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The Sources of German Student Unrest 1815-1848 [1974]

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Abstract: »Die Ursachen der Entstehung einer Bewegung unter den deutschen Studenten 1815-1848«. The student revolt of 1968 inspired historical investigations for its historical antecedents, one of which was the radical movement of the *Burschenschaft*. This was a national and liberal association of German students, founded at the end of the Napoleonic wars, repressed by Metternich's reaction, which resurfaced in the 1820s, was once again persecuted in the following decade, only to reemerge as a progressive democratic challenge before and during the revolution of 1848. In contrast to older organizational and ideological approaches, this essay looks more critically at the evolution of student subculture. Moreover, on the basis of enrollment statistics and matriculation registers, it explores the overcrowding crisis of the 1830s, the diversification of social origins of the student body and the specific motivations of the radicals. Offering a social explanation of activism, the article proposes an intermediary framework of radicalism, stressing "a value gap, political repression, institutional malfunction, and social frustration."

Keywords: student radicalism, *Burschenschaft*, Napoleonic Wars, Metternich's reaction, revolution of 1848.

Confronted with the student challenge, journalistic and scholarly commentators have tended to interpret campus dissent as intensified generational conflict,¹ deepened identity crisis,² or increased protest proneness of individual personalities.³ But within the process of modernization and industrialization, such socio-

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¹ S. N. Eisenstadt, *From Generation to Generation* (New York 1956); and *Modernization: Protest and Change* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1966), 26ff. Cf. also Lewis S. Feuer, *The Conflict of Generations: The Character and Significance of Student Movements* (New York 1969) for an attempt to apply this concept to different historical examples, perceptively criticized by Richard Flacks in *J. Social Hist.* 4 (1970), 141ff.

² Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York 1963, 2nd ed.), 247ff; *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (New York 1968); and his most recent ideas summarized in "Reflections on the Dissent of Contemporary Youth," *Daedalus* (Winter 1970) 154ff.

³ Kenneth Keniston, "The Sources of Student Dissent," *J. Social Issues* (1967); *Young Radicals: Notes on Committed Youth* (New York 1968) and for the further development of his concepts cf. *Youth and Dissent: The Rise of a New Opposition* (New York 1971).

psychological explanations raise the historical problem of the breakdown of communal and corporate youth culture and its challenge by a critical counter-culture characterized by different values, customs, and organizations. Facilitating the transition from family (dependence) to work (independence) in a variety of group experiences, traditional student associations, such as social fraternities, religious and artistic circles, athletic clubs and intellectual debating societies, socialize the future elite toward adult roles and form a safety valve for sporadic outbursts of violence, sexual license, etc. But at certain junctures, opposition groups arise, based on voluntary participation and anti-authoritarian ideals, propagating a consciousness radically disaffiliated from the mainstream assumptions of the grown-up world. The primary modes of such protest behavior tend to be either cultural – i.e., bohemian life-style rebellion – or political – i.e., radical activism channeled into movements advocating revolution or reaction. In the perspective of 19th century Europe, the basic conceptual question must therefore be reformulated: Why does youth suddenly shift from traditional culture to counterculture and back?⁴

Such a comparative analysis of individual instances of the transition from communal-corporate to modern universalistic youth groups should allow further refinement of present explanations of youthful propensity to act as vanguard of change.⁵ The objection that students as transitory beings possess only a vague sense of solidarity but no class consciousness and that protest involves merely a committed minority activating a larger passive constituency need not be fatal, since it is precisely the increase in strength of endemic radicalism and the creation of a receptive audience which needs to be explored. The first modern student movement, the German *Burschenschaft* of the *Vormärz* (pre-1848 revolution era) is an excellent case in point, since it was the ambiguous ancestor of both the volkish protest of Weimar (Nazi) and the extra-parliamentary opposition of Bonn (APO).⁶ Because 19th century university archives permit

⁴ Theodore Roszak, *Counter-Culture* (New York 1969); Frank Parkin, "Adolescent Status and Student Politics," *JCH* 5 (1970), 144ff; and Philip Abrams, "Rites de Passage: The Conflict of Generations in Industrial Society," *ibid.*, 175ff, all emphasize the switch from traditional to counterculture as the critical analytical problem.

⁵ Although the authoritative collection edited by S. M. Lipset, in *Daedalus* (1968), called "Students and Politics" (hardcover edition: *Students in Revolt* [New York 1970]), and the special issue of the *Political Science Quart.* of June 1969 dealing with student rebellion stress crosscultural comparison, they drastically slight the problem of time perspective. Historians themselves are to blame for this state of affairs, since most of their contributions such as those collected in *JCH* 5, no. 1 (1970), under the title "Generations in Conflict" are naive in terms of social science methodology. Cf. Phyllis H. Stock, "Students versus the University in pre-World War One Paris," *FHS* 8 (1971), 93ff, and Jesse G. Lutz, "The Chinese Student Movement of 1945-1949," *J. of Asian Studies*, 21 (1971), 89ff.

⁶ Jürgen Schwarz, "Die deutsche Studentenschaft in der Zeit von 1918 bis 1923 und ihre Stellung zur Politik," Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Freiburg (1962); and the literature cited by Wolfgang Zorn, "Student Politics in the Weimar Republic," *JCH* 5 (1970), 128ff.

neither the construction of psychological linkages for individuals or groups, nor a satisfactory re-creation of family structures, the present essay will limit itself to analyzing the relative dominance of certain ideological, political, institutional, and social impulses in the development of the German student movement. This inductive investigation of clusters of shifting factors seeks to establish an intermediary historical framework which systematizes the sources of student protest in preindustrial contexts and provides a theoretical counterpoint to explanations of current dissent.⁷

Although attempting to generalize about the prevailing pattern at all German institutions on the basis of an extensive older Burschenschaft literature this case study will draw most heavily on the documentary sources of Heidelberg and Bonn.⁸

I

Self-conscious and organized student unrest arose first in Central Europe because the peculiar sequence of modernization endowed the mandarin elite with a prestigious influence, duplicated only where change was similarly imported from the outside. Rather than self-generated, as in the West, reform demands were raised by a bureaucratic intelligentsia, imitating foreign models, in a largely traditional society which possessed neither national unity, participatory political structures, nor more than feeble beginnings of industrialization. The collapse of the anachronistic Holy Roman Empire and Napoleon's disastrous defeat of Frederickian Prussia presented the reformers around Baron von Stein with the opportunity to modernize army, state, economy, and social structure with a large transfusion of Liberal ideas. Though neither breaking Hohenzollern absolutism nor Junker dominance, these Prussian reforms facilitated the

⁷ For attempts to develop a historical model of youthful unrest, cf. Richard Flacks, "Social and Cultural Meanings of Student Revolt," in E. E. Sampson and H. A. Korn, eds., *Student Activism and Protest* (San Francisco 1970), 117ff, and John R. Gillis, "Youth and History: An Introduction" unpublished paper, Princeton Univ. (1970). Cf. also Peter Loewenberg, "The Psychological Origins of the Youth Cohort," *AHR* 76 (1971), 1457ff.

⁸ For a comprehensive list of the older scholarship, see W. Erman and E. Horn, *Bibliographie der deutschen Universitäten* (Leipzig and Berlin), 596ff. See also L. Petry "Deutsche Forschungen nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg zur Geschichte der Universitäten," *Vierteljahrshefte für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 46 (1959), 145-203; Herman Haupt, ed., *Quellen und Darstellungen zur Geschichte der Burschenschaft und der deutschen Einheitsbewegung* (Heidelberg 1910), 1ff. The actual history of the Burschenschaft is treated by Paul Wentzcke, *Vor- und Frühgeschichte bis zu den Karlsbader Beschlüssen* (Heidelberg 1919), VI; G. Heer, *Die Demagogenzeit: Von den Karlsbader Beschlüssen bis zum Frankfurter Wachensturm, 1820-1833* (Frankfurt 1927), X; and *Die Zeit des Progresses: Von 1833 bis 1859* (Frankfurt 1929), XI, 97ff. Cf. also Paul Wentzcke, ed. *Darstellung und Quellen zur Geschichte der deutschen Einheitsbewegung im neunzehnten und zwanzigsten Jahrhundert* (Heidelberg 1957), 1ff.

emergence of a self-conscious *Bildungsbürgertum*, striving for equality with the noblesse of birth through education. With this social purpose, Wilhelm von Humboldt fundamentally restructured German higher learning and replaced the practical Enlightenment encyclopedism with a new ideal of *Bildung* (cultivation) and a revolutionary ethos of *Wissenschaft* (research). In practical terms this departure from tradition to innovation meant abandoning the cameralist preparation of public officials in favor of a neo-hellenistic idealism. The philosophical vision of Fichte, Schleiermacher, and Schelling endowed the intellectual with a new exalted duty: through the pursuit of knowledge the scholar should purify the state into a *Rechts-* and *Kulturstaat*. This conjuncture of the onset of modernization with the rise of the educated bourgeoisie and a heightened academic mission provided fertile soil for the growth of student unrest.⁹

Since the Humboldtian redefinition of university purpose did little to change their actual role, the students formed a movement in 1815 to renew their own life and customs themselves. Because of intermittent adult repression, this *Burschenschaft* evolved in three fairly discontinuous stages, differing in modes of inspiration, organization, and action. The initial Christian-German *Schwärmer* (visionary enthusiasts) phase largely stemmed from an acute rejection of Restoration values and served as the ideological matrix of subsequent dissent by formulating a countercreed. Those who spontaneously came together at Protestant north-central German universities were members of an age cohort, marked by the generational event of the Napoleonic Wars, in which early defeat tended to weaken the authority of the parents and later victory in turn proved the superiority of national and liberal ideas. As the first age group which had been taught the neo-humanist ideals as well as the patriotic values of the *Nationalpädagogogen*, they volunteered in considerable numbers to fight against Napoleon. Matured before their time through being freed from parental supervision and being allowed to act out their heroic dreams, the *Kriegsfreiwillige* on their return gathered together in reading groups or joined Jahn's teutonic *Turner* (gymnasts) in order to steel their minds and bodies for future struggles for the fatherland. More than one-half of the founders of the student movement were sons of the educated bourgeoisie, a higher percentage than in

⁹ The founding writings are in Ernst Anrich, ed., *Die Idee der deutschen Universität* (Darmstadt 1956); Eduard Spranger, *Wilhelm von Humboldt und die Reform des Bildungswesens* (Tübingen 1910 and 1960); René König, *Vom Wesen der deutschen Universität* (Berlin 1935, 1970). See also Mohammed Rassem, "Die problematische Stellung der Studenten im Humboldtschen System," *Studien und Berichte der katholischen Akademie Bayern* 44 (1968), 15-35. For the social transformation, cf. Hans Gerth, *Die sozialgeschichtliche Lage der bürgerlichen Intelligenz um die Wende des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt 1935); W. H. Bruford, *Germany in the Eighteenth Century: The Social Background of the Literary Revival* (London 1935), and the other literature cited in my paper, "Menschenbildung as Bourgeois Ideal: The Social Role of the Neo-Humanist Prussian University" (Princeton Univ. 1970).

the general student body, and while nobility and commercial middle class constituted approximately the same share in both groups, the lower middle class was underrepresented in the Burschenschaft.¹⁰ Although profoundly restorative in their longing for purity and community, these students nevertheless wholeheartedly embraced the modernizing values of the adult reformers and (after the French defeat) clashed sharply with the majority of their elders, who were striving for postwar and counterrevolutionary stability. Inspired by the anti-Napoleonic rhetoric of Schiller, Arndt, Jahn and Körner, the *Urburschenschaft* founded at Jena embraced a liberal constitutionalism and propagated an anti-particularist German nationalism according to the motto “honor, freedom, fatherland.” Since the students’ impetus was primarily ideological, the constitution of the *Allgemeine deutsche Burschenschaft* (the national organization created in 1818) called for reform by individual change of consciousness through “the christian-germanic training of all spiritual and physical talents for the service of the nation.”¹¹

On the level of student life and customs, the rejection of tradition was equally decisive. The overriding aim of the movement was to abolish the corporate obscurantism of ancient *Burschenfreiheit*, an informal freedom won from the authorities which had turned to such riotous license that the Prussian king in 1798 had to threaten severe penalties against further excesses. Except for a brief flowering of Masonic orders (Enlightenment oriented) and literary societies (their *Sturm und Drang* counterparts), German student sub-culture had been dominated by the drinking and dueling *Comment* (written custom) of the *Landmannschaften* (ancient regional fraternities). Glorifying in an adolescent

¹⁰ This characterization of the founding cohort is based on 157 Burschenschaftler at Tübingen, 1815-1817, named by Georg Schmidgall in “Tübinger Burschenschaftslisten, 1816-1936,” in P. Wentzke, ed., *Burschenschaftslisten* (Heidelberg 1942) and checked against A. Bürk and W. Wille, eds., *Die Matrikeln der Universität Tübingen* (Tübingen 1953), III, and below, n. 28. Günther Steiger’s attempt to quantify the Burschenschaftler of the Wartburgfest in Max Steinmetz, ed., *Geschichte der Universität Jena 1548/58-1958* (Jena 1958), I, 345f, II, 526ff, remains rudimentary. Cf. also F. Gunther Eyck, “The Political Theories and Activities of the German Academic Youth between 1815 and 1819,” *JMH* 27 (1955), 26ff. Lewis Feuer’s chapter, “Suicidalism and Terrorism in the German Student Movement,” in his *Conflict of Generations*, 54f, is a foil for his contemporary phobias and a late fruit of the Luther to Bismarck to Hitler school of German historiography.

