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# Continuity and Change in German Social Structure

*Erwin K. Scheuch\**

## **Germany: An Enigma?**

### Uncertain Knowledge and Definite Beliefs

During the last two decades, Germany has been one of the most frequently studied societies. Yet there is less agreement among social researchers today than earlier about the presumed characteristics of Germany (1). No recent social science treatise has the authority of Lowie's *The German People*, which dealt with pre-World War I social structure (2). Empirical researchers are more and more prompted to confess limitations to their knowledge. At the same time, however, a great many people in a great many countries hold very strong beliefs about what they consider to be the unique features of Germany. There is a plethora of books and articles on contemporary Germany, and in the fall of 1964, in one of those recurrent bursts of interest, the Federal Republic became a favorite topic of more or less intellectual magazines (3).

On the one hand, then, we observe a widespread certainty that Germany is not merely another industrial society, that it has (mostly disturbing) features setting it apart as a social system. On the other hand, there are relatively few attempts to explore the subject systematically. This paradox is a symptom that in itself is in need of explanation.

Despite the volume of publications on postwar Germany, the interest displayed has been highly selective. What the world usually wanted to know about Germany was how Nazism was possible, or—with the benefit of hindsight—why it was inevitable, and whether it was likely to recur in one form or another. Some of the theories about the causes of Nazism gained wide acceptance, and accordingly those aspects of the German social structure that were believed to be responsible for Nazism (or, more generally, for the failure of democracy) received attention. As features that are presumably characteristic for German society, sociologists and psychologists tended to single out a rigid class system, an authoritarian family system, and a distinctive »modal personality« plus a particular value sy-

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stem (4). Historians and political scientists, on the other hand, concentrated on the effects of political institutions and on the structure and the value system of the elite (5). Depending on the observer's theories of historical causation, any one of these aspects could be treated as an explanation of Germany as an anomalous case of an industrial society (6).

A close look at the themes of such writings shows that it is not Germany as a case of an industrial society which social scientists try to analyze; rather, they purport to see a nation-state of possibly unique and definitely undesirable features. Consequently, in treating present-day Germany it is less the dramatic changes in this society by itself that command interest than it is the question of whether all this change leaves unaltered the causes for earlier dangerous political developments (7). For very good reasons, Germany does not present itself as an object of sociological or social psychological investigations analogous to Britain or France or Italy, but unfortunately this also leads to remarkable narrowing of focus when defining the scope of analysis.

Reaction to such phenomena as Nazism or German imperialism, or an anti-Semitism of unparalleled violence accounts for only a part of this selective attention. There is in addition to these political phenomena—and intensified by them—a certain tradition of Germanophobia among Western intellectuals. Social scientists in Western democracies are not immune to this Germanophobia. Quite the contrary. Sometimes this Germanophobia comes close to being simply racist, more frequently it is a consequence of a recurring historical pattern: whenever Germany was confronted with a real test situation which left it some choice, she tended to opt for anti-democratic solutions (8). In Germany, the Boulangers or McCarthys remained not a mere threat but often attained political dominance. Such dicta as »Germany is at your feet or at your throat« (Churchill) refer to an emotional reality. Thus Germany has served and continues to serve for many intellectuals as a symbol of the forces that are hostile to a liberal, free, and humane society—a sentiment that is shared by quite a few German intellectuals (9). Obviously, this does not contribute to a detached assessment.

Notions about the uniqueness of Germany may persist longer with intellectuals than with other people. Surveys of attitudes toward Germans do indeed show that these beliefs have changed in western countries: such formerly used attributes as »cruel« are now out of use (10). However, stereotypes about Germany are still better »organized« in the West than is true of notions about most other peoples with the exception of such distant nations as Japan and China. A good indicator for the »organization« of such a national stereotype is the finding that in open-ended questions a smaller number of words suffices to account for the perception of Germans than is true, e.g., for Americans or French.

Typical for the present stereotype about Germans in Western Europe and the U.S. are such attributes as hard-working (effective working-hours in Germany are among the lowest in Europe), disciplined (traffic violations and crime rates are high), scientific (the share of students in engineering and natural sciences is rather low), conscientious, aggressive, boisterous, stiff, obedient; largely lacking are now such attributes as nationalistic, arrogant and militaristic. This list of attributes would presumably be different and much less friendly were comparable data available from Eastern European countries. For Western Europe, however, the present stereotype is a sort of simplified and unfriendly version of stereotypes about the British.

Among intellectuals in Western countries, the stereotype is, of course, more varied, and includes the complicating notion that Germany is a uniquely complex and unpredictable society. Indeed, notions about Germany and the Germans have fluctuated more than is true for beliefs about most other countries. The emphasis of Henry Adams and Madame de Staël on the presumably easygoing and reflective nature of Germans as against Heinrich Heine's, Lord Acton's, or George Clemenceau's emphasis on the thoughtless energy and self-negation of Germans before the demands of authorities signify an unusual divergency of opinion, partly reflecting the differing political organisations of the very same German society. A recurrent theme in the analysis of Germany by Western intellectuals has been the thesis of the two Germanies: a peaceful, humane, and cultivated Germany; and a cruel aggressor that rules despotically whether at home or as an occupation power. In the 19th century Ernest Renan observed an uneasy coexistence between the cultivation of learning and the adoration of power. There is not much use in now trying to weigh the relative truth of conflicting allegations by various observers or to confront popular stereotypes about Germany with the results of research on the same phenomena. The analyses of intelligent observers do not refer to purely imaginary phenomena, and even popular stereotypes often have some remote relationship to real differences between social groups (11).

I think that the usual approach if explaining a nation or a national character is itself ill-advised: to start with the concrete political form of a society, then to infer from this the structure of a society, and finally to use this inferred structure to explain the political manifestations at a particular moment as a necessary consequence. It should be obvious that not all aspects of a particular social structure are expressed at a given moment, and the political and social phenomena that happen to be internationally visible at a particular time do not constitute a country's total social structure. Furthermore, the features that writers on national character take as their points of departure are usually determined by the interests of the observer's home constituency.

## In Search of an Integrated Social Structure

Germany is a society apart—this is both the conventional wisdom and a widely shared attitude among social scientists. However, a more systematic analysis of any modern, industrialized society must always lead to the conclusion: the respective society is both unique and a variation on a common theme; whether one or the other aspect is stressed depends mainly on the political outlook at a particular time and on the standards of comparison. Even aside from this consideration, Germany remains a society apart: it is not even obvious whether there is such a thing as one German society.

Are pre-World War I Germany, Weimar Germany, Nazi Germany, the present Federal Republic, and East Germany all one society? A number of observers now maintain that East Germany and West Germany have developed into two different social systems (12). However, it is implausible to treat a social system as being so fragile that we must think of a rapid succession of societies all called German on the same territory. Indeed, whatever social science knowledge we possess about the last four decades does show continuity for most aspects of social structure. In outward appearances and political organization, to be sure, the changes are drastic. But in principle this is nothing peculiar to German society: a less drastic, yet still quite dramatic, succession of different political systems can be observed for France, without foreign observers doubting the continuity of a French social structure. American social scientists have been conditioned by their own national history to think that only one political system (democracy or communism) fits a particular society (the U.S.A. or Russia) (13). Given the character of America as the »first new nation,« the present form of democracy is seen a necessary consequence (14). Given the relative continuity of political systems in Anglo-Saxon countries, the notion of only one type of stable relation between a social system and a system of government does indeed not conflict with actual experience. There is, however, such a conflict between theory and firsthand experience for Continental societies with their turbulent recent political history. It should not be assumed that social systems are as short-lived as their successive forms of government.

The same social system may permit in the short run (of several decades) several types of polities: such an assumption fits much better the recent experience of Continental nation-states. Thus we observe for Germany as the most extreme case of changing systems of government at the same time a relative stability of basic social attitudes (e.g., an »anti-democratic« pessimism about human conduct) together with a rapid accommodation to democratic forms of participation in the polity (15). Such statements as »German society is basically unchanged, so that the factors which produced Nazism are still present« and »Germans have accommodated to the

democratic form of government, for at the polls they have regularly rejected nationalistic parties« do not cancel each other. There is some truth to both assertions, and they need not to be understood as contradictory. The »basically« unchanged society now harbors a remarkably stable democratic system of government. With overwhelming majorities, voters reject political parties that represent many of their feelings and wishes, and they endorse parties whose policies do not conform to strongly held preferences (16). There is no one-to-one relationship in Germany between processes at the level of the polity and population characteristics. In all likelihood this is the prevailing state of affairs in most pluralistic, modern societies, and it is the Anglo-Saxon and specifically the American experience that is the exception.

Social scientists are, of course, more eager to demonstrate interrelationships between phenomena than to show a lack of relationship. Consequently their conceptual tools to account for indirect and complicated relationships between events are not too well developed. However, here we need such concepts.

Let us assume that there is indeed a relation between social structure and general regularities (in the sense of standards for everyday life), on the one hand, and between higher level institutions and political systems at a particular point in time, on the other hand. However, instead of behaving as though this relationship were necessarily one of mutual determination, we should turn the type of relation between social structure and the political system into an object for research. As a matter of fact, the degree of fit between social structure and political process constitutes a major topic of this chapter. Here I try to account for the relation in terms of the new concept of »degree of indifference of system elements.«

In the social sciences, the concept of a system has proved to be a powerful analytical tool in specifying a mutual influence (functional relationship) between factors. However, to treat concrete societies as systems in the sense of a complete network of interdependencies means reifying a useful concept (and also stretching an analogy to biology) (17).

We all know from our experience that not every change in one sphere of a society (e.g., urbanization) leads to changes of all other elements; concrete societies are not that delicately made. Usually, sociologists account for non-synchronized change as »lag,« but this again assumes a continuous state of equilibrium as a normal condition (18).

If conditions in one sphere (e.g., in labor relations) are unaffected by a change in another sphere (e.g., authority patterns in the family), we can speak of »indifference of system elements.« Such an indifference may characterize relations between various institutional sectors (family, youth culture, friendship patterns, voting behavior) (19).

A high degree of indifference between system elements obviously means that a greater number of higher-level arrangements are compatible with the same lower-level organization. Thus in a society such as the German one of 1920-40, several types of authoritarian political systems might have been compatible with the same stratification system and system of major cleavages; a stable democracy, however, was not compatible. Or in post-World War II France, both a multiparty parliamentary system and a highly indirect form of authoritarianism are both compatible with the same value system, the same family system, and the same antagonisms resulting from the stratification system (20).

This is not to deny that system elements may be so joined at a particular time that changes in lower-level phenomena call for equivalent changes in higher-level arrangements; changes in the Italian system of social stratification and changes in labor relations in Yugoslavia appear to be cases in point. The degree to which a variety of higher-level arrangements (such as systems of government) are possible for the same social structure may be termed the compatibility of system levels.«

Usually, industrializing societies and even industrialized societies with remnants of older structures, are characterized (in the short run of several decades) by high degrees of compatibility. The direct relationship between such aspects of the social structure as value systems and the political system (which behaviorally oriented political scientists have usually assumed to exist) is merely a marginal case.

Historians have been accused of making sense of history after the event by interpreting the outcome in any given instance as the only possible culmination of past processes; ex-post facto interpretation leads, of course, to always changing insights into presumed determinisms. An analogous fallacy could be charged against political observers who infer from a nation-state's political system at a given time the character of a social system. This is one reason why there is little point in matching assertions on the order of »hard-working,« »boisterous,« »aggressive,« etc. with information based on systematic research. It would imply as known the »degree of indifference between system elements,« which actually should be a major object of investigation in a macro-social analysis (21).

#### Germany as a Normal and Unique Case

The recent political history of Germany is certainly unique. It is not so very unique for an industrial society to have an unstable democracy; it is not even unique for an industrial society to exist with an authoritarian political structure. However, the authoritarian regime in Germany certainly was unique in its ruthlessness, and its imperialism is unmatched. Within the lifetime of the average individual the very same society has had an

unstable democracy, a powerful dictatorship, and now a rather well-functioning democracy side by side with a so-so Communist system. Even compared to the recent political history of other Continental societies, Germany is unmatched in the scope of changes in the political systems.

Nevertheless, in comparative research of international scope we do not find many features that seem to belong only to the German social system (22). Societies such as England, France, and Germany appear to be merely variations of a common type: Western industrial societies (23). Certainly the similarities of their social systems are much greater than the dissimilarities between their systems of government. Thus the often-cited »German family« turns out in a sense not to exist. Family organizations differ in emphasis from country to country within the industrialized group, but they are not monads (24).

A sociological analysis gives little support to the common assumption that the unique political history of Germany is the expression of a unique social system. Whatever knowledge we possess from cross-cultural comparisons points to differences only in degree between Germany and other Western industrialized societies. Probably this is in part a result of the coarseness of sociological analyses, but if this is so, then it should also be doubtful that fastening on some differences that are manifest to an intelligent observer would adequately account for the character of the social system and its relation to the polity. Let there be a moratorium on citing some instances where Germany appears to differ from another Western industrialized country as explaining by itself her presumed uniqueness.

As an organizing scheme for the evidence of similarities and dissimilarities an analysis by system levels recommends itself. In basic German social organization—i.e., such institutions as the family and other functionally diffuse primary relations--the differences from other Western industrial societies appear to be rather small. They are more important in the system of stratification; differences are largest for the upper middle class and higher level institutions such as mass communications media and political parties. Correspondingly, standards of everyday behavior and group stereotypes including national prejudices do not differ sharply from those of other countries (25). Differences are more pronounced for beliefs without an immediate relevance for behavior—such as ideas about morals; and those differences are largest for articulate opinions in politics and aesthetics. Thus it is fair to postulate—that differences between Germany and other Western industrial societies tend to be more pronounced the higher the system level. This postulate, by the way, appears to hold for industrial societies in general, whose uniqueness then reduces itself largely to peculiarities of highest level institutions.

Frequently in macro-social observations the internal heterogeneity of modern industrial societies is underestimated. Functionally differentiated



and changing as these societies are, none is as integrated as observers using the notion of a system usually imply. The degree of indifference varies quite a bit from society to society and may properly be understood as a characteristic of a social system. In surveys we may observe similarities in family structure, community organization, labor relations, mobility rates, etc.; yet the consequences of dissimilarities that--taken by themselves--are rather small, may be vast given diverse degrees of indifference between system elements.

Given the results of cross-cultural investigations by sociologists, the uniqueness of Germany as a polity may be largely explained by two related properties of its social system: 1) high compatibility of many different political organizations with the same social system, and 2) an unusual degree of indifference between system elements. A common-sense expression of the same phenomena would be the statement that this society is less well integrated than most other industrialized societies, hence has few checks against extreme behavior arising in one sector or another. Historically and philosophically inclined readers may equate this assertion with the older dictum, that Germany's problem has always been her lack of a proper balance between order and anarchy, with authoritarianism as the easy way out. This, by the way, is unique only for a society of such a large size.

As an event to be better understood from this perspective, let us consider the most repulsive and least comprehensible aspect of the Nazi system: the concentration camps of the extermination variety (*Vernichtungslager*). This unparalleled institution tells us very little but in a sense a great deal about »German society.« Systematic extermination of Jews has been explained as a necessary consequence, given the specific character of German society and the Germans. However, although anti-Semitism of the rabble-raising kind, with boycotts of Jewish stores and a night of breaking windows and other hoodlumism (*Kristallnacht*) can be linked up with specific features of Germany, this does not account for a meticulous and unadvertised genocide. The incredible »yellow stars« to be worn by anyone whom the Nazis defined as Jewish was certainly no necessary consequence of the German social structure, but the apathetic reception of this utterly fantastic measure was undoubtedly such a consequence. There is not even reason to suppose that this society in which an attempt to exterminate all Jews occurred was more anti-Semitic than many other European societies: If we chose as a standard just the sentiments of the individual citizens, the degree of anti-Semitism was probably just a bit higher than is unfortunately »normal« in Europe, and it is now just somewhat less than usual by the same standards (26). In Germany, although perhaps less so than in other societies, it is very questionable to infer from persecution of minorities an abnormally high level of prejudice or to explain persecution by a high level of prejudice.

In the studies by the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey, only 10 per cent of the population were identified as »ideological Nazis« and 33 per cent as »sympathetic to the Nazi regime« (27). From the various surveys during the last decade and a half, this percentage of »ideological Nazis« has now been reduced by somewhat more than half, and yet no party using Nazi symbols has ever had much success in elections (28). Again according to the Strategic Bombing Survey, 16 per cent of the Germans regarded World War II lost from its beginning, and by around 1943 a majority believed the war lost, even though this did not noticeably affect the efficiency of the war machine (29).

The notion of a homogeneous, even monolithic, German social system should not be deduced from the functioning of a military machine or a political system. To understand a particular political system, it is advisable to look at the social system as a necessary but not a sufficient condition. Viewed from this perspective, Germany ceases to be an enigma and becomes an extreme case of a loosely integrated industrial society with a high capacity for different institutional arrangements.

Such considerations also change the problem formulation when we ask whether present-day Germany has the same social structure as the Germany of the 1930's, 1920's, and earlier. In addition to noting changes in the family, in the stratification system, in leisure behavior, or in any other substantive aspects, we shall also have to look for changes in the degree of indifference of system elements (i.e., in the relational characteristics of society). The question of whether German society is still the same cannot be answered by just citing percentages of population characteristics that changed or else did not; this question also calls for a diagnosis as to whether the capacity of this social system for widely different political systems has changed. An answer to the latter query is probably most important to satisfy the limited interest that most outside observers have in this society. However, with present sociological techniques, it is also a most difficult question to answer. Whatever postwar research is available on Germany shows that there are many contradictions characterizing this society, more than is true for most other industrialized and changing social systems.

During the last hundred years, Germany has been characterized by strong cleavages. Historically, some of the most important ones were: manual versus non-manual wage earners; aristocracy versus business; unions versus employers; Catholics versus Protestants versus secularists; »young generation« versus the rest; rural versus urban. Not the least of many cleavages was a strong regional differentiation, which caused some observers (such as Franklin Roosevelt) to doubt whether the Germanic tribes had ever amalgamated into a nation (30). In the past, several of these cleavages within German society potentially threatened the very existence of the social system. Resolving cleavages often used to mean achieving

dominance over opponents, from whom submission was demanded. The most dramatic, basic social change that has occurred since the beginning of World War II is the different arrangement of cleavages, and especially a different style in dealing with them (31).

By now it is becoming fashionable for Germans to consider themselves member of a pluralistic society (32). For Germany, this is a revolutionary change in self-conception: as against the sometimes hysterical assertion of *Gemeinschaft*, the notion of live-and-let-live was never very popular. In a later discussion of the system of stratification and the organization of the elite, I shall try to show that Germany is still no pluralistic society in the usual sense of the term. The strong differentiations within the German society are related to each other rather in the form of particularism than in the form of a tolerant (or agnostic) pluralism. Nevertheless, that pluralism should be looked on as something acceptable and even good marks a great change.

The way in which cleavages are defined and are related to each other is in my opinion largely responsible for what appears to be the peculiar feature of German society: the high compatibility of this social structure with different forms of political organization. Accordingly, in a discussion of substantive features of German society I emphasize two topics which are most likely to show Germany as a nearly unique case among other Western industrialized societies: the system of social stratification and the organization of the elite.

## **Systems of Inequality and Social Stratification**

### Ritual and Reality in Patterns of Deference

The rigidity and the explicitness of the German system of stratification is one characteristic of German society that presumably sets it off from other Western industrialized countries (33). If we believe reports by foreign observers, the wife of a minor civil servant is supposed to address the wife of his superior by the title of her husband: »Jawohl, Frau Oberinspektor.« Visitors to German universities say they have heard students address their teachers as »Herr Professor Dr.,« and they report at home that a German Ordinarius may be spoken to only by God, and then only by appointment.

Alas, life in Germany is not that picturesque. These exaggerated stories lead outside observers to attribute a high degree of rigidity to the German system of stratification but do not show them the actual nature of the system of inequality.

In generalizations about other countries it is unfortunately common to confuse patterns of deference with effective inequality (in the sense of distances between stages in hierarchies). The same behavior in different cultural contexts may obviously mean different feelings of real respect and imply different degrees of power of one person over the other. Just as American observers may over-react to the formality in status-oriented behavior in Germany, European observers commit an equivalent error when reporting about the U.S. Europeans are frequently impressed with the fact that in the U.S. a subordinate may be on a first-name basis with his superior—although the generality of this is widely exaggerated in Europe; a subordinate may even argue with his superior before a definite decision has been made. This leads foreign observers to the conclusion that there are few class differences in the U.S. (34). And then the very same observers declare themselves to be puzzled by the American penchant for titles and prestige symbols in general (35).

What really sets off the German system of stratification is the formalization of relationships. Sets of rules are laid down for behavior between unequals, and explicit prescriptions for patterns of deference are taught. This is not just specific to class differences but also characteristic for other relations between unequals in Germany—such as the relations between an older and a younger person, between a barber and a customer, between a physician and an artist, and between a man and a woman.

Such rituals of asymmetry in face-to-face relations are actually not a characteristic of a class system: they are typical for feudalistic societies. What foreign observers often take as a distinguishing feature of the German stratification system is thus a sign of the degree to which preindustrial rules are retained in such a highly industrialized country (36).

This asymmetry does not denote the degree of control over the subordinate that it would in a purely class relationship. In a relation between persons who are fundamentally equals and are merely unequal with regard to power, that power may be used at the discretion of the superior. Criminal youth gangs are an extreme example of this, and 19th-century relations between capital owners and workers are another. This power to use power does *not* characterize relationships that are generally defined as asymmetrical--such as the relationship between man and wife or parents and children. It is no accident that in feudalism inequalities was idealized as a »natural« extension of relations between family members and that this analogy was also invoked in defense of slavery (37). These past usages and the emotional reaction to them have obscured the fact that a feudal relationship does not imply despotic control. Quite the contrary, the character of such ascribed status differences is one of a balance of mutual rights and obligations. These obligations restrict the superior in a relationship often quite severely in making use of his superior position.

The feature that American observers especially are really reacting to—while believing they are observing a characteristic of the German system of social stratification—is the combination of feudalistic forms governing face-to-face interactions in general (and not just between actors of different status) and norms specific to the industrial setting. It is, of course, important to recognize that both preindustrial and industrial criteria determine the position of an individual in a social pyramid, to realize that the German system of social stratification is still noticeably influenced both by traditional rank (*ständische*) and by class elements. This *mélange* of feudalistic arrangements and characteristics of industrialized societies is one of the distinctive features of the German social system, but it is not a unique one (38).

### The Meaning of Occupation

The single most important determinant of social status in Germany is 1) occupation (or for the wife, husband's occupation). Occupation alone is more predictive for status than all other status criteria combined (39). Further factors in declining order of importance are (ignoring for a moment the second most important one): 3) level of education; 4) social status of friends and acquaintances; 5) personal income; and 6) social status of parents (40). This statement holds both for studies of perceptions of class difference and for objective differences. The only truly pre-industrial factor among these is social status of parental family, and this is of some importance mainly in perceptions but quite insignificant in determining actual behavior. The remaining criteria are—with the one exception still to be mentioned—identical in order of importance, with those reported for other Western industrialized societies (41).

A favorite gripe against the U.S. by European observers—and it is intellectually really no more than a gripe—has been its presumed materialism. German cultural critics now find reason to deplore the same materialism at home which presumably leads to a preoccupation of people with the status value of goods (42). Advertising executives and social critics alike point to ownership of certain goods (home, swimming pool, yacht, private plane) as new status criteria. Research shows, however, that such goods are not determinants of status but merely symbols (43). What passes as unique among critics of the Federal Republic is merely a formal feature in an industrial society.

There is one factor, however, which is idiosyncratic for the perception of status variables in Germany: factor number 2 in order of importance is ability plus accomplishment (*Tüchtigkeit*) in one's occupation. At first this finding is quite perplexing, but it can be used as a key for a reappraisal of the German stratification system. This we shall take up again later.

