forming constellation of factors constitutes the essential practical capacity of the type of mind which is constantly seeking orientation for action. To awaken this capacity, to keep it alert, and to make it effective with reference to the material at hand is the specific task of political education.

In the exposition of political interrelationships, the purely contemplative attitude must never be allowed to displace the original need of the political person for active orientation. Considering the fact that our educational procedure is oriented

primarily to the contemplative attitude, and that, in the transmission of our subject-matter, we aim more at a schematic survey than at a concrete orientation to life, it is imperative to determine at least a point of departure for those problems which concern the education of future generations in the realm of the active and of the political.

All the ramifications of the problem cannot be dealt with here. Let it suffice to present the structural principle of the essential interrelationships that obtain here. The forms and methods of transmitting the social and psychological subject-matter vary with the peculiarity of the structural foundations of the group on which they rest.<sup>1</sup> A certain form of social group and a certain pedagogical technique is suitable for artistic training, another for scientific training. Among the various sciences, mathematical knowledge calls for different pedagogical methods and for different relations between teacher and pupil than does the transmission of cultural subject-matter. The same is true for philosophical as contrasted with political subjects, etc.

History and practical life show a constant, if unconscious, search for more adequate educational methods in the different fields. Life is an incessant process of training and education. Usages, customs, and habits are formed by processes and in situations of which we are utterly unaware. The forms of association are continuously changing; relationships between individuals, between individuals and groups, vary from moment to moment. In one situation we are confronted with suggestion; then with spontaneous participation; then with sensitiveness to others; then with restraint by others, etc. It is not possible to set up here a complete typology of the forms of communication. They emerge and pass away in the historical process, and they can only be understood through their living context and its structural changes, and not in a vacuum.

As a first orientation, we present two tendencies of modern life which play a significant role in the external and internal shaping of the coming generation. On the one hand there is the

<sup>1</sup> The phenomenological school in particular has sought to show, in opposition to modern intellectualism, that there is more than one form of knowledge. Cf. particularly Max Scheler's *Die Formen des Wissens und die Bildung* (Bonn, 1925); *Die Wissensformen und die Gesellschaft* (Leipzig, 1926); Heidegger's "Sein und Zeit", *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*, Bd. 8. (Halle, 1927), offers, even though indirectly, much that is valuable in this respect. However, the specific character of political knowledge is not treated there.

tendency, in accord with modern intellectualism, to make homogeneous and to intellectualize the forms of education and of the propagation of knowledge. As a countercurrent to this, there is Romanticism, which desires the return to older and more "original" forms of education.

The meaning of this will be made clear by an illustration. For the transmission of purely classificatory knowledge, the lecture is the most suitable type of pedagogical technique. If knowledge has to be systematized, classified into types, or otherwise ordered the most adequate pedagogical form seems to consist in that peculiar sort of subordination which is evident when one listens to a lecture. The "listener", as mere "listener", takes "cognizance" of it. Underlying this is the assumption—implicit in the lecture itself—that purely subjective personal factors have been eliminated. Thus intellect acts upon intellect in a rarified atmosphere detached from the concrete situation. But since the subject-matter of the lecture is not concerned with sacred and authoritative texts, but with materials that are public, and subject to free and independent investigation which can be checked, discussion after the lecture is possible. This justifies the so-called seminar procedure. Here, too, the essential feature is that subjective and emotional impulses and personal relations are pushed into the background as far as possible so that abstract possibilities are considered, one over against the other, on a factual basis.

From the standpoint of subject matter, this type of pedagogical association of lecturer and audience, and the type of communication it implies, seem to be justified in the case of those sciences which Alfred Weber<sup>1</sup> has called "civilizational", i.e. those forms of knowledge which are not subject to the influences of *Weltanschauung* or of personal-volitional impulses. It is problematical whether this type of communication applies to the cultural sciences and even more to those oriented towards immediate practice. It is in accord with the type of knowledge and the tendency inherent in modern intellectualism that it should set up as a model this one specific mode of association between teacher and student and this specific form of communication, and attempt to carry it over into other realms of knowledge.