¹¹ P. Wentzke, *Geschichte der Deutschen Burschenschaft*, vol. 1, passim; H. Haupt, “Die Verfassungsurkunde der Jenaischen Burschenschaft vom 12. Juni, 1815,” in *Quellen und Darstellungen*, I, 114ff; E. Dietz, “Die Teutonia und die Allgemeine Burschenschaft zu Halle,” in *ibid.*, II, 215ff; G. Heer, “Verfassung und Ziele der alten Marburger Burschenschaft,” in *ibid.*, I, 211ff, and Eduard Voigt, *Der Anteil der Berliner Studentenschaft an der allgemeinen deutschen Burschenschaft bis zu ihrer ersten Katastrophe* (Berlin 1914). For the evolution of the constitution of the Burschenschaft, cf. G. Heer, “Die ältesten Urkunden zur Geschichte der allgem. dt. Burschenschaft,” in *Quellen und Darstellungen* XIII, 61ff, including the famous nineteen points to be adopted by all chapters and the official report of the first *Burschentag*. Since romantic nationalism is the best-known feature of the Burschenschaft in the West, the present essay makes no attempt to belabor the obvious.

Pennalismus (combining the negative aspects of school rituals) students had developed the types of the gross *Rennomist*, a mixture of boorish bragging and Junker fighting, and the modish aristocratic and frenchified *Stutzer*. Against the authoritarian organization and social exclusiveness of the fraternities – a microcosm of absolutist society – the Burschenschaften proposed a new kind of student association, embracing all “honorable students” without regard to regional origin or social distinction in a model for a future German state, based on the “equality and freedom of the flourishing people.” Rejecting whoring, fighting, and running up debts as immature, radical students strove to “maintain and strengthen national custom and power, spiritual and physical justice, honor and equality of rights among all Burschen as long as they uphold Wissenschaft, law, morality, fatherland and especially their estate.” Breaking with the feudal and absolutist spirit of the fraternities, this program called for the emancipation of the student from schoolboy to citizen of the academic community, reflecting the larger transition from *Untertan* to *Bürger*. In practical terms, Burschenschaftler strove for chastity and severe restraints against dueling and gambling, i.e., “the moral regeneration of student life.” Through gymnastics and fencing, through scientific discussion groups and a less compulsive form of recreation, they sought to offer a positive alternative. Nevertheless, the departure from the past was incomplete, and since many former Landsmannschaftler were founding fathers of the Burschenschaft, a sectarian teutonic, anti-Semitic romanticism colored their life style. Hence the Urburschenschaft was a transitional creature, striving for a democratic form of student association and government but incapable of transcending a century-old tradition in all respects.¹²

Despite flamboyant rhetoric, the practical actions of the Burschenschaftler were less than momentous. The notorious Wartburg Festival of 1817, commemorating both the tricentennial of the Reformation and the Leipzig victory over Napoleon, was largely a fraternal and religious demonstration of the students’ “dedication to truth and justice” and their patriotic longing for “the unification of Germany” frustrated by the Congress of Vienna. Only the programmatic denunciation of the authorities both with the restoration governments and in the press, turned the Turners’ (Jahn’s gymnasts’) symbolic burning of a Prussian corset, a Hessian wig, and an Austrian corporal’s staff, together with the works of the intellectual defenders of the *status quo*, into a controversial political event. The radical manifesto “Principles and Decisions,” which was never officially adopted for fear of jeopardizing future bureaucratic careers, urged the study of “morality, politics, and history” rather than direct action in order to

¹² G. Heer, “Die ältesten Urkunden zur Geschichte der allgemeinen deutschen Burschenschaft,” in *Quellen und Darstellungen* XIII, 61ff. Cf. also the vivid portraits in Friedrich Schulze and Paul Symank, *Das deutsche Studententum* (Leipzig 1910), supplemented by such local club histories as Hans Gerhardt, *Hundert Jahre-Bonner Corps* (Bonn 1926), and Otto Oppermann, *Die Burschenschaft Alemannia zu Bonn und ihre Vorläufer* (Bonn 1925).

achieve the goals of national unity, constitutional government, the true abolition of serfdom, freedom of speech, and the rule of law.¹³ Only a small minority of the estimated 1500 Burschen among the more than 5000 students between 1815 and 1820 shared the extreme views of the Blacks or *Unbedingten* (the unconditionally committed) of Glessen, gathered around the charismatic Charles Folien, who agitated for a christian teutonic egalitarian republic. Ironically it was the assassination of the tsarist apologist, and minor poet, Kotzebue by the highstrung and unbalanced Sand, a member of this circle, which provided Metternich with the pretext for launching the Carlsbad Decrees, marking the physical end of the initial phase.¹⁴ Although knowing that "Germany is in no serious danger," the coachman of Europe conjured up the image of a grand conspiracy, led by the political Professors Kieser, Fries, Luden, and Oken, and warned that at the universities "a whole generation of revolutionaries must be formed unless the evil is restrained." By prosecuting students and professors, by strengthening censorship, and by limiting the demands for constitutions to *landständische Verfassungen* (regional estate bodies) the restoration regimes in the German Confederation sought once more to contract the public sphere and to bureaucratize political affairs. But despite its swift suppression, the student movement succeeded in developing an organizational counter-form to the

¹³ For the contemporary controversy between the participants of the festival, Maassmann, Kieser, and Fries, and the defenders of the restoration regimes, Kamptz and Stourdza, cf. the articles by Günther Steiger, "Die Theilnehmer des Wartburgfestes von 1817: Erste kritische Ausgabe der sog. Präsenzliste," in *Darstellungen und Quellen* IV, 65ff, and "Das Phantom der Wartburg-Verschwörung," *Student und Nation* (Jena 1966), 183ff. The text of the "Grundsätze und Beschlüsse des 18. Oktobers," the only, albeit unofficial, political document of the Urburschenschaft is reprinted as an appendix by H. Ehrentreich, "Heinrich Luden und sein Einfluss auf die Burschenschaft," in *ibid.*, IV, 48ff. The anonymous article on the "Burschenfest auf der Wartburg," in the *Zeitschrift für Deutschlands Hochschulen*, nos. 26-29 (1845), also stressed the meeting's "schwärmerische and therefore unpolitical nature."

¹⁴ Karl Follen, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sammtschulen seit dem Freiheitskriege 1813* (n.p. 1818); Adolf L. Follen, *Freie Stimmen Frischer Jugend* (Jena 1819); K. A. von Müller, *Karl Ludwig Sand* (Munich 1925); and the most recent evaluation by Willi Heinz Schröder, "Politische Ansichten und Aktionen der 'Unbedingten' in der Burschenschaft," *Student und Nation*, 223 which plays up the radicals' progressivism. Though ideologically typical, the anti-Semitic clause adopted because of pressure of the Blacks in 1818 and rescinded a decade later, had little practical effect, since less than 3 percent of German students at the time were Jews and it did not apply to those baptized. Cf. also Karl Griewank, "Die Politische Bedeutung der Burschenschaft in den ersten Jahren ihres Bestehens," in *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Friedrich Schiller Universität Jena* (1952-53), 27ff; Jürgen Schwarz, "Deutsche Studenten und Politik im 19. Jahrhundert," *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 20 (1969), 72-94; and K. G. Faber, "Student und Politik in der ersten deutschen Burschenschaft," *ibid.* 21 (1970), 68ff.

fraternity system and an ideological critique of Biedermaier society in a contradictory mixture of volkish-mystical and moral-liberal strains.¹⁵

II

During the second, *Demagogen*, phase after 1827 the Burschenschaft, politicized more by persecution than volition, transformed itself into a conspiratorial secret society and moved from intellectual agitation to practical political action. Despite the federal Mainz Investigating Commission's vigorous eradication of real radical groups such as the *Jünglingsbund* and imagined conspiracies such as the "geheime Bund," the student movement reemerged locally and nationally on the basis of an oral as well as a written tradition perpetuated in families and secondary schools by its "old boys." But to survive outside the law, counterculture had to jettison its openness and egalitarianism in favor of the more restrictive and elitist forms of corporate groupings such as the division between an inner circle and a wider social following, the *engere Verein* and the *Renoncenschwanz*. The gradual renewal of public debate and the resurgence of literary radicalism produced a schism of the two strains which had combined in uneasy balance, the politically committed *Germanen*, who advocated constitutional reform but resembled fraternities in student affairs, and the moral-scholarly *Arminen*, whose primary aim was the regeneration of student life – such as the abolition of dueling – but who foreswore politics. Conscious that Germany was still "half sleeping, half awake" the former strove to "gain political independence, in order to stand in the waves like a rock in the surf," thus leading the fatherland into a Liberal and National future: "The realization of the principles of our century ... is at stake." When the French crowned Louis Philippe a bourgeois king, the activists demanded that "for Germany too, the July revolution must herald the dawn of a new age." Hence they omitted the phrase *preparation* from the constitution of the refounded Allgemeine Burschenschaft and now boldly called for "the realization of political participation for the German people, ordered and secured by public freedom and justice" (my italics).¹⁶

¹⁵ Metternich to Gentz 17 June 1819, in Prince Richard Metternich, ed., *Memoirs of Prince Metternich*, English ed. (New York 1880-82), III, 287. Cf. also Franz Schnabel, *Deutsche Geschichte im neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (Freiburg 1949), II, 234ff; and Maria Wawrykowa, *Ruch Studencki w Niemcech 1815-1825* (Warsaw 1969). For a provocative reevaluation, cf. Enno E. Kraehe's paper, "The Origins of the Carlsbad Decrees," AHA meeting (1971). Cf. also H. Tümmeler, "Wartburg, Weimar and Wien," *Historische Zeitschrift* 215 (1972), 49-106, and G. Steiger, *Aufbruch: Urburschenschaft und Wartburgfest* (Leipzig 1967).