While occupation is the most important general determinant of status in Germany, as it is in all Western industrialized countries, the ranking of individual occupations differs from country to country (44). In agreement with stereotypes about Germany we find that the university professor holds first rank in prestige rating, although he is about to share this place of honor with the big industrialist; quite rightly, many observers of post-war Germany consider this high status of business leaders a major social change (45). Contrary to his ranking in the United States, the physician runs a very poor third. And the proverbial civil servant (*Deutsche Beamte*)? His status differs drastically according to his title, for today a low-ranking civil servant is rated even slightly below a highly qualified worker and quite a bit below a factory foreman (*Werkmeister*). To be in the service of the state, regardless of position, leads to a high level of prestige aspirations for the civil servant himself but not automatically to an equivalent rating by others. Here we do indeed observe a strong change, and perhaps an important one; and in this respect the Federal Republic now differs from other nation-states with a German culture, especially Austria.

Although some individual occupations are rated somewhat differently in various Western societies, closer inspection shows that the principles determining occupational prestige are practically identical. In all these societies those occupations receive a higher rating than appears plausible by the nature of work where 1) long training periods are usual, 2) where the practitioner is self-employed and determines his own work schedule, 3) where he is not paid for a specific operation but receives an honorarium for services rendered, and 4) where mistakes in performing the work have important consequences.

Prestige scales of occupations can be understood as indirect expressions of central values held in a society. One dominant criterion for ordering occupations along a prestige hierarchy is the presumed power that an occupational position implies over people or resources. Specifically in industrial societies, an underlying dimension is the degree of autonomy that such an occupation affords in the pursuit of one's life goals. Viewing prestige scales of occupation as expressing general status principles, Germany's stratification system again appears to be just a (minor) variation of a pattern common to all industrialized societies.

However, in addition to these manifest and latent similarities, we do find important differences in the interpretation of positions in a hierarchy, in the meaning assigned to being »high« or »low.« Prevalent in the United States is the belief that the higher the position on the prestige scale, the greater the success of the individual. Conversely, being successful is presumed to express itself in achieving a higher occupational position or in acquiring more of some other status criteria. This is in agreement with the belief that social status expresses success and that success is the result of an individual's accomplishment (46).

In this respect, German society differs considerably from other Western societies and conforms to the standards of »ascriptive« societies. In ascriptive social systems it is not generally believed that upward social mobility is possible for everyone of sufficient ability. A rise in status is attributed to other factors, such as the help of one's family, luck, or a ruthless and despicable personality (47). In this case the interpretation of different social status changes from that prevalent in the U.S.: positions of high status are no longer taken to express necessarily a superior accomplishment but are seen as different social ranks (48). Ranks need to be respected—hence the rituals of deference—but their occupants may not command respect. Only in a society where higher position is supposed to express a personal qualification does deferential behavior express respect toward the particular person.

The different evaluation of high status and upward mobility cannot be explained by different mobility rates. International comparisons of social mobility are notoriously difficult, and measurements are fairly crude. However, all studies show that there is presently no great difference in over-all mobility rates between most Western industrialized countries, and most certainly no great difference between the U.S. and Germany (49). The only remaining difference is probably the speed at which individuals change status, but the net result at the end of a life does not seem to differ much. Therefore, it is the interpretations that differ and not the realities to which these interpretations refer.

After pointing to the interpretation of status as »rank« and after identifying the evaluations of mobility, we are ready to make use of a finding that appeared at first as a mere oddity: the extremely high importance that in Germany is attached to *Tüchtigkeit*. The respect for *Tüchtigkeit* within a given occupation can be interpreted as a second ranking system for individuals. Positions deserve deference, *Tüchtigkeit* respect. Thus there is a strong contrast between attitudes toward an incompetent manager and toward a highly competent foreman. The incompetent manager will be treated with the patterns of deference relevant to his position, but he will receive little respect; the highly competent foreman will still be treated as a foreman, but he will be accorded a high respect (50).

In Germany, satisfaction within one's occupational life may therefore be derived from two sources: the prestige that is due to the rank of a position and the respect due to a competent performance. Rating by respect for *Tüchtigkeit* is not merely a minor modification of hierarchization by ranks; it leads to markedly different treatment, apart from the treatment assigned to the rank of a position. Success in the United States is primarily expressed in a position of high rank; in Germany it may express itself also in a reputation for *Tüchtigkeit*.

A prestige ranking due to an occupation and a respect that is accorded to accomplishment within an occupation are, of course, not equivalent. Accomplishment within an occupation can be honored only by those who know about this reputation--i.e., co-workers, friends, neighbors, and other persons that care to look at John Doe as an individual. This usually small world of a particular person can be called his »primary environments« as against the secondary environment where anyone is treated as an occupant of a certain position, such as physician or professor (51). Respect due to *Tüchtigkeit* is a reward that is accorded primarily in this primary environment and supplements the prestige that is attached to particular occupational categories. It is my contention that in the U.S. occupational prestige dominates both the secondary and the primary environment, while in Germany rank and accomplishment bring separate rewards. The consequences of this double rating are rather great. A low rating on one of the dimensions (respect or prestige) may be compensated by a higher ranking on the other (except of course where incompetence coincides with an occupation of low prestige). Such a difference in reward systems means also that for the individuals the differences between the »small world« of the primary environment and the secondary or public world are accentuated.

There is still another dimension cross-cutting the rank-ordering of occupations along a scale of prestige--a dimension which at first seems closely related to *Tüchtigkeit*. If occupations are ranked by the respect (*Achtung*) that the skill they require deserves, we arrive at a still different ordering of occupational categories (52). Most of the academic professions, also high on a scale of occupational prestige, retain their high ranking. However, we do now find skilled workers occupying one of the highest ranks, even above some of the self-employed and academic occupations. Thus in a nationwide survey in 1963, the respondents rated the occupations of both miners and judges (the latter an occupational category with less prestige in Germany than in the U.S.) as deserving the same respect and being equally important; both were rated very much higher than the occupational category superintendent of a high school. For those who believe nothing has changed in German society, it should be instructive to learn that on this scale one of the lowest rankings is given to professional soldiers.

The ranks of occupations by prestige and by skill do not coincide in other countries, either. France is a country where the manual worker is given both little prestige and accorded little respect, while the *journaliste* has the high ranking on both scales that was traditionally presumed to be characteristic for Germany. In England, being self-employed is a much more dominant value than in the two other countries (53). In European societies, however, rankings of occupations along different dimensions appear to coincide less than is true for the United States. And in



Germany the differences in rankings between the prestige of, and the respect for, an occupation appear to be still a bit greater than in either France or England.

In feudal societies, a difference between the social prestige and the respect in terms of social significance of an occupation was a normal feature of the system of inequality. Thus a courtier or scribe or personal servant of a nobleman enjoyed considerably higher social prestige than social respect. To meet a strong distinction between those two dimensions plus a further differentiation according to the presumed individual performance shows how strong feudal principles of social structure still are in Germany and in France. A major consequence of this coexistence of several principles of ranking is a blurring of the significance of inequality along any one of the dimensions. Social prestige and respect for occupational categories may partly neutralize each other in the emotional significance that inequalities will have in the secondary environment; and inequalities in the secondary environment are further cushioned in their effect by an additional ranking system that is effective in primary environments.

Germany appears at first sight to be a country where the distance between different social classes is especially great. On closer inspection we conclude now that for a large part of the population the difference between social classes is not dramatic (54). Various prestige dimensions (acceptability of occupation, »normality« of style of life, respect accorded to performance, social rank of position) cross-cut each other. Therefore an individual's low ranking on any one of the dimensions may be neutralized in part by a higher ranking on other prestige dimensions. Especially important and unusual is the wide differentiation of ranks between different types of manual labor, and in general the lack of a gap between manual and non-manual occupations (55).

We do not have comparable data for earlier periods, but if we are to believe descriptions of Germany before World War I and during the Weimar Republic, then this differentiation of prestige and life situations within various occupational categories represents a major social change. Rank differences have by no means disappeared, as some proponents of a »leveled society« (*nivellierte Mittelstandsgesellschaft*) advise us to believe, but a cross-cutting of ratings certainly makes rank differences less divisive (56).

### The Stratification Pyramid

As is true for most Western industrialized societies today, Germany is emphatically a middle-class society. In the simplest sense, this means that nearly a majority of Germans are middle-class by whatever criterion class is measured (57). Middle positions are the least controversial, and persons

in these positions are less of a target for hostility than is true for persons in other positions. The value system is dominated by middle-class conceptions. In this respect, Germany closely resembles the U.S.

Characteristic for pre-industrial and early capitalist societies is a distribution of its members among social classes that resembles in shape an inverted funnel. Equally characteristic for present-day Western industrialized societies with a relatively »mature« economy is the so-called »middle-class bulge.« This metaphor is not meant to describe the prevailing shape of the male members of such societies; it refers to the historically unique occurrence that the majority of persons are no longer in the lowest social positions but have moved into the middle of the stratification range.

In West Germany this middle-class bulge is by no means as strong as in the U.S., but it is there, and it is increasingly pronounced, as a position of relative affluence is enjoyed by more and more Germans. According to my studies, about 20 per cent of the population are definitely lower class, and about 30 per cent are in the peculiar situation of upper-lower class that so closely resembles the life condition of the former *petit bourgeoisie* (58). From the middle on, the stratification pyramid thins rapidly. A rather lenient definition for upper-middle and for upper class places approximately 7 per cent of adult Germans into these prestigious positions. When using a strict criterion for upper-class membership, hardly 1 per cent of the population qualifies. All in all, there is nothing peculiarly »German« about such a distribution, and all indications point to an ever-closer approximation to the present situation in the United States. And just as in the U.S., a large majority of Germans perceive themselves as already belonging to the middle class.

In contrast to attitudes during the Weimar period, the rise of membership in the middle class and the establishment of a kind of national middle-class value system has lowered hostility toward those parts of the lower classes about to acquire middle-class status. In his 1932 analysis of the Nazi party, Theodor Geiger could show that the attraction of the Nazi movement was in part based on the fear of members of the »old middle class« that they were about to lose or have to share their status with »upstarts« (59). This resentment was primarily directed towards those groups of manual workers that were beginning to move into middle-class status. Indeed, Nazism at that time appealed strongly to those who felt threatened by a loss of status because of changes in the industrial economy. These sentiments, especially a reluctance to share middle-class status with new members, are still existent; however, quantitatively they are now of minor importance. Thus one major source of instability for the political system has virtually disappeared; not even the farmers' union or refugee associations have been able to revive such sentiments.

## Evaluations of Inequalities

In any society, the relations between social classes and the attitudes in general toward stratification are strongly influenced by social mobility. Most studies have shown that actual rates of mobility in Western industrialized societies—including Germany—are quite comparable. However, despite these similarities in objective conditions, the differences in the degrees to which societies are perceived as either permitting or hampering social mobility are quite dramatic.

All Western industrialized societies (with the possible exception of Great Britain) have far more upward mobility than downward mobility. However, only in the United States is there a general optimism that everyone (at least every white American) has a chance to be upward mobile and that one's position in the stratification system is primarily the result of one's capabilities. The majority of Germans, too, believe that advancement through capability and hard work is possible, but they also believe that most likely this advancement will be limited in scope. Inherited position, family connections and friends, and a good measure of luck are also seen as important conditions for any advancement that is more than moderate. This is a more optimistic appraisal of chances for advancement than is characteristic for France, and this evaluation is quite «normal» in Western societies, the U.S. being distinctly extreme. Most Germans do not think that everyone within their system could make it from rags to riches, but they do believe that most could advance from ordinary clerk to the heights of the existence of an accountant. A larger majority than in the U.S. also believe that they have no real chance to ever join the elite—and studies of actual mobility show they are right.

Limits in social mobility, however, do not trouble most Germans. They do have a real chance for a modicum of upward mobility, and this limited ascent is all that is being asked for, if we go by the percentage of Germans who think they have attained or are going to attain most of what they set themselves to accomplish (60). And even if no mobility is achieved, even if the occupational life is ended pretty much in the same slot where the worker started out 45 years earlier, this does not seem to lead to strong dissatisfaction.

Why do the members of various industrialized societies perceive and evaluate the same objective conditions so differently? Why is it in some countries and at some stages in history that dissatisfaction with social mobility arises and leads to a politically explosive situation? One major factor is the evaluation of the stratification system, especially the perception of mobility chances. If upward social mobility is believed to be both frequent and attainable through the individual's abilities plus a portion of good luck, then individuals tend to blame themselves for a failure to achieve

upward mobility. The locus of blame is shifted to »social conditions« or »society« if the stratification system is perceived as an ascriptive one--i.e., as a system where a position does not reflect on an individual's ability (61). Whether, in a society whose stratification system is believed to be largely ascriptive, inequality of social position will lead to political conflict based on class differences depends on the actual rates of mobility and the strength of dissatisfaction with own status: in stratification systems that are perceived as being determined by achievement, dissatisfaction with own status is more likely to lead to personal disorders including crime. While in a social system such as Germany's status inequality is in principle more likely to lead to political action, this type of cleavage is now much reduced in importance—the result of rather limited aspirations for mobility and objectively very high rates of upward mobility.

The potential for conflict that is usually inherent in stratification systems with strong inequalities is further reduced by the type of expectation for mobility. In the U.S., the individual usually hopes to achieve mobility for himself, and success and failure are judged by comparing one's actual station in life with one's expectation. But in most European societies the system is also judged by the chances of one's children to achieve a higher position than one's own. Surveys show that at present a majority of the population in England as well as in Germany expects that their children will get further in life than they themselves (62).

In addition to these factors which at present contribute to the decline of tension between strata and to the gradual disappearance of class-based politics in Europe, some specifically national factors further reduce the impact of inequality of status in Germany. Let us recall that in Germany prestige resulting from one's occupation and the self-respect associated with it can be derived from several criteria. The effects of this crisscrossing of status dimensions are far-reaching. Obviously, there will be relatively few makes in contemporary German society who have to consider themselves as over-all failures. At the same time, most individuals must admit partial failure (63). With an evaluation of success in working life along several dimensions, the chances for overall success obviously diminish. By the same logic, this feeling of failure is limited with respect to social mobility, since the aspirations are not too far removed from the possibilities. (Continued possibilities of course depend upon expansion of the economy and upgrading of job skills.)

For a German, part of the feeling of success derives from achieving a high standard of performance in his job—although this tends to be less and less true for unskilled jobs. It is this emphasis on measuring up to an ideal within the job—rather than just trying to qualify for a next higher position—that characterizes the affective relationship with one's work. This interpretation accounts for the somewhat compulsive involvement in

job performance (which is of course not necessarily equivalent to efficiency) that strikes many foreign observers. While contributing to reducing the cleavage effect of inequalities, the emphasis on *Tüchtigkeit* is also a source of tension in the worker--akin to the worry about upward mobility in the U.S. As David McClelland points out, a constant fear of *Überforderung* (of not achieving perfect performance) is characteristic for German males of middle class background (64).

The crisscrossing of reward dimensions, the possibility of considering oneself successful on alternative dimensions, plus the involvement in one's job, all contribute to the peacefulness in employer-employee relations that is another characteristic feature of the German social structure. No major industrial power has had so few strikes. Then in the spring of 1962 employers and trade unions in the metal industry, the building trade, and mining poised for three successive real tests of strength (one side preparing for industry-wide walk-outs, the other for lock-outs), both sides were forced by the consensus of all those not directly involved to abandon their collision course (65). Public opinion poll after public opinion poll shows a constant aversion to strikes and a belief that there are no legitimate conflicts of interests that have to be settled by a test of strength. The Nazi idea of a single docile labor organization (*Arbeitsfront*) and a similar organization in East Germany now fit quite well into this German inclination to disclaim differences that may be inherent in different social positions. This is of course also a basic weakness of German society: it is still badly prepared to meet open conflict.

The presumably rigid and explicit German system of social stratification, which so often strikes foreign observers, is not an emotional reality for the Germans themselves. The very notion of social classes, or of rank ordering of positions apart from the *Tüchtigkeit* of the incumbent, is repellent to a majority of the population, however much they have to admit the existence of classes. There is an unreconciled contradiction between the emphasis on status-specific patterns of deference and the attempt to deny the legitimacy of any positional difference.

German ideas about an acceptable relationship between different strata (as we learn from surveys) correspond essentially to preindustrial notions, specifically feudalistic ones. The average person would like to believe in an organic interdependence between strata and in the existence of a common interest (66). Traditionally, the appeal to nationalism has been the most effective way to establish strong emotional ties in the face of a real conflict of interests. Especially among persons under 40 years of age, these feelings—which in the past were of major political relevance in times of crises—are losing their importance.

The major change from conditions during the Weimar Republic has been an increasing differentiation of work situations and life chances wit\*

hin broad occupational categories. Incomes, treatment by superiors, independence of work, length of training, and social status differ considerably within the old job categories of skilled worker and white-collar worker (*Angestellter*)--probably more so than is true for other European societies (67). This development has drastically reduced the political relevance of tensions resulting from inequalities in social status. New topics for bargaining produce changing coalitions in accordance with the shifting alliances of interests. Temporary groups rather than large, fixed blocs now face each other in social conflicts.

This development means a reduction of tension, and so does the increase of job security. Germany is enjoying a long period of overemployment. In addition, the welfare state has been drastically extended, and the system of old-age pensions in the Federal Republic is now probably one of the most generous and definitely one of the most inflation-proof in the world. Many of the connotations of unequal status have thus lost their anxiety-producing effects.

These rather drastic changes have reduced the potential for immediate socio-political conflict along status lines but have not eliminated tensions caused by status inequalities as such. Just as in the U.S., these tensions are now experienced largely as individual problems. The nature of the problems, however, differs from those mentioned above as typical for the U.S.; and this is a result of the evaluation of occupational roles that is prevalent in Germany.

According to the traditional German value system, a person's involvement in an occupation was of central importance. Here he was to express his »true self« and at the same time that he was earning his livelihood, he was presumably serving the common good. Of course these values—essentially a fusion of the aristocratic and artisan standards of a feudalistic society—were not accepted by most manual workers. However, until the Weimar Republic this was one of the two prevailing legitimate ideologies. Needless to demonstrate, there was a grotesque disparity between the reality and this value orientation.

As industrialism proceeded; a second ideology developed: that the true personality did not have a chance to realize itself within the economic world or in general by participating in society. For an antidote against alienation, one had to turn inward to a private world—to friends, family, and perhaps contemplation (68). The distinction between a reward system for performance in work and one's status in the society at large contributed further to this distinction between a meaningful primary world and an official »public« sphere. One latent function of this second ideology was to de-emphasize the frustrations resulting from class difference, from a stratification system in which »the true self« was not involved, which affected merely the arbitrary (*uneigentliche*) »social self.«

Naturally, these notions were only articulated by a minority, and they were crucial merely for segments of the upper-middle class. In a diluted form, however, the feeling of alienation in the industrial world and the perception of public affairs as essentially irrelevant can be traced in the lower classes. The strength of this ideology can be inferred from the fact that in part it pervades even the writings of contemporary German sociologists themselves (69). Many Germans still do not feel quite at home in an industrial society. They give Moloch (the »economy« and its lure of a higher »standard of living«) his due, but they experience this as a further instance of man's inevitable adjustment to reality after a fall from grace.

The political consequences of such a value system are obvious. In times of displeasure with events in society at large, one may simply withdraw into the private world and try to live an exemplary life there. To live a »moral« life, pay taxes, and educate their children well—these constitute for many people the most important contribution they can conceive of making to society.

Insofar as this more or less vague feeling of alienation translated itself into a general orientation toward society and inhibited involvement in public affairs, it was indeed of major political relevance in Germany's past. Many well-meaning citizens never asserted their views about politics and public life. And such an orientation restricted the involvement of those very strata which in other polities set limits to the actions of politicians. This lack of engagement in public life in a blood-and-guts sense—however dutifully formal citizenship norms are carried out—makes of course a much wider range of political systems compatible with the same value system (70).

### The Compatibility of the Status System

Up to World War II, this ambivalence toward an industrial society was extremely important for politics in Germany. Presently it is not. Did basic attitudes change? Is there now a willingness to no longer preceive public life as alien? The answer is that attitudes toward the stratification system began to change appreciably only after the war, and the stratification system itself has change least of all. What has changed markedly is the relation of the system to politics.

It may seem strange that World War II caused so few changes in German social structure. How could the vast relocation of populations, the destruction of property, and the movement of impoverished refugees into West Germany have so little effect on the stratification system? Contrary to common beliefs, research shows that World War II itself and the immediate postwar political developments had a surprisingly limited impact on the survivors. The changes that were mentioned earlier in this chapter

occurred mainly during the last decade, and major structural changes have just gotten under way.

As of 1966, the majority of surviving older Germans are in the same positions as they were before the holocaust of the years 1943-58. Penniless as all refugees may have been when they entered what is today the Federal Republic, these same refugees are now by and large in the same positions as they would have been had no population movement occurred. Immediately after the end of World War II, there was general concern that refugees would become a new German underclass; by now there are few status differences that can be attributed to the accidents of history such as whether property was lost or not or whether one had to leave one's native area or not (71). World War I and its aftermath had an incomparable greater effect on the stratification system than World War II—with a consequent political turmoil. The relative stability of the Federal Republic in no small measure stems from the absence of violent changes in the stratification system. This experience gives grounds for a reappraisal of the presumed relation between the German stratification system and the success of authoritarian political movements.

Undoubtedly the German system of stratification—or the peculiar evaluation of this not very unusual system by many Germans—was a source of strain for the social system. However, this by itself does not account for the success of authoritarianism. Presumably the tensions associated with the stratification system and with the meaning of work lead merely to a diffuse feeling of uneasiness; this potential for social conflict could be utilized for political purposes only after these feelings had become intensified. The historically observed degrees of intensity of dissatisfaction and of feelings of hostility between strata, however, are not a necessary consequence of the stratification system itself.

From the perspective advocated here, additional conditions were needed. Aside from economic distress, the most important were a rapid change in the relation between social strata and a definition of one's interests as determined by a position in the status system. These conditions are now absent. Whatever danger the system of stratification in Germany may still imply for a stable democracy, it is more in the nature of providing causes for apathy toward public affairs, not of causing general conflict between groups.

The compatibility of the German system of social stratification with different forms of political organization and with different political goals is still rather high, but the potential for aggressive responses toward out-groups is much reduced. In such a constellation, elite groups can still determine policy and political structure to an extent that is unusual for industrialized societies, but since the beginning of the 1960's even this appears to be changing.



## The Elite in West Germany

### The Changing German Elite

The earlier German elite—at least those who publicly passed for an elite, such as the proverbial Prussian Junkers—were major source of concern for foreign observers. It has often been asserted that the elite in the Weimar Republic helped to end this German experiment with democracy, and there is widespread consensus that the elite by and large cooperated (though in part uneasily) with the Nazi movement, contributing to the effectiveness of its control. In passing, it should be re-emphasized that members of the elite led a belated resistance movement and that the Nazi Party itself was dedicated to the extermination of part of this elite. But, while the ties between Nazism and the German elite were less strong than is often maintained, there is no doubt that in the past the elite in Germany tended to oppose attempts to institutionalize democracy. The very groups that in most Western industrialized societies are among the strongest supporters of democratic government contributed in Germany to the failure of democracy (72).

Who are the elite in the Federal Republic? Has the present select class changed in composition and patterns of recruitment? The elite should be different, and recruitment patterns should have changed, if the policies of the Military Government and some of the policies of the Nazi Party itself were at all effective.

Formerly, the most conspicuous part of the German elite was the aristocracy, especially the Prussian nobility. Up to the end of the Weimar Republic, the aristocracy played an important role in German politics and the higher civil service and a dominant one in the military. To a diminishing degree after 1933 the aristocracy continued as an important part of the elite. However, the Nazis themselves were not enamoured with the traditional aristocracy (especially the Prussians); they attempted to broaden the base for recruitment of military leadership (73).

Today the aristocracy plays an insignificant role in Germany, despite a few remnants of former importance (e.g., in Bavaria and the foreign service). It was the very identification of the German elite with military service that was a major cause for its decline. Probably no other population group suffered as heavy losses in the war as the aristocracy; many more, especially from some of the most illustrious families, lost their lives in the unsuccessful *coup d'état* of July 20, 1944 (74). Those aristocrats left in the part of Germany east of the Elbe were further decimated by the Russian Occupation, and the remainder lost their economic base through the agrarian reforms of the DDR. This largely obliterated the traditional aristocracy, since in the territories that are now the Federal Republic nobility

has never been of major significance. The lack of success of any political movement to bring back monarchy testifies to this change.

