YOUNG-SUN HONG

Welfare, Modernity, and the Weimar State

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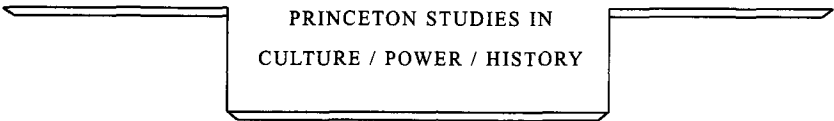
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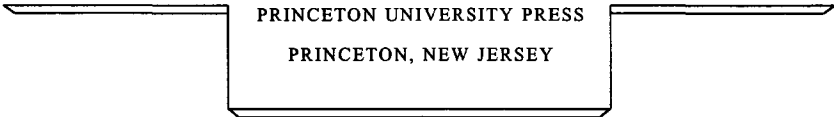A LIST OF TITLES

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PRINCETON STUDIES IN
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Welfare, Modernity, and the Weimar State, 1919–1933

•   YOUNG-SUN HONG   •

IN MEMORY OF
• *MY GRANDMOTHER* •
AND MY FATHER

• C O N T E N T S •

ADCV	Archiv des Deutschen Caritasverbandes
AdR	*Akten der Reichskanzlei*
ADW	Archiv des Diskonischen Werkes der Evangelischen Kirche, Berlin
ADWRh	Archiv des Diakonischen Werkes in Rheinland
AFHSS	Archiv der Fachhochschule für Sozialarbeit und Sozialpädagogik
AfS	*Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*
ARGB	*Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie*
ASS	*Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*
AW	*Arbeiterwohlfahrt*
BAK	Bundesarchiv Koblenz
BAP	Bundesarchiv Potsdam
BayHStaA	Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv
BDF	Bund deutscher Frauenvereine
DEF	Deutscher evangelischer Frauenbund
DNVP	*Deutschnationale Volkspartei*
DV	Deutscher Verein für Armenpflege und Wohltätigkeit (German Association for Poor Relief and Charity); after 1919, the Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge (German Association for Public and Private Welfare)
DVS	Deutscher Verband der Sozialbeamtinnen
DZW	*Deutsche Zeitschrift für Wohlfahrtspflege*
EZA	Evangelisches Zentralarchiv, Berlin
FW	*Freie Wohlfahrtspflege*
PrGStAM	Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Abt. Merseburg
GuG	*Geschichte und Gesellschaft*
HADV	Executive Committee of the Deutscher Verein
HAStK	Historisches Archiv der Stadt Köln
HLA	Helene Lange Archiv
IfG	Archiv des Instituts für Gemeinwohl
IM	*Die Innere Mission*
KFV	Katholischer Fürsorgeverein für Mädchen, Frauen und Kinder
Nachrichten-dienst	*Nachrichtendienst des Deutschen Vereins*
NSV	Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt
RAM	Reichsarbeitsministerium (Reich Labor Ministry)
RFV	Reichsfürsorgepflichtverordnung (National Social Welfare Law, 1924)

RGBl.	*Reichsgesetzblatt*
RGr	Reichsgrundsätze über Voraussetzung, Art und Maß der öffentlichen Fürsorge (National Guidelines for the Determination of Need, the Nature, and the Scope of Public Welfare, 1924)
RJWG	Reichsjugendwohlfahrtsgesetz (National Youth Welfare Law, 1922)
RMdI	Reichsministerium des Innern (Reich Interior Ministry)
RVG	Reichsversorgungsgesetz (National Military Pension Law, 1920)
SBA	*Soziale Berufsarbeit*
SDV	*Schriften des Deutschen Vereins für Armenpflege und Wohltätigkeit* (later *für öffentliche und private Fürsorge*)
SPr	*Soziale Praxis*
StADf	Stadtarchiv Düsseldorf
StAF	Stadtarchiv Frankfurt am Main
StAM	Stadtarchiv München
StAN	Stadtarchiv Nürnberg
VGM	Preußisches Ministerium für Volkswohlfahrt, ed., *Veröffentlichungen auf dem Gebiet der Medizinalverwaltung*
VSWG	*Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*
WuS	*Wirtschaft und Statistik*
Zentralblatt	*Zentralblatt für Jugendrecht und Jugendwohlfahrt*
ZfA	*Zeitschrift für das Armenwesen*