¹⁶ G. Heer, *Geschichte der deutschen Burschenschaft*, II, passim; A. Petzold, "Die Zentral-Untersuchungs-Kommission in Mainz," *Quellen und Darstellungen*, V, 171ff. Two of the most influential pieces of the written tradition were J. L. Haupt's, *Landmannschaften und Burschenschaft* (Leipzig 1820) and F. Herbst, *Ideale und Irrthümer des akademischen Le-*

Years of repression, combined with the fall of the Restoration regime in Paris, inspired the second cohort of Burschenschaftler with a willingness to act out their rhetoric directed towards a constitutional or republican state. Participating prominently in the mass celebration of the Hambach Fest of 1832, both a demonstration against local absolutism and an attempt to organize radicals on a national scale, the Germanen joined the Liberal *Presseverein* and agitated in favor of the Polish rising. Prodded by the most committed chapter at Heidelberg, the Allgemeine Burschenschaft disregarded the threatening resolutions of the German Confederation and resolved that “the practical political course ... must be continued, and the revolution must be pursued as the only practical means.” This action program made it “the duty of every Burschenschaftler to publicize his political opinion through word and pen, to found political clubs with citizens, to organize press associations, to buy weapons and to exercise in their use.” Undeterred by the disavowal of several moderate universities such as Bonn and Breslau, student radicals eagerly followed the call of the *Vaterlandsverein* (the organization of grown-up activists) to Frankfurt in April 1833 and attempted to seize the capital of the Deutsche Bund as a beachhead for a universal uprising. Some 50 radical students, led by several adult intellectuals and artisans, stormed the police headquarters of the imperial city in the evening of 3 April 1833, while outside the gates several groups of peasants awaited the signal and between 300 and 400 Poles stood poised to cross the Rhine. “We were all firmly convinced that even if our step should fail and we would perish, we had to take some kind of action,” a student afterward described the motivation of the putschists. “We were certain that every spilled drop of blood would bring a thousandfold harvest in the future.”

Ridiculed because of its failure to provoke a popular rebellion, the Frankfurt *Wachenturm* was nevertheless the first armed threat in Germany against the restoration system and an important symbolic precursor of the 1848 revolt. A Prussian prosecutor concluded accurately: “The Burschenschaft has become a thoroughly revolutionary organization whose rebellious paper dreams have turned into concrete violence.” Direct revolutionary action proved such a disaster that in the ensuing repression 1200 Burschenschaftler were indicted, including even the harmless Arminen, thus destroying many a promising career through imprisonment or emigration. Hence the traditional fraternities, which had transformed themselves from Landsmannschaften into Corps, were tacitly approved by university authorities as wholesome fun, and reasserted their con-

bens in unserer Zeit (Stuttgart 1823). For the victory of the Germanen, cf. G. Heer, “Die Allgemeine deutsche Burschenschaft und ihre Burschentage, 1827-1833,” in *Quellen und Darstellungen*, IV, 246ff. The impact of the French Revolution is dramatized by the letters in Otto Oppermann, “Burschenschaftlerbriefe aus der Zeit der Julirevolution,” *Neue Heidelberger Jahrbücher* 13 (1904), 57-120. See also R. R. Lutz, “The German Revolutionary Student Movement, 1819-1933,” *Central European History* 4 (1971), 215-41.

trol over student life. A curator could note with considerable satisfaction: “The radicals are getting slowly older and the overwhelming influence of the largely reliable citizenry makes itself felt in favor of stability.” The Demagogen phase demonstrated conclusively that by severing their connection with the reformers of student life, the political radicals were unable to overthrow the restoration regimes even with the help of adult minorities.¹⁷

III

In the least-known third, *Progress*, phase of the 1840s, radical German students turned toward *Gleichheit* (equality) rather than unity and freedom, because they were preoccupied with institutional and social concerns. Unlike the Schwärmer and demagogues, the progressive cohort was not marked by a single overpowering generational event, but rather mobilized gradually through the Francophobe Rhine-enthusiasm of 1840 and the disappointment of their hopes in a new era under Frederick William IV. Student dissenters, some of whom were already the second biological generation within the movement, drew on the romanticized Burschenschaft tradition, the criticism of an increasingly uncensored press, the example of the liberal-democratic opposition in the southwestern provincial diets, and on a rather general and diffuse dissatisfaction with the organizational forms of student life. The progressive movement set out “to bring reason into stagnant medieval academic life, to effect through pen, word and deed the abolition of ancient student abuses within the university and to merge with the great people” outside the ivy walls. According to one concerned official the

purpose of these associations is the same as that of the former Burschenschaften; it chiefly consists in enmity against the existing governmental system, agitation for a general constitution in Germany, favoritism toward writers of Young Germany, enthusiastic approval of the ultra-liberal people’s party; and

¹⁷ G. Heer, “Die ältesten Urkunden,” in *Quellen und Darstellungen*, XIII, 61ff; and Harry Gerber, “Der Frankfurter Wachensturm vom 3. April, 1833,” *ibid.*, XIV, 171ff. Cf. also the printed “Straferkenntnis des Kriminalsenats des kgl. Kammergerichts wider die Theilnehmer an den geheimen burschenschaftlichen Verbindungen an den Universitäten Greifswald und Breslau, Dezember 5 und 12, 1835,” in Preussisches Staatsarchiv Coblenz, abt. 403 no. 2428, and the report of the Badensian Ministry of Interior, 15. April, 1836 Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe 235/431. See further the repeated ministerial efforts to coax universities into enforcing strict suppression of the Burschenschaft, Badensian Ministry of Interior to Heidelberg Senate, 19 January, 1836, Heidelberg Univ. Archive, VIII, 1, no. 233a, Regierungsbevollmächtigter to Ministry of Interior, 7 April, 1836, GLAK 235/430, and Curator Rehfuës to Bonn Senate, 20 March, 1837, Bonn Univ. Archive, Rektorat, U 164 and U 166; A. Toepel, *Die Studentenverfolgungen in Bonn von 1819-1852* (Bonn 1918); and Douglas Hale, “The Persecution of the Demagogues,” unpublished paper (Stillwater 1972).

especially within the university, in opposition against the Corps and Landsmannschaften decried by them as aristocratic.

Now only one part of a larger anti-Metternich movement, the activists sought to revitalize the “spirit of freedom, justice and progress,” suppressed by the Frankfurt Commission of Inquiry. Since they were strongly influenced by their reading and discussion of the Young Hegelians, the democratic poets and the French Utopian Socialists, radicals groped for new organizational models, characterized by “the greatest freedom and informality.” The failure of demagogic conspiring made them “the most resolute opponents of secrecy,” while the degeneration of the Burschenschaften into quasi-Corps (hierarchical structure, dueling, etc.) made them prefer the foundation of completely equal progressive associations “renouncing all external signs, replacing the duel with a court of honor and exclusively dedicated to moral, scholarly and social tasks.” Although they were little more than institutionalizations of friendship circles and were therefore often rent by schisms and disputes, these *Progress-Vereine* in their consequential universalism, egalitarianism, and ideological radicalism were the first truly modern student associations on European soil.¹⁸

In order to arrive at a more rational form of “social, moral, and scholarly relations in student life,” progressive activists had to renew student government as well. Rebelling against the tyranny of the SC (*Senioren Convent*), i.e., the Interfraternity council of the Corps and Landsmannschaften, reform associations first formed a counter AC (*Allgemeiner Convent*), representing Burschenschaften, dissenting fraternities, and Progressive groups. But this half-way house was soon superseded everywhere by an *Allgemeine Studentenschaft* led by a committee elected by the entire student body in groups of ten. Advocated by professors like Scheidler in his *Deutscher Studentenspiegel* or assistants like Deinhardt (pseud. E. Anhalt), the demand for democratic student representation was taken up by students like Jahn, Rogge, and Overbeck who coined the slogan: “Down with fraternities and up with people!” During the brief peak of their popularity in 1844-46 such *Allgemeinheiten* comprised often as much as

¹⁸ G. Heer, *Geschichte der Burschenschaft*, III, passim. Ernst G. Deuerlein, “Zur Geschichte des studentischen Progresses in Erlangen,” in *Quellen und Darstellungen*, I, 157ff; H. Gerber, “Vom Bonner Burschenschaftlichen Progress,” *Bonner Zeitung*, 6 and 13 July, 1930, and “Die Burschenschaft und der Progress,” *Burschenschaftliche Blätter* (1935), 231ff; Hermann Haupt, “Die Progressbewegung in Würzburg seit 1840,” MS in the Burschenschaftsarchiv in Frankfurt; G. Heer, “Wiederaufleben burschenschaftlicher Bestrebungen seit 1840 und burschenschaftliche Verbindungen bis 1860 an der Universität Marburg,” in *Quellen und Darstellungen*, VII, 243ff; G. Juckenberg, “Zur Entstehung der Jenaer studentischen Progressbewegung,” in *Student und Nation*, 259ff; Report of the Universitätsamt-mann on Student Organizations (September 1843), GLAK 235/30061. The intellectual influence of the Young Hegelians is traced by R. R. Lutz, Jr., in “The ‘New Left’ of Restoration Germany,” *JHI* 21 (1970), 235-52. Since the *Progress* phase is the least-known stage of the German student movement, the bulk of this study will be devoted to its analysis.

50 percent of the student body (with the grudging but temporary cooperation of the Corps) and succeeded in greatly reducing duels and excesses because they effectively maximized the force of progressive opinion. Serving as agitational platform for the committed Left, representative student government nevertheless proved ephemeral because it rested on the only passing involvement of independent students, and attempts to institutionalize it in discussion subgroups only led to the resurgence of traditional associations. Moreover the hostile toleration of the authorities refused the *Allgemeinheiten* all power to enforce their reforming program on the recalcitrant SC. Hence, ideological disputes between liberal gradualists and radical revolutionaries, between university reformers and social critics rendered the Kyffhäuser attempt at refounding an Allgemeine Burschenschaft abortive. But the movement published the first significant student newspaper from 1844 to 1846, the *Zeitschrift für Deutschlands Hochschulen*, and formed the consciousness of those activists who fought and died on the barricades two years later. If a value gap between generations and political repression spurred the first two stages of student dissent, what impulses prompted the renewed radicalism of the 1840s?¹⁹

Despite all earlier reform efforts, the most immediate issue, galvanizing the third wave of protest in the Vormärz, was the mindless irrelevance of romantic student subculture, immortalized in *The Student Prince*. The successful satire written under the pseudonym August Jäger about a mythical *Felix Schnabel* describes the dominant ideal of a *flotter Bursch*: “The beautiful, colorful caps, leather breeches and jack boots, complete liberty and lack of restraint, frequent dueling and drinking were utterly to [my] taste.” One of the alumni later recalled: “In the middle of the everyday world the student had created a universe of his own, the *Burschenwelt*, with peculiar customs and habits, festivals and weapons, songs and melodies, even an independent language.” Called a “crass fox” (*Fuchs*), on his arrival the freshman was immediately captured by a Corps (*gekeilt*) and persuaded to join (and share his voucher!) as *Renonce* or *Mitknei-*

¹⁹ Karl Hermann Scheidler, *Ueber das deutsche Studentenleben und die Notwendigkeit einer innern, von den Studirenden selbst ausgehenden Reform desselben* (Jena 1840); E. Anhalt, *Die Universität: Überblick ihrer Geschichte und Darstellung ihrer gegenwärtigen Aufgabe* (Jena 1846); C. Jahn, *Einige Worte über allgemeine Studentenschaft* (Bonn 1845); Walter Rogge, *Offener Brief an die Bonner Studenten* (Bonn 1846); Johannes Overbeck, *Offener Brief zunächst an die Bonner Studenten* (Bonn 1848). Cf. also the earlier anonymous argument, *Worte eines Studirenden über die Reform, der Universitäten, Burschenschaft und Landsmannschaften in ihren Verhältniss unter sich zu der vergangenen und gegenwärtigen Zeit und zu der Reform* (Leipzig 1834). See also the report of the Amtmann of Heidelberg to the Academic Senate, 12 September, 1847, HUA, VIII, 260, and the cursory notes in the Senate protocols of Bonn, BUA, RA VII, 1846. Another excellent source for the ideology and organization of the movement is the *Zeitschrift für Deutschlands Hochschulen (ZfDH)*, edited by the well-known radical Gustav von Struve between May 1844 and August 1845 and reconstituted by Friedrich Baader as *Akademische Zeitschrift (AZ)*, November 1845 to March 1846, also published at Heidelberg.