The military, characteristically so important in Germany, has shared the fate of the aristocracy. Its members were largely drawn from the aristocracy, but even beyond that it fell into oblivion during the discontinuation of Germany's military tradition. The Federal Republic is today the major country where the military are least influential (75). Here, too, the Nazis had already begun to break the establishment.

While the fate of the aristocracy and of the military was mainly decided in World War II and its immediate aftermath, the third major change in elite composition, the increased importance of big business, occurred within the Federal Republic and is a feature genuine to this polity (76). Owners and managers of important industries are now more immediately involved in public life than were their counterparts in earlier periods. Of course, many industrialists still prefer to »own« a deputy or a share in a party instead of participating directly; but the trend is unmistakably for businessmen to become more involved in public life.

Within business, the single most active and most influential group during the 1950's was finance (and not heavy industry, as in the Weimar Republic). In the writings of German social scientists, this approximation to the conditions in most Western industrialized societies has probably been overemphasized, and it is definitely an exaggeration to call this greater involvement of business—as Dahrendorf does—one of the major guaranties of the stability of German democracy (77). Nevertheless, this is a major change, and today businessmen constitute the largest part of the German elite.

There probably has been a fourth change: an increased importance of higher civil servants. Such officials are considered to be the second or third most numerous group within the elite. Although as individuals they usually do not wield significant power, they can often claim superior expertise, and they are important as a group. Their homogeneity of background and outlook exerts a strong influence on the character of political debate. Probably some of the strong legal flavor of present political concepts and argumentation even in foreign policy comes from this group (78).

Even allowing for these changes, that the composition of the elite should still be in many ways similar to that of the Weimar Republic—except for the virtual disappearance of the aristocracy--seems just as remarkable as the differences which have appeared since then. In accordance with the particularistic structure of German society, the most diverse groups are now all represented among the elite: the churches, trade unions, journalists, professors, the academic professions, the arts (largely through artists with civil servant status), farmers (via owners of estates), and of course political organizations. One may be a member of the elite through

national importance but equally as a regional dignitary; residence in West Germany's capital is certainly no prerequisite. It is only in comparison with the stratification system in general that the shift in the elite appears pronounced.

To overstate a change for the sake of clarity: World War I strongly affected the stratification system, while World War II did not. The reverse is true with regard to the elite. Still, it would be wrong to consider this change as a real break in continuity. The weight of groups may have changed, and some groups may no longer be represented, but the organizing principle of the system has remained. Any current changes are probably stronger than those that occurred during the 1950's, simply because the latter were so moderate.

### The German Discussion of »Elite«

Some analysts of contemporary German society, notably Dahrendorf, doubt whether there is now anything left deserving the term »elite.« The elite as a social phenomenon is believed to be a casualty of the changes in German society. The absence of such an elite is both proclaimed and mourned by many Germans—both inside and outside politics—who by any objective criterion should be called members of the elite themselves. Of course, differences in power, status, prestige, prominence, and/or notoriety are recognized; but it is usual to deny that various groups with superior positions should be called »elite« (79). This discussion itself, whether there is at present such a thing as a German elite, is quite instructive: it reflects the preindustrial values and ideologies that still prevail among the most highly educated Germans. As to the real facts, a controversy over who is at the top and what qualities the top people have is itself a good indicator of rapid social change.

Reflections on the nature of an elite characteristically confuse analytical and value orientations. Some observers of Germany differ as to who has power. It is indeed no easy task to reach any consensus on such a question in a society that has undergone and is continuing to undergo rapid political and economic change. Others among the intelligentsia think they know who holds power and carry on a lively debate about the quality of those in positions of leadership. This debate is chiefly Utopian, reminiscent of Plato's prescriptions for an ideal society. As usual in human history, their answer to the question of whether the best men rule is an accusing »No.«

Short of an omniscient and absolute definition of »the best« the only reasonable way to phrase a question about the quality of those in top positions is: given the functions of a particular position at a specific point in time, do the incumbents have the necessary qualifications? The functions of a position are the standards against which the qualities of an incumbent

are to be judged. Given a high degree of functional differentiation, we should expect different qualities to be relevant for different positions. And given changing tasks, different qualifications are relevant at different times.

Germans and Frenchmen tend to be impressed by politicians who have a command of classical scholarship, and Americans by and large rather distrust such men in political office. However, at times the U.S. has been led by men of considerable scholarship and philosophical inclinations. One need only think of the founding period and such men as Jefferson, Franklin, Adams, Madison, and Hamilton. Yet during other periods the politicians in the U.S. have been distinguished chiefly—if they were distinguished at all—by their ability to act as brokers for conflicting interests and by their understanding of current power positions. When no major problems of social structure or of the political system were at stake, the U.S. has done quite well with the latter kind of politician. A businessman's command of social philosophy is usually no prerequisite for a leadership position in formulating economic policy; but his ability to diagnose economic tendencies and to react pragmatically to economic conflict are usually relevant. In addition to these special qualifications, there is probably such a quality as leadership ability unrelated to a specific content—but this is certainly not concomitant with a professor's notions of intellectual and cultural eminence.

The degree to which those functions are adequately performed that are called for at a particular time and in a particular position depends in part on the qualities of the incumbents. However, it is quite unrealistic to base one's judgment about the effectiveness of the elite of a country on some »average« qualification. For an elite, too, the whole is not equivalent to the sum of its parts. Decisions in one sphere of society affect other spheres, and the top positions of a society accordingly can be viewed as a system. The way in which the top positions are related to each other and specifically the way in which decisions in one sphere are made with reference to another sphere can be called the elite system. The quality of an elite is just as much a consequence of this system as it is a consequence of some average qualification.

The term »elite« is used here as it is usually employed in American writing, i.e., simply as denoting all those who are in a position of leadership regardless of their eminence with respect to other criteria. The term »leadership« is meant to simply refer to the process of being deferred to, imitated, and obeyed (80).

Whether leadership is the legitimate consequence of a position (i.e., »authority«) or merely *de facto* is a second and secondary problem (81). A top position makes it likely that the incumbent will be influential, but this is properly an empirical question, not one to be decided *a priori*. Conversely,

an influence may be exerted by those not in a top position (e.g., the *eminentes grises*). Whether *de jacto* importance and importance of office usually coincide is one of the properties of an elite system as a system. The British establishment is a prime example of a leadership structure where position and actual influence frequently do not coincide, while the reverse tends to be true for the French elite. The elite system in Germany appears to be a bit closer to the system in France than to that in England (82). All this is known as part of everyone's life experience; and yet in their professional treatises sociologists and political scientists tend to ignore their own knowledge as private persons (83).

Can those without power but high prestige be counted among the elite-»newsworthy« philanthropists and film stars? What about a recipient of the Nobel Prize such as Rudolf Mössbauer, a powerful figure in finance such as Rudolf Miinemann, a regionally powerful politician with national impact such as Franz Meyers (Prime Minister of North Rhine-Westphalia)? How these various forms of eminence are to be sorted into types is one of the main topics in German writings about elites (84). This is not merely a traditional German preference for systematizing instead of empirical analysis but also reflects reality: namely, a low degree of overlap between various forms of eminence. The lack of overlap and not the absence of leadership groups as such is the cause for the many doubts as to whether Germany has an elite.

Whatever there may be left in Germany of »society« as an example of elegant and cultivated living is not identical with the groups that hold positions of power in politics and in the economy. Intellectual leadership is concentrated in still a different set of persons. The traditional notions of »elite« in Germany and France demand that the various forms of eminence all be concentrated in the same group, and the British establishment is seen as an example of what Germany now lacks. Given also a considerable regional dispersion because of the lack of a cosmopolitan capital, it becomes understandable why the existence of an elite is so widely rejected. In surveys of Germans in leadership position one frequently encounters a great reluctance to use the term »elite« and a preference for the term leadership groups« " (*Führungsgruppen*).

Whether Germany has a vestigial upper class and some *Führungsgruppen* in place of an elite is not merely a question of semantics and definition that we may safely ignore. Within Germany it would be justified to argue for a moratorium in using the term »elite« in view of the many undesirable value connotations of this term—the more so when authors apply the word only to the type of elite system that is to their liking. In an international context, however, one cannot simply present the statement »Germany has no elite,« and hope that it will be understood as a consequence of a subjective definition. If, as I have argued, the elite in Germany is

segmentalized and regionally dispersed, for such an arrangement it does matter which definition and terms one chooses.

The notion of elite will be of interest here simply insofar as it denotes persons in a position of leadership with regard to processes on the level of the polity and the social system. These various leadership positions and groups are interrelated in such a way that they form a system. Both the system and the aggregate of persons in leadership positions may be called »elite.« In this sense we shall compare the composition of the elite and the character of this system with that of other industrialized Western democracies. Given definition, the diagnosis will differ somewhat from that of other investigations of Germany's elite.

### Composition of the Present German Elite

The few recent empirical studies of the elite in Germany all proceed from an analysis of demographic characteristics of those who hold positions that officially are of major importance. The most recent and most comprehensive of these studies finds that the German elite shows the following characteristics:

- 1) a long formal education, usually a university degree in an applied subject;
- 2) long careers until elite positions are reached; characteristic for those now in elite positions are 20 to 30 years experience in one particular occupation;
- 3) a consequently rather high age, with most members of the elite being between 45 to 60 years old;
- 4) almost total exclusion of women (85).

Such results are partly treated by the methods used to identify elite status. Unfortunately, while the method for studying representative cross-sections of whole populations is well developed, the techniques to identify elite groups are not. Political scientists in Germany and France have usually studied the elite by somehow defining certain normal positions as having elite character and then describing the characteristics of those who occupy the positions. This approach ignores the question of how one can prove the relevance of the positions that were selected and whether the importance of the office matches the actual influence of the incumbent-provided that members of the elite even hold formal office. For some elite groups the results may not be effected by the method of selections, but this only reflects a particular organization of the elite. Provided an elite in the sense of leadership operates from formal positions that are equivalent in importance to the actual influence of incumbents, provided further that there is considerable overlap between various elite sectors, and also provided that there exists a strong concentration of such elites in a capital,

then the particular method of selection probably does not matter. The German elite is at present very different from this type of organization, and methods of selection do matter. Of course, this does not become apparent as long as everyone uses the same formalistic approach.

The description given in this chapter of the composition of the current German elite and its system of interaction is mainly based on four recent investigations, three of which are as yet unpublished. The one published study, by sociologists at the University of Tübingen, relied on the traditional approach and carried it out with great precision. In a first step about 300 top positions were selected from the realms of politics, public administration, the judiciary, economic interest groups, large corporations, churches, and mass media. Between 1919 and 1961 these nearly 300 positions were occupied by more than 2000 persons, and the main emphasis of the study was on tracing the rate and direction of change in the incumbency of a position (86). In principle the same approach was also used in a study of leaders in business that was commissioned by *Der Spiegel* and carried out in 1963-64 by the market research organization IFAK (87). Altogether, 500 members of the top management in German industry were selected, 400 of whom served in production and 100 in distribution and services.

A very different approach was chosen by the Institute for Comparative Social Research of the University of Cologne in a survey of the German elite in 1965. In principle, this approach was a combination of two of the three most frequently used methods in studies of community power structure (88). The Institute's researchers began with quotas giving combined specifications of positions both by region of the country and by branch of the elite (analogous to the subdivisions used by Zapf). For example, a given number of interviews was assigned to the Munich region, and this number was further subdivided into such categories as public administration and business. The quotas were in part derived from past surveys of elite groups in Germany and in part based on judgment. For each of 300 cases both the title of an organization and the name of a specific person were listed. In a second step about 24 »knowledgeables« were interviewed; they were defined as persons occupying positions at intersections of various elite sectors. Each of these »knowledgeables« within one of the six regions amended the local list of positions and names, adding new positions or substituting the name of a particular person suggested for a position (e.g., recommending for an interview the assistant undersecretary of a ministry rather than the undersecretary). This procedure was self-weighting in the sense that initial quotas were substantially changed, (e.g., fewer top political leaders were identified in a city such as Berlin than was originally anticipated.) Altogether about 400 top »influentials« were thus identified, of which 366 were actually interviewed.

A fourth comparative study of the elite, this time dealing with Germany and France, was organized by Karl Deutsch and conducted in Germany by Louis Edinger in 1964, using a procedure that was in between the usual positional approach and the method developed at Cologne. In a first step, 12 German »knowledgeables« were asked to suggest names for elite interviews. At the same time, traditional sources for selecting names of consequence were consulted, and a number of incumbents of such positions were identified. This led to a roster of 650 elite members, out of which 173 persons were selected for actual interviews.

The procedures used in the 1965 study led to somewhat different findings about the composition and the structure of the German elite than the other studies. The type of differences was predictable already from experiences during data collection. A substantial majority of the Cologne Institute's respondents were associated with positions that would also have been identified in a straight positional approach. However, quite often a different person than the one in position of formal leadership was identified as the more influential one. Thus one of the »court philosophers« of German industry held an intermediary position in the industry's public-relations institute; a senior vice president of a company was recommended as more important than the official president; a specific employee of the national headquarters of one of the major parties was considered to be at least as influential as the vice-chairman of this party; a specific official of the Defense Ministry (*Bundesministerium für Verteidigung*) was believed to be the single most powerful man in procurement even though his title was less than awe-inspiring. Especially those of major intellectual influence would often not be identifiable at all via a straight positional approach. And it is perhaps of equal importance that the positional approach loads any sample with a large number of irrelevant persons.

In Germany lists of persons and lists of positions of top influence in national affairs diverge according to the particular method employed, and this can be interpreted as an indicator that elite composition in Germany is changing. Apparently, many younger persons have already achieved positions of considerable actual influence, while representatives of the pre-war generation continue to serve formally in high office. Also the Cologne sociologists' assumption of a regional and sectoral segmentation of the elite was strongly confirmed. Quite knowledgeable members of the elite usually knew only a very small number of persons from other elite sectors even within their region. The German elite includes very few women. There are a few women in positions of importance in the mass media, in art, and in nonprofit associations but almost none in politics or business. Roughly the same holds true for England, France, and the U.S.

Before going on to pick out and compare findings from the four surveys on which this section is based, it may be convenient to name the surveys



again. The work done by University of Tübingen researchers is dated 1961; the study sponsored by *Der Spiegel*, 1963; the investigation organized by Karl Deutsch, 1964; and the University of Cologne sociologists' contribution to Daniel Lerner's three-country project, 1965. In the discussion that follows, these dates appear in parentheses to show the source of various data.

There are contradictory findings about the age composition of the elite. In a positional approach, the elite may appear somewhat over-aged (1961). Members of the intellectual elite and especially leaders in public administration are indeed very often older than 55, but in politics and in business various age groups are all strongly represented. At present, a major change is underway for positions of economic leadership, and according to the newer standards a man that by 40 years of age is not a candidate for a position of major importance, and who has not reached such a position by around 45, will probably never make it to the top (89). In politics, too, a major change is taking place, and by about 1970 most of the persons known from postwar German politics will have been replaced largely by men in their 40's and 50's. However, because of the continuing high age of leaders in public administration, the average age for the elite will not drop accordingly. Zapf (1961, p. 170) finds 58 years to be the average age for the German elite, and in later surveys the average is perhaps 56 years (1965). By about 1970 this average will have dropped to about 52 years and will be considerably lower in some sectors. Perhaps more indicative than the average age is the age spread, and here we may expect that the lower age limit generally acceptable for elite status will drop to about 40 years.

Most elite members are married, although divorce rates are nearly three times as high for them as in the population at large (1965). Given the low German divorce rates, this still means that the elite person in Germany will in most cases have one marriage. The number of children is a bit higher than average in the population but smaller than appears to be true for the U.S.; large families (5 children and more) are very rare.

Catholic groups have always complained that ever since the founding of the Second German Empire the nation has been dominated by protestants. The Federal Republic is the more Catholic part of the former Reich, now including both major denominations in nearly equal proportions. There is widespread consensus that the Catholic Church is a vastly more influential body than the Protestant churches combined. However, all recent investigations of the German elite (1961, 1964, 1965) agree that in leadership positions Protestants are considerably more numerous than Catholics. Among leaders Protestant usually means Lutheran. The proportion of Protestants to Catholics differs considerably by sector of the elite, with Catholics being numerous in politics and extremely under-represented in business (1961, 1965).

The number of those who do not belong to one of the churches is more than twice as high among the elite as in the general population. Given the rather automatic membership in one of the churches that is a consequence of German law, not being a member is tantamount to a public declaration of anticlerical sentiments. The German elite is not anti-religious in other ways, however. Church attendance is a bit lower than usual for comparable groups, but again not much so (1965).

In marital status and in religious behavior the German elite does not differ radically from the population in general, but in education it does. Only about 2 per cent of adult Germans have a university education, but approximately 2 out of 3 members of the elite have. A positional approach (1961) leads to a higher percentage for those that have merely attended grade school—the level of education typical for the population in general. This is largely because a larger number of Social Democrats and of trade-union leaders are included through positional sampling and unions and the SPD are the two organizations whose leaders tend to have a much lower level of formal education. A university education is of course no guarantee for an elite position; there is no »elite« educational career in Germany comparable to the system in England or France (90). However, a university education is becoming a requirement for entrance into the pool of eligibles. This is increasingly true even for business and the military. Already today more than one-third of the elite hold a Ph.D. or an equivalent doctorate (1965) (91).

A university education for the German elite used to be largely equivalent to the study of law. While law still remains the single most important field of study—especially among the political and the administrative elite (as is also true for the U.S. and France)—the sciences, liberal arts, and economics and business administration are of increasing importance. There is no standard combination of subjects any more akin to the famous PEP in Britain or the applied sciences as in France. By around 1970, the increasing number of those trained in economics may already have an effect on the style of decisionmaking in Germany, which so far has been dominated by legal training. By this date, the German elite will be even more diversified in background than it already is.

The local and regional background of German leaders is even more diverse than their educational careers. This is largely a consequence of having an ad hoc capital and a number of strong regional centers. Just as in many other Western countries, about two-thirds of the German leaders have been born and raised in cities (1965); a positional approach, however, places this share closer to 50 per cent. In contrast to the situation in England and France, no single urban region contributes a large share of all leaders—and this is true for the past as well.

The elite in the Federal Republic is more West German than ever before. This is not just a consequence of a shift of the center of government to the western parts of Germany. Already during the Weimar Republic, and continuing during the Nazi period, the percentage of leaders born in western parts of the country was increasing, with a disproportionately strong decrease of the traditional leadership from the eastern parts of Germany (92). Thus German leadership has become more »Western European« over a long period. The relative numerical importance of foreign-born Germans—so characteristic for the elite of the Nazi period—is now gone, too.

Civil servants and the judiciary are the most homogeneous groups within the German elite in age, education, and regional and local background. Elites in these fields are usually somewhat older, they come much more often from rural areas, and a much greater number of them stem from the eastern parts of Germany, as compared to other elite groups. Elites in all fields of civil service usually have a training in law. These differences in background from that in other elite sectors, together with the relative homogeneity in age, education, and place of origin may contribute to the sense of »apartheid« that seems so prevalent among them.

The social basis from which the German elite is recruited is probably broader than that of France and definitely far broader than is true for the British elite (93). Of course, recruitment is still quite selective: all recent elite studies agree that considerably more than 50 per cent of the elite come from the approximately 5 per cent of families which constitute upper- and upper-middle-class Germans (1964, 1965). Using a less restrictive definition for upper and upper-middle class to include about 10 per cent of the population, we find about two-thirds of all elite members coming from these strata (94). Politics, civil service (excluding the judiciary), and non-business pressure groups are those sectors of the elite that are most accessible to persons from lower social strata. Nobility is by now fairly irrelevant except in the more ceremonial positions.

Education, as previously suggested, affords one major avenue for entering the elite: there is a dramatic difference between educational status of elite members and that of their fathers. Another avenue is marriage: among the elite, the social status of fathers-in-law is somewhat higher than the status of the average member's own father, although not dramatically so (1965). Surprisingly, elite members prefer to marry wives with merely a high-school education (*mhtlere Reife*). The Cologne researchers found that the percentage of wives with a university education is lower than warranted by the ratio of male to female students. Intellectual wives or highly educated wives are not part of German elite culture.

Provided a man is fortunate in the choice of a father, is born in an urban area that offers easy access to secondary education, and is able to

attend the university, there is one further strategic point in his career: the choice of an occupation. Advancement is largely within one occupation, with little opportunity for a crossover prior to reaching a position of some consequence (1965). A number of occupations offer an opportunity to join the elite, but two quite distinct approaches are used to win access. The aspirant may climb to the top of an important firm or office, or he may first achieve prominence in a smaller sphere and then work through a nationwide organization where influence increases further without concomitant increase in occupational position. Advancement via public office in the specific meaning of this term is, however, quite rare (1965). Rather, there is a branching-out into public life after a position of some importance has already been achieved (95). Membership in associations is common, but most memberships are confined to pressure groups operating on a national level, and membership in more than two voluntary associations is not frequent (1965). All this points to a very different function of voluntary associations for the German elite than is true for their U.S. counterparts.

Most careers of current German decisionmakers were interrupted by military service, and only in business and among cultural leaders were less than two-thirds of the present elite affected by this. Contrary to some of the suspicions abroad, I believe that this experience has contributed to the considerable fear of war and the distrust of an active military policy that is prevalent among the German elite (96). Most of the German elite did not attain officer status, and approximately one-third remained in the lowest ranks. Given a length of military service in most cases of more than 3 years (frequently up to 7-9 years), and given also the policy of more or less drafting anyone for officer status who had completed secondary education, this is a rather remarkable finding, although perhaps in part it reflects the high casualty rate of officers. In spite of the preference of some large industrial combines for former staff officers in selecting top management, I think these figures reflect a rather remarkable lack of enthusiasm for the military.

A side-effect of the prevalence and length of military service is that persons of quite different age have been members of the elite for the same number of years. The average number of years in an elite position is approximately 10 years (1964), and in many sectors of the elite 15 years appear to be the limit at which a definite decline of actual influence begins. Given the fact that members of the present German elite did not fill positions as they continually became vacant, but reached elite status more or less simultaneously, we can expect a major retirement within the next years. This is already under way for the economic elite, where within this decade the overwhelming majority of positions will be occupied by new personnel.

A sizable income is usually a concomitant of elite status in Germany, but ownership is usually not. Postwar tax legislation did favor the accumulation of capital, and several hundred persons in Germany managed to amass considerable fortunes within a period of about 15 years. The extremely large fortunes, however, are still the result of inheritance, and by and large there is less of a concentration of income and wealth than is true for present-day Britain (97). There are approximately 20,000 persons who own property valued in excess of \$ 250,000 in Britain as against 13,000 such persons in Germany, although Germany's GNP has been higher for several years.

By income and standard of living, however, the elite is differentiated more sharply from the population in general than is true with regard to their property-holding. Much less than in Communist countries and more than in the U.S., a considerable part of the material rewards for elite status is derived from benefits other than cash income. The »magic« lowest threshold for elite income in business, academia, the mass media, and pressure group representatives is by now around 50,000 Deutsche marks (DM) a year. Transferred into dollars at the official rate, this may not strike American observers as an elite income, but in goods and services this is probably equivalent to \$ 20,000. With approximately DM 100,000 a year, at least in business, benefits begin to amount to an increasing share of the remuneration. In addition to the usual expense accounts, stock options, and individual pensions, there are chauffeur-driven limousines and company mansions rented at nominal cost. However, a large part of the decisionmaking elite appears to feel underprivileged in comparison to the rest of the population and especially in comparison with their foreign confreres. Indeed, of the 2,539 members of the boards of directors of German corporations (*Aktiengesellschaften*) in 1963, only 249 received an income in excess of DM 200,000 per annum (officially: \$ 50,000) (98). It is both a consequence of the lack of homogeneity of the German elite and a contributing factor to this state that incomes differ sharply by sector, and so does the effective standard of living. Also beyond DM 100,000, incomes are set rather arbitrarily, and differ sharply for the same type of activity.

Elite status in Germany means having a good standard of living, but it does not necessarily mean being rich, and it certainly does not mean owning property. It does mean control over property or the income of others either directly or indirectly by means of legislation. However, this influence cannot easily be transferred into large monetary rewards without considerable risk.