Welfare, Modernity, and the Weimar State, 1919–1933

SOCIAL DISCIPLINE AND THE POLITICS OF WELFARE REFORM

The history of public poor relief, voluntary charity, and welfare in Germany has been marginalized in most studies of the formation of the welfare state and treated in a niggardly manner in comparison with the vast literature devoted to both the English poor laws and the Bismarckian social insurance legislation.[1] However, the growing interest in the question of social discipline since the 1980s has pushed the development of these programs, which together form the backbone of the welfare *system*, toward the center of scholarly attention.

Since the late 1980s, scholarly debate on the significance of the welfare system has been dominated by two schools of thought—the one building on the work of Michel Foucault, the other drawing on Max Weber, the Frankfurt School, and Jürgen Habermas.[2] These two schools argue in different but complementary ways that the development of welfare states is part of a universal, yet anonymous process of social rationalization, bureaucratization, juridification, and professionalization. Both schools focus on similar themes: the development of therapeutic practices and the social-scientific discourses through which they operate, the effect of these practices on individual rights and state form, and the role of normalization and disciplinary practices in the constitution of the modern subject. Both argue that the development of therapeutic state practices has definitively blurred the classical state-society distinction and dissolved the private and familial spheres into the new intermediate "social"

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[1] The only general study of the welfare system is Christoph Sachße/Florian Tennstedt, *Geschichte der Armenfürsorge in Deutschland*, 3 vols. (Kohlhammer, 1980–92). The history of social insurance is closely interrelated to the development of poor relief, charity, and welfare. However, the present study focuses on the latter complex of programs and treats social insurance only as it impacted the welfare system. The best survey of the social insurance system is Gerhard A. Ritter, *Social Welfare in Germany and Britain*, trans. Kim Traynor (Berg, 1983). The first steps toward the much-needed reassessment of the Bismarckian social insurance system are Martin Geyer, *Die Reichsknappschaft: Versicherungsreformen und Sozialpolitik im Bergbau 1900–1945* (C. H. Beck, 1987), and Greg Eghigian, *Making Security Social: Affliction, Insurance and the Rise of the German Social State* (forthcoming).

[2] The most important representatives of these approaches are Detlev Peukert, *Grenzen der Sozialdisziplinierung. Aufstieg und Krise der deutschen Jugendfürsorge, 1878–1929* (Bund-Verlag, 1986), Jacques Donzelot, *The Policing of Families* (Pantheon, 1979), David Garland, *Punishment and Welfare: A History of Penal Strategies* (Gower, 1985), Andrew J. Polsky, *The Rise of the Therapeutic State* (Princeton University Press, 1991), François Ewald, *L'Etat Providence* (Paris, 1986), Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago, 1991), and Sachße/Tennstedt, eds., *Soziale Sicherheit und soziale Disziplinierung* (Suhrkamp, 1986). Geoff Eley locates Peukert's work within the broader framework of modern German historiography in "German History and the Contradictions of Modernity: The Bourgeoisie, the State, and the Mastery of Reform," in Eley, ed., *Society, Culture, and the State in Germany, 1870–1930* (University of Michigan Press, 1996), pp. 67–103.

realm, whose emergence is argued to be constitutive of the transition from the
bourgeois rule of law to the interventionist, welfare, or social state.[3]

Detlev Peukert's *Limits of Social Discipline* has dominated the debate over
welfare, modernity, and fascism in Germany during the past decade. In this
work, Peukert argues that Progressive youth welfare reformers were the pro-
tagonists of modernity, who sought to extend both individual rights and national
power through the rationalization and normalization of the sphere of working-
class social reproduction. Drawing on Habermas, Peukert argues that there was
a permanent contradiction between bourgeois utopias of social order, in whose
name this rationalizing, normalizing process was pursued, and the expectations
and experiences of urban, working-class youth, and that this contradiction was
constantly being reproduced through the spread of unskilled factory labor. Con-
sequently, inherent in the Progressive project was the danger that Progressive
reformers would employ the vast apparatus of surveillance and discipline—
which was originally created to extend the social