pant. Only through showing his prowess at drinking immense quantities of beer (there were hierarchical beer-states with kaiser, pope, king, dukes, etc. stratified according to amount consumed) and at sword and pistol duels could he become a full member, eventually a *Senior* or *Chargierter*, the formal leaders of the club. This counterpart to Biedermaier philistinism, with its customs of *Landesvater* (a special toast to the local prince) and *Comitat* (a formal cortege for a departing *Altes Haus*) was theoretically apolitical, but practically perpetuated boundless disdain for the independent students, called “savages,” “camels,” or “finks.” In contrast to this atavistic corporatism, the radicals thought of themselves as members of a new, progressive time, in which natural law and critical reason demanded “the transformation of university life through the free will and the independent effort of its participants” in order to emancipate the students in their own associations as well as in universities and society at large. Hence they most strongly denounced the social exclusiveness and arrogance of these “sons of aristocratic and rich families” since, despite all youthful excesses, “they will only become tools of the bureaucracy and the status quo.”²⁰

Although not opposed to youthful fun and frolics, the Progressives demanded “the recognition of common student rights, equal votes in all questions, the codification of a *Comment* (custom) in step with the times and the abolition of the ridiculous and senseless laws about drinking beer,” which held students in ritualistic infancy. The radicals especially rejected the neo-feudal notions of external honor, embodied in the dueling code. Following a body of professorial criticism (Fichte, Rosenkranz) of the barbarity of such behavior, progressive students considered “the uncouth custom of ostracism” and of “individual combat” one of those medieval legacies which had to be eradicated. Since the *Paukwesen* had degenerated in the 1840s from a defense of individual honor to a quest for the largest number of *Contrahaben* (brawls) without yet having become only athletic exercise, this simplistic form of proving one’s mettle was largely responsible for the brutalization of student life. In contrast activists preferred “the judgment of public opinion through an *Ehrengericht* (court of honor) as the sole means” of settling quarrels and disputes. In Heidelberg this central Progressive institution was so successful that during one semester there was no duel, in contrast to hundreds the year before. In order to break corporative consciousness critical students attempted to found reading

²⁰ August Jäger (?), *Felix Schnabels Universitätsjahre* (Munich 1835), ed. O. J. Bierbaum with selections from the *Burschicose Wörterbuch* (Ragaz 1846) in Berlin, 1907; W. Fabricius, *Die Deutschen Corps* (Frankfurt 1926), 144ff; L[udwig] F[reihardt], “Zur Naturgeschichte des deutschen Studenten,” *AZ*, III, 34f; and “Was wir wollen,” *Probeblatt* of *ZfjDH*, 1f. Polemics with Corps and Burschenschaft proposals for new organization and the reform of student life dominate the pages of the student papers to such an extent that it would be redundant to give anything beyond an illustrative citation, e.g., G. Langreuther, “Die Stellung der Burschenschaft zu ihrer Zeit,” *ZfjDH*, XXXIV, 317ff, arguing for its self-dissolution.

clubs (*Lesevereine*) which would subscribe to opposition newspapers and provide recent works of liberal, democratic, and socialist writers. As the bigoted Prussian minister of culture Eichhorn observed, these meeting places between professors, intellectuals, and students soon “became a center of political debate and ... an instigator of illegal actions,” and they were therefore immediately prohibited. Though in some instances overdrawn, the progressive indictment of traditional sub-culture persuaded sensitive faculty members in Heidelberg and Bonn to recommend the creation of representative student government, courts of honor, and the abolition of restrictions on organizations since “they were not only unnecessary but harmful.” But the stubborn resistance of the corps, the internal disunity of the radicals and the constant fluctuation between ministerial repression and local toleration stalled all student efforts at self-reform, although they could not suppress “individual petrels of revolutionary consciousness.”²¹

Their failure to reach more than a minority of their fellow students turned the radicals against the university itself. The gap between the neo-humanist rhetoric of universal *Bildung* and creative *Wissenschaft* and the doctrinaire formalism of turning out bureaucrats triggered a series of critical pamphlets by schoolmen who, like Diesterweg, charged that the system of higher education was elitist, the dominance of classical over modern studies stifling, and the neglect of higher technical training disastrous.²² Adding their own bill of complaints, the Progressives demanded that the universities be recognized “as vital national institutions,” granting a common right of academic citizenship without any territorial barriers to academic mobility. Conscious of “representing intelligence in the state, and of holding the spiritual culture of our people and its position among civilized nations in our hands,” the activists stressed that “only a thoroughgoing reform of the universities, only a greater extension of the freedom of teaching” and learning (*Lehr- und Lernfreiheit*) would allow institutions of higher education to live up to Humboldt’s exalted ideals. Specific criticism focused on “the timid exclusion of contemporary ideas,” the require-

²¹ “An die Studenten Deutschlands,” *ZfDH*, III, 25ff; “Ueber das Duell,” *ZfDH*, I, 6ff; “Etwas über Ehrengerichte und ihre Zukunft,” *AZ*, XIII, 189ff, etc. The establishment and suppression of the *Lesevereine* is evident from correspondences from individual universities, such as Berlin and Bonn, *ZfDH*, II, 20ff. Cf. also Eichhorn to Curators in Prussia, 5 February, 1844, *StaKo* abt. 403, no. 577. For the professorial reform proposals in Bonn, cf. BUA, U 167 and the Heidelberg Senate recommendations HUA VIII, 1, 260 and GLAK 235/616. Some of the most revealing memoirs of former *Progress* students are Carl Schurz, *Lebens-erinnerungen* (Berlin 1906), I; A. von Ernsthausen, *Erinnerungen eines Preussischen Beamten* (Bielefeld 1894); Rudolf von Gottschall, *Aus meiner Jugend: Erinnerungen* (Berlin 1890); Friedrich Spielhagen, *Finder und Erfinder: Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben* (Leipzig 1890), I; and J. Jung, *Julius Ficker, 1826-1902: Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Geistesgeschichte* (Innsbruck 1907).

²² Friedrich Paulsen, *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts auf den deutschen Schulen und Universitäten* (3d ed., Leipzig 1919), II, and H. König, *Gedanken zur Nationalerziehung aus dem Vormärz* (Berlin 1959).

ment of certain courses, the enforcement of Latin in examinations, “the prevalence of narrow professionalism,” the spread of professorial nepotism, the practice of last-minute cramming and the mindless copying of dictation – in short outward compulsion rather than the inner “awakening of patriotism and enthusiasm for intellectual inquiry in young minds.” Idolizing younger dissenting professors like Nauwerck in Berlin, Kinkel in Bonn, and Roeth in Heidelberg, student radicals complained about the lukewarmness of even such Liberal lights as Dahlmann and Gervinus, and rather sought their inspiration from Bruno Bauer, Feuerbach, Strauss, Louis Blanc, etc. While the prestigious *Ordinarien* (full professors) controlled the mass lecture courses (lucrative *sinecures* because of their fees), the struggling *Privatdozenten* (unsalaried instructors) were left with ill-attended advanced classes, thereby giving especially students in theology and law little face-to-face contact with those men who controlled the state examinations in their fields. Although the *Rektoren* and *Dekane* looked with self-satisfaction upon the expansion of the German universities in the first decades of the 19th century, a significant number of students found their educational hopes seriously frustrated.²³

A large number of Progressive complaints sprang from the corporate structure and separate legal jurisdiction of the university. Although aware that “the final cause of the disease must be sought in the governments” student radicals nevertheless only demanded the cessation of excessive interference such as the *Revers*, a hated pledge not to join secret societies. Equating knowledge with freedom they called for the lifting of police supervision and for the same rights of free speech and assembly for which the liberal opposition was fighting in the *Landtage*. Sympathizing with the plight of younger faculty members, the activists decried political censorship over advancement (leading to a number of *causes célèbres* in the *Vormärz*), and the disenfranchisement of the *Privatdozenten* in university decision-making which made it very difficult to innovate against the instinctive conservatism of the full professors in such areas as philosophical radicalism or phrenology. The compromise of bureaucratic political control from without and full professorial power within left students and instructors with the worst of both worlds: “Teachers and students must work closely together” for change.

For the Progressives, another “central cancer of the university” was the system of separate academic justice with its double jeopardy (institutional discipline followed by criminal proceedings), its lack of due process, its punishment on mere suspicion, its condoning of dueling and debts, and its underlying as-

²³ Program of AZ, I, 1ff; “Dr. Röth’s erste Vorlesung über Schiller und Göthe,” AZ, V, 61ff; “Der Gelehrte und der Bürger,” AZ, V, 61ff; “Offenes Sendschreiben eines neuen Philisters an den Senat der Hochschule, welche er als Student zuletzt besucht hat,” AZ, XIV, 205ff. See also “Andeutungen für die Restauration unserer Hochschulen,” *ZfDH, Probeblatt*, 4f; I, 1ff; II, 13ff; IV, 36ff, and XI, 120ff.

sumption of student immaturity, requiring special protection. Repeated in petition after petition, the abolition of exempted university jurisdiction with its anachronistic penalties of flogging and incarceration, and the power of exclusion from state employment (by barring from *Staatsexamen*), became a central plank of the movement, since more than one-quarter of all students were at one time or other involved in discipline cases. The traditional excesses of drinking and destroying property (accounting for two-thirds of these), as well as the duels reported to the authorities (making up the rest), produced usually only grave warnings, fines, or temporary confinement since, despite all professorial moralizing, they were considered *Kavaliersdelikte*. On the other hand the rare political offenses such as membership in secret societies, singing of republican songs, and agitation against university or state almost always led to exclusion from further study either by temporary *consilium abeundi* or permanent *Relegation*. Reacting against the “disregard for law, lack of honor, conspiring, dueling, uncouthness and debts” fostered by the existing system, the radicals formulated a new university ideal which would turn passive schoolboys into active students, treated as young adults and committed to self-learning.²⁴

IV

As a complement to their institutional critique, the progressive students called for an end to the academics’ social isolation as well as their caste status as *Gelehrte* in order to transform them into full citizens. The sharp legal and status “division between cultivated and uncultured” bourgeoisie fueled the arrogance of the Bildungsbürgertum, which considered itself greatly superior to the mundane *Spießbürger* of the small towns. Radical students accused this closed corporative spirit of “gradually depriving scholars of their national consciousness, making them disinterested in the questions of the day and disdainful as well as oblivious of those not engaged in Wissenschaft.” Perpetuated in the universities, “this separation and mutual distrust” fatally divided the thrust of liberal opposition to the absolutist state, since the educated elite was being co-opted into the aristocratic bureaucracy which left the petit bourgeoisie at the mercy of the often contradictory economic self-interest of the laissez-faire oriented *Besitzbürgertum*. As a remedy similar to the abolition of the guilds,

²⁴ “Über die Verhältnisse der jungen Lehrer an den dt. Universitäten,” *ZfDH*, I, 3ff; “Über die Reform der Universitäten,” *ZfDH*, IV, 36ff; “Unterthänigste Petition mehrerer Studierenden von Heidelberg, Revision der akademischen Gesetzgebung betreffend,” *ZfDH*, XIX, 189ff; XXXIII, 233ff; “Die akademische Gesetzgebung,” *AZ*, X, 145ff; XI, 157ff; XII, 173ff; XIV, 218ff, XV, 221ff. For the practical handling of academic justice, cf. BUA RA VII (Senatsprotokolle), G1 (Untersuchungen), A G9/21ff (Disziplinarakten), Kurator E 9 VII (Akademische Gerichtsbarkeit), HUA, VIII, I, 233a and 260 and GLAK 236/430f, 235/626. For the problems arising from the dual jurisdiction of city police and university law, cf. Dietrich Höroldt, *Stadt und Universität* (Bonn 1969), 74ff.