## Recruitment and Socialization

Decisive for the character of an elite anywhere are patterns of recruitment and socialization into the ways of a distinct subculture—provided such a subculture exists. The earlier the selection for future elite status and the more effective the socialization into a group set part from the »rest,« the stronger is the sense of cohesion in an elite, the better the communication, and the greater the informal social control. It is difficult to imagine two decisionmaking elites who are further apart from each other in these respects than the British and the present German elite. In a comparison with the rather extreme character of the British system, the equally extreme nature of the present system in Germany becomes most obvious.

In all Western industrialized countries, the main factors furthering a person's chances to join the elite are: 1) a high social status of the parents; 2) university education; 3) a prestigious marriage; 4) choice of an occupation with high vertical mobility; 5) residence in the capital region or one of the metropolitan areas; 6) proper kind and degree of religious sentiments. In Germany, a favorable combination of these factors merely means a better chance of joining the pool of eligibles. Although the majority of elite members are recruited from the upper and the upper-middle classes (i.e., about 5 to 10 per cent of the population), this is still a very large and diverse base for recruitment. For many decades it has been quite rare in Germany for a child to grow up in the expectation that his background would guarantee entrance into the elite.

In Germany a man in his early 20's will still not know whether he has a good chance to reach an elite position, even though he may have a favorable combination of background factors and be attending an university. Assuming that this young man has completed his university education in one of the more popular fields, that he has married a wife coming from somewhat higher status but having only a modest education, and that he has been offered a promising position in the civil service, the judiciary, academia, business, or the mass media, he will still not consider himself as a definite candidate for an elite position. Such a designation will come by and large around the age of 30-35 years, usually as a result of 7) technical mastery and 8) a modest skill in interpersonal relations in general and a superior skill in cultivating superiors, plus 9) a largely conventional personality with some unconventional aspects. As a management consultant in Germany said recently: »We are looking for the superior average« (*überdurchschnittlicher Durchschnitt*). At the age of around 35, most future members of the elite see themselves as candidates for decisionmaking positions and in competition for this status with a relatively few but not always personally known other candidates. And from here on, luck plays an even greater role than it has already.

While the age of 35 or so appears to be a kind of threshold in most elite sectors, the speed of careers from here on differs by fields. In business, politics, and in the mass media, most candidates take approximately 7-10 years to reach a position of consequence, and they are in this position ready to replace the No. 1 person in their firm or office whenever his time comes to relinquish effective control. In academia, the judiciary, and in the civil service the way to the top takes longer. Careers in pressure groups seem to follow less of a pattern.

Thus, allowing some downward correction for age, the German pattern of elite career movement is similar to the American. But compared to either England or France there certainly is a considerable difference. In England, most future members of the elite will have joined the pool of eligibles for elite status by the age of 10. The type of secondary school chosen for a child is already of major consequence for his future chances. A few public schools such as Eton, Harrow, Westminster, Winchester, and Rugby supply a very large percentage of all elite members (99). From these public schools the boys pass on not just to Oxford and Cambridge but to a new important colleges within these universities: Christchurch, King's College, Balliol, All Souls, St. Magdalen. Of course, Lord Samuel exaggerated a bit when he stated: »Life is one Balliol man after another«; after all, 14 out of 44 British Prime Ministers came from Christchurch. And from there on the »old boys« pass on to a few clubs such as the Reform Club, Travellers, Atheneum, Savile, or Carlton. By the time a candidate for the elite in Britain starts in his professional life, he has known many of the future elite members and most of his immediate competitors quite well for about 15 to 20 years.

In France the chance for an elite position is determined later in a young man's life. There is no direct equivalent of the famous public schools of Britain, but there is indeed an approximation to Oxford and Cambridge: the »grandes écoles.« Most of the later decision-makers have gone to one of these schools: Polytechnique, École des Mines, École des Hautes Études Commerciales, St. Cyr, École Libre des Sciences Politiques, École Nationale d'Administration. Thus the common experience in the background of French decision-makers is graduate study in a subject of applied learning. The important advancements then take place in Paris, and, given the physical proximity and very often the background of common schooling, most competitors know each other. After the initial choice of occupation, rates of advancement differ considerably. Unlike Germany, where business now offers quite rapid careers and the civil service especially slow ones, France quickly promotes gifted young men in the civil service, while business is rather tardy in comparison. Politics, too, is somewhat slower than in Germany, and here the background of decisionmakers is unusually heterogeneous except for the prevailing common training in law. This is largely a

result of one peculiarity: that in contrast to nearly all other elite careers in France, political careers are first made in the provinces. Undoubtedly, this diversity in the background of political decisionmakers, and in contrast to this the homogeneity among civil servants contributes to the power of higher civil servants in France.

In England, decision-makers often will have known each other as boys, and quite often their families were already acquainted before the boys met at school. In France most decision-makers will have first heard about each other by the age of 22-25. In Germany decisionmakers will often become acquainted for the first time upon reaching elite status. Immediately after the war, such giant corporations as Krupp, Mannesmann, AEG, and Bayer promoted to top management persons who were unknown to nearly anyone in their field. The same is true for several of the now important »young men« in German politics.

In his book on *The European Executive*, David Granick headed a chapter on Germany »The Land of the Family Firm.« While it is true that some of the largest corporations are owned and controlled by families, and while a relatively small number of families controls a very large part of German industry, top management is no longer selected with family as a major consideration. (By way of contrast, of the 200 most important French corporations, only 28 are stock-issuing companies.) Most elite groups everywhere at all times recruit via co-optation. The field from which new members of the elite are co-opted is sometimes quite narrow, as in Britain. In Germany, an established member of the elite will have a rather wide field from which to choose his successor. Quite often, a large share of luck seems to enter, and personal predilections (and sometimes even arbitrariness) play a rather large role. Personal preferences are said to have determined the choice of the top men at Krupp and Mercedes: decisions that proved satisfactory in one case and unsatisfactory in the other. One of Germany's top executives in advertising—and by common consent an extremely able man—is a quite bizarre example of this influence of personal factors: the owner-manager of one of the largest agencies was vacationing at a spa and chose for his drinking companion a head waiter; this companion became so close to his heart that he appointed him to a second-line management position in his own agency—and this was the start of a meteoric career.

While co-optation is the prevailing mode in most Western countries in promoting candidates to elite status, countries differ by type of co-optation. In most sectors of the German elite, a member is able to pick his successor and to exercise some black-balling power over the admission of a disagreeable candidate who nevertheless seems acceptable to his peers. However black-balling is rare, and the system is not very well suited to handle disagreements between equals. By and large, a member expects that his



choice will not be challenged, and he will take some care in selecting a successor to avoid such a challenge; correspondingly the peers of a decision-maker will tend to suppress minor misgivings in order to preserve unanimity. This means that in promotion the more controversial characters are often bypassed. This is a usual outcome of committee decisions, but the prevailing mode in Germany produces a similar result in the absence of committees and without the extensive and often frank discussion that is characteristic in the U.S. At the same time this system tends to create a relationship of dependency upon a »creator.« This dependency or »feudal« relationship is weakening now, but it is still of major importance in the civil service and in academia.

Considerable heterogeneity in background, late appointment to elite candidacy, a rather large pool of eligibles who are often not acquainted with each other, a hardtopredict chance of succeeding, personal dependence as the road to becoming heir apparent—these are some of the characteristics of the German pattern of recruitment. An additional strain is caused by a phenomenon quite common in upward mobility: the criteria for advancement change during the progression to ever higher positions. Technical competence is probably most important for the earlier stages of a career but becomes increasingly supplemented and then replaced by interpersonal skills and judgment. The real importance of some kind of competence of an applied sort, the relatively late selection, and the uncertainties in view of a large number of unknown competitors all contribute to the »official« definition that decisionmaking status is attained by achievement in the sense of a superior expertise in some subject matter. Indeed, in interviews with the elite, the respondents tend to justify their position—just as their American counterparts do—with reference to achievement (100).

The major exceptions from this pattern are jobs with pressure groups and some careers in the Social Democratic Party and the mass media. Here careers are often made or ruined by posing as the speaker for some faction, by fashioning coalitions between factions, and by rising to importance with the increasing power of such coalitions. These careers frequently resemble quite closely the pattern for the run-of-the-mill American politician who emphasizes »knowing people,« slander, and the trading of rewards. Expertise is neither claimed nor granted, and consequently power becomes more of an end in itself and the only defense for an inherently unstable position. Therefore it is not surprising that representatives of pressure groups, and many representatives of the mass media and the SPD, are merely tolerated by other elite figures but not accepted. Together with the traditional German dislike of pressure groups, this contributes further to the aversion in according them a definite place in political process (101).

Provided acceptance into a pool of eligibles takes place as early as is true for Britain, and provided further that future decisionmakers will in most cases grow up together for some 15 years, socialization into a distinct subculture--!e., a group characterized by a distinct way of life different from the rest of the population—poses no problem. Effective socialization also means that such a subculture can largely rely on an implicit system of controls and rules. The German system of late selection from a heterogeneous pool with an emphasis on expertise cannot be effective in socializing elite members (except in the civil service and the universities). Such a system tends to fragment the elite and to compensate for this may lead to very explicit rules of conduct between »strangers.« Both fragmentation and rules are noticeable in Germany, with the shared and assertive feeling of superior competence as a unifying ideology. Indeed, the system needs such an ideology much more than is true for the British case.

Members of the German elite have traditionally tended to view the British establishment as an example, and there have been repeated attempts specifically to emulate the British system of early selection (102). Until the Nazi period a few of the more illustrious university fraternities served some of the functions of an Oxbridge college. Along with their general reverence for many aspects of British social structure, the Nazis attempted to set up a system of elite boys schools, the *Napola*. The present Federal Republic is probably even further from the British model than any previous German state. Selection is emphasized ever more at the expense of homogeneity and socialization. In this respect, the German elite closely resembles the U.S. system, except that in Germany even such approximations to the »grandes écoles« as Harvard, Yale, and Princeton are lacking (103).

#### The Structure of the Elite: Segmentation

When some observers maintain that present-day Germany has no distinct elite, they are right in one sense. There appears to be no distinct elite subculture--a factor usually determining the visibility of elites. The value system of the elite is now largely identical with that of the traditional upper-middle class. It is this class from which most members of the elite are recruited; and it is this class that the German elite considers as its »relevant public« and that it largely identifies with. In interviews respondents frequently disclaim elite status and prefer to think of themselves as upper-middle class (104).

At the same time, some members of the elite privately show considerable disdain for the general public and are often irritated by the idea that this general public might pass judgment on elite behavior. The »public« of the German elite is both larger and smaller than that of the elite in

other western countries: it is a small public in the sense that popular opinion (*J'opinion des tous*) is not considered relevant; it is large (approximately 400,000) and unusually heterogeneous in the sense that the German elite pays attention to articulate opinion from the middle ranks up.

During their 1965 survey of the elite, University of Cologne sociologists found the very high regional dispersion of decisionmakers that they had anticipated. In addition, they encountered a surprising lack of knowledge about elite persons from the same region but from a different sector. Even within such a self-contained city as West Berlin, an industrial leader would claim to have practically no knowledge about elite members in the worlds of art, academia, or in governmental agencies; nor would a political journalist, for example, prove more knowledgeable about leaders in business or religion.

The widespread feeling of many members of the decisionmaking elite that at present there is no elite in Germany is partly the result of the absence of a homogeneous elite sharing a specific way of life. An additional major component of this self-perception is the lack of a »model« group (*Vorbildlichkeit*). There is no single group with power (such as the British establishment) whose way of life would be generally respected. Quite the contrary: there is a widespread consensus that power, social prestige, and an exemplary way of life do not coincide for any one group (105).

The more reflective members of the German elite do not really mourn the absence of *Vorbildlichkeit* among decisionmakers; after all, taste and discriminating manners have hardly been the hallmark of most other elite groups, as, for example, the British gentry. It is remarkable, nevertheless, how little general respect the German elite commands, aside from respect for power and prestige. The repeated attempts to start something like a »high society« have remained inconsequential and have met with some derision (106).

This observation again reflects the heterogeneity of the elite, who, aside from influencing decisions in various spheres, have—with one important exception to be discussed later—little in common. Conversations among German decisionmakers from different sectors usually demonstrate that these persons really do not have to say much to each other, nor are they at ease with one another in small talk. Apart from the question of who gets what when, given their variety of background and differences between the circles in which they move, do Friedrich Flick, Erwin Piscator, Berthold Beitz, Rolf Sternberger, Alfred Nau, Bishop Dibelius, Ludger Westrick, Pfarrer Hess, and Admiral Ruge have anything to say to each other?

This rather self-contained existence within sectors and regions can be called segmentation (107). For a European country, such segmentation of the elite is rather anomalous. Some observers insist that as a consequence one should conclude that Germany does not have an elite in the sense that

other developed nations have one. However, if 1) a highly differential access to actual power and 2) restriction of legitimacy to employ resources according to one's own judgment are important, then Germany definitely has an elite—only one that is differently organized than usual. The unusual organization is not unique, however, and this is one of the arguments against a second school of thought which sees the current state of decision-making in Germany as a typical transition arrangement.

In the segmentation by sector and by region, the German elite system actually resembles that of the U.S. (108). The extent of differentiation is perhaps somewhat greater in spite of the smaller size of the country, and the consequences also differ. Many of the effects of elite segmentation are neutralized in the U.S. by the publicity focused upon personalities and actions, more than is the case for Germany, and by at least an acquiescence to popular opinion serving as a court of last resort. The actions of various parts of an elite may be controlled by either the elite themselves (presupposing the existence of a subculture exerting a measure of effective social control over its members) or by a large public. In Germany, both control mechanisms are largely missing. If there is a tendency to correct this, then it is in the direction of the U.S. model—namely by becoming more willing to heed popular opinion, however, this has not yet gone very far.

One important objective condition for German segmentation is the absence of a capital. Germany had always had a series of regional capitals rather than one national center. Only at the turn of the century were these regional centers beginning to bow to the ascent of Berlin. After 1945, the traditional pattern once more reestablished itself, and by now such regional capitals as Munich, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Hannover, and Hamburg have regained their former importance. Most of these middling cities have metropolitan areas of 1 to 2 million inhabitants and are thus large enough to support a varied intellectual life and considerable economic activity but not large enough to do so on a scale of international importance. There is no one cultural center, no one center where most of the major economic decisions are made, and there is no one center of politics. Even the mass-communication system is organized around these regional capitals (109). There is no Paris or London or Brussels in Germany, but the secondary cities are of greater importance than the secondary cities of France, England, and Belgium.

German critics of this regional diversity—and they are both numerous and prominent—probably overstate its importance for the structure of the German elite. Even within the same city contacts between members of the decision-making elite of different sectors across the boundaries of their small worlds are not good and are possibly even somewhat less developed than is true for the U.S. Other factors in addition to regional diversification have to be considered. The patterns of recruitment to decisionmaking

groups and the type of socialization are of primary importance in this context.

Given the increasing importance of a university education, the absence of a leading university for the nation has a major significance. Again, at the beginning of the century, it began to look as though a concentration of academic excellence would finally assert itself in Germany, too; Heidelberg, Berlin, Göttingen, and Munich were the most likely candidates for »national universities.« Somewhat dated impressions in other countries notwithstanding, this trend is by now completely reversed, and it was already disappearing during the Nazi period. What has remained are different types of universities and a few colleges that fall short of those.

In Wilhelmine Germany and the Weimar Republic, student fraternities were to some degree a functional equivalent to the common university settings that are shared by the greater part of the English and French elite and to some degree also by the American elite. In some institutional spheres in Germany, membership in a particular student fraternity is still of importance, especially in the foreign service, in the judiciary, the coal and steel industry, and among engineers (110). Membership in a national network of local fraternities—such as the CV, KV, Cdsener SC, and Weinheimer SC—can help a career along.

The lack of concentration of the country's talent in one city, the absence of »national« centers of learning, the want of one major population center—these lead many of the Federal Republic's home critics to bemoan its mediocrity and to define lack of excellence as one of the country's chief problems. What these critics and substantial parts of the elite themselves are really reacting to, however, is the organization of the elite into a series of rather self-contained small worlds.

The boundaries of these little worlds are mainly determined by occupational spheres, i.e., sets of positions that are characterized by similar career principles and by related content. This agrees with the earlier description of recruitment patterns in Germany and with the absence of a socialization into an elite subculture. Since careers are presumably based on achievement within one occupational sphere (based in turn on some kind of expertise), occupation assumes the importance of a life principle. With occupation and occupational success (which the elite shares with the population at large) so important and an elite subculture virtually non-existent, interaction across sectors is both difficult and little desired.

Characteristic of any elite system are the stages of a career and the mode where a cross-over occurs into spheres other than the one where an elite member started out. In the Federal Republic, professional specialization precedes elite status, and consequently it is unusual—except for the war generation—to have a broader background. Only after elite status has been achieved is there a cross-over into activities other than those of one's oc-

cupational specialization. Even then, such a crossover is common only for top elite positions, and it is usually in the form of a co-optation of a »generalist« by the specialist.

This restriction to an occupational sphere is slowly giving way, but it will be a long time before junior members in the German elite will be asked as a prerequisite to involve themselves in civic affairs and voluntary associations to broaden their outlook. Politics is so far the one major exception from this insulation within one's own occupational world. German social structure has been described as the coexistence of a multitude of pyramids, each representing one occupational sphere (111). This metaphor is misleading for the »base« of the pyramid; it does characterize the structure of elite groups.

Excellence in one's occupational career is the official justification for holding an elite position, and expertise is the presumed basis for actual influence--even to some degree in politics. If the excellence or the expertise are not real, they will be imputed *ex post* from the present position of excellence and influence. The system requires such circularity in attribution. Success as success, and not based on expert knowledge, is viewed with suspicion and uneasiness. The ambivalence toward a success story in politics such as the one of Rainer Barzel, the parliamentary leader of the CDU, is an expression of this attitude. Other »successes« in German politics and business, such as Helmuth Schmidt of the SPD and Berthold Beitz of Krupp, are explained now by the expert knowledge that these men possess in one field, even though this knowledge may be of only limited relevance for their present position (112). This norm in the elite is a reflection of the emphasis on *Tüchtigkeit* in the German value system in general, and in turn the population also sees professional competence as an important quality even for its political leaders (113).

The career of Franz-Josef Strauss may serve as an illustration for this quest to provide an »objective« basis for influence. Even before Strauss by his actions provided the basis for his present image as the scarecrow of German politics, he was already controversial among politicians as a mere expert in success; his friends then attempted to legitimize his influence by pointing to his gift for rapid calculation and his excellent grades at school. When in 1964 Strauss staged an attempt at a comeback as cabinet minister he quickly read up on economics and delivered in the Bundestag a highly technical speech on some economic problem in order to now qualify as a real expert. Fatally for his ambitions, experts in economic theory branded his speech as the ill-digested work of a novice.

Unlike the situation in the U.S., there is little romanticizing of success in Germany. A mere vote-getting ability such as Lindsay's in New York would in Germany not make a man »respectable« in high office. There is a similar esteem for the expert in France, but there, expertise is justified by

an excellent record in one of the »grandes écoles.« Related to this French pattern but in partial contrast to it, the expertise in Germany is proven within an accepted occupation plus co-optation as expert by those already qualified as experts. Of course, there are many success stories in Germany, and in a good number of cases success is not the result of technical competence. The realities in the different countries do not differ so much as the modes of justification. However, these modes of justification do influence self-conceptions and in consequence behavior.

In private, relaxed conversations, members of the German elite-- including businessmen--often refer to some specialized knowledge that they acquired in the pursuit of their careers. Even if the topic of such a conversation should be the ability of an underdeveloped country to increase its agricultural production, a German elite member will nevertheless find an opportunity to inject: »I as a specialist in circuit-breakers... « This does not exactly foster intermingling—except on the basis of some more earthy common interests or with reference to so-called basic questions requiring deep thinking but no knowledge.

The British »cult of the amateur« is the very antithesis of the self-conception of German elites. In Germany, the »expert« is venerated everywhere, but the »cult of the expert« is nowhere stronger than in the elite (114). This set of conditions determines interaction between members of the elite. In comparison with France and especially with Britain, face-to-face interaction outside the sphere of immediate competence is quite low. There is more interaction with subordinates than is the case in the U.S. (although the character of interaction is more influenced by hierarchical differences than in the U.S.) but less interaction with peers. This agrees with the tendency of elite members in Germany toward paternalism in relation to their staff (115).

This emphasis on competence as the presumed basis for status has important consequences for interaction—most of which are obvious but some of which may appear a bit surprising at first sight. Obviously, a mutual credit for competence in one field provides a strong bond against »outsiders« who lack this competence and is thus both a basis and a reinforcement of segmentation. As with the value placed on territorial integrity in a feudal fiefdom, elite members claim autonomy of judgment within their sphere of competence. Not all fiefdoms of competence are equally large or equally important, nor are they all equally safe. Professional competence in either science or in one of the traditional fields of learning is a fiefdom relatively safe against raids by other feudal lords. The values of German society are largely those of a society with scarce resources where production is a virtue in itself, and consequently engineering and related »productive« knowledge is a respected territory. Business in the sense of selling is usually regarded with a bit of disdain; it is a large, relatively safe but not

a respected fief (116). And finally there are territorial disputes which—given the value that competence has—tend to generate a great deal of feeling. Most of these disputes occur in the subject-matter fields of the social sciences. Economics, political science, sociology, and psychology demand that professionals trained in other fields, and specifically those trained in law, redefine their areas. While this has been partly accomplished in university settings, there has not been any notable success with respect to top decisionmaking on practical matters.

Of course, actual competence may quite often be lacking, but as long as each individual moves within his »field,« there is a presumption of relative expertness in interactions between members of different elite segments. It would be shockingly bad manners to violate an »expert's« autonomy of judgment. Such challenges can legitimately be brought forward only by one's own colleagues, and quite often they are. Given the importance of a presumption of competence, these challenges are serious indeed; the best strategy is to avoid such confrontations. And the best way to avoid a challenge is not to cooperate with other experts and to sidestep a really serious professional argument. There is definitely little team spirit in the German elite: both across and within elite segments. In general there is little free and easy interaction between equals; and very often one senses an undercurrent of threat.

### Opinion Formation and Manipulation

In decision-making processes in Germany, there is quite frequently a confusion of the role of the *quaestio jaxci* and of values to be set by the decision-maker. Given the lack of a homogeneous outlook on life, resulting from the broad base for recruitment, and given the late socialization mainly into a specific elite segment, the system is not well equipped to handle dissent about values; nor can one presuppose either tacit or open agreement on values. Disagreement about (real or presumed) facts can be settled by recourse to the judgment of experts. Dissent about values, however, is a danger point not only of the system of decision-making at the top but of German social structure in general; the difficulty is merely accentuated at the top. Consequently, and in agreement with the emphasis on expertise, there is a tendency to define problems as technical questions (117). Redefined in this way, a large share of responsibility can be delegated to the expert.

Defining a problem as a technical question and delegating it to the expert may often reduce immediate conflict; it does so at the price of increasing the difficulties in settling the remaining disagreements. The standard by which the statement of an expert is to be judged is scientific truth: his statements are in principle either true or false, and the remain-



ning uncertainty or errors are consequences of technical problems. For the remaining disagreement, a man of some stature will often try to accommodate his partner even if the latter's wishes are not really grounded in »technical considerations.« However, in principle a definition of a problem as a technical question makes true compromise extremely difficult.

A realization that no objective standard is available which would commit both partners in bargaining and that two or more claims are equally valid from different points of view is for most members of the elite in Germany quite uncomfortable. Such a realization is, however, a precondition for a true compromise—namely, an agreement between partners to find the point of least remaining conflict. The very term »compromise« in German has the connotation »shoddy« (*jauler Kompromiss*), and a compromise is usually understood as a postponement of a conflict and not as its termination. In the face of considerable disagreement about values and wishes, the »expert society« buys peace and order by means of a delegation to experts.

This has quite dramatic consequences for the process of opinion formation. In disagreements that are defined as disagreements in wishes and in values, everyone is equally qualified to raise his voice; for questions of fact, the opposite is obviously true. The truth of a statement of fact is not something to be decided by vote. Defining an issue as one where ascertaining the facts will settle the argument automatically disqualifies all those not trained for expert judgment in the matter. Issues that can be decided by expertise are not amenable to democratic process, and defining a large number of issues as problems of fact narrows the scope of democracy.