The educational institutions of medieval scholasticism and perhaps even more the universities in the age of absolutism,

<sup>1</sup> Alfred Weber, "Prinzipielles zur Kulturosoziologie," *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* (1920).

whose main purpose was the training of state officials, were instrumental in the elaboration and stabilization of this type of instruction. Only the sects and conventicles which were not primarily interested in specialized technical training and for which spiritual awakening was the prerequisite for knowledge and insight, developed the tradition of other forms of human association in the pedagogical process and cultivated other modes of intellectual transmission.

In our own epoch the inadequacy of an educational system which confined itself to merely handing down and communicating knowledge to the student by the lecture system, which subordinated the "listener" to the "lecturer", became acutely evident in those fields which we are accustomed to refer to as the "arts". Here, too, training in organized academies has displaced the older form of student-teacher association the prototype of which was the workshop (*atelier*). None the less, the type of association characteristic of the workshop is better suited to the sort of substratum to be communicated than is training in academies. The workshop brings about a relationship of mutual participation between master and apprentice. Here nothing is systematically expounded to be "taken cognizance of" by the apprentice. All that is communicated is shown in concrete situations "as opportunities arise", and not merely "said". Apprentice and master work together, assist one another, and participate in common in the completion of those creative enterprises which may have originated with either one of them. The initiative is transmitted from the teacher to the pupil, and there finds a response. Along with the transmission of the technique, there goes also the transmission of the idea, the style, not by means of theoretical discussion, but in the course of creative collaborative clarification of the aim which unites them. Thus the whole person is affected, and there is a wide difference between this human relationship and the mere "taking cognizance" which is involved in the lecture system. It is not a schematic system which is taught, but always a concrete orientation (in the case of the artistic process, a feeling for form is communicated). Here, too, analogous situations repeat themselves, but they are comprehended in the light of the character and the unity of the work newly to be created.

The Romantic impulse led to an instinctive recognition of the superiority of the form of association characteristic of the workshop. It emphasized that great damage had been done

to the plastic arts by the academies ; or, to say the least, that creative art existed really not because but in spite of academies. Every movement which, in a related manner, tended to shape political or journalistic pedagogy in the same pattern was viewed with alarm. In this field, too, intellectualism finds a compensatory force in Romanticism. The ascendancy of this Romantic current has, in fact, achieved practical results in a few fields such as, e.g., in the crafts—or, to take a very different sphere, in nursery schools and kindergartens. It found acceptance in all those spheres of life in which intellectualism, not as an inherent necessity arising out of the facts of the situation, but rather because of a mere formal expansionistic urge, displaced the collaborative form of relationship of the workshop which had originally grown up. But the Romantic trend reaches its limit wherever systematic knowledge is an indispensable prerequisite of modern life. The more advanced the level of training and the more complex the form of artistic workmanship, the more questionable does the use of workshop methods become, even though upon these higher levels of activity a great many excesses may be ascribed to a needless over-rationalization. (We note here an apt structural analogy with the phenomenon of over-rationalization and over-bureaucratization of capitalistic enterprises.) Thus we are able precisely to define the limits beyond which the Romantic countercurrent is no longer justified. The academic institutionalization of instruction in the case of architects, for instance, is not to be attributed exclusively to the exaggerated intellectualism of our age, but to the factual conditions of the complexity of the technical knowledge that is essential and must be mastered. Furthermore, it is essential to recognize that the existence and the dominance of our intellectualism is not itself an intellectually premeditated and contrived phenomenon, but has arisen naturally from the organic condition of the total process of social development. Hence it is not our task to drive intellectualism from the places where it actually fulfills an organic need that has arisen in recent times, but rather merely from those spheres in which, due to its inner formal urge for expansion, it tended to apply intellectualistic methods even where more spontaneous and direct approaches are to-day still effective. The purely technical requirements of engineering can no longer be taught in workshops. It is quite possible, however, where we deal with creative impulses whose form is still in process of growth, to apply those more living forms of collaborative

educational association which are designed to "awaken" interest and transmit insight.

A solution is no longer to be found in one or the other extreme, but only on the basis of a realistic mediation between the various conflicting currents of our time, which requires that we seek to discover exactly, in each concrete case, to what extent, in accord with the particular subject-matter, the systematizing and to what extent the personal educational procedure is to be used.