the progressives suggested that the universities “should above all be deprived of their corporate character; then the nimbus of the *Herr Professor* would disappear and nothing but a teacher remain” who could make his knowledge accessible to all and participate actively in community self-government. In order to speed the reintegration of the *Akademiker* into the citizenry, radicals suggested the formation of civic clubs, the easing of access to higher education, and the softening of distinctions between practical and scholarly courses. On the student level, the chief culprit appeared once more academic legal exemption, intended “to provide youth with somewhat greater freedom and with a position meshing with the social prejudices of the privileged,” since it reinforced the students’ feeling of superiority to the reviled *Philister* (adult burghers). Erupting in numerous battles with the *Knoten* (a derisory term for the town artisans, etc.), this superiority of even the last *Hunger student* over the working man owed its existence to judicial privileges which in turn made students dependent upon the bureaucratic paternalism of the university. In order to break down this status barrier, Heidelberg students pleaded in the Badensian Landtag that “we see no disadvantage or dishonor but rather the greatest benefit in being completely accountable to the regular courts of law for all our actions.”²⁵

In the last prerevolutionary years student radicals moved beyond an awareness of their mandarin privileges to a growing understanding of the *soziale Frage* (social problem) of agrarian and artisan pauperism. The graphic descriptions by Friedrich Engels, Lorenz von Stein, and the *Lieder vom Armen Mann*, as well as the grim reality of the famines following a harvest failure and the plight of the weavers, evoked sympathetic concern. Suffering vicariously, a student poet accused the oppressors: “Yet the labor of our hands only clothed *your* skin/ And the fruits of our travail stilled *your* hungering” and prophesied: “All the tears which misery shed before your greedy eye/ Must be expunged, and only then will mankind reunite.” One practical response was the creation of a *Hilfsverein* with the purpose of “effectively counteracting material wants, primarily by providing the necessary means for work and survival to the poorer burger class of our community in order to save them from physical and moral degradation.” A minority of hard-core radicals like Blind, Lasalle, and Liebknecht placed priority upon a revolution to redistribute wealth, by force if need

²⁵ “Ueber die Privilegien der Studierenden,” *ZfDH, Probeblatt*, 2; “Ueber das Verhältniss der Studenten zu den andern Ständen,” *ZfDH*, VI, 53ff; IX, 87ff; X, 34ff, and XXXVI, 337ff; L. Freihardt, “Der Gelehrte und der Bürger,” *AZ*, III, 29ff; IV, 45ff; V, 61ff; VII, 94ff; “Die Neueste Petition der Heidelberger Studirenden um Aufhebung der akademischen Gesetze,” *AZ*, XII, 173ff. For the wider implications of this question, cf. R. Meyer, “Das Berechtigungswesen in seiner Bedeutung für Schule und Gesellschaft im 19. Jahrhundert,” *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, 124 (1958), 763ff; and Reinhart Koselleck, *Preussen zwischen Reform und Revolution. Allgemeines Landrecht, Verwaltung und soziale Bewegung von bis 1848* (Stuttgart 1967).

be. Although the novel phrase which entered Burschenschaft constitutions, “the socialist tendency” referred primarily to abolishing the distinction between student subculture and society at large, in the minds of the most advanced activists it meant the struggle for a “social Republic.” In Heidelberg the extreme Left, numbering little more than a dozen called the Neckarbund, which debated such iconoclasts as Stirner, Pfitzer, Proudhon, and Fourier, and ridiculed the “halfhearted Liberals,” advocated some form of democratic socialism. Gradually this “small group of eccentric heads who sport extreme political views and who even actually participate in our election campaigns and political demonstrations,” became a genuine revolutionary force. Because of the increasing misery of artisans and peasants the majority of Progress students slowly realized that the regeneration of their own life and the liberation of the universities was intimately connected with the renewal of the entire social fabric, even if that required some sacrifice of their own status.²⁶

V

The social thrust of the radicals’ dissent derived less from a guilty consciousness of their caste position than from the social strains within the university.²⁷ On the basis of both rudimentary contemporary statistics and figures derived from published matriculation lists, the outlines of the conflicting pressures for entrance into the Bildungsbürgertum are clear. During the first half of

²⁶ Although including articles about vegetarianism, phrenology and German Catholicism, the *Zeitschrift für Deutschlands Hochschulen* (e.g., “Umschau,” XXI, 213ff) was notably insensitive to the social problem. Only the deterioration of the situation in the second half of the 1840s made pauperism a major issue in AZ, III, 32f, VII, 106f; VIII, 111f, IX, 136; *ibid.*, 139f, etc.; Report of Heidelberg Senate, 8 March, 1846 in GLAK 235/626. For the general context cf. the essays collected in W. Conze, ed., *Staat und Gesellschaft im deutschen Vormärz, 1818-1848* (Stuttgart 1962) and his suggestive “Vom ‘Pöbel’ zum ‘Proletariat.’ Sozialgeschichtliche Voraussetzungen für den Sozialismus in Deutschland,” in H. U. Wehler, ed., *Moderne deutsche Sozialgeschichte* (Cologne 1966), 111ff; and F. D. Marquardt, “Pauperismus in Germany during the Vormärz,” *Central European History* 2 (1969), 77-88 and the literature discussed there.

²⁷ Hajo Holborn, “German Idealism in the Light of Social History,” repr. in his *Germany and Europe: Historical Essays* (New York 1971); Leonore O’Boyle, “Klassische Bildung und soziale Struktur in Deutschland zwischen 1800 und 1848,” *Historische Zeitschrift* 207 (1968), 584ff; Wolfgang Zorn, “Hochschule und höhere Schule in der deutschen Sozialgeschichte der Neuzeit,” in Repgen and Skalweit, eds., *Spiegel der Geschichte* (Münster 1964), 321ff; cf. also K. E. Jeismann, “Gymnasium, Staat und Gesellschaft in Preussen: Vorbemerkungen zur Untersuchung der politischen und sozialen Bedeutung der ‘höheren Bildung’ im 19. Jahrhundert,” *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 21 (1970), 435ff; H. Busshoff, “Die preussische Volksschule als soziales Gebilde und politischer Bildungsfaktor in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts,” *ibid.* 22 (1971), 385ff; and P. Lundgreen, “Technicians and Labor Market in Prussia, 1810-1850,” *Annales Cispalines d’Histoire Sociale*, ser. 1, no. 2, 1971 (Pavia 1972), 9-29.

the 19th century the sons of the educated bourgeoisie gradually lost their absolute majority in the student body, but remained the single largest bloc, making the academic elite less inbred but still remarkably self-sufficient. In the fashionable institutions of Berlin and Heidelberg, the children of the propertied bourgeoisie slowly increased to about one-third of the total, constituting the second major source of Akademiker primarily concentrated in law and medicine. At Halle and Tübingen where theology played a larger proportionate role the lower middle-class sector maintained its second rank, congregating also in philosophy, but in all four institutions the sons of lesser officials, white collar employees, and elementary teachers began to outnumber or challenge those of the artisans and peasants. Moreover everywhere the expansion of the 1820s and 1830s drew larger numbers of petit bourgeois children into the university. In Berlin and Heidelberg they already outnumbered the plutocratic element, while in Halle and Tübingen they substantially increased their percentage representation. However, the *Kleinbürgertum* found it universally difficult to compete in the academic recession of the 1840s and therefore was the first to drop out, while the advance of the *Besitzbürger* was temporarily halted and the *Bildungsbürger* enjoyed a brief Indian summer of restored dominance. Hence, after a period of rising expectations in the 1820s and 1830s, opportunities for upward mobility into the educated elite were drastically contracting in the 1840s.²⁸

²⁸ J. Conrad's pioneering study, *Das Universitätsstudium in Deutschland während der letzten 50 Jahre* (Jena 1884), provides original figures for Halle, updated in his essay, "Einige Ergebnisse der deutschen Universitätsstatistik," in *Conrads Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie*, III (1906), 433ff. For Berlin see the compilation of Max Lenz's son in his *Geschichte der Königlichen Friedrich Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin* (Halle 1910-18), III, 483ff. Cf. Hermann Mitgau, "Soziale Herkunft der deutschen Studenten bis 1900," in Rössler and Franz, eds., *Universität und Gelehrtenstand 1400-1800* (Limburg 1970), 233-68; and A. Rienhardt, *Das Universitätsstudium der Württemberger seit der Reichsgründung* (Tübingen 1918). Unfortunately according to our own analysis of 1776-1817, and especially 1810-15, Rienhardt seriously underclassifies the *Besitz* category by putting in only self-declared grand merchants, great industrialists and estate owners, etc., which depresses the solid middle class into the *Kleinbürgertum*. Readjusted by a factor of 2/5 they form the following picture:

Date		Bildung	Besitz	Alt	Mittelstand Neu	Totals	Proletariat
1810-15	No.	297 (95)	80 (25)	83 (18)	44 (12)	127 (31)	11 (1)
	%	56 (61)	16 (16)	16 (11)	9 (8)	25 (19)	2 (1)
1835-40	No.	368	111	201	135	336	3
	%	45	16	22	16	38	0.5
1871-76	No.	303	116	154	122	276	3
	%	43	13	20	17	37	0.5

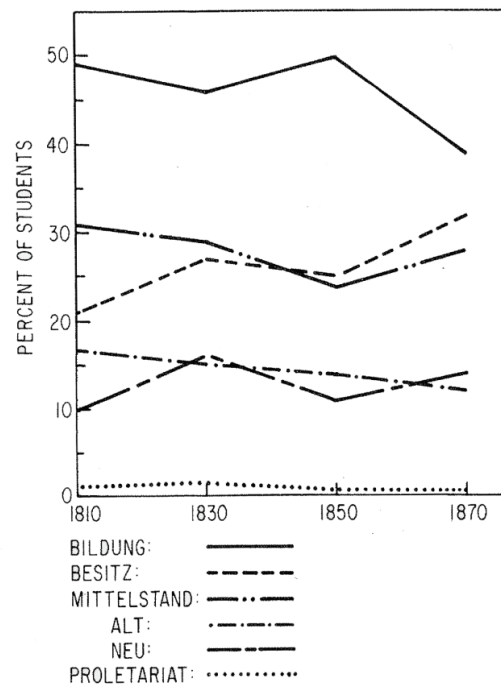
Notes: In parentheses is a sample of 157 Burschenschaftler of 1815-17 (founding generation) in Tübingen, roughly 1/3 of ca. 475 students immatriculated 1815-17. For the categorical basis of the graph cf. Table 1. See also James D. Cobb, "Vormärz Bonn Student Organizations: Variety and Homogeneity," M.A. thesis. Univ. of Missouri, Columbia (1973).