Even in academic debate it is not always easy to define what is a technical judgment and what constitutes a true value judgment that cannot be settled by evidence (118). The very notion that contradictory wishes and values cannot be decided by recourse to an objective standard, binding all disagreeing parties, is a quite recent one. In societies with some absolute philosophy--be it Catholicism, Communism, or Nazism—the legitimacy and illegitimacy of contradictory values can in principle be deduced from the official philosophy. Under these conditions, values are facts to be found; there are true interests and true values. Just what the truth is in view of conflicting statements can be settled by experts. Values and wishes as statements that are evident and binding only to those pronouncing them, reducing them to expressions of opinion—this is an understanding specific to Western industrial societies with a pluralistic value system. And even in these social systems, many values are excepted from this status of opinions.

In most societies, those in power have declared themselves to be experts of values and the legitimacy of interests. To a larger degree than is true for most other Western industrialized societies, this is still the claim of many

segments of the German elite. Significantly, a part of the elite in Germany claims this authority not as a norm-setting elite; rather, they define themselves as experts in some kind of »natural« law. Thus the Constitutional Court explains—not postulates—what the proper functions of the family are and have been in human history and what the »natural« differences and proper relations between man and wife are. These pronouncements make rather hilarious reading for a family sociologist, but they are meant by the court as explication of a natural law to which it claims a superior access. Should a claim to expertise in values be honored the scope for democratic process would be further drastically reduced. Fortunately, the most traditional segments of the elite—such as lawyers and physicians—are now increasingly challenged when they make such a claim.

An interesting pattern of communication arises with respect to a segmented elite, especially when, as in Germany, decision-makers hesitate to form definite opinions outside their own field of competence by synthesizing known facts (119). An additional and reinforcing factor is the distrust of mass media, with the partial exception of a few prestige papers. Generalizing from their own occupational experience, where there is always more to every issue than is released to outsiders, most elite members believe that there must always be a story behind the story. Instead of relying on the media or on his own judgment, a typical member of the elite (especially of the business elite) will have »his« favorite experts on various topics: on foreign policy, on the true aims of political parties, on military affairs, on European integration, on art, etc.

Perhaps to fit themselves for following »expert« discussion, the majority of the elite read two or three dailies, about one-third follow public-affairs presentations on TV, and about half listen daily to radio news (120). Foreign newspapers are the second most frequently mentioned source of information, immediately after domestic newspapers. It is some sort of comment on the German prestige dailies that the most important German-language newspaper in terms of reliance placed upon it is the Swiss *Neue Züricher Zeitung*. Substantial minorities claim to read daily *Le Figaro*, the *New York Times*, and the *London Times*. A peculiarity of the German elite is the low percentage of magazine readership. In part, the functions of U.S. and British minority magazines are filled by weekly newspapers which largely serve as journals of analysis and opinion.

These rather common media of information are supplemented by two sources that enjoy a high credibility: newsletters and personal contact. Nearly one-third of the decision-makers (1965) claim to rely especially on one or another restricted-circulation newsletter. These publications are avidly read, especially by business leaders, and are quite different in character from most U.S. newsletters. In return for a high price, the confidential-information services sometimes report real news but more often

organize efficiently the volumes of already available news. Quite often, such information services are employed to »leak« stories, and this may contribute to their prestige; however, a comparative reading of several good newspapers will often have a superior information value. Probably the elite's susceptibility to the merchandising appeal of »confidential« newsletters expresses an uncertainty about the reliability of the freely available papers.

Personal contacts are presumed to be a major source for reliable information. The efficiency of the person-to-person system of communication differs considerably by area (1965). While less than a third of the elite know personally the parliamentary representative (*Bundestagsabgeordneter*) from their own constituency, practically everyone claims good personal contact with some member of both the *Bundestag* and the *Landtag*. Equally frequent is access to key civil servants in the ministries and to leaders of special interest associations. Nearly every one of the decision-makers also claims good personal contact with a leading journalist and with at least one renowned professor. Even less cultivated than access to the representative from one's own constituency, however, are relations to representatives of the churches and (least of all) to artists and writers.

These various observations can now be merged into a simplified model. German decision-makers scan a considerable variety of sources for information about current events. Their interest is by no means confined to domestic events, and there is a rather high degree of attention to international affairs. The printed media are of special importance, but they are supplemented both by some form of pseudo-privileged written communication and by personal contacts with other leaders. The elite of all sectors tend to make personal contact with business leaders, upper civil servants, communications executives, and academicians. This personal contact is mainly with important figures in the respective fields, bypassing, e.g., the local politicians and journalists. Most of these contacts have the character of checking some point of interest with an expert in another field and of asking for a brief on new developments.

While this system of personal contacts appears quite efficient, it does have some definite limitations. Most result from the segmentation of the elite, heterogeneity of background, and the cult of the expert. There is only a relatively small amount of easy socialization across elite segments in everyday life—although an important minority deviates from this pattern. Given their relatively low level of education and their lack of »stylishness,« the wives of many decision-makers do little to correct this state of affairs. They do not acquire the chief-of-protocol skills typical of graduates of American women's colleges; nor do the husbands press for frequent socializing at home. The accessibility of elites across segments is really availability to specific requests and contacts during frequent conferences. A good

volume of communication is available to the elite, but not sufficient opportunity for evaluative and exploratory discussions across segments in order to achieve a considered consensus.

The system of communication is also misleading in another respect. Sometimes the number of »experts« for a field of competence is woefully small. European integration and armament policies are two prime examples where the opinions or judgments of perhaps no more than two dozen experts largely determine elite opinion in general. And for such fields there appears to be relatively little cross-checking of expert opinion: the questioner's faith in an »expert« is somewhat akin to the trust placed in a family doctor.

Such a communication system obviously calls for some correction, and at the same time it is quite vulnerable to manipulation. There have been efforts at both.

Attempts at overcoming the unsatisfactory communication across elite segments have mostly taken the form of establishing interdisciplinary organizations« and providing opportunities for noncommittal mixing. A number of special-purpose organizations expressly specify that there should be a balance of members from different sectors. If such organizations have some modicum of power--such as the boards of radio networks (*Rundfunkrate*)” or the national science council (*Wissenschaftsrat*)—their membership is reserved to top influentials. They indeed have ample opportunity to keep on meeting each other in a variety of functions (121). For the less illustrious members of the elite there are now a number of social clubs. Country clubs and the Free Masons report increasing memberships, and Rotary clubs and Kiwanis in Germany attract a somewhat higher-status clientele than their parent organizations in the U.S. A number of institutions have been founded as meeting grounds for representatives from different segments of society. Conferences are organized for invited participants to discuss some current problem or some general topic of intellectual merit, hopefully under a long-range perspective. The Protestant academies (*evangelische Akademien*) have been especially successful, and one of these academies—Loccum—has organized a number of meetings which significantly influenced later policies. The list of such institutions is still growing, and there seems to be no lack of demand. A number of these institutions are quite self-consciously elitist--such as the *Bergerdorfer Gesprächskreis*, where a round-table discussion on the effects of automation may be preceded by a Mozart flute concerto (122).

A bit closer to changing the elite itself are a number of »circles« where elite figures and elite candidates are organized according to some shared orientation or interest but with different occupational specialties. These arrangements take many forms. For example, a private ad hoc commission was organized around a dissident but influential SPD deputy who initiated

some position papers for Willy Brandt (123). A permanent discussion group, *Tönissteiner Kreis* was organized by the »National Association of Manufacturers« (*Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie*). Still one step further to influencing concrete policies are topical study associations such as, in the field of foreign affairs, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für auswärtige Politik*. One major advantage of these many associations is precisely their noncommittal character, affording representatives of feuding groups a chance to establish direct contact. Another important function, especially of the informal »circles,« as the recruitment of new elite members: here older members have a bit of time for observing otherwise unknown candidates.

Most of the organizations mentioned so far do not object to publicity, but some of the non-official groupings that actually influence policy do. The most respectable and most visible of these groupings is probably the »Conference of Undersecretaries of State« (*Staatssekretärskonferenz*). This permanent body was organized by the undersecretaries themselves, since they felt that the cabinet of the federal government did not sufficiently coordinate policies. In effect, this »Conference« is an executive cabinet of the federal government, probably a unique institution. The only puzzling aspect of this association of top civil servants is that it should be necessary at all, given the similarity of background and office, residence in a tiny capital, and the small number of persons involved.

The alliance of second-line executives is paralleled by similar alliances in politics and business. Quite effective is an unofficial association of backbenchers in the Bonn parliament who call themselves »the sewer workers« (*Kanalarbeiter*). After-hour socializing with drinks and card games have sufficiently strengthened a team spirit that on occasion may prevail over the official parliamentary leadership. For a number of years Adenauer had regular teas with a small circle of Bonn correspondents--the *Teekränzchen*--where reportedly information policy, in addition to that of the official *Bundespressekonferenz*, was discussed.

More conspiratorial would be two other groupings, if they exist or did exist. I believe they indeed are real, but their assumed members don't confirm this. Presumably unknown to Chancellor Erhard, a group of unionists and representatives of industry supposedly meet to discuss labor-management policies and especially wage levels. Whether this unofficial but policy-setting body exists or not, it is known under the specific name *Lohnkränzchen* (roughly translated, the *Kaffeeklatsch* on wages). There is fairly general agreement that an unofficial business association, the *Konzentrationsausschuss* did exist, although even very knowledgeable persons are not able to name more than 7 of its former 12 or so putative members. In continuation of some not very enlightened traditions of the Weimar Republic, the *Konzentrationsausschuss* presumably planned for all indu-

strial donors the size and contribution of funds to various political groupings, in order to maximize the impact of giving. This grouping is now definitely defunct, and it probably has no direct successor.

Even intellectuals and artists have various types of policy influencing organizations. Anti-Nazi journalists used to coordinate their attacks on former Nazis now again in official position through the *Club republikanischer Journalisten*. Their information sheets singled out a specific target at a time for a coordinated attack in a great number of dailies. Although the campaigns of the group were effective, it is no longer very active. An equivalent to the American Civil Liberties Union is the *Humanistische Union*, which uses public relations to influence opinion. A most informal band of modern writers, Group 47, has been accused by its enemies of monopolizing literary criticism and manipulating literary success. One response has been a rival Group 65. And so on—down to such ad hoc groupings for a specific political purpose as the *Wahlkontor* of admirers of Willy Brandt.

Potentially more problematic are several attempts to organize within this fragmented elite persons with similar blueprints for a better society or with similar criticisms against the present one. The *Abendländische Akademie*, for example, united in admiration for a Franco-type authoritarian state (124). The *Grünwalder Kreis* united in its anger at the number of former Nazis in positions of influence. While it appears quite possible to organize a group of believers across elite sectors, subsequent attempts at widespread conversions appear pretty hopeless. The present structure of the elite seems to be quite immune against conspiracies with broad aims (e.g., advocating a political philosophy), and quite vulnerable to conspiracies with limited objectives (e.g., building up a politician or a specific policy). This is in my opinion a consequence of the previously described pattern of communication. Another elite member may be effective in his capacity as expert; but the scope of expertise is usually quite limited, and these limits also prescribe the range of effectiveness in proselytizing.

These numerous attempts at organizing the elite may be a symptom of the concern of the elite itself over segmentation, but they are also the cause for new confusion. These many attempts to achieve via organization what is lacking in the structure often induce a feeling of intolerable pressure for giving time to countless worthy causes. What is meant as a help very often turns into another formal obligation.

In spite of all these planned occasions for communication, at least in the short run, the communication system affords very small minorities a chance at opinion management. The campaign that Franz-Josef Strauss conducted among the elite prior to the 1961 election, establishing himself then as Germany's most promising young politician, indicates the speed and the degree to which opinion can be influenced by a small group.

Members of the elite who should and do consider themselves very well informed about political initiatives were nevertheless surprised at the recent position paper of the German Council of Churches (*Evangelische Kirche Deutschlands*) on the question of Germany's Eastern policy. This document took most politicians by surprise, although it was drafted over a period of time by a number of part-time politicians who belong to the top elite. Frequent meetings of a number of key persons may give the illusion of a high transparency of the structure, but in reality it is no substitute for a system affording unplanned encounters at various levels.

One of the most successful and most curious cases of opinion management occurred during the campaign of the 1965 federal elections. It was then the consensus of those high and low in the elite structure that this campaign would culminate in a neck-to-neck race between the CDU and the SPD; by many, the SPD was seen as having a good chance to nudge the leading CDU from its position as the strongest party. So certain was the belief of leading politicians in the reliability of these predictions that definite commitments were made for a government coalition between the CDU and the SPD (the so-called *Grosse Koalition*), if possible with a Chancellor other than Erhard. The President himself went on record as saying that he would help such a coalition to come into being if the CDU and the SPD proved to be not more than 3 per cent apart in popular votes—at that time a seemingly safe assumption. Actually, the CDU received 8.3 per cent more in popular votes than the SPD and missed claiming a majority in parliament by only four seats. This was considered a major upset; but at the same time the two leading parties and the opinion researchers were accused of having misled the population by predictions that they knew or should have known to be false (125). A public statement by the CDU manager Dufhues on election night, admitting that indeed the statements about a neck-to-neck contest had been a »war trick,« did not help matters.

Piecing together what really happened takes detective work (126). It is a fact that all along alternative forecasts were available to journalists and politicians. A number of respectable opinion-research institutes had regularly reported a difference in strength of the two parties that came quite close to the final balloting. Even the one institute that during the election itself still predicted a tossup between the two parties had on August 21 published a poll which showed the CDU with a safe lead. Why did the journalists not pounce upon the differences in prediction between various equally respectable pollsters? Why were the contradictions between results of the same opinion-research institute »overlooked?« Why did hardly anyone care to check the protestations of the FDP that the published poll results were biased or even manipulated?

Apparently the CDU and the SPD alike were interested in creating the image of a neck-to-neck race—although acting on different theories of voting behavior. In both parties, only very few persons—altogether probably not more than 6—knew the more correct results. In those institutes reporting a neck-to-neck race, unusual security precautions were strictly enforced, and here again presumably no more than a half-dozen persons saw the actual results before public release. The success of the whole operation, however, was not the result of these security arrangements: since alternative channels of information were available, mere information control would not have sufficed. Security arrangements had merely the function of preventing the main actors (party headquarters, and the pollsters in league with them) to speak with different voices. The success of this operation neckto-neck« depended largely on the impression given to the public.

Early in the campaign, information was leaked to respected journalists about a neck-to-neck race. In a small and very gossipy capital such as Bonn this sort of news travels fast, and personal and privileged information begins to bounce back upon the newsmakers like voices in an echo chamber. Thus politicians and Bonn correspondents kept reinforcing their own beliefs, and although this news originated from only about 5 sources, it acquired many voices and kept gaining in plausibility. The fact that politicians acted on this diagnosis strongly reinforced it. The very fact that personal communication within elite segments in Bonn is quite effective leads to quick consensus: all that is needed is a judicious choice of input.

A combination of information control and planned publicity for one diagnosis was successful in creating a high consensus in the various »small worlds.« The availability of personal contacts then lent an air of authenticity to these shared beliefs. If this can be used to manage for a period of several months the opinions about a topic of such general interest as the outcome of the national election, it can be used with even greater effectiveness to manage opinion and consent in areas such as defense policies.

Germany's policy toward atomic arms is a prime example. Ever since the end of World War II a majority of the German elite have strongly opposed atomic armament for Germany. Strong support exists for international agreements on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and for entering into such agreement whether or not Germany has a part in negotiating them. There is even widespread support both in the population (a bit less than 50 per cent) and among the elite (about 50 per cent) for a neutralized Germany. Yet Germany's official policy does not at all conform to these opinions.

This case has more than one curious aspect. Obviously, policymakers in other countries are not really aware of this state of opinion. The elite within Germany are insufficiently conscious of the actual policies of the



government; and insofar as a definite government policy for the acquisition of nuclear weapons is perceived, there is merely private disapproval rather than active protest. This situation has been in existence for many years. Obviously the very small minority involved in discussions of defense policies is successful in not communicating its real aims, provided there are any. With respect to German advocacy of the MLF (multilateral nuclear force), the elite appear to be consoled by the belief that nothing will come of it and that the subject is too technical to understand anyway.

What will happen if some form of German participation in a nuclear defense system is brought about? Probably the same that happened when the German government rejected the widely accepted Rapacki Plan for a neutral zone through Europe: nothing. There will be an acquiescence to a slightly disapproved new fact.

By the size of audience and the intensity of involvement, discussions about defense policies are the very opposite of discussions about the strength of political parties. The smaller the audience, the less the involvement, and the greater the sense of inevitability, the easier it is for a determined minority, and especially for the government, to influence opinion and also to create a *fait accompli*.

Given the rather high exposure to very different media and the availability of personal contacts, this vulnerability of the system to management and this insensitivity to majority opinion are largely a result of the peculiar treelike structure of the elite class. As mentioned, most communication occurs by region within specific elite sectors; in these small worlds, the communication is quite intense. Different segments of the elite are linked together by a finite set of persons who keep meeting each other in different contexts. Since these linkage persons are readily available for direct contact, the spurious sense of being highly informed is further enhanced. Combined confidence in one's ability to be informed and reliance of the system on a finite number of linkages (plus the paucity of communication across segments within localities), reduces the suspicion of a management of opinion that an elite in a more secretive society may have (127). At the same time, however, the system is rather insensitive to attempts at mass conversions.

#### The Value System of the Elite

In its composition and structure, the elite in Germany is now quite similar to that of other industrialized countries, notably to the elite in the U.S. Significant differences in degree remain, and for the sake of clarity they have been accentuated in the description. Many of these differences are a consequence of a peculiar mixture of elements specific to an industrial society and those carried over from feudalism. This coexistence of

elements from different social systems affects social structure, and it also determines the peculiar value system of the German elite (not »elite values<sup>^</sup> since top decisionmakers simply share those of the upper-middle class).

A distinction can be drawn between: 1) values or norms regulating modes of conduct (analogous to traffic rules) irrespective of the particular content of an action, i.e., »system norms« and 2) the substantive values which underly a way of life, i.e., »substantive norms.« To the degree that there is any elite sub-culture, this should manifest itself first in a set of particular system norms. Consensus about substantive norms is less frequent in industrial societies anyway, and to the degree that we observe it at all for the German elite, it is often nothing specific to the elite but characteristic for its »setting,« the upper-middle class. In a diversified elite, such as the German one, there is also a diversification of substantive values. Therefore, a general description of values of the elite implies a high degree of abstraction from the actual diversity.

In comparison with other European elites, there is for the German elite little of the peer-group control which regulates behavior, especially within the British elite. This is a necessary consequence of regional diversification, of segmentation by spheres of competence, and of a lack of homogeneity in background and socialization. With little informal face-to-face interaction among elite members across sectors, there is but a small chance for the development of a set of system norms for the German elite in general. Of greater relevance are system norms specific for elite segments—i.e., a series of specific professional codes of conduct. Of course something like an informal code of chivalry in dealing with status equals may be detected, but it remains optional because there are few effective sanctions that affect an elite member as a private person. One of the most effective means of social control within tightly bound groups, ostracism, is impracticable in such a diversified and segmentalized elite.

Since the rules of conduct vary by sector, a general agreement on substantive values might serve as an integrating force. But no such agreement is likely in a society as differentiated as Germany. In the absence of many integrating factors of other European societies, a shared belief in the significance of elite status and a consensus on some rather general values of little immediate relevance for behavior have to serve as a corrective.

Elite status is indeed widely perceived as a justification for leadership based on superior competence, and this shared self-perception does establish membership in a common reference group (128). Since high status is interpreted as being deserved, and since status differences in German society are not illegitimate, the German decisionmakers do not feel as defensive about their superiority in status and power as do their American counterparts (129). The mutual respect for elite status and the metaphysics

of merit proven by status are a more effective integrating element than is true for the U.S. Yet beyond some agreement on generalities there are many causes for dissent, and this condition is both recognized and feared.

The fear of internal dissent is probably responsible for one of the most perplexing phenomena within the German elite: the tendency to bypass political antagonisms. Former Nazis and anti-Nazis, former victims of prosecutions and their prosecutors may be observed in amiable conversation with each other, both agreeing that an extension of the statute of limitations would be sowing dissent. Given the weakness of integrating factors, open dissent is a process that the system characterized here cannot deal with effectively. Dissent will easily erupt into open conflict (130).

The elite itself cannot be expected to exercise effective self-policing over dissident members. The continued political power of a man so widely believed discredited by his private life as Franz-Josef Strauss is an example for the weakness of general system norms in the face of support from a rather small sub-group within the elite. Numerous indeed are the stories of physicians covering up for a physician of whose actions they disapprove. Former (hopefully so) Nazis may be quite numerous in the judiciary, but there are obviously many anti-Nazis, too, and in many cases the behavior of some fellow judge during the Nazi period was widely disapproved by his colleagues. And yet in the Federal Republic no single judge has ever been sentenced for his deeds as a Nazi magistrate. In fact, the *Bundestag* even passed a law allowing compromised judges to voluntarily retire with full pension and (in effect) immunity for past actions (131). The ingroup spirit is usually stronger than the respect for more general values.

In a number of Western industrialized societies effective control of elite actions is exercised by public opinion. Except in times of extreme public agitation, however, public opinion is usually effective only in censoring specific individuals. The German elite share with elites of other European societies an aversion against becoming the subject of public controversy. There is general resentment when a member turns to the public at large for support in a disagreement with other elite members. Accepting the verdicts of public opinion would be to yield the principle of professional autonomy.

In their relation to public opinion in a wider sense of the term (*opinion de rows*), the elite in Germany differ markedly from the elites of Anglo-Saxon countries. For German decisionmakers, public opinion is a capricious sovereign merely in a very limited sense; it is an irrational threat to the expert but neither a final arbiter nor a court of last resort. For the German elite public opinion as the voice of masses is a problem rather than a guide, is a force one has to come to terms with or, better still, to control (132). This description may be oversimplified, but for many groups not very much so. By now, politicians are the large exception, alt-

hough German parliamentarians (and quite often on the side of the angels) consider themselves as independent agents rather than as passive spokesmen for the will of the people (133).

This attitude toward public opinion is consistent with the prevailing self-conceptions and value orientations in the German elite. Given the importance of expertise in deciding issues, public opinion is seen merely as a force challenging the reasonable way of settling issues. Accordingly, the elite feel their actions should not be policed by public opinion. The objects of such policing can count on the sympathy though not active aid of their peers. In this evaluation we encounter a peculiar but characteristic mixture of technocratic and feudalistic orientation.

The attitude toward public opinion is connected with the general belief in a »natural law« to which the expert has a privileged access. It will be recalled that a majority of the elite believe that there are always »true« solutions, provided one is qualified enough to find them. Whatever the issue on which the public expresses a preference, there should be someone within the elite who is better qualified to judge. Even many Social Democrats argue—whether with explicit reference to the theories of Marx or not—that after all »the people« do not know their true interests and had better take the interpretation of their true interests from their leaders.

The prevailing ideology within the elite is one of a collegiate body which is trying to serve the common weal and whose members possess superior qualifications in specific areas. However, it is no longer consonant with the prevailing ideology in elite circles to coerce the public. While public opinion is not understood to legitimately prescribe conduct, the public does set limits for right or wrong—usually the latter. This is accepted as a price one pays for democracy.

Today the German elite consider democracy the only possible form of government. However, in studying elite conceptions of democracy, we find that this term »democracy« seems to cover quite different forms of government, some of which are a bit far removed from the usual meaning of democracy. In spite of this, attempts to again convince the elite that »popular« democracy is a brainchild of untrustworthy liberals or that Germany needs a »German democracy« have not been very successful (134). The need to establish an ideological identity against the claims of East Germany has been helpful for the acceptance of democracy. Nevertheless, the general endorsement of democracy is a bit unspecific as to content. When members of the German elite now endorse democracy, they primarily refer to a form of government, not an attitude or a value orientation. Being democratic appears to mean: being a conscientious citizen under a new form of government, loyally conforming to new laws, giving democracy what is due to Caesar. In their attitudes, however, the majority of the elite display an ambivalence to a democratic orientation.