What has been said here about the teaching of the "arts" applies *mutatis mutandis*, in a very large degree, to politics. Hitherto politics as an "art" has been taught and transmitted only incidentally "as occasion arose".

Political knowledge and skill have thus far always been passed on in an informal and spasmodic fashion. The handing down of the specifically political has been left to chance occasions. What the studio has meant to creative art and the workshop to the handicrafts, the social form of the club has meant to liberal-bourgeois politics. The club is a specific form of human association which developed quite unintentionally as a suitable medium for social selection along party lines, as a basis for achieving a political career as well as for the cultivation of collective interests. The peculiar sociological structure of the club is the key to the understanding of the most significant forms of direct and informal transmission of political knowledge, growing out of the interest of those concerned. But in this case, as in the "arts", we note that the more original and spontaneous forms of learning and training, which rest upon chance occasions, do not suffice. Our present-day world is much too complicated, and every decision, even if it is to be based only in part upon the knowledge and training made possible by present opportunities, requires too much specialized knowledge and too broad a perspective to permit the kind of knowledge and skill which has been acquired by casual association to suffice in the long run. The need for systematic training already tends, and in the future will tend even more strongly, towards the necessity of giving to the aspiring politician or journalist a specialized training. On the other hand, there is the danger that this specialized training will overlook the essentially political element. Purely encyclopædic knowledge which does not emphasize actual conduct will not be of much use. At the same time, a problem will arise, indeed it has already arisen for those of broader

vision, namely, shall the training of politicians be left without further ado to party schools ?

In this respect, party schools have a certain advantage : the inculcation of the values, corresponding to certain interests, takes place almost automatically and permeates the subject-matter on every level of presentation. The atmosphere of the club which colours the interest of the members is quite unwittingly carried over into research and teaching. The real question is whether this form of political education is the only desirable one, for, upon closer examination, it turns out to be no more than the cultivation of a given set of values and perspectives, which are dictated by the partial point of view of a given social and political stratum.

But should there not and could there not be a form of political education which presupposes a relatively free choice among alternatives, which is and should become to an even greater degree the foundation of the modern intellectual stratum ? Would we not, without further ado, be giving up a significant achievement of European history precisely in the critical moment when party machinery threatens to overwhelm us, if we did not make the attempt to strengthen those tendencies which enable us to make decisions on the basis of a prior total orientation ? Can interests be aroused only by means of indoctrination ? Are not interests which have been subjected to and have arisen out of criticism also interests, and perhaps a higher type or form of interest which should not be renounced without considerable reflection ?

One should not allow oneself to be captivated by the limited doctrinal world, the terminology and outlook of the extremist groups. One must not assume that only inculcated interests are interests, and that only revolutionary or counter-revolutionary action is truly action. Here both the extreme wings of the political movement insist on imposing their one-sided conception of practice upon us and thereby conceal what is problematical. Must it be assumed that only that is politics which is preparation for an insurrection ? Is not the continual transformation of conditions and men also action ? The significance of the revolutionary phases can be understood from the standpoint of the whole, but even when they are so understood they are only a partial function in the total social process. Is it to be assumed that there is no tradition and form of education corresponding to precisely those interests seeking to establish a dynamic equilibrium, and

which are oriented to the whole? Would it not be in the true interest of the whole to set up more centres from which radiate those political interests imbued with the vitality of a critical point of view?

There exists the need for the kind of political education in which the historical, legal, and economic subject-matter requisite to such critical orientation, the objective technique of mass-domination, and the formation and control of public opinion can be taught. Such an education should also take account of the fact that there are spheres in which interests are unavoidably bound up with insight. What is more, the subject-matter relating to these spheres should be presented in a manner which presupposes that we are dealing with people who are still searching for solutions and who have not yet arrived at final decisions. And, as a result, it will be possible to determine where the older forms of formal-theoretical educational association, and where the more living types of political association which are oriented towards action are applicable.