On the basis of both contemporary descriptions and a sample of Heidelberg activists, it seems plausible that within general student stratification, the radicals of the 1840s, like those of the founding cohort of the student movement, derived primarily from families of the Bildungsbürgertum. Time and again critics point to the exclusively aristocratic and plutocratic style and recruitment of the traditional fraternities. At the other extreme institutional pressure on scholarship holders, theologians, and *pauperi*, prevented the poorer elements from opposing the system, since lower middle-class careerists knew that “outside the path provided by the state, there is no chance of advancement.” An analysis of the social origin of 200 Heidelberg Burschenschaftler and Progress Students of the 1840s reveals that over 60 percent derived from the Bildungsbürgertum, 27 percent from the Besitzbürgertum, and only 12 percent from the *Mittelstand*, i.e., drastically underrepresenting the lower middle class in favor of the educated elite. If one takes only membership in predominantly progressive groups the comparison with the general student body becomes even clearer: The activists comprise 13.5 percent more sons of university graduates, 10 percent less propertied, 3 percent less petit bourgeois and 12.4 percent less nobles. Although the difficulties of authenticating names and of identifying indisputable radicals as well as other overriding factors (friendship patterns, etc.) blur the picture, this evidence bears out the hypothesis that the radicals largely represented the educated bourgeoisie, challenging the prerogatives of the nobility. Hence the struggle between Corps and Progressive Burschenschaften was largely a conflict not of the poor against the rich, but of two rival segments of the elite between the cultured classes and the aristocratic as well as plutocratic groups. This social derivation of radical dissent reveals no substantial disparities between leaders and followers and indicates that the student movement was a relatively homogeneous part of a larger emergence of the *Bildungsbürgertum*.²⁹

²⁹ A sample of 200 identifiable student radicals at Heidelberg drawn from HUA and GLAK records as well as the lists in E. Dietz, *Die deutsche Burschenschaft in Heidelberg* (Heidelberg 1895) forms the following picture when compared with the social composition of the entire student body in 1845, based on G. Toepke, ed., *Die Matrikel der Universität Heidelberg* (Heidelberg 1904-7), V-VII:

		<i>Mittelstand</i>					
		<i>Bildung</i>	<i>Besitz</i>	<i>Alt</i>	<i>Neu</i>	<i>Proletariat</i>	<i>No Data</i>
Entire student body 1844-45	No.	254	139	51	27	0	4
	%	53.9	29.5	10.8	5.7		
Entire student body 1850-51	No.	228	125	69	20	0	
	%	51	28	15	4		
Average for 1844-50	%	52.5	28.7	12.9	4.9	0	
Sample of 210 radicals 1840-49	No.	123	54	17	6	0	10
	%	61	27	8.5	3		
Sub-sample of certain progressives	No.	74	22	11	5	0	
	%	66	19.6	9.8	4.4		

Graph 1



*The *Bildung* figure for 1850 is likely to be too high since it is strongly influenced by an outlier at Halle. For the derivation and content of the categories cf. Table 1a.

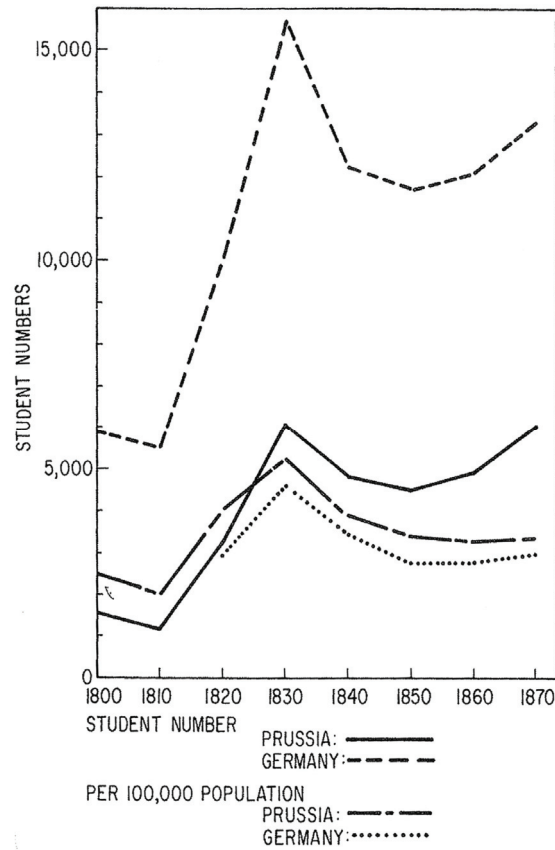
Moreover, in the 1840s, the learned professions within and outside the universities faced a grave crisis which endangered the students' future. This was caused by "a great disproportion between the demand for salaried state officials and the supply" of graduates. Since tuition jumped 50 percent (e.g., at Heidelberg) and living costs for students almost doubled (e.g., at Bonn) from the beginning of the century, curatorial student aid reports indicate that "the number of needy applicants continues to swell" and that "during the last years it grew steadily in far larger proportion than attendance at the university, so that existing funds have proven insufficient at every distribution."³⁰

Note: A count of nobles regardless of profession within the student body of 1844-45 results in a number of 75 among 475 non-Burschenschaft students, i.e., a figure of 15.7%, whereas the entire sample of radicals yields 10 among 210 and the sub-sample only 7 of 112, i.e., 4.7 or 3.3% respectively.

³⁰ J. G. Hoffmann, *Sammlung kleiner Schriften staatswirthschaftlichen Inhalts* (Berlin 1843). Information on living costs is scattered and impressionistic. At the beginning of the century, 200 Thlr was considered a minimal check (*Wechsel*). In Tübingen the projected constitution

The overcrowding of the universities in the 1820s and 1830s, prompted by a post-Napoleonic War deficit of trained personnel, produced a serious surfeit of qualified academics one decade later.

Graph 2



of a *Studentenverein* exempted all those under 300 Thlr from contributions, indicating that by the 1840s this was considered the poverty line (ZfDH, X, 101ff). D. Höroldt, ed., *Stadt und Universität*, App. 5: "Preise für Wohnung und Verpflegung in Bonn, 1819," 330; Steinmetz, ed., *Jena*, 310ff; Moritz August von Bethmann Hollweg, "Rechenschaftsbericht über den Zustand des Stipendienwesens ... 1842-44," and for 1845-47, 1848-50, StaKo abt. 403, no. 14045. On the basis of figures from W. Dieterici, *Geschichtliche und statistische Nachrichten ueber die Universitäten im preussischen Staate* (Berlin 1836), the relative amount of student support per capita has been calculated in App., Table 2.

Contemporary accounts abound with “complaints about the great number of public servants and aspirants to those positions; every year the figure of dissatisfied unemployed candidates grows, and despite all warnings of the government the demand for professional studies continues unabated.” The enrollment boom during which the annual student numbers in Germany jumped from 5000 to 15,000 (i.e., from about 20 to 52.5 per 100,000 inhabitants) produced a glut of professionals who could not be absorbed by business in a still largely pre-industrial economy, and led to severe competition for state jobs which extended the waiting period for administrative trainees up to ten years before salaried compensation. For the *Burschenschaftler*, state employment was particularly crucial since out of over 300 Progressives at Tübingen, Giessen, and Greifswald, fully 67 percent entered some sort of bureaucratic office, whereas if the careers of the members of the Bonn Corps Palatia are representative, one-half of the wealthier fraternity students sought their fortune in private enterprise.³¹ Although attendance fell by almost 5000 in the 1840s (to 34.1 per 100,000 population) allowing Prussian statisticians to argue that “fear of an excess of present students appear no longer well founded,” the overproduction of lawyers and theologians continued to be a serious problem since the time lag between graduation and employment posed a grave hurdle for those less well off. Although the medical faculty increased throughout the period without any demonstrable difficulty (taking up part of the slack from law) and the philosophical faculty also expanded at an astounding rate to meet the demand for professionally trained secondary school teachers, the growing number of those seeking to enter a university career created a log jam of *Privatdozenten*, often sympathetic to student demands. The unsettled economic prospects and insecure social status of journalists, barristers, and technical professionals added another element of frustration to the career expectations of students. Hence the Progressives felt themselves to be part of a restive academic proletariat blocked in its economic and political aspirations, and formed the potential leadership of a popular revolt.³²

³¹ The career data were compiled for the progressive *Burschenschaften* Walhalla (Tübingen), Alemannia and Cattia (Giessen), and Kränzchen and Alemannia (Greifswald) on the basis of P. Wentzke, *Burschenschaftslisten*, I, 1933ff, II, 83ff, 91ff, 205ff. They yielded a ratio of 212:101 bureaucrats over free professionals with 58 either deceased or lacking career information. The Corps figures are from “Verzeichnis der Corpsburschen” of the Palatia (n.d. Bonn), 2ff, and produce a count of 71:69 with 15 people unaccounted for. Part of the boom in higher education was also the result of an increased literacy rate. Cf. E. N. Anderson, “The Prussian *Volksschule* in the 19th century,” in G. A. Ritter, ed., *Entstehung und Wandel der modernen Gesellschaft* (Berlin 1970).

³² Dieterici, *Geschichtliche und statistische Nachrichten*, 109ff, is the first – if too optimistic – attempt to establish a statistic of supply and demand for academic professions (J. Conrad, *The German Universities for the last Fifty Years* [Glasgow. Cf. also W. Riehl, *Die bürgerliche Gesellschaft* (Stuttgart 1851), 1885], 19ff.). 342ff. In Ermann-Horn, *Bibliographie*, there were eight entries for the first two decades of the 19th century complaining about ex-

VI

When the revolution finally came in the heady spring of 1848, Progress students stood in the forefront of the struggle for unity, freedom, and equality, and though only one voice in a chorus of elemental force, played an important role in the overthrow of the Metternich regimes in Vienna, Munich, and Berlin. Göttingen activists congratulated the Austrian *Akademische Legion* on acting out radical student ideas: "Hand in hand with the people who recognize you as friend and bringer of their freedom you daringly confront the bayonets of the enemy, and with one stroke bulwarks of liberty are springing up everywhere." in public assemblies, newly founded newspapers like the *Berliner Volksfreund* and the *Bonner Zeitung*, and in electoral campaigns for the Frankfurt and Berlin parliaments student activists sought to rouse the apathetic to national and social action:

The anarchy which threatens from the suppressed below cannot be prevented by ignoring the social crisis, by leaving the unfortunate to themselves or by repressing them with force, but only if we honestly embrace their cause, thoroughly improve their lot and seek to raise their neglected education.

In Heidelberg, a student club proclaimed the principle of "a democratic republic, i.e. that governmental form which embodies freedom, fraternity and equality not only before the law but as much as possible in real life," and encouraged propaganda among the students and the people, in the press, in conversation, and through "exercise in arms as far as physically possible." On the other hand Bonn radicals immediately went beyond the confines of the campus, and under the leadership of the charismatic professor Kinkel, activists like Schurz became leading figures in the democratic club composed both of burgers and students which so effectively mobilized rural and urban discontent that it captured a mandate to the Berlin parliament. For a brief period the fraternization between students and the peasant-artisans seemed real, as, e.g., when Schlöffer in Berlin led the Borsig workers to the rescue of the fighters on the barricades. Eventually, however, the innate elitism of all but the most radical activists ruptured the alliance between intellectuals and masses. Although volunteering for the Schleswig-Holstein struggle, and participating in the final spasm of the revolt in the southwest, the radicals' role in the actual fighting was minor. Hence the

cessive *Studiersucht*, while in the next two decades eighteen writers warned against studying, and only two in the 1850s and 1860s. Cf. also J. R. Gillis, "Aristocracy and Bureaucracy in Nineteenth-Century Prussia," *Past and Present* 41 (1968), 105ff and *The Prussian Bureaucracy in Crisis, 1840-1860* (Stanford 1971); Leonore O'Boyle, "The Problem of an Excess of Educated Men in Western Europe, 1800-1850," *JMH* 42 (1970), 471ff; Reinhart Koselleck, "Staat und Gesellschaft in Preussen 1815-1848," in Conze, ed., *Vormärz*, 79ff.

students' primary impact in 1848 lay in their agitation in favor of a sometimes social but mostly democratic consciousness.³³

Too young to dominate the political stage, Progress students sought to exploit the paralysis of traditional authorities to renew their academic and social life. In order to make the university into "a free state within the state ... forming a firm phalanx for Germany's unity and freedom" radicals knew that nothing short of "a national reorganization" of its ethos, its relations to the state, its teaching procedures, its student life, and its social role would do. Hence at Pentecost 1848 the Jena activists called a second Wartburg Festival to debate "the future direction of the Deutsche Burschenschaft, its position and participation in the reorganization of our academies and its attitude towards the German fatherland"; but in the new spirit all other "sincere enthusiasts" of change were invited as well. In heated debates between those "who gladly welcomed the revolution and those ... who would rather have undone it" the general student assembly adopted an activist program, demanding that "the universities shall become national institutions" to be supported and administered by a united German state with the limits of "the principle of self-government." As a basic ideological goal, the congress unanimously endorsed "unconditional freedom of teaching and learning," elaborated this to mean that "all division into separate faculties ceases," because of the unity of knowledge, and broadened the access to government office with the provision that "attendance at a university shall not be a prerequisite."