As is true for elites in other Western industrialized countries, on questions of civil rights the German elite is by and large more liberal than the population, although criticism from intellectuals is widely begrudged as »negative« (135). Pluralism of sorts—namely, as the right of different groups to live their own life, provided there is group consensus about this style of life—has been accepted; individualism much less (136). No longer can subgroups of the elite (such as business) be mobilized to break other groups (such as trade unions). There is quite a bit of resentment against some of the changes in social structure—especially against the strong position of workers in the labor market and against the democratization of leisure—but no feeling that a different political system would be desirable in order to undo these changes. A major cause for uneasiness is the bargaining process of interest groups, and while the various parts of the elite gratefully accept whatever their own pressure group achieves, a more »objective« system would be welcomed. The notion of a *jormierxe Gesellschaft* which is advocated by Erhard is quite explicit only on this point: the condemnation of government by pressure groups. However, while the present German society may not command a great deal of affection from its elite, there is no longer a consensus that previous forms of German society were more desirable than the present one.

The German elite is by and large now much less conservative than it is believed to be, and this is even true for business leaders. According to a survey in 1965, more than one-third of the elite is left of center in its political philosophy, and only between one-fifth to one-fourth can be termed conservative. There is no longer a debate about the justification of the welfare state, only a widely shared feeling that welfare measures are by now going a bit far. Some occasional industrialist may still be recruited by groups of the far right, but no longer industrialists as a class.

This diagnosis of political attitudes of the elite may sound strange, in view of the continuous uncovering of yet another supporter of Nazism now in a position of high authority. However, the lack of resistance to Nazism and the extent of cooperation that it received from the elite does not imply that its philosophy was widely shared. According to the 1956 study of Edinger, 24 per cent of the elite had identified with Nazism, and no more than 19 per cent could be counted as having opposed the regime (137). The majority of the elite—just like the majority of the population—were either neutral or ambivalent toward the Nazi regime. Probably the percentage of former Nazis in the elite was greater than in the population in general. But in a vast number of cases compliant action did not mean acceptance of the ideology. A majority of the elite did not have to recant Nazism; they just had to change their actions. And in addition, there has been lately a significant turnover in personnel.

The most important change contributing to the stability of a democratic form of government is, however, the decline of the traditional form of nationalism. There is little left of the rabid and self-centered nationalism of earlier times; in its place stands a general endorsement of ever-stronger relations with other countries of the »West.« Even in the private lives of its members, the German elite has finally defined itself as part of the West. The U.S. and France are the two societies that a considerable minority find attractive enough to imagine living there permanently. Instead of the earlier definitions of Germany as a country between the East and the West, Germany is now widely seen as just one more variation of a Western society.

The advocacy of stronger ties to other Western countries may often sound like a mere exercise in ritual. This observation might lead to the conclusion that the German elite adheres to the Western alliance just as long as this alliance does not conflict with Germany's policies. Such a conclusion would be wrong.

Increasingly since John F. Kennedy assumed the Presidency in the U.S., parts of the German elite have been perceiving differences between Germany's political aims and the policies of her allies. Younger members of the elite advocate that the example of De Gaulle should be followed and that Germany should put its self-interests ahead of the interests of others. Yet even a longer period of conflicts in policies is unlikely to affect the basic endorsement of the alliance. The alliance as such is seen to be in Germany's national interest and is widely understood to be the very foundation of West Germany's continued existence. The fear of communism is general, deep, and transcends rational considerations. A German nation-state is felt—and this is really on the level of emotion—to be incapable of resisting communism by itself in the long run. A 1965 survey of the elite shows a redefinition of the »Communist danger,« away from the preoccupation with a military danger. Yet the common fear of communism remains as the closest thing to an unofficial German religion.

Fear is one component of this orientation to the West, of this new definition of Germany as a »Western country.« An equally important component is the absence of a true nation-state. Germany as a nation-state in any of the usual meanings of the concept is either a reminiscence or a hope but certainly no reality. Occasional attempts to attach the symbols of a traditional nation-state to the Federal Republic have not met with notable success. As a consequence, a majority in the German elite consider the nation-state obsolete for European countries in general, and in addition welcome this development.

This is indeed an unusual condition: a national elite without a full nation-state. Will this lead to an attempt at reunification at all costs? Most likely, no. Strong fears and acceptance of the fact that Germany is a se-

condrate power bind the German elite to the West and limit the scope of national politics. While there are indications that national pride is on the increase, there are few signs that this means a desire for nation-state politics in the traditional sense. For the German elite, Europe is turning into something of a second nation. Nowhere is the endorsement of European integration as strong and as consistent as in this elite without a nation-state.

The redefinition of Germany as a part of the West has proven to be a pleasure experience. Both out of necessity and now out of preference, the German elite has become cosmopolitan. And yet at a basic level, the attitude system of the German elite is pervaded by an »anthropological pessimism^ by a belief that most humans are much too imperfect to be really trusted; there is a lack of optimism in further human perfectibility. This is combined with a strong feeling that only very exceptional men with a Faustian ardor are masters of their fate, while the rest of us—nearly everyone—is merely bowing to ever changing necessities. This general orientation to the world is not specific to the elite; it is a characteristic of the German upper-middle class.

In the past, various anti-democratic ideologies could be easily fused with such an outlook. This is unlike now, if only because among the German elite, too, the interest in systems of thought of cosmic scope has very much receded. True, in their value orientation and in their political belief systems the German elite still are not the world's foremost proponents of democracy. But neither are they active enemies of democracy nor do they even passively reject it.

Already with respect to the stratification system we observed a mixture of democratic and non-democratic value orientations, which remained nevertheless rather irrelevant for the political system. The same is true for the incidence of non-democratic (or even antidemocratic) values among the elite. To a degree, this follows from the character of the essentially upper-middleclass ideology in which public life does not seem terribly relevant for »man« (i.e., the individual in an emphatic sense of the term). Traditionally, for members of the German elite, just as for most Germans, the value system always permitted withdrawal into private life if public life became repellent. And as long as one remained a virtuous man in private, compliance with non-virtuous governments did not really destroy self-respect. In the past, a number of anti-democratic political movements and systems were compatible with the *mélange* of values; at present the democratic system benefits from this high compatibility of different system levels and segments on German society.

Then might anti-democratic systems still be compatible with the value system of the German elite? In principle, yes; but not in practice. While it is true that in Germany even democracy has an authoritarian flavor, there

are a number of corrective elements against a truly non-democratic movement. Most of the elite endorse democracy in name, and a good many accept it wholeheartedly.

The strongest corrective element against any antidemocratic adventures or excesses of nationalism, however, is neither the value system of the elite nor public opinion but is the high degree of responsiveness to Western opinions about Germany and its elite. No matter what manipulations of the communication system within Germany might be feasible, the German elite has and uses access to foreign media. Given the reappraisal of Germany as a secondary power and the redefinition of Germany as a Western country, a widespread criticism of Germany will be perceived and heeded—possibly with resentment, but heeded anyway.

The German elite may have changed less than was hoped for in 1945. But by virtue of its new responsiveness to the elites of other Western countries, the elite in Germany has indirectly become much more of an asset than a liability for democracy.

## NOTES

- 1) Agreement among social researchers was highest immediately after 1945, when social psychologists of Freudian orientation arrived at a nearly unanimous verdict. Most of their diagnoses were strongly influenced by the theories first developed in the Frankfurt Institut für Sozialforschung; cf. Max Horkheimer (ed.), *Studien über Autorität und Familie* (Paris, 1936). Representative for the early diagnosis: Nazism is a consequence of the authoritarian personality prevalent in Germany, and the German authoritarian personality is a consequence of the German family system (Bertram Schaffner, *Fatherland: A Study of Authoritarianism in the German Family* [New York, 1948]). This agreement quickly deteriorated. As an example, compare David Rodnick, *Postwar Germans: An Anthropologist Account* (New Haven, 1948), with Schaffner's book. Viewed from today, it is striking to what degree these Freudians accepted as facts the common stereotypes about Germany and proceeded to think up explanations for the presumed characteristics. These analyses are even today still part of the conventional wisdom among Western intellectuals, even though in actual social research agreement about distinguishing features of German society is by now rather low.
- 2) Robert H. Lowie, *The German People: Social Portrait to 1914* (New York, 1937).



- 3) *Reader's Guide* lists nearly 6,000 articles on Germany in the U.S. during the period of 1945 through 1964--about a third more than about France, one of the most frequently discussed countries. In 1964, feature stories on Germany appeared in most American mass-circulation periodicals, such as *Look*, *Life*, *Time*, *Holiday*. Examples of more recent topical issues of semi-intellectual and intellectual journals of Germany are the March 9, 1953, issue of the *Saturday Review* and the April, 1965, issue of *Encounter*. The research department of *Der Spiegel* has computed that an average of 3 books a day is now being published on Germany!
- 4) The locus classicus for English-language discussions of the German class system and its relation to the political system is Talcott Parsons, »The Problem of Controlled Institutional Change,« in T. Parsons (ed.), *Essays in Sociological Theory Pure and Applied* (Glencoe, Ill., 1949), pp. 310-45; see also Parsons, »Democracy and Social Structure in Pre-Nazi Germany,« *Journal of Legal and Political Sociology* (November, 1942).

The prevailing views in English-language literature on the German family are found in the publications by Horkheimer (ed.), *Studien über Autorität und Familie*, and Schaffner, *Fatherland*; see also Erik H. Erikson, »Hitler's Imagery and German Youth,« *Psychiatry*, V (1942), 475-93; Erich Fromm, »Psychoanalytic Characterology and Its Application to the Understanding of Culture,« in S. S. Sargent and Marian W. Smith (eds.), *Culture and Personality* (New York, 1949), pp. 1-10.

The notion of a peculiar German personality finds its expression in such publications as Kurt Lewin, »Some Psychological Differences between the United States and Germany,« in Gertrud Lewin (ed.), *Resolving Social Conflicts* (New York, 1948), pp. 3-33; Donald V. McGranahan, »A Comparison of Social Attitudes among American and German Youth,« *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, XL1 (1946), 245-57, and McGranahan, »German and American Traits Reflected in Popular Drama,« *Human Relations*, I (1948), 429-55; I. Thorner, »German Words, German Personality, and Protestantism^ *Psychiatry*, VIII (1945), 403-17; David C. McClelland, »The United States and Germany: A Comparative Study of National Character,« in David C. McClelland (ed.), *The Roots of Consciousness* (Princeton, 1964), pp. 62-92. See also R. Brickner, *Is German Incurable?* (Philadelphia, 1943); Kurt Wolff and W. Mischell, »Defenses against Defeat: German Discussions in 1950-51,« in Herbert C. Kelman (ed.), *Images in International Behavior* (New York, 1963); Martha Wolfenstein and Nathan Leites, *Movies: A Psychological Study* (Glencoe, Ill., 1950); Ruth Benedict, »The Study of Cultural Pat-

terns in European Nations,« *Transactions of the New York Academy of Science*, VIII<sup>2</sup> (1946), 274-79; Gordon W. Allport *et al.*, »Personality under Social Catastrophe: Ninety Life Histories of the Nazi Revolution,« *Character and Personality*, X (1941), 1-22.

For a critical and balanced discussion of the concept of modal national personality, see Alex Inkeles and Daniel J. Levinson, »National Character: The Study of Modal Personality and Sociocultural Systems,« in Gardner Lindzey (ed.), *Handbook of Social Psychology* (Reading, Mass., 1954), pp. 977-1020; Maurice L. Farber, »The Problem of National Character: A Methodological Analysis,« in Neil J. and William T. Smelser (eds.), *Personality and Social Systems* (New York, 1963), pp. 80-87.

A similar discussion is characteristic for postwar social science publications on Japan. Representative are Ruth F. Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (Boston, 1946); Geoffry Gorer, »Themes in Japanese Culture,« *Transactions of the New York Academy of Science*, V<sup>2</sup> (1943), 106-24.

- 5) The literature on these topics is even more numerous than the sociological and social psychological literature cited in n. 4. An example of analyses attributing peculiarities of recent German political history to institutional arrangements is Ferdinand A. Hermens, *The Representative Republic* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1958). On the role of strategic groups and political values in German society, see: Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik* (Villingen, 1960); Louis Baudin, »Elite,« in *Handwörterbuch der Sozialwissenschaften*, III (1961), 198-202; Otto Stammer, »Das Eliteproblem in der Demokratie,« in *Schmollers Jahrbuch*, Vol. LXXI (1951); Hans Gerth, »The Nazi Party: Its Leadership and Composition,« *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLV (1940); Karl W. Deutsch and Louis Edinger, *Germany Rejoins the Powers* (Stanford, 1959); F. S. Busin, »Bureaucracy and National Socialism,« in Robert K. Merton *et al.* (eds.), *Reader in Bureaucracy* (Glencoe, Ill., 1960); Louis J. Edinger, »Continuity and Change in the Background of German Decision Makers,« *Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. XIV (1961); Maxwell E. Knight, *The German Executive, 1890-1933* (Stanford, 1952); Harold D. Lasswell *et al.*, *The Comparative Study of Elites* (Stanford, 1952); Daniel Lerner *et al.*, *The Nazi Elite* (Stanford, 1951); Franz B. Neumann, *The Structure and Practice of National Socialism, 1933-1944* (New York, 1944); Nikolaus von Preradovich, *Die Führungsschichten in Österreich und Preussen, 1804-1918* (Wiesbaden, 1955); Joseph Schumpeter, »Das soziale Antlitz des Deutschen Reiches,« in J. Schumpeter (ed.), *Aufsätze zur Soziologie* (Tübingen, 1953); Ralf Dahrendorf, »Demokratie und Sozialstruktur,« in R. Dahrendorf

(ed.), *Gesellschaft und Freiheit* (Munich, 1963). pp. 260-99; Erich Matthias and Rudolf Morsey, *Das Ende der Parteien, 1933* (Düsseldorf, 1960). The inevitability of National Socialism as a consequence of the characteristics of Germany is the main theme of William Shirer's bestseller about the rise and fall of Nazi Germany, but in a less simple-minded form it is one dominant theme of scholarly discussions.

- 6) Examples: the authoritarian personality structure of most Germans makes totalitarian leadership inevitable; the anarchism implicit in German society calls forth an overemphasis on order; the democratic political institutions in Germany were (and are) insufficiently founded in popular sentiment and must crumble in any period of crisis; the German upper class with its anti-democratic attitude and enmity against trade unions and intolerance of competition within Germany and outside its boundaries was and is always ready to support political adventurers. Etc. For many of these contentions, a considerable body of support has been assembled; my main uneasiness is based on a suspicion of all uni-causal explanations for complex, modern societies.

The explanations of Japanese political development by sociologists and social psychologists are even more suspect. See Jean Stotzel, *Jeunesse sans chrysanthème ni sabre* (Paris, 1954), for findings contrary to the work of Benedict and Gorer.

- 7) This was the problem to which such American scholars as Schaffner and Rodnick addressed themselves in postwar studies of German families.
- 8) See, for example, Ben Hecht, *A Guide for the Bedevilled* (New York, 1944); T. H. Tetens, *Know Your Enemy* (New York, 1944), or some of Drew Middleton's writings when he covered the advance of Allied troops into Germany. The anti-German racism implicit in popular fiction may be seen in books of such diverse character but wide audience among intellectuals as Katherine Anne Porter's *Ship of Fools* or Ian Fleming's Bond-saga *Moonraker*. This anti-Germanism has a tradition as old as the industrialization of Germany, as is evident in the writing of Maurice Barrès and Rudyard Kipling. Max Weber reflected without too much success about this phenomenon of a Germanophobia as intense as anti-Semitism. In Great Britain, anti-Semitism and Germanophobia were often associated--e.g., with Lord Northcliffe. A very good example of such prejudice in its primitive form is Hans Koningsberger, »A Map of Their Own,« *Holiday*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 4 (October, 1964).
- 9) There is a long-standing tradition of self-criticism in Germany, too--although it is probably even less tolerantly received than is true for

other Western countries. Nietzsche's criticism of Germany and »the Germans« is especially pointed and has been of some influence. The criticisms during the Weimar period by Heinrich Mann or Kurt Tucholsky find their present-day continuation in the publications of Max Picard, Martin Walser, Ginter Grass, and Rolf Hochhuth. Recent examples are »Bilanz der Bundesrepublik« the title of a special issue of *Magnum* in 1961; Hans Werner Richter (ed.), *Beswandsaufnahme: Eine deutsche Bilanz* (Munich, 1962).

- 10) This statement is based on a comparison of the results for Germany with those for other countries in the surveys by Buchanan and Hadley Cantril in 1949; the 4-country survey by the UNESCO Institute for Social Research in 1959; the 7-country survey »Products and People« 1963; and the 3-country survey by Melvin Turnin. The three latter studies are as yet unpublished. Stereotypes about Germany and the Germans have changed with different speed in different countries: the change has been very rapid in France, rather slow in England. Cf. »L'opinion publique et l'Europe des six,« *Sondage*, Vol. XXV, No. 1 (1963).
- 11) The research on national stereotypes has usually proceeded from the assumption that stereotypes are mere heinous prejudices. Lamentable as stereotypes are in their consequences for the relations between nation-states and individuals from various countries, it is doubtful that national stereotypes are pure fabrications. Common sense should suggest (and in my opinion research supports this notion) that national stereotypes are undue abstractions and generalizations from some aspects of reality, complicated by the readiness to project feelings of hostility to outgroups.  
One of the most informative accounts of such impressions by a discerning observer is Walter Rudolf Leonhardt, *Xmal Deutschland* (Munich, 1962).
- 12) It is presently one of the fashionable topics for social scientists and journalists in West Germany to speculate whether differences in linguistic usages and citizen-state relations signify that West and East Germany now have become two nations. Ralph Dahrendorf is one of those inclined to accept the two-nations theory. Of course, such speculations are very much at odds with the official claim of the Federal Republic that there is no such thing as even a different polity called Deutsche Demokratische Republik, the euphemism for East Germany.
- 13) Perhaps the best example of the tendency to treat a given nation-state as coincidental with a political system is the work of the Committee on Comparative Government. This committee represents the attempt to marry the system-orientation of traditional political science with

sociology (specifically with the conception of social systems by Talcott Parsons) and with empirical social research (specifically survey research). The assumption that government policies must accurately reflect the social characteristics of the citizenry is here introduced as a self-evident requirement for a functioning sociopolitical system. Cf. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Princeton, 1963).

- 14) Seymour Martin Lipset, *The First New Nation* (London, 1964).
- 15) Indicators for this negative attitude toward public life are preferences for such questionnaire choices as »Most people cannot be trusted,« or »Nobody up there pays any attention to the real problems of the people,« or »One should not tolerate any criticism by outsiders of one's fatherland.« Surveys show a remarkable stability for such responses over a 10-year period.
- 16) Examples are not hard to find. During the whole of the Federal Republic's existence, about 80 per cent of the electorate favors capital punishment, and yet attempts by individual politicians and political parties to reintroduce capital punishment (presently abolished) have not brought any noticeable advantages to its proponents. Again, a majority of the population is against a primary school system organized along denominational lines (*Bekennnisschule*), yet advocates of change have never been rewarded by voters. Nor is this lack of a tight relationship between voter decision and substantive wishes of the very same voters a phenomenon specific to Germany. In his investigations of working class authoritarianism, Martin Lipset has found a similar lack of correspondence for English voters. Cf. *Political Man* (Garden City, N.Y., 1959), esp. Chaps. IV-V.
- 17) The conception of systems (personality system, social system, and cultural system) and system elements has attained some dominance in contemporary sociology mainly from the work of Talcott Parsons. Parsons conceived his notion of a system largely in analogy to the system concept in biology. In organisms there is usually a high interrelation between organs. I assume, with many critics of this system notion, that for most societies the interrelation between system elements is more complicated than it is in higher-order mammals (such as authors). The best introduction to Parsons' concept of system can be found in T. Parsons *et al* (eds.), *Theories of Society* (Glencoe, Ill., 1961), I, 30-79.
- 18) The best known of these »lags« is W. Ogburn's cultural lag. Ogburn assumes 1) that technology changes more rapidly than »cultural« phenomena in a society and 2) that in our present society there exists a large gap between technical sophistication and archaic family systems and norms. It should be obvious that this is mainly a vulgarized

Marxism, where a technological determinism takes the place of the somewhat nebulous »productive forces« of Marx.

- 19) Relationships between system levels may also be revealed through analysis of degrees of »indifference.«
- 20) The presently fashionable type of authoritarianism makes use of fewer information about opinion formation in functionally highly differentiated societies. Thus both in present-day Yugoslavia and in France the ordinary citizen is largely free of harassment even if he is somewhat of an opponent of the regime. From this point on, the forms of authoritarianism differ. A full-fledged authoritarianism will interfere whenever the opponents of the regime try to achieve some form of organization. A mild and highly sophisticated form will tolerate some formal opposition and will only both with the media of mass communication and with opinion leaders such as university professors or effective writers. Thus in France the regime of General De Gaulle keeps a tight control over the only large French wire service, the radio and television networks, and to some degree the movie industry; it will view with approval the concentration of newsprint distribution in the hands of Hachette and persecute writers through the regular court system. Thus while during the Third and Fourth Republics the laws against insulting the President were invoked less than half a dozen times, during the Fifth Republic prosecutions of writers under this law have exceeded 300 cases. Actually, no stable authoritarian regime is compatible with a highly differentiated industrial society that relies on full-time oppression of citizens. Even the Nazi regime in Germany during the years 1933-39 restricted itself to the violent prosecution of organized political opposition, dismissal of political opponents in civil-service positions, and to the suppression of freedom of expression in the mass media. Otherwise, the Nazi regime largely was satisfied with the overt compliance of the individual citizen, counting as it did on a certain amount of »unofficial« terror by its adherents against individual citizens. Wholesale terror and extermination characterized the war years; to make this form of prosecution the criterion for labeling a regime a dictatorship is to overlook progress in the technology of authoritarianism.
- 21) The distinction between macro-sociology and micro-sociology has been developed by Georges Gurvitch to distinguish between the analysis of societies with the intent of explaining their laws of development and the analysis of specific phenomena within a society with the intent to understand only those phenomena. I use the terms in the same sense.
- 22) Cross-cultural comparisons including several industrial countries and using the tools of empirical social research are not too frequent. Alt-

though in the isolated instances of social research during the 19th century international comparisons appeared as a natural strategy, and although »classical« methodologists such as Durkheim and J. S. Mill declared the comparative approach to be the strategy central to the social sciences, empirical social research as an institutionalized activity was overwhelmingly conceived with the nation-state as a natural context. Present cross-cultural comparisons largely take the form of comparisons between one developed country and one or more underdeveloped societies. Therefore our body of comparative studies for Western industrialized societies is quite small, the frequent allusions in sociological writings to differences between the U.S., England, France, Germany, or Italy notwithstanding.

In n. 10 several studies were cited. Below I also draw upon the results of opinion and market-research surveys where similar data happened to be collected in parallel but uncoordinated investigations, and I make use of a comparative study on goals and methods in child training by Urie Bronfenbrenner and Edward Devereux. Most of this material is as yet unpublished. Certain additional information has been taken from the »World Polls« section of *Public Opinion Quarterly*, the international periodical *Polls*, and the work of the International Sociological Association research committees on the family, on social stratification and mobility, and on mass culture and leisure.