Thus it seems certain that the interrelations in the specifically political sphere can be understood only in the course of discussion, the parties to which represent real forces in social life. There is no doubt, for example, that in order to develop the capacity for active orientation, the teaching procedure must concentrate on events that are immediate and actual, and in which the student has an opportunity to participate. There is no more favourable opportunity for gaining insight into the peculiar structure of the realm of politics than by grappling with one's opponents about the most vital and immediate issues because on such occasions contradictory forces and points of view existing in a given period find expression.

Those who enjoy such a capacity for observation based on active orientation will see history differently from the majority of their contemporaries. History will, accordingly, no longer be studied only from the point of view of the archivist or moralist. Historiography has already passed from modest chronicle and legend, developing further as rhetoric, work of art, and vivid pictorial representation, until it arrived at a romantic yearning for immersion in the past. It has already undergone so many transformations that to-day it can once again undergo transformation.

These modes of historical interpretation corresponded to the dominant orientations that the respective epochs had to their

past. Once this new mode of active orientation to life, which seeks to discover the sociological structural relationships, passes from political life back into the realm of scholarship, the corresponding new form of historiography will develop. This new form of historiography does not imply that the importance accorded to the study of the sources and the digging in the archives will decline, nor that other forms of historiography will cease to exist. There are to-day needs which are still satisfied by pure "political history", and others which call for "morphological" presentation. But just those impulses, which, arising out of our present mode of orientation to life, lead us to see past events as a succession of changes in the social structure are still in their beginnings. Our present-day orientation to life cannot be complete until it has appreciated its continuity with the past. When once this point of view has established itself in life, then the past, too, will become intelligible in the light of the present.

#### 7. THREE VARIETIES OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE

Thus far we have not been able to offer a definitive solution to our problem, but have had to content ourselves with uncovering hidden interrelations and again calling into question issues which were seemingly settled. What would it avail to receive reassuring answers concerning politics as a science as long as political thinking in no way corresponded to these answers?

We must first of all understand that political-historical thinking produces a kind of knowledge of its own which is not pure theory, but which nevertheless embodies real insight. Likewise it must be recognized that political-historical knowledge is always partial and sees things only from certain perspectives, that it arises in connection with collective group interests, and develops in close contact with these, but that nevertheless it does offer a view of reality as seen from a specific angle. For this reason we have made a detailed historical-sociological analysis of the formulation of the problem which was intended to show that the fundamental question of the relation between theory and practice varied in accordance with whether it was seen from a bureaucratic, historicist, liberal, social-communist, or fascist angle. In order to appreciate the peculiar nature of political thought, it is necessary to have grasped the distinction between knowledge which is oriented towards action and knowledge which

aims merely at classification. Finally, the peculiarity of the forms of communication of knowledge had to be shown to be relevant to the specific requirements of political education. Hence the detailed treatment of forms of exposition and pedagogy.

Only when these differences have been clearly perceived, and the consequent difficulties taken into account, can there be an adequate solution to the problem of the possibility of a science of politics. Such an analysis, however, which constantly keeps in mind that political knowledge is involved with the mode of existence and which constantly attempts to understand the forms of exposition from the social-activistic angle, is offered by the sociology of knowledge. Without the type of formulation of problems made possible by the sociology of knowledge, the innermost nature of political knowledge would not be accessible to us. The sociology of knowledge still, however, leaves open three paths of analysis. First, after having recognized that political-historical knowledge is always bound up with a mode of existence and a social position, some will be inclined, precisely because of this social determination, to deny the possibility of attaining truth and understanding. This is the answer of those who take their criteria and model of truth from other fields of knowledge, and who fail to realize that every level of reality may possibly have its own form of knowledge. Nothing could be more dangerous than such a one-sided and narrow orientation to the problem of knowledge.

If one has already examined the problem from this point of view and arrived at these conclusions, there arises the possibility of taking another approach. This consists in the attempt to assign to the sociology of knowledge the task of discovering and analysing the "social equation" present in every historical-political view. This means that the sociology of knowledge has the task of disentangling from every concretely existing bit of "knowledge" the evaluative and interest-bound element, and eliminating it as a source of error with a view to arriving at a "non-evaluative", "supra-social", "supra-historical" realm of "objectively" valid truth.