The most acrimonious discussion centered on academic justice, but finally the Left prevailed with "a repudiation of any judicial exemption" in order to "let the student become a general citizen of the state." The Wartburg assembly further sketched the outlines of a federal student government "with equal rights of all," called for the "participation of students in the election of academic administrators and in the appointment of professors" and unanimously de-

³³ "Göttinger Adresse an die Wiener Brüder," in the *Deutsche Studentenzeitung* (Göttingen 1848), I, 7 the central revolutionary student newspaper, published in July and August 1848; StaKo abt. 403, no. 6577, 6582, 7332, BUA RA 16a and b (Bewegungen und politische Ereignisse im Jahr 1848); and "Kommilitonen!" radical handbill in HUA, via, no. 230. Cf. also GLAK 235/30061 for the printed statutes of the Heidelberg democratic student club and GLAK 235/625 for the confrontation. M. Braubach, *Bonner Professoren und Studenten in den Revolutionsjahren 1848/1849* (Cologne 1967); H. Derwein, "Heidelberg im Vormärz und in der Revolution 1848/49," *Neue Heidelberger Jahrbücher* (1955-56), entire; Karl Obermann, "Die Berliner Universität am Vorabend und während der Revolution von 1848/9," in *Forschen und Wirken* (Berlin 1960), I, 165ff, and R. R. Lutz, Jr., "Fathers and Sons in the Vienna Revolution of 1848," *J. Central European Affairs* 22 (1962), 161ff. Cf. also Griewank, *Deutsche Studenten und Universitäten in der Revolution von 1848* (Weimar 1949), 19ff; Edith H. Altbach, "Vanguard of Revolt: Students and Politics in Central Europe, 1815-1848," in Lipset, ed., *Student Politics*, 451ff; and Priscilla Robertson, "Students on the Barricades: Germany and Austria, 1848," *Political Science Quart.* 84 (1969), 367ff.

manded the abrogation of the Carlsbad Decrees. A pithy restatement of all major features of the Progressive critique, this petition to the Frankfurt parliament represented the culmination of three and one-half decades of student dissent. The most advanced radicals from Vienna, Berlin, Breslau, and Munich, who had fought on the barricades, turned the festive demonstration of 1500 or so young men into a working session by establishing a student parliament, even more radical than the main assembly. Working out the organizational details of a national student association along the lines of the previous *Allgemeinheiten*, this self-appointed body added such specifics to the demands as public examinations, the elimination of mandatory Latin, "the abolition of lecture fees and the payment of Dozenten by the state," as well as the unprecedented opening of the university doors "to anyone who wants to educate himself there." Under the lodestars of "political freedom and social equality" the revolutionary students attempted to turn the elitist university into "a true institution of the people."³⁴

In the end the students' quest for a renewal of society and university foundered on the same fratricidal division between constitutional Liberals and radical Democrats which doomed the uprising at large. Although parliamentary politics in 1848 were almost exclusively an affair of the *Bildungsbürgertum* (of the over 800 Frankfurt deputies over 80 percent had attended a university) the educated elite fragmented along professional, geographic, religious, but also generational lines, impressionistic evidence suggests the hypothesis that of the 100-150 deputies with *Burschenschaft* connections, the representatives of the Left, since they were younger, generally belonged to the Demagogen phase, while those of the Center-Right, by and large older, harkened back to the ideas of the *Urburschenschaft*.³⁵ But although a higher share of vocal sons tended to support the radical democratic cause than their professional fathers, the initial unity of the student body disintegrated at an accelerating pace throughout 1848. In a pattern which was repeated on every German campus, they polarized into a

³⁴ M. Friedländer and R. Giseke, *Das Wartburgfest der deutschen Studenten in der Pfingstwoche des Jahres 1848* (Leipzig 1848), passim; Ernsthausen, *Erinnerungen*, 69ff; Adolph Strodtmann, *Gottfried Kinkel: Wahrheit ohne Dichtung* (Hamburg 1851), II, passim. "Der Reichstag der deutschen Studenten in Eisenach," and numerous other articles in the *DStZ*, I, 4ff. For the social radicalism of the most advanced students, cf. P. H. Noyes, *Organization and Revolution: Working Class Associations in the German Revolutions of 1848/9* (Princeton 1966), 108ff.

³⁵ Although L. O'Boyle, "The Democratic Left in Germany, 1848," *JMH* (1962), 374ff, Frank Eyck, *The Frankfurt Parliament, 1848-1849* (London 1968), 94, and John R. Gillis, *Prussian Bureaucracy*, ch. III have made a beginning toward a quantitative analysis of the correlation between age, religion, social background, education, student organization, and political opinion in 1848, suggesting the above hypotheses, they still need systematic prosopographical verification. For the wider context cf. Veit Valentin, *Geschichte der deutschen Revolution 1848-1849* (Berlin 1940-41), II, 557; R. Stadelmann, *Soziale und politische Geschichte der Revolution von 1848/49* (Munich 1948); Jacques Droz, *Les révolutions allemandes de 1848* (Paris, 1957); T. S. Hamerow, *Restoration, Revolution and Reaction: Economics and Politics in Germany 1815-1871* (Princeton 1958).

moderately conservative camp, led by the Landsmannschaften, the religious groups, and the adult liberal clubs which endorsed slow gradualism: "Free from political fanaticism, we declare that we love the fatherland above all and consider its unity, power and greatness, yes the freedom of the people, safeguarded only through the full realization of the constitutional principle." In contrast the republican camp, led by the Progress associations, reformist Burschenschaften, independents and local democratic clubs urged radical change: "We want no compromise with the princes, because the people, unified by their own power, will find the right man among the patriots who will become their federal head, not by the grace of God, but freely elected. With one word: we want the Republic." United only in their opposition to absolutist particularism and academic authoritarianism, student dissenters split on the question of the degree of necessary reform, thereby robbing youth of an effective collective voice.³⁶

This fundamental political schism deadlocked institutional and sub-cultural reform as well. The constitutionalists, who were often out-manned in student assemblies, allied with the powerful Liberal professors, while the progressive activists, who were more numerous and vocal during the early stages of the uprising, found sympathy only among the largely democratic *Privatdozenten* and extraordinary professors. A second student parliament in Eisenach in September formulated a new constitution for the German universities, striving to "overthrow the bureaucratic system" and seeking "a correct compromise between academic freedom and the state's right of regulation." Consisting of "teachers and learners" this democratic university would be governed through a committee composed in equal parts of students and professors, which would control the administration, and would be financed by free tuition and state support. All state examinations would be abolished and the unfettered pursuit of Wissenschaft would be allowed, in a vision which combined radical and Humboldtian traditions in a daring blueprint a century ahead of its time. The spirit of drastic change also inspired the instructors and nontenured professors to call for "a reform of their own position" so that their legal and financial security would be increased, their participation in university governance enlarged, and a more rational planning system for the growth of new specialties and appointment be adopted.

Typically, Liberal professors called for "unprejudiced and prudent" changes such as the abolition of the office of government-plenipotentiary (Curator), public scrutiny of administration, the establishment of normal pay scales, the improvement of faculty rights in appointments, wider representation of unten-

³⁶ Friedländer and Giseke, *Wartburgfest*, 47ff; "Die Parteien auf deutschen Universitäten in ihrem Verhältnis zu den Parteien des gesamt-Vaterlandes," *ZfDH*, IX, 85ff; "Wartburger Adressen," and "Die politischen Parteien auf der Wartburg," *DSiZ*, I, 4ff, II, 10ff, III, 19ff, and other numerous articles. Cf. also Paul Wentzcke, "Das zweite Wartburgfest, Pfingsten, 1848," in *Quellen und Darstellungen*, XVII, 208ff.

ured professors, and the restructuring of academic justice, as well as minor improvements in the examination system. Only very faintly echoing student suggestions, the deliberations of the full professors at Bonn resulted in an even less imaginative blueprint demanding “increased self-government,” creating special administrative and disciplinary councils, and allowing extraordinary professors larger rights and token improvements in the position of the instructors. In the negotiations of the Congress of German Professors in Jena, advocates of real change were in the minority (since full professors comprised the bulk of the delegates). Although the assembly was willing to call for greater “*allgemeine Lehrfreiheit*” it refused to vote the cessation of lecture fees, upheld the prerequisite of attendance at some university for state office, and modified the corporate structure of the university by creating a *corpus academicum* to allow for token instructor and sporadic student representation. Although it extended the scope of civil jurisdiction over students and supported freedom of association, it refused to abolish separate academic justice. The split among students and the status divisions among different levels of faculty led to the shelving of all significant reforms when, under a wave of reaction, another congress convened in 1849 and the elitist, authoritarian *Ordinarienuniversität* escaped unscathed.³⁷

On their most immediate level, concerning the quality of student life, the Progressives’ quest proved equally barren, and within a few years traditional student culture was completely restored. The second student parliament of Eisenach had formulated a unitary and representative statute of a “*deutsche Studentenschaft*,” an “association for the advancement of general academic interests,” based on equal rights and headed by a strong steering committee, locally electing one deputy for each 100 enrolled. But some moderate local chapters such as Halle rejected it as too radical and when the Corps ceased to cooperate, it never got off the ground, in Jena the fraternities met for the first time in their history on the national level to assure that the Student Association would “never intervene in the internal social affairs of the *Verbindungen*” and to voice their public support for “the maintenance of academic justice, lecture fees” and the custom of dueling. Indifference, fear of change, hope for bureaucratic advancement, and elitist arrogance combined to muffle the activists’ clamor for the establishment of a Chair of Socialism in Breslau or the appoint-

³⁷ Karl Schurz, *Der Studentencongress zu Eisenach am 25. September 1848* (Bonn 1848); *Lebenserinnerungen*, I, 145ff; III, 32ff. For the programs of the disenfranchised *Privatdozenten* and *Extraordinarien*, the liberal professors and the Senate, cf. BUA RU 172, *Protokolle der Berathungen über die Universitätsreform*, 23. VI.-25. VII. 1848 and BUA, Kurator, CII “Reform in der Verfassung der Universitäten,” and *Officielle Protokolle über die Verhandlungen deutscher Universitätslehrer zur Reform der deutschen Hochschulen* (Jena 1848). For the radical teachers cf. also H. König, *Programme der bürgerlichen Nationalerziehung in der Revolution von 1848/49* and N. Andernach, *Der Einfluss der Parteien auf das Hochschulwesen in Preussen, 1848-1918* (Goettingen 1972).

ment of Feuerbach in Heidelberg. When in the winter and spring of 1849 the fate of the revolution at large was in the balance, the true radicals flocked to the southwest German revolutionary armies, while the moderates, sensing the onslaught of reaction, began to shed their progressive views, deprecated in later memoirs as youthful aberrations.