- 23) Not all scholars restrict themselves to »Western« industrialized societies in postulating of a common type of social organization. Alex Inkeles has maintained that regardless of the principle of government or historical tradition there is an industrial society as one specific form of social system with a corresponding type of personality. These thoughts, first advanced in Inkeles, »Industrial Man: The Relation of Status to Experience, Perception, and Value,« *American Journal of Sociology*, LXVI (1960), 1-31, have gained wide acceptance.
- 24) The popular notion of the German family as dominated by an authoritarian father insisting on blind obedience, with formal relations between family members, is just plain nonsense if this is postulated to be the main type. Such a family constellation existed of course in Germany and elsewhere in Europe mainly around the turn of the century and in the upper-middle and middle class; it is now understood by family sociologists as a transitory phenomenon after the unassertive dominance of the male had lost its factual basis and lead to an assertive dominance (*sekundärer Patriarchalismus*). Cf. René König, »Family and Authority,« *Sociological Review*, V (1957), 107-27. Even during this period a number of family types coexisted, and among unskilled workers a form of matriarchalism was re-

- portedly quite frequent. Even as provided for in official legislation, the German family was never as patriarchal as the French family insofar as the latter was reflected in the Code Napoleon.
- 25) The recent work of Melvin Tumin confirms that there are comparable levels of prejudice in most industrialized societies. The level of anti-Semitism in England, France, and Germany is of rather similar magnitude, although the actual demonstration of this prejudice is not comparable at all. Of course, the objects of prejudice vary from country to country: anti-Polish prejudice in Germany largely corresponds to anti-Algerian bias in France and anti-West Indian feelings in Britain. Tumin estimates that at present in all of these societies nearly two-thirds of the population can be classified prejudiced against one ethnic group or another; perhaps this amount of prejudice is a property of industrial society in its present manifestation.
  - 26) This judgment is based upon the cross-cultural study by Tumin and surveys conducted in Germany, partly by the government itself.
  - 27) United States Strategic Bombing Survey, *The Effects of Strategic Bombing on German Morale* (Washington, D.C., 1947), I, 33.
  - 28) Right-wing extremism in the Federal Republic has always been more visible than politically effective. During the 1965 elections the NPD (a new National Party of Germany) openly appealed to Nazi sentiments but received merely 2 per cent of the vote; in its most successful constituencies this party received between 6 and 7 per cent of the popular vote. Nevertheless, on the basis of a number of surveys I estimate the percentage of ideological Nazi's at present closer to 4 per cent of the population.
  - 29) *The Effects of Strategic Bombing on German Morale*, I, 16.
  - 30) Regional differences still persist as stereotypes about Bavarians or Rhinelanders, and during the 1965 elections they also had—in the absence of strong party identifications—a noticeable influence on voting behavior. Cf. Deutsches Industrieinstitut, *Analyse der Wahl zum 5. Deutschen Bundestag am 19. September 1965* (Köln, 1965); see also Werner Kaltefleiter, »Wähler und Parteien in den Landtagswahlen 1961-1965,« *Zeitschrift für Politik* (1965), pp. 224-50.
  - 31) To consider the postwar period as a time apart may be misleading, for several social changes probably began during the war. This has been suggested for changes in the authority structure of middle-class families and is probably true for changes in the stratification system and citizen-state relations. For the changes in the family in response to wartime conditions, see the case studies collected by Gerhard Wurzbacher, *Leitbilder gegenwärtigen deutschen Familienlebens* (2d ed.; Stuttgart, 1954). For a cross-cultural comparison of degrees of authoritarianism in Western industrialized societies, see Glen H. El-



der, Jr., »Role Relations, Sociocultural Environments, and Autocratic Family Ideology,« *Sociometry*, XXVIII (1965), 173-96.

- 32) The term »pluralism« gained currency during the debate in the Catholic organizations about a few position of their church in its relations to political institutions. The Catholic Church wished to emphasize that it was willing to consider dissenting groups as a permanent part of its environment. Politicians quickly added this term to their vocabulary, although Chancellor Erhard himself is chasing after the traditional German goal of *Gemeinschaft* when advocating his »complete society« (*formierte Gesellschaft*).
- 33) Talcott Parsons, too, in his »Program for Institutionalized Change,« *Essays in Sociological Theory Pure and Applied*, considers the status system as peculiar and as partly responsible for Nazism. Consequently, he states (1944) that a change of the status system is a prerequisite for the development of a stable democracy in Germany.
- 34) Especially during the 19th century, European observers were awed by the lack of ritual in the relations between status unequals. Cf. Max Berger, *The British Traveller in America, 1836-1860* (New York, 1943), pp. 54-55; Harriet Martineau, *Society in America* (New York, 1837), Vol. III; Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (London, 1832). A great many citations of European observers that refer to this lack of deference in America are reported in Lipset, *The First New Nation*, pp. 106-22.

Lipset uses the continuity of these references as a main evidence in his contention that there is an unchanging American character. Of course, 19th-century Europeans, coming from a society much more dominated by patterns of deference characteristic of feudalism, were more eloquent than present-day Europeans in their description of awe at this American trait. I believe, however, that this lack of deference is not an expression of an American character but is a consequence of a »pure« system of inequality based on class. To the degree that this feature becomes dominant, this »American« trait will also manifest itself more strongly in Europe, including an increased importance attached to symbols of prestige.

In American sociology, the term »class« is mostly used as interchangeable with status and stratum. Important examples are Richard Center, *The Psychology of Social Classes* (Princeton, 1949); W. Lloyd Warner *et al.*, *Social Class in America* (Chicago, 1949). »Officially,« however, even in America, status and stratum are considered the general terms for inequalities, of which social class is then a specific case. Here I follow the prevailing—though perhaps deplorable—custom of using the terms as interchangeable.

- 35) There is also agreement that the U.S. as the society with a low degree

of legitimacy for class differences is also the society where there is extraordinary concern with prestige. This is manifest both in consumption patterns (see the descriptions of Vance Packard in *The Waste Makers* (New York, 1960); *The Pyramid Climbers* (New York, 1962), and *The Status Seekers* (New York, 1959) and in the complicated maneuvers in interpersonal relations in order to be liked and respected (this is one major theme of Erving Goffman's writings and a factor in the attention he receives). However, sociologists should expect an increasing emphasis on prestige with declining legitimacy of class differences; »the less definite the status, the more assertive the behavior« is a well-established regularity. Thus wives who have derived status are more assertive of status differences than their husbands. In a context where status differences are mutually accepted, there can be easy intermingling—provided the ritual permits this—of status unequals; children of physicians and of their charwomen may, for example, be less interfered with in playing together if status differences between parents are not challenged. An underlying conflict in the U.S. stems from official equality and factual inequality; a prevailing strategy is to »unmix« and to restrict one's private life to intercourse with status equals or to those of higher status. All these mechanisms were already recognized by 19th-century visitors (cf. Lipset, *The First New Nation*). In contrasting the U.S. and Germany, an understanding of the systems of social stratification will be made easier if one considers these differences as alternative definitions of inequality.

- 36) One of the foreign observers who shows sensitivity to this aspect of a ritual of deference is Talcott Parsons, *Essays in Sociological Theory Pure and Applied*, p. 320 *et passim*. Parsons emphasizes the formalism of German institutions in general and points to the dissociation of emotional meaning attached to expressions of deference. »Germans are much more preoccupied with status than Americans, but there has been little romanticization of success in Germany. Americans are prone to romanticize attainment within the institutionalized status system; while Germans have a greater romantic interest in goals outside it« (p. 321).
- 37) Thus St. Hildegard argued that just as God assigns his angels in heaven to different places in the status hierarchy, so He separates his children on earth according to different estates—»but God loves them all.« The strength of feudalistic arrangements in German society was vividly described by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: that they found it in their time perhaps reflects the fact that industrialization in Germany was unusually late and rapid.
- 38) A country which at present displays the contradiction between feu-

- dalistic remnants and a class system is Italy, and here the tensions that spill over into politics are especially pronounced. See Erik Al-lardt and Yrjö Littunen (eds.), *Cleavages, Ideologies, and Party Systems* (Helsinki, 1964); Theodor Geiger, *Die Klassengesellschaft im Schmelztiegel* (Köln, 1949).
- 39) Erwin K. Scheuch, »Sozialprestige und soziale Schichtung,« *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, XIII (1961), pp. 65-103; E. K. Scheuch and Dietrich Rüschemeyer, »Scaling Social Status in Western Germany,« *British Journal of Sociology*, II (1960), pp. 15-68. See also Karl Martin Bolte, *Sozialer Aufstieg und Abstieg* (Stuttgart, 1959).
- 40) According to a number of indicators in E. K. Scheuch, »Bundestagswahlstudie 1961,« an unpublished research compilation. This part of the material is as yet unpublished. See also Hans-Jürgen Daheim, »Die Vorstellungen vom Mittelstand,« *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, XIII (1960), pp. 237-77; Alfred Willener, *Images de la société et classes sociales* (Bern, 1957); Renate Mayntz, *Soziale Schichtung und sozialer Wandel in einer Industriegemeinde* (Stuttgart, 1958); Hans Popitzer *al.*, *Das Gesellschaftsbild des Arbeiters* (Tübingen, 1957).
- 41) A number of empirical studies on the ranking of occupations in many industrialized countries were reported in vol. II (1960) of the *British Journal of Sociology*. Further references can be found in the report of the Committee on Social Stratification and Social Mobility of the International Sociological Association; cf. David V. Glass and René König (eds.), *Soziale Schichtung und Soziale Mobilität* (Köln, 1961). Some older but relevant studies are reported in National Opinion Research Center, »Jobs and Occupations: A Popular Evaluation,« in Reinhard Bendix and Seymour Martin Lipset (eds.), *Class, Status, and Power* (Glencoe, Ill., 1953), pp. 411-26; Natalie Rogoff, »Social Stratification in France and in the United States,« *American Journal of Sociology*, LIX (1953), 347-57.
- 42) The German of the Federal Republic as comfort-minded, gadget-hunting, superficial, opportunistic, and so on is the subject of a concerted attack from right-wing social critics (such as Klaus Harpprecht) and left-wing critics (such as Erich Kuby) in the newest German exercise in intellectualized stereotyping: »Die Bundesdeutschen,« *Der Monat*, No. 200 (May, 1965). American readers may feel that in connection with their own postwar society they have read all too many such diagnoses before.
- 43) That such goods are indeed symbols and not determinants of status can be seen by an analysis of cases where these symbols and other status criteria do not coincide. A certain make of car is at first accep-

ted at face value as an index of status but then is reinterpreted as an attempt at snobbery and even deception if, e.g., occupation and income do not correlate with ownership of this good. A bookkeeper may save money in order to buy his wife a mink coat, but this will be judged by his peers in occupation as living beyond one's means. In feudal societies, coincidence between status and such symbols as attire, housing, and consumption of luxury good was regulated by law, so that dressing beyond one's status led to legal action. The lack of such regulations has made symbols of status into ambiguous targets for intensive striving. Compare the recent empirical studies reported by H. Kreikebaum and H. Rinsche, *Das Prestigemotiv in Konsum und Investition* (Berlin, 1961), esp. pp. 116-24.

- 44) Rogoff, »Social Stratification in France and in the United States.«
- 45) This is accorded major importance by Ralf Dahrendorf in various recent publications. See especially Dahrendorf, »Demokratie und Sozialstruktur in Deutschland,« in R. Dahrendorf (ed.), *Gesellschaft und Freiheit* (Munich, 1963), pp. 260-99. Dahrendorf in a sort of inverted Marxism argues that no modern democracy is possible without businessmen having both high status and great political power. He believes that the lack of either in pre-World War I Germany led to the failure of democracy.
- 46) That a higher position also means higher competence of the incumbent is not just popular belief or editorializing by the *Prairie City Times* but is the so-called functionalistic explanation of social stratification. Presumably, the higher rank of some occupational categories expresses their greater significance for the society, and the criteria for achieving these higher categories are harder to meet than those for positions with lower prestige; therefore the higher a man, the better a man. Of course, neither contention has been critically analyzed. To meet this view in all its intellectual and experiential naïveté consult Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore, »Some Principles of Stratification,« *American Sociological Review*, X (1945), 242-49.
- 47) The different rank order of factors believed to lead to upward social mobility can be seen in Rogoff, »Social Stratification in France and in the United States«; Deutsches Institut für Volksumfragen (DIVO), *Umfragen 1958* (Frankfurt, 1959), p. 124 *et passim*.
- 48) Compare Talcott Parsons' remark in *Essays in Sociological Theory Pure and Applied*, p. 321, that there is little romanticization of success in ascriptive societies.
- 49) See David V. Glass (ed.), *Social Mobility in Britain* (London, 1954); Glass and König (eds.), *Soziale Schichtung und Soziale Mobilität*, pp. 171-229.
- 50) This difference between the privilege accorded to rank and the re-

- spect accorded to a specific person is also known in the U.S. in certain situations—notably in Army life and in the Catholic clergy.
- 51) The distinction between primary and secondary environment has been explained in Erwin K. Scheuch, »Die Sichtbarkeit politischer Einstellungen im alltäglichen Verhalten,« *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, XVII (1965), p. 173 *et passim*.
  - 52) Friedrich Weltz, *Wie steht es um die Bundeswehr?* (Hamburg, 1964), pp. 13, 104.
  - 53) DIVO, *Umfragen 1958*, pp. 117-23. Cf. Alex Inkeles and Peter Rossi, »National Comparisons of Occupational Prestige,« *American Journal of Sociology*, LXI (1956), 329-39; Robert E. Clark, »Psychoses, Income, and Occupational Prestige,« in Bendix and Lipset (eds.), *Class, Status, and Power*; p. 336 *et passim*; C. A. Moser and R. Hall, »The Social Grading of Occupations,« in Glass (ed.), *Social Mobility in Britain*, pp. 26, 34, 39.
  - 54) The distances between the various social strata are, of course, not evenly spaced. In all industrialized societies stratification pyramids are a combination between a continual increase of some factors (»prestige«) plus some definite discontinuities in between, the latter phenomenon being in agreement with older notions of social inequality. Significant for the reduction of tensions resulting from a stratification system is the fact, that there is no great gulf between upper-lower and lower-middle class. There is now in Germany as in the U.S. a definite distance between lower-lower and upper-lower class. Most of these statements are based on unpublished material from Scheuch, »Sozialprestige und soziale Schichtung,« pp. 78-84.
  - 55) In contrast to present-day Germany, both in France and in England there is a major gap between manual and non-manual occupations; specifically in England there is an additional major discontinuity in the stratification continuum between self-employed and wage-earners, in France a break between agricultural and non-agricultural occupations. These statements are based on a re-analysis of several polls and research articles on the stratification system of these countries. Cf. Moser and Hall, »The Social Grading of Occupations,« pp. 35 ff.; DIVO, *Umfragen 1958*, pp. 119-22.
  - 56) One of the few sociological diagnoses of contemporary society that has been widely accepted in Germany is Helmuth Schelsky, *Wandlungen der deutschen Familie in der Gegenwart* (Stuttgart, 1954). In this book Schelsky coined the term *nivellierte Mittelstandsgesellschaft* for a society where a petit-bourgeois existence is considered the »normal« form of existence and where most people would identify themselves with the middle class. This identification was presumably the result of upward mobility, where the upwardly mobile would

quickly adapt to their new situation, and downward mobility, where the downwardly mobile would still retain their middle-class consciousness. »Die Gesellschaft ist in ihrem Sozialbewusstsein auf irgendeine Mittellage hin nivelliert, der Begriff ihres Selbstbewusstseins lebt von der Überwindung einer Spannung zwischen Ober- und Unterschicht« (p. 224). Schelsky by now repudiates this analysis, which among other assumptions was based on the expectation »dass in der Entwicklung der industriell-bürokratischen Gesellschaft die sozialen Abstiegsprozesse über die Vorgänge des sozialen Aufstiegs zu dominieren beginnen, mindestens in der deutschen Gesellschaft« (pp. 211-22). See also Schelsky, *Ortsbestimmung der deutschen Soziologie* (Düsseldorf, 1959). The cross-cutting of dimensions of stratification that is assumed here was observed in two studies by the Forschungsinstitut für Soziologie in Cologne. Most respondents perceive a multidimensional system of stratification, not a simple arrangement of a population according to one criterion, e.g., ownership or non-ownership of means of production. Cf. Scheuch, »Sozialprestige und Soziale Schichtung,« p. 76.

- 57) Schelsky, *Wandlungen der deutschen Familie in der Gegenwart*, pp. 103-4.
- 58) For the degree to which workers accept petit-bourgeois preferences, see Richard F. Hamilton, »Affluence and the Worker: The West German Case,« *American Journal of Sociology*, LXXI (1965), 144-52. The same tendency is noted also for American workers in Richard F. Hamilton, »The Behavior and Values of Skilled Workers,« in Arthur Shostack and William Gomberg (*pes.*), *Blue-Collar World* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1964). The data used in Hamilton's article for West German workers were collected in 1959, and they no longer describe present party alignments. I found recently that class voting among white-collar workers has declined and is declining still further.
- 59) Interest groups representing the »old middle class« and certain unqualified white-collar workers protested vehemently against »proletarianizing« the middle class. Actually, their »fears were primarily caused by a disappearance of status gaps between white and blue collar rather than by a decline in the status of lower-middle-class groups. According to Theodor Geiger, »Der Zweifrontenkampf (der Mittelschicht) wird nun immer deutlicher zu einem Kampf gegen den Klassenkampf ... Das Klassenprinzip, die Klassengesellschaft als Strukturmodell, ist der Mittelschicht ein Dorn im Auge« (*Die Klassengesellschaft im Schmelztiegel* (Köln, 1949)). For the importance of distance rather than mere position, see Edmund Goblot, *La barrière et le niveau* (Paris, 1930).
- 60) According to the findings of my »Bundestagswahlstudie,« a majority

of Germans think that one should be satisfied with one's station »in life, declare themselves to be more or less satisfied with themselves, and about 40 per cent maintain they would not choose to do anything else than they are doing now even if they could start all over. Of course, these responses only express »official« ideology, but then this is largely what lack of tension between social strata means.

- 61) This notion was explored more fully by Alexander Weinstock, in collaboration with Erwin K. Scheuch, »Stratification and the Locus of Blame,« a paper to be published by the *British Journal of Sociology*.
- 62) See Glass (ed.), *Social Mobility in Britain*, p. 74 *et passim*.
- 63) Confirmed by the data from the »Bundestagswahlstudie.«
- 64) Cf. McClelland (ed.), *The Roots of Consciousness*, p. 78.
- 65) One of the inherent weaknesses of the Weimar Republic was the hope of employers and unions alike to achieve a definite and final victory over each other. Employers' associations were willing to back practically any party that promised to crush the unions. Today, industrial legislation has blurred the line between labor and management, and unions work through both major parties. The SPD takes considerable pains to demonstrate its independence from unions, just as the Labour Party in Britain does now. In polls conducted during 1961 and 1962, a large majority of respondents named both unions and employers as having too much power; the only other institution or group similarly accused of being more powerful than it should be was the Catholic Church. This is, by the way, not a bad judgment of actual power in Germany.
- 66) A two-thirds majority thought in 1961 that the present was not the best time to live and mentioned the Wilhelmine period as the time when people were happiest (»Bundestagswahlstudie«). In principle, the tendency to glorify the »horseandbuggy days« has also been observed in American polls, but this tendency is stronger in Germany. Among the reasons given for preferring the pre-World War I days, one of the most important was the imagined absence of conflicts.
- 67) In Great Britain, the unions—partly in response to past abuses of the »Butty« system of sub-contracting—have followed a policy of reducing wage differentials between different categories of workers. Before World War I, an unskilled British laborer received 50 per cent of the salary of a skilled worker, while today he receives 85 per cent (this policy probably did not exactly tend to increase efficiency in British industry). Cf. T. Brennan, »The Working Class in British Social Structure^ in *Transactions of the Third World Congress of Sociology* (London, 1957), III, 106-12. A comparative investigation of the internal composition of white-collar groups in Western industrialized societies will be found in Hans Bayer (ed.), *Der Angestellte zwischen Arbeiter*

*schaft und Management* (Berlin, 1961), pp. 145-69. See also R. K. Burns, »The Comparative Economic Position of Manual and White-Collar Employees,« *Journal of Business*, XXVII (1954), 257-67; »Die Entwicklung der Angestelltegehälter seit dem Kriege im Vergleich zu den Arbeiterlöhnen,« *Der Angestellte* (January 10, 1954); Arthur Nikisch, *Zur Neuabgrenzung der Begriffe Angestellter und Arbeiter* (Berlin, 1959); Michel Crozier, »L'ambiguïté de la conscience de classe chez les employés et les petits fonctionnaires,« *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie* (January-June, 1955), pp. 78-97; K. Rieker, »Arbeitslohn, Angestellten- und Beamtengehälter,« *Arbeit und Sozialpolitik* (March, 1954). The most comprehensive investigations of the internal differentiation among white-collar workers in Germany are Otto Stammer (ed.), *Angestellte und Arbeiter in der Betriebspyramide* (Berlin, 1959); Karl Martin Bolte, »Angestelltenfrage im Lichte der Zahlen,« in Bayer (ed.), *Der Angestellte zwischen Arbeiterschaft und Management*, pp. 63-121. My general conclusion from a quite large number of studies is that with regard to internal differentiation within occupational groups Germany is getting to be less »European« and more »American.«

- 68) The »Bundestagswahlstudie« indicates that many Germans prize happiness in the family even before financial well-being. In a rating of importance of occurrences in several spheres, events in politics were rated just above events in sports and relations with neighbors, both being of exceedingly low importance. This conflicts with answers by the very same respondents as to why they considered the past preferable to the present and what was a cause for concern in the future: here political events were mentioned frequently.
- 69) See Ralf Dahrendorf, *Homo Sociologicus* (Köln, 1958). Dahrendorf in agreement with Schelsky and Adorno—perceives a choice between role obligations and individualism. The prevailing view in American role theory is that individuality expresses itself via interaction of personality and role requirements; the notion of a true individual as being free from role requirements would appear quite fantastic.
- 70) German schoolbooks present »politics« in a very formalistic sense only. Thus criticism of political parties or of the actions of the Bundestag is usually denounced as challenging the democratic order. Popular protests during the *Spiegel* case were similarly criticized in the name of democratic order, and something like a civil rights movement would be interpreted by German authorities as outright anarchy. The citizen has a »duty« to vote, may inform himself by reading the releases that the respective parties and groups deem proper for public consumption, and is encouraged to join a political party. In order to discuss politics; but from then on »orderliness« (*Ruhe*) is



enjoined upon him. Accordingly, Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture*, find Germans especially well informed by comparison with the British and the American electorate but lacking in democratic sentiments and general involvement in the polity.

- 71) Until the middle 1950's, the refugees were considered a potential new proletariat. For the prevailing views at that time, cf. Helmuth Schelsky (ed.), *Arbeitslosigkeit und Berufsnot der Jugend* (2 vols.; Köln, 1952). By now, most analysts agree that refugees have mostly regained their former status, with the exception of older white-collar workers. Cf. Hiddo M. Joller, *Zur Soziologie der Heimatvertriebenen und Flüchtlinge* (Köln, 1965). Consequently attempts to treat refugees as one voting bloc have been increasingly unsuccessful; the specific »refugee vote« is now probably less than 4 per cent.
- 72) The prevailing view of West German historians is now that by around 1930 powerful economic interest groups, the army, and a substantial part of the upper echelons of the civil service had decided that parliamentary democracy had failed and that some sort of authoritarian regime was needed. Nazism was definitely not what these groups had in mind, and Hitler was only accepted reluctantly, late, and after promises by him which—had he kept them—were to reduce him to the role of a mere vote-getter. See the documentation in Erich Matthias and Rudolf Morsey, *Das Ende der Parteien, 1933* (Düsseldorf, 1960); J. P. Mayer, *Max Weber and German Politics* (London, 1956), p. 48 *et passim*.
- 73) Hans Gerth, »The Nazi Party: Its Leadership and Compositions *American Journal of Sociology*, XLV (1940), 517-41; Daniel Lerner, *The Nazi Elite* (Stanford, 1951).
- 74) There is a very extensive literature about the background of those involved in the 20th of July resistance movement, and especially of the role of the traditional military elite in this belated attempt. See, e.g., Josef Foltmann and Hans Möller-Witten, *Opfergang der Generale* (3d ed.; Berlin, 1957). In many ways this movement can, of course, be understood as a return to 1932, an attempt to bring about the »proper« kind of authoritarian regime in Germany after Hitler betrayed the trust of many of his supporters. It was precisely the conservative and quite often antidemocratic character of this resistance movement that made its failure and the subsequent purges so important for changing the composition of the German elite.
- 75) This is my conclusion from four surveys of German elite opinion, none of which has been published so far. One of these, conducted in 1964 by the Forschungsinstitut für politische Wissenschaften of the University of Cologne, was specifically devoted to the topic of defense policy and included both representatives from the Bundestag in-

volved in military politics and leaders of the military. Investigations of procurement procedures published in a variety of popular journals and in the daily press also show that the German military apparatus is so far treated by politicians as a political asset and as an instrument to reward friends and buy allegiances. The importance of military considerations in German foreign-policy discussions is not the result of lobbying by generals but reflects the involvement of some deputies in strategic planning. Hellmuth Heye resigned late from his post as *Wehrbeauftragter* in 1964, he warned against the present sense of alienation of the military as a possible new source of danger.