There is no question that this approach has its justification, for there are, doubtless, areas of political-historical knowledge in which there is an autonomous regularity which may be formulated, in large measure, independently of one's *Weltanschauung* and political position. We have seen that there is a sphere in the psychic life which can be dealt with, to a large

extent, by means of mass psychology, without going into the question of subjective meaning. Similarly, there is an area of social life in which may be perceived certain general structural regularities, i.e. the most general forms of human association ("formal sociology"). Max Weber, in his *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, made it his central task to work out this stratum of purely "objectively" perceivable relations, in order to arrive at such a non-evaluative objective field of sociology. Finally, even the attempts to distill a pure theory out of the sphere of political economy, free from the entanglements of one's social position and *Weltanschauung*, is another instance of the aim to distinguish sharply between "evaluation" and "factual content".

It is not yet certain how far the separation of these two spheres can go. It is by no means impossible that there are domains in which this can be done. The "non-evaluative", "supra-historical", "supra-social" character of these spheres will be fundamentally assured only after we have analysed the body of axioms or the categorical apparatus which we employ with reference to its "roots" in a *Weltanschauung*. Altogether too frequently we are inclined to accept as "objective" those categorical structures and ultimate postulates which we ourselves have unconsciously read into our experience, and which, for the sociologist of knowledge, are revealed only subsequently as the partial, historically-, and socially-conditioned axioms of a particular current of thought. Nothing is more self-evident than that precisely the forms in which we ourselves think are those whose limited nature is most difficult for us to perceive, and that only further historical and social development gives us the perspective from which we realize their particularity. On that account, even those who are striving to attain a non-evaluative sphere separable from the rest of knowledge must at least as a corrective continually search out the social equation in their thinking by some such means as the sociology of knowledge.

While the result of such a procedure cannot be predicted in advance, this much may be said: if, after the influence of political-social position upon knowledge has been accounted for there should still remain a realm of non-evaluative knowledge (not merely in the sense of freedom from partisan political judgment, but in the sense of the employment of an unambiguous and non-evaluative categorical and axiomatic apparatus)—if there

should turn out to be such a sphere, it would be attainable only by taking account of all the "social equations" in thinking which are accessible to us.

We arrive then at the third alternative to which we ourselves are committed. It is the view that, at the point where what is properly political begins, the evaluative element cannot easily be separated out, at least not in the same degree as is possible in formal sociological thinking and other sorts of purely formalizing knowledge. This position will insist that the voluntaristic element has an essential significance for knowledge in the political and historical sphere proper, even though in the course of history we may observe a gradual selection of categories which more and more acquire validity for all parties. Nonetheless, though there is a *consensus ex post*<sup>1</sup> or an increasingly broader stratum of knowledge which is valid for all parties, we should not allow ourselves to be misled by this or to overlook the fact that at every given historical point in time there is a substantial amount of knowledge which is accessible to us only seen in social perspective. But since we do not as yet live in a period free from mundane troubles and beyond history, our problem is not how to deal with a kind of knowledge which shall be "truth in itself", but rather how man deals with his problems of knowing, bound as he is in his knowledge by his position in time and society. If we advocate a comprehensive view of that which is not yet synthesizable into a system, we do this because we regard it as the relative optimum possibility in our present situation, and because in so doing we believe (as is always the case in history) we are taking the necessary steps preparatory to the next synthesis. But having stated this solution to the problem, we should be ready to add at once that the disposition to achieve a synthesis from the most comprehensive and most progressive point of view also has implicit in it a prior judgment, namely, our decision to arrive at a dynamic intellectual mediation. Certainly we would be the last to deny that we have made this value-judgment. Indeed, it is our main thesis that political knowledge, as long as politics conforms to the definition previously made, is impossible without some such decision, and that this decision in favour of dynamic intellectual mediation must be seen as an element in the total situation. But it makes a good

<sup>1</sup> Cf. for further details the paper presented by the author in 1928 at Zürich ("Die Konkurrenz im Gebiete des Geistigen"), in which there is a discussion of the nature and genesis of *ex post* consensual knowledge.

deal of difference whether this presupposition influences one's point of view unconsciously and naïvely (which will hinder a fundamental enlargement of our perspective), or whether it appears only after everything of which we can become aware and which we already know has entered into our deliberations.