Hence the university authorities had no difficulty restoring discipline by singling out a few exposed individuals who had not emigrated or been killed, while generously overlooking the transgressions of the majority. Although Progressive associations regrouped and attempted to regain the initiative, the general disillusionment with idealistic reformism contributed to the youth's conversion to Rochau's slogan of *Realpolitik*. When radical ideologues like Marx continued to denounce reactionary politics, they found less echo at the universities, since the establishment of representative bodies like the Prussian Landtag offered some outlet for political action, the abolishment of the Carlsbad Decrees corrected the worst instances of repression, and the takeoff of industrialization offered nonbureaucratic career prospects. In general the age cohort marked by the failure of the revolution generally became less willing to get involved. Nevertheless the radicals' institutional and social critique had shaped the consciousness of the revolutionary generation. A decade later it challenged Prussia once more in the constitutional conflict, and served as ideological and organizational model for later dissent. Prompted by the adult failure to socialize the young into their own roles compromised by servility, hypocrisy and greed, the Progressive's futile quest was a paradigm of the impotence of youth in attempting to change university and society in one bold stroke.³⁸

VII

The pervasive emotionalism of youthful protest makes the analytical separation of the underlying sources of student unrest from exalted rhetoric and flamboyant action a complex task. The limited nature of the records does not sustain

³⁸ Schurz, *Studentencongress*, 15ff, "Der Corpscongress zu Jena," *DSiZ*, VI, 42; "Studentischer Indifferentismus," *DSiZ*, VII, 49f; "Zur genaueren Charakteristik der politischen Ansichten der Göttinger Studenten," *DSiZ*, VIII, 57ff; Ernsthausen, *Erinnerungen*, 76ff; G. Heer, "Die Zeit des Progresses," in *Quellen und Darstellungen*, XI, 151ff. The literature on the resurgence of traditional student culture is much more tentative than that on the student movement. One typical individual fate is that of Heinrich von Treitschke who began as a member of the Bonn Frankonia, then joined a corps in Heidelberg and later denounced the exalted idealism of the Burschenschaft. Some of his letters are reprinted in the *Festschrift* of the Frankonia (Bonn 1969), 219ff, 224ff. Cf. also his *Deutsche Geschichte im 19ten Jahrhundert* (Leipzig 1927), pt. II, ch. VII, 383ff. According to one foreign observer of the 1860s, "The time when the students were political conspirators has gone by," and romantic irrelevance once again reigned on campus. James Morgan Hart, *German Universities: A Narrative of Personal Experience* (New York 1874), 294ff.

anything beyond vague psychological speculation, but in terms of social analysis some generalization regarding the emergence and failure of the first modern student movement in the West seems not only possible but imperative. The evolution from corporate *Landmannschaft* through intermediary *Burschenschaft* to universalistic *Progressverein* in the 19th century Germanics points to the sequential interaction of several clusters of factors, which dominate successive phases of unrest, and though elsewhere differing in relative timing and strength, appear essential to the emergence of sustained student dissent. In a scenario of modernization where industrial technology as well as ideas of progress are imported from the outside (the non-western European pattern), youthful enthusiasm for the new when confronted with the instinctive traditionalism of adults leads to an ideological gap between young and old. The intrusion of rational and critical value patterns, such as French nationalistic and English self-government ideas, undermines the authority of adults and provides youth as a self-conscious vanguard of change with a program of action, justifying generational revolt. Political restriction and repression (Carlsbad Decrees) in preparticipatory and prerepresentative bureaucratic systems, possessing no accepted channels of public criticism and influence on decision-making, apparently fosters the crystallization of a youthful counterelite, which though trained to take over the levers of power, rejects its instrumental role and demands the liberalization of political structures in order to renew their legitimacy. Especially in prenational contexts (such as in East-Central Europe), unification is directed against both external and internal oppression and forms a magnetic, revolutionary goal. In the case of the *Burschenschaft* this combination of factors was so powerful that it stamped the movement's historical self-consciousness as a secular order upholding *national-liberal* ideology and thereby forged the central core of German academics' political values for the succeeding century.³⁹

A perceived malfunction of institutions of higher learning, a tangible manifestation of the insufficiency of traditional values and practices, seems to be another important link in the mobilizing chain, since universities provide the physical setting for protest and assemble a critical mass, capable of concerted action. The clash between the educational rhetoric of molding harmonious, creative, and ethical leadership personalities and the reality of producing timid bureaucrats disillusioned students, especially when they measure routine indoctrination against the neo-humanist ideals of *Bildung* and *Wissenschaft*. Most

³⁹ L. Krieger, *The German Idea of Freedom* (Boston 1957). For the symbolic reconciliation between *Burschenschaft* and the Prussian state, cf. Bismarck's "Ansprache an eine Abordnung der deutschen *Burschenschaft*," April 1, 1890, in which the iron chancellor praised the student movement's contribution to German unification, in *Gesammelte Werke* (Berlin 1930), XIII, 406f. Cf. also Robert M. Berdahl, "New Thoughts on German Nationalism," *AHR* 77 (1972), 65ff.

directly, the mindless irrelevance of traditional sub-culture, which channels youthful desire for active change into infantile rituals, offends their self-sacrificing idealism. At the same time the prolonged dependence, enforced by a double legal standard, frustrates their desire to escape the moratorium and enter responsible adulthood, since the romantic ideal of *Jugend* provides only aesthetic freedom. Finally, decreasing access to the educated elite in terms of the social composition of the student body, and the crisis of the academic professions during a phase of initial overproduction before an expanding economy can absorb the surplus, appear to add fuel to the fires of unrest. In terms of derivation the student movement by and large represents the leading edge of the challenge of the Bildungsbürgertum against the prerogatives of crown and nobility, rejecting the social fusion of a power elite of birth, wealth, and education which characterizes the regional and social fraternities. Hence the case study of the German Burschenschaft suggests that the switch from traditional to counterculture – i.e., the heightening of generational conflict and the intensification of the identity crisis – derives primarily from a set of intermediary historical factors. Such factors include a value gap, political repression, institutional malfunction, and social frustration, perceived even by the students as parts of an interrelated breakdown of the old order.⁴⁰

This framework of sources of student unrest resolves some of the paradoxes of its general, as well as specifically Central European, traits. Seldom truly innovative and often merely following the vanguard of adult academic and intellectual dissent, student activists nevertheless tend to protest in greater number, force, and determination than their counterparts among the elders. Moreover their rejection of the traditional sub-culture as a tool for grownup conservatism turns the generational struggle into a conflict between different groups of the young. Hence, when in student protest the endemic generational tension surfaces, it is muted by the sympathy and involvement of adult radicals as well as by the opposition of other elements of youth standing for traditional values and practices. Successive age cohorts are mobilized into radical consciousness by different ideological impulses and different generational events, but in organized and sustained dissent, a counter-tradition of protest becomes an important element. Although it is a truism that socially students are part of the elite, this condition does not preclude severe strains within the leading strata in which challenging groups seek an alliance with other disadvantaged classes to gain power. Similarly, modernization has an ironic impact, since it is usually fostered first by bureaucratic governments, and then, emancipating

⁴⁰ John R. Frisch, "Youth Culture in America, 1790-1865," Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Missouri, Columbia, Mo. (1970) allows a cross-cultural comparison with an example in which modernization did not produce a student movement. The more recent chapter of that story as well as a perceptive summary of the existing conceptualization on the sources of student dissent is Seymour M. Lipset's, *Rebellion in the University* (Boston 1972).

itself from its source, often turns against authoritarian structures in the name of novel values such as liberty and national unity. In terms of numbers, student protest is always the creation of a minority, which increases in size and determination when the causative factors are operating. Most importantly, these clusters provide a larger sympathetic audience, and in moments of perceived crisis attract the support of as much as 50 percent of the student body. Student movements are therefore more often successful in shaping a critical generational identity than in achieving practical political, social, or institutional aims. Hence, the German *Burschenschaft* formed the political and social consciousness of the progressive segment of the academic elite, which pressed for national unification and liberalization of government. But when the causative factors reversed, the failure of the student movement to reach its reforming goals, largely due to its elitism, contributed heavily to the incompleteness of modernization in Germany.⁴¹

⁴¹ For the larger perspective cf. F. Ringer's provocative *Decline of the German Mandarins* (Cambridge, Mass. 1969), and F. Lilge, *The Abuse of Learning; The Failure of the German University* (New York 1948). Since Robert Anchor, *Germany Confronts Modernization* (Lexington, Mass. 1972) fails to say as much about society as about culture, the history of German higher education still needs to be examined consistently from the point of view of its social purpose and role.

Appendix

Table 1: The Social Composition of the Student Body of Three German Universities

	Bildung												Besitz								Mittelstand						Totals						Proletariat ^d																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																				
	BL				HA ^a				HE ^b				TO		BL		HA		HE		TO		HA		HE		TO		BL ^c		HA		HE		TO		HA		HE		TO																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																												

Source: See n. 28

^a Since there are no 1810 figures for Halle, the numbers and percentages for the two adjacent entries, 1788-91 and 1820-22 were averaged. For 1830 the figures for 1832-36 are given. The 1850-54 averages are distorted by a gross outlier, since sons of pastors with 414 and 29% are abnormally high, falsifying the general trend. To check the degree of deviation the percentages for 1832 and 1872-76 (for 1870) were averaged, giving 39% for Bildung, 21% for Besitz, 17% for the old and 25% for the new Mittelstand, i.e., together 42% whereas proletarians remained at 1%.

^b Because the 1830 figures for Heidelberg contain an abnormal proportion of missing data (sons of widowed mothers or those of age) amounting to over 12%, the figures for 1831 were substituted, since they have only 3.5% no information on father's status or profession.

^c The Berlin information is not broken down into old and new Mittelstand and no entries for servants or workers were given.

^d The categories are largely based on 19th century German statistics and represent self-defined contemporary social groupings rather than units of modern analysis. *Bildung* includes all fathers with university or higher education or equivalent status such as officers and court officials. *Besitz* refers to landed and commercial property and attempts to account for agrarian as well as industrial capitalists, the primarily economic elements of German elites in contrast to the bureaucratic segment based on education. The *Mittelstand* comprises both the old (*Alt*) occupations of peasant, artisan, small tradesman etc. and the new (*Neu*) white-collar professions of petty officialdom, grade and middle-school teachers, clerks and dependent salaried personnel. The *Proletariat* contains the traditional servant and landless labourer groups as well as the emerging industrial workers. The status vs. professional dichotomy bedevils all attempts at establishing universal classification schemes but the present large divisions, at the risk of some imprecision, give the rough outlines of the social dynamics at issue.

Table 2: Student Financial Aid at Prussian Universities Compiled from Figures for First Half of 1830s

University	Greifswald	Königsbg	Halle/Wittenbg	Breslau	Bonn ^d	Berlin	Total
Students	217	431	844	951	828	1,777	5,048
Stipends	1,499 Thl	2,000	1,200 (50)	5,860(177)	3,000	4,000 ^c	17,559
Donations		2,064 (70 ^a)	2,000 (36) ^b		1,873 (290)	1,732	7,669
Free food	3,036	2,845	4,400 (139)	3,070(332)	1,200(55)	2,000	16,551
Support			350 (35)	422 (49)		?	772
Total	4,535	6,909	7,950 (260)	9,352 (558)	6,073 (345)	10,000 ^c	44,819
Per Cap.	20.89	16.03	9.41 (10.0+?)	9.83	7.33	5.62	8.87

Notes: Average size of *Stipendium* (state and private): 23.83 Thl; Average size of *Freitisch*: 16.48 Thl; Average size of other aids: 9.19 Thl.

^a The figures in parentheses indicate the number of stipends etc. granted.

^b The estimate for Halle's donations (my own) is likely to be low and hence the total per capita support should lie above that of Breslau, since on the basis of contemporary literary evidence it seems to have granted a high amount of support and the large proportion of lower middle-class students bear this out.

^c The stipend figure for Berlin is again a rough personal estimate, whereas the total is taken from Dieterici's informed guess, since the fragmentary nature of support in the Prussian capital from various different sources makes it difficult to arrive at any clear total.

^d The Bonn figures for the 1840s are:

	1842-44		1845-57		1848-50	
Students	632		716 (interpol.)		806	
Stipends	9,000		9,000		9,000	
Donations	1,022		743		1,406	
Convictorium	3,600		3,600		3,600	
Extrord. Suppt.	3,685		3,559		3,180	
Total	17,308		16,902		17,186	
Cath.	482	12,383	530	12,515	565	12,991
Prot.	153	4,655	154	4,232	127	3,991
Jew	10	270	6	155	16	385
Total	645		690		708	

i.e., the average size of the stipend declined from 26.83 Thl to 24.24 Thl whereas the per capita amount which had risen to 9.12 Thl fell again to 7.11.