- 76) Extensive, if somewhat less than well-organized, documentation of this fact will be found in Kurt Pritzkolet's books *Die neuen Herren* (Munich, 1955) and *Das kommandierte Wunder* (Munich, 1959).
- 77) Cf. Ralf Dahrendorf, »Recent Changes in the Class Structure of European Societies,« *Daedalus* (Winter, 1964).
- 78) The position of high-level civil servants still remains to be properly documented, for the official statistical sources are rather misleading here. Contrary to Anglo-Saxon tradition, German civil servants are members of the boards of trustees of the many corporations in which federal, state, or municipal authorities hold an interest, and they are far more numerous among elected officials (German civil servants can now be members of the legislative branch of government) than can readily be seen from handbooks. Thus Rudolf Wildenmann, »Der Hang zur Bürokraten-Demokratie,« *Deutsche Zeitung und Wirtschaftszeitung*, August 10, 1953, was able to show that the official designation »civil servant« vastly underrepresented the actual number of civil servants in parliament. See also Rudolf Wildenmann, *Macht und Konsens* (Frankfurt, 1963), pp. 140-50; Edinger, »Continuity and Change in the Background of German Decision Makers,«; Maxwell Knight, *The German Executive, 1890-1933* (Stanford, 1951).
- 79) Cf. Ralf Dahrendorf, »Eine neue deutsche Oberschicht?« *Die Neue Gesellschaft*, IX (1962), 18-31; Dahrendorf, »Ausbildung einer Elite,« *Der Monat*, No. 166 (1962), pp. 15-26; Louis Baudin, »Elite,« *Hand-Wörterbuch der Sozialwissenschaften*, III (1961), 198-202; Baudin, »Führungsschicht und Eliteproblem,« in *Jahrbuch der Rankegesellschaft* (Frankfurt, 1957); Helmuth Plessner, »Über die Elitebildung,« *Gewerkschaftliche Monatshefte*, VI (1955), 602-6; Hans P. Dreitzel, *Elitebegriff und Sozialstruktur* (Stuttgart, 1962).

A substantial part of this discussion is rather hilarious. For example: »Das Werden der Elite bleibt geheimnisvoll. Es muss ein plötzliches Aufbegehren der Persönlichkeit, ein angstvolles Bewusstsein der Einzigartigkeit der Person, ein Losreißen durch Selbstbekräftigung geben, die das bewirkt. Dem Elitemenschen wird sein Lohn in der Be-

trachtung seines Werkes, aber auch nur, wenn es ihn und andere zu erhöhen vermag, wenn es gleichermassen Grösse und Liebe ist« (Baudin, »Elite,« pp. 201-2). The dominant ideal seems to be that of a likeable »Übermensch,« a sort of intellectual »Green Giant« of American advertising fame.

The German notions of elite are quite similar to those prevailing in France. Cf. M. Clifford-Vaughn, »Some French Concepts of Elites,« *British Journal of Sociology*, XI (1961), 319-31.

- 80) This notion is further elaborated in Ronald Nuttall, Erwin K. Scheuch, and Chad Gordon, »Sanctions, Resources, and a Typology of Influentials,« a paper read at the meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society in Boston, April, 1965.
- 81) A lack of concordance between formal position and actual influence gets German authors rather excited. As examples, see Thomas Ellwein, »Die Machtstruktur in Westdeutschland,« *Die Neue Gesellschaft*, XII (1965), 852-59; E. Richert, *Macht ohne Mandat* (Köln, 1958).
- 82) Journalists appear to be more sensitive to this than sociologists, whose theoretical preconceptions tend to impair their vision. Cf. the following accounts by analytically inclined and respected journalists: Anthony Sampson, *Anatomy of Britain* (London, 1962); Raymond Isay *et al.*, »Les Elites Françaises,« *La Revue des Deux Mondes*, Nos. 12-17, 24 (1960); Rudolf Walter Leonhardt, *Xmal Deutschland*, esp. Chap. XXI.
- 83) The functionalistic theory of stratification in sociology has now made professionally respectable an old myth—namely, that those in top positions must be of superior qualification because they are in top positions. Modern societies are functionally differentiated, and the prime expression of functional differentiation is occupational diversification; occupations are then hierarchized according to presumed contribution to something that in professional jargon is often called system maintenance. Since top positions are positions of the greatest importance for this mythical system maintenance, it follows that only the best qualified are acceptable there. Since janitors and professors are *both* functionally important to the maintenance of societies (and universities), an additional criterion is introduced: competition for a particular job because of its attractiveness, which in turn derives from the status of the position. Importance is deduced from the status of the job (and not empirically from the degree of talent necessary to perform it), and thus the reasoning becomes nearly circular. Since functional differentiation is the organizing principle of modern societies, and because this differentiation expresses itself in diversification of formal positions, one who follows this line of reasoning

concludes that formal positions must define influence and that influence not coinciding with a position is deviant. Consequently, the most important part of an elite must be what German sociologists influenced by Dahrendorf call *Funktionselite*, the aggregate of the best in the most important positions. (This is merely a report about the prevailing sociological analysis of the elite in Germany; empirical assumptions and logic of argumentation are the property of the respective authors.)

- 84) On the basis of a critical survey of German literature on the elite, the prevailing type of classification is given by Schluchter as follows: 1) Functional elite (*Funktionselite*); 2) norm-setting elite (*Wertelite*); 3) »high society« (*Repräsentationselite*). See Wolfgang Schluchter, »Der Elitebegriff als soziologische Kategorie,« *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, XV (1963), 233-56.

Underlying our own subsequent discussion is the following notion. A functionally differentiated social system that cannot rely mainly on tradition requires: positions that are legitimated to represent social norms; a reward system for differential effectiveness in the performance of socially valued activities; and a definite decision structure (in the sense that the decisions are accepted as either legitimate or requiring acquiescence as a matter of prudence). These different functions may be represented by different sets of persons. Here I am primarily interested in those sets of persons who control decisions and in other sets of persons (primarily those representing social norms) insofar as they sanction decisions. Thus the theme here is differential power.

- 85) Wolfgang Zapf, *Wandlungen der Deutschen Elite* (Munich, 1965).  
86) See the methodological appendix, *ibid.*, for further details.  
87) A number of results are reported in a cover story by *Der Spiegel*, Vol. XIX, No. 25 (June 16, 1965), pp. 44-57, and in a public relations report, »Führungskräfte,« *Spiegel Dokumentation* (June, 1965).  
88) The Cologne sociologists' 1965 study was the final part of the surveys of the elite in England, France, and Germany that Daniel Lerner has supervised since 1953.

In choosing their methods, the research teams from Cologne turned to the literature on community power structure because empirical study of leadership groups has developed farthest in that field. About 500 »Community« reports have been published within one decade, and this growth has been accompanied by a continuous and rather violent debate about method. The three chief approaches are: 1) the reputational technique, based on what its detractors call a public opinion poll on power; 2) the positional approach, postulating an identity between formal office and actual influence; 3) the issue approach,

a technique in which first a number of issues are selected and then those involved in decisions on these issues are identified. Each of these techniques is especially suited to a particular organization of the elite, the reputational technique being most effective with oligarchies and the issue approach being most suited when a high degree of differentiation of influence exists. Each method by itself is insensitive to erroneous postulates about reality.

Lately, combinations of various techniques have been designed, and the approach chosen in the Cologne survey of the German elite is based on one such technique that we developed for the study of leadership groups in American urban areas. Further information on the methods developed in this field, especially experiences with the insufficiency of the positional approach, can be found in *American Sociological Review*, XXVII (December, 1962), 838-54.

See also E. Baltzell, »Elite and Upper Class Indexes in Metropolitan America,« in Bendix and Lipset (eds.), *Class, Status, and Power*; Robert Dahl, *Who Governs?* (New Haven, 1961); D. Antonio and H. Ehrlich (eds.), *Power and Democracy* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1961); H. Ehrlich, »The Reputational Approach to the Study of Community Power,« *American Sociological Review*, XXVI (1961), 926-27; Floyd Hunter, *Top Leadership--U.S.A.* (Chapel Hill, 1959); N. Polsby, »Three Problems in the Analysis of Community Power,« *American Sociological Review*, XXIV (1959), 796-803; R. Schulze and L. Blumberg, »The Determination of Power Elites,« *American Journal of Sociology*, LXIII (1957), 290-96.

- 89) Personal communication by Germany's leading agency for the recruitment of top management.
- 90) Sampson, *Anatomy of Britain*, pp. 195-217. See also Mark Abrams, »British Elite Attitudes and the European Common Market,« *Public Opinion Quarterly*, XXIX (1965), 236-46; Abrams finds that 45 per cent of the British elite (*Who's Who*) have gone to either Oxford or Cambridge. The French equivalent of the British pattern—attendance of a handful of public schools plus enrollment in certain colleges at Oxford and Cambridge—consists of study at one of the »grandes écoles«; see David Granick, *The European Executive* (New York, 1962), Chap. V. For an evaluation of a university education by German businessmen, see Heinz Hartmann, *Education for Business Leadership* (Paris, 1955). An increasing emphasis on education as a prerequisite for top management has been found by Lloyd Warner and N. H. Martin, *Industrial Man: Businessmen and Business Organizations* (New York, 1959).
- 91) This might be interpreted as actually showing a higher level of formal education for German businessmen than is true for those of other

countries. However, the stages in the educational systems of Anglo-Saxon countries and of Germany are not comparable; furthermore, the doctorate in Germany has high prestige value in business, resulting in many (successful) requests for honorary doctorates, while the reverse tends to be true in the U.K. and in England. One cannot infer from the number of doctorates a multiple of that number having the equivalent of the B.A. degree. If top business leaders in Germany have a university education, they tend to go further in academic work than their counterparts in the U.K.; but the percentage of those going to college at all is lower than in the U.S.

- 92) All of the elite studies in which this could be checked agree on a »western« trend. Cf. Zapf, *Wandlungen der Deutschen Elite*, p. 172.
- 93) Material on the social base of the French elite may be found in A. Girard, *La réussite sociale en France* (Paris, 1961); J. L'Homme, *Le grande bourgeoisie au pouvoir* (Paris, 1960); Mattei Dogan, »Quelques aperçus sur l'évolution de la stratification des élites en France,« in *Transactions of the Fifth World Congress of Sociology* (London, 1964), III, 275-82.
- 94) This is the definition used in the Cologne index of social status. See Scheuch and Riischemeyer, »Scaling Social Status in Western Germany.«
- 95) Nearly two-thirds of all elite members do not hold and have never held public office. This is in marked contrast to the elite in the U.S. If public offices are held, there is often a progression from local office to national office, although nearly half of those in public office appear to have gone directly for an office of nationwide relevance.
- 96) In the U.S., lengthy military service tends to be associated with conservatism among elite personnel and with a greater receptivity toward military considerations. Reputedly in former times this was also true for German reserve officers, so that the present situation appears to be a break both with Germany's own past and with conditions in other Western countries.
- 97) I base this interpretation on a variety of sources, among them Sampson, *Anatomy of Britain*; Pritzkolet, *Das kommandierte Wunder*; *Der Spiegel's* survey; and information received from the management consultant M. Schubart.
- 98) These figures are based on an analysis by the research staff of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in 1963. See also *Der Spiegel*, Vol. XIX, No. 25 (June 16, 1965), pp. 44-57.
- 99) In 1960, 73 of the Conservative deputies had been educated at just one public school, Eton. Former Prime Minister Macmillan is reported to have remarked ironically: »Mr. Attlee had three old Etonians in his cabinet, and I have 6; things are going twice as good under the

Conservatives.« Lord Keynes, George Orwell, Harold Macmillan, Aldous Huxley, and Lord Hausham were all »old Etonians.« The strength of sentiment that attending a particular public school conveys may be inferred from the following statement, which was by no means meant to be ironic. On being called upon to form a cabinet, Baldwin wrote: »One of my first thoughts was that it should be a government of which Harrow should not be ashamed.« Five members of Baldwin's subsequent cabinet had graduated from Harrow. Cf. Sampson, *Anatomy of Britain*, pp. 175 ff.

- 100) This is also emphasized by Heinz Hartmann as a result of an empirical study of German management. See his *Funktionale Autorität* (Stuttgart, 1964), and *Authority and Organization in German Management* (Princeton, 1959).
- 101) Chancellor Erhard, for one, misses no opportunity to express his dismay at the existence of pressure groups. An essential part of his *formierte Gesellschaft* is the rejection of divisive groups bargaining directly with each other at the expense of the general public. Thus dislike of pressure groups is now an official policy, although so far this has not noticeably influenced government actions.
- 102) The most famous elite boarding schools in Germany are the academy in Salem and in general the Waldorf Schulen. In addition, there are further elite schools of regional fame, notably those run by Jesuits.
- 103) There is of course a prestige hierarchy among German universities. See, e.g., the rankings listed by Leonhardt, *Xmal Deutschland*, pp. 152-56. However, there is no over-all »leading« German university, for almost any university may lead in a specific field of study. The postwar surge of big-city universities has further leveled the relative standing between universities.
- 104) In the absence of a general and unchallenged status superiority, and in view of the ambivalence toward the term and the traditional notion of elite, there are attempts to demonstrate elite status via some formal recognition. In declining order of effectiveness, the invitation lists of the *Bundespräsident*, service medals, and diplomatic honors are the chief indicators. At present 290 Germans have acquired the title of honorary consuls and represent a host of smaller nations in exchange for bearing the cost of operation of such a consulate themselves. Cf. »Honorar Konsuln,« *Capital*, Vol. IV, No. 8 (August, 1965), pp. 35-42. Characteristically, persons of somewhat indeterminate degrees of influence vie for such symbols.
- 105) Recently, even the top of the German status hierarchy, the *Ordinarius* (full professor at a university) has come in for criticism, and the grounds are in part an alleged lack of discrimination and taste in everyday life.

- 106) There appears to be a strong aversion among those with power and especially of those distinguished by accomplishments against being counted as members of »high society.« Repeated attempts in Germany to establish occasions and places where high society might gather have failed precisely at that moment when the popular press dubbed them as society affairs. Examples of such failures are the debutante balls in some German cities (notably Munich) and the *Presseball* in Bad Godesberg. A recent publication by the journalist Gregor von Rezzori successfully stuck the label of *Schickeria* on these attempts, and this term in effect means »demimonde.« (See »Idiotenführer durch die deutsche Gesellschaft,« the series name for a number of separately titled volumes written by von Rezzori and published in Hamburg over the past few years.) A parallel trend—though different in details—has been observed by Cleveland Amory, *Who Killed Society?* (New York, 1960).
- 107) Segmentation may be conceptualized as a form of »indifference between system elements«—this time however not between levels of a social system but between sectors. A high indifference between system elements at different levels means a high compatibility of the same social organization with different political organizations. High indifference between system elements at the same level—or high segmentation—does not primarily indicate high compatibility with different political systems so much as it does compatibility with different political aims and policies. If this is true, the usual segmentation should have some major consequences for assessment of future political developments in Germany. Again it should prove difficult to transfer some well-established propositions from England or the U.S. to Germany, in spite of strong similarities of social structure in other respects.
- 108) This is my conclusion after two elite surveys in the United States. See also Hunter, *Top Leader ship--U.S. A.* A similar conclusion can be inferred from the survey of data provided by Robert Presthus, *Men at the Top* (New York, 1964), and from Antonio and Ehrlich (eds.), *Power and Democracy*. In spite of its conspiratorial bias, even C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York, 1956), is not really incompatible with this assumption. My later description of communication patterns and of arrangements across elite sectors tallies quite well with much of Mills's argument—of course minus the assumption of a monolithic and rationally purposeful combination of a few major financial interests.
- 109) The radio and television networks are by and large organized by *Länder*, and this means their headquarters are located in the regional capitals. Radio and television networks with a considerable surplus



income are the modern German equivalent of the feudal *maecenas* in more than one way. Consequently, a considerable cultural life tends to cluster around them. Even the newspapers are regional and middle-sized with a few exceptions. The average German newspaper serves several counties surrounding one central city and sells about 100,000-200,000 copies a day—with a maximum of about 450,000 for one paper in the Ruhr district. Sometimes these papers achieve a modicum of national importance; examples are the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, and *Frankfurter Rundschau*.

- 110) The national average of students who are organized in any kind of club, fraternity, or association is a bit less than 30 per cent. Somewhat less than half of those who belong are members of one of the more conservative fraternities. Thus there has not been a comeback of the type of student fraternities which cultivated extreme nationalism and resistance to democracy.
- 111) Leonhardt, *X-mal Deutschland*, pp. 157-63.
- 112) The bankruptcy of the self-made automobile producer Carl F. W. Borgward was widely commented on as »unjust.« Editorials argued that the banks should have helped Borgward since as his own chief designer he was a creative engineer, even though he was undoubtedly not a very convincing businessman. By way of contrast, the downfall of another self-made man, Willy H. Schlieker, was not lamented, for Schlieker was considered »merely« a risk-taking businessman. Contrary to many opinions abroad, it is not bad as such to be a self-made man in Germany, provided one has »deserved« success. This emphasis on expertise may possibly be overdone for the sake of clarity. However, it is still not common in Germany to be fired as a manager for lack of success, provided one tried hard and with the best knowledge available. And elite members do treat each other differently depending on whether the partner in question is credited with professional competence or just with power.
- 113) Cf. Erwin K. Scheuch and Rudolf Wildenmann (eds.), *Zur Soziologie der Wahl* (Opladen, 1965).
- 114) Max Weber's theory of bureaucratic organization may be understood as an ideal-typical reflection of these norms. See Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (new ed.; Tübingen, 1956), Vol. I.
- 115) The norm of a paternalistic relationship to subordinates was one of the chief obstacles against the co-determination laws regulating labor-management affairs. Quite rightly it was felt that the particularistic relationship of the leader-follower type would be impaired by outsiders (i.e., delegates of the national unions) attempting to represent personnel from numerous enterprises. See Hartmann, *Authority and Organization in German Management!*, Mark van de Vail, »The

Worker's Councils in Western Europe: Aims and Results,« *Proceedings of the Seventeenth Annual Meeting of the Industrial Relations Research Association* (1965), pp. 1-12; Deutsches Industrieinstitut, *Bibliographie zur Mitbestimmung und Betriebsverfassung* (Köln, 1963); Hans Jürgen Teuteberg, *Geschichte der industriellen Mitbestimmung in Deutschland* (Tübingen, 1961).

- 116) See Dahrendorf (ed.), *Gesellschaft und Freiheit*. Chap. XII, on the German evaluation of business. These sentiments are shared in the population at large, where the single most resented group are businessmen, and the most resented activity is accumulating money by selling (Scheuch, »Sozialprestige und soziale Schichtung,« p. 78 *et passim*).
- 117) In opinion surveys, a majority of respondents are found to believe that most political issues could be settled by referring them to experts. Many respondents assume that if all politicians had the necessary measure of good will and would free themselves of special interests, »just« solutions could be found for most issues confronting the polity. Thus political disagreements are largely viewed as unnecessary and the result of moral deficiency in the politicians.
- 118) The distinction between facts and value judgment that is used here follows the prevailing conceptual distinction in the philosophy of science. Value statements can be treated as facts when they become objects of analysis. If they are simple declarations of preferences, value statements are, of course, merely informative about the speaker and not about the objects they presumably refer to: in this way, value statements may be argued in a metalanguage. The term »technical question« refers to so-called technological value judgments. These are pronouncements by experts that a certain course of action or a certain state of affairs is preferable to another one. Insofar as such statements imply a goal and recommend a way of achieving it, the recommendation can be rephrased as an assertion about a means-end, or functional, relationship and within these limitations is a legitimate part of an expert's scope of judgment.
- 119) This hesitancy to synthesize one's own opinion is true only for areas where legitimate authorities are believed to exist. For the subject matter of the social sciences such hesitancy is not noticeable.
- 120) In general, the level of information about current affairs in German society is rather high. In the international citizenship survey, Almond and Verba, *The Civic Culture*, found a German cross-section somewhat better informed than a British one and considerably more so than an American sample.
- 121) Interlocking directorates are a pattern both inside and outside business. Thus the president of the board of directors of the *Dresdner*

*Bank* is a member of the board of trustees of the *Metallgesellschaft AG*, and in turn the president of the board of directors of the *Metallgesellschaft AG* is a member of the board of trustees of the *Dresdner Bank*. Conflict-of-interest positions are quite frequent in the German elite, but they are not admitted to cause a conflict of interest. After all, a German expert is presumably serving not interest but truth. The very notion of conflict of interest is insulting to the German elite.

- 122) The list of invitees to the *Bergedorfer Gesprächskreis* provides a rough notion of the scope of the German elite (applying a liberal definition), except for politics and business. Cf. their *Proceedings*, published by R. von Becker Verlag, Hamburg.
- 123) The work of this *Wissenschaft und Politik* group is published in Ulrich Lohmar (ed.), *Deutschland 1975* (Munich, 1965).
- 124) The *Abendländische Akademie* has had a number of prominent politicians who sometimes seem to find themselves in common political action. Some important members were Heinrich von Brentano, then Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic, and Richard Jaeger, Minister of Justice in the second cabinet formed by Erhard (who, by the way, appears to prefer Salazar to Franco).
- 125) A summary of this debate is given in Erwin K. Scheuch, »Drei Fragen an die Demoskopien,« *Die Welt*, October 1, 1965, p. 7.
- 126) Already in the spring of 1965, the differences between the results of several polls became so puzzling that the Committee on Methodology of the German Sociological Society appointed a commission to study the pre-election polls. However, the Committee was advised by some pollsters to postpone the work until after the election.
- 127) Lack of contact at the community level distinguishes the German elite from the American. In America, in addition to clubs and socializing, various civic activities bring members from different elite sectors together; in Germany civic activities involving elite members are not organized locally. The varied organizations and informal groupings for elite members that were mentioned earlier are mostly national in scope.
- 128) The concept of reference group is used here in accordance with Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (2d ed.; Glencoe, 1936, 1957), pp. 225-386.
- 129) With reference to the American emphasis on equality, see Lipset, *The First New Nation*, pp. 110-22 *et passim*. Of course, to a lesser degree equality is also the »official« German ideal, although conservative leaders uphold beside it the notion of *Leistungsgemeinschaft* (i.e., a community of those who are differentiated in status by ability).
- 130) An indicator for the degree to which open conflict exists is the number of civil suits that elite members file against each other. Rare is the

- German elite member who at any one time is not involved in some kind of suit for damages, libel, or slander. Formal court action has to substitute for more informal mechanisms of social control.
- 131) For further information, see the contribution by the head of the Office for the Prosecution of Nazi Crimes, Fritz Bauer, »Justiz als Symptom,« in Richter (ed.), *Bestandsaufnahme*, pp. 221-32.
  - 132) The changing notions of public opinion in Germany and specifically of the role of the »masses« in political process have been documented by Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (Neuwied, 1962).
  - 133) Ever since the founding of the Federal Republic there has been a popular majority for reintroducing capital punishment; for at least a decade a majority of the population has advocated an end to all investigations about Nazi crimes; a majority is against foreign aid and against social-welfare payments to foreign workers. These majorities were reported by opinion polls, and occasionally a politician did try to play on the sentiments recorded here (Konrad Adenauer for one), but by and large politicians have resisted this temptation. The authors of the Basic Law deliberately excluded plebiscitarian elements and in doing so referred to the experiences with direct democracy in the Weimar Republic.
  - 134) The first case (democracy as a brainchild of a destructive liberalism) has been argued by some members of the *Abendländische Akademie*; the second position (Germany needs a German form of democracy) is often argued by those who believe that the German character is ill-suited for self-government. The similarity in argumentation to some of the postwar American analyses of German society is obvious.
  - 135) This uneasiness erupted into an issue during the last election campaign, when Chancellor Erhard vilified writers and artists who did volunteer service for Willy Brandt. For the German notions of intellectuals, see M. Rainer Lepsius, »Kritik als Beruf: Zur Soziologie der Intellektuellen,« *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, XVI (1964), 75-91.
  - 136) For an analysis of earlier conditions, see Theodor Geiger, *Demokratie ohne Dogma: Die Gesellschaft zwischen Pathos und Nüchternheit* (Munich, 1963).
  - 137) Louis Edinger, »Posttotalitarian Leadership: Elites in the German Federal Republic,« *American Political Science Review* (March, 1960).