The very quintessence of political knowledge seems to us to lie in the fact that increased knowledge does not eliminate decisions but only forces them farther and farther back. But what we gain through this retreat from decisions is an expansion of our horizon and a greater intellectual mastery of our world. Consequently, we may expect, from the advances in sociological research into ideology, that interrelations of social position, motives, and points of view, which have hitherto been only partially known, will now become more and more transparent. This will enable us, as we have already indicated, to calculate more precisely collective interests and their corresponding modes of thought and to predict approximately the ideological reactions of the different social strata.

The fact that the sociology of knowledge gives us a certain foundation does not free us from the responsibility of arriving at decisions. It does, however, enlarge the field of vision within the limits of which decisions must be made. Those who fear that an increased knowledge of the determining factors which enter into the formation of their decisions will threaten their "freedom" may rest in peace. Actually it is the one who is ignorant of the significant determining factors and who acts under the immediate pressure of determinants unknown to him who is least free and most thoroughly predetermined in his conduct. Whenever we become aware of a determinant which has dominated us, we remove it from the realm of unconscious motivation into that of the controllable, calculable, and objectified. Choice and decision are thereby not eliminated; on the contrary, motives which previously dominated us become subject to our domination; we are more and more thrown back upon our true self and, whereas formerly we were the servants of necessity, we now find it possible to unite consciously with forces with which we are in thorough agreement.

Increasing awareness of previously uncontrolled factors and the tendency to suspend immediate judgments until they are seen in a broader context appears to be the principal trend in the development of political knowledge. This corresponds to the fact, mentioned earlier, that the sphere of the rationalizable

and of the rationally controllable (even in our most personal life) is always growing, while the sphere of the irrational becomes correspondingly narrower. We shall not discuss here whether such a development will ultimately lead us to a fully rationalized world in which irrationality and evaluation can no longer exist, or whether it will lead to the cessation of social determination in the sense of freedom through a complete awareness of all the social factors involved. This is a utopian and remote possibility and is therefore not subject to scientific analysis.

However, this much may be safely asserted: politics as politics is possible only as long as the realm of the irrational still exists (where it disappears, "administration" takes its place). Furthermore, it may be stated that the peculiar nature of political knowledge, as contrasted with the "exact" sciences, arises out of the inseparability, in this realm, of knowledge from interest and motivation. In politics the rational element is inherently intertwined with the irrational; and, finally, there is a tendency to eliminate the irrational from the realm of the social, and in close connection therewith, there results a heightened awareness of factors which have hitherto dominated us unconsciously.

In the history of mankind this is reflected in man's original acceptance of social conditions as unalterable destiny in the same way that we shall probably always have to accept such natural and inevitable limitations as birth and death. Together with this outlook there went an ethical principle—the ethics of fatalism, the main tenet of which was submission to higher and inscrutable powers. The first break in this fatalistic outlook occurred in the emergence of the ethics of conscience in which man set his self over against the destiny inherent in the course of social events. He reserved his personal freedom, on the one hand, in the sense of retaining the ability through his own actions to set new causal sequences going in the world (even though he renounced the ability of controlling the consequences of these acts) and, on the other hand, through the belief in the indeterminateness of his own decisions.

Our own time seems to represent a third stage in this development: the world of social relations is no longer inscrutable or in the lap of fate but, on the contrary, some social interrelations are potentially predictable. At this point the ethical principle of responsibility begins to dawn. Its chief imperatives are, first, that action should not only be in accord with the dictates of conscience, but should take into consideration the possible

consequences of the action in so far as they are calculable, and, second, which can be added on the basis of our previous discussion, that conscience itself should be subjected to critical self-examination in order to eliminate all the blindly and compulsively operating factors.

Max Weber has furnished the first acceptable formulation of this conception of politics. His ideas and researches reflect the stage in ethics and politics in which blind fate seems to be at least partially in the course of disappearance in the social process, and the knowledge of everything knowable becomes the obligation of the acting person. It is at this point, if at any, that politics can become a science, since on the one hand the structure of the historical realm, which is to be controlled, has become transparent, and on the other hand out of the new ethics a point of view emerges which regards knowledge not as a passive contemplation but as critical self-examination, and in this sense prepares the road for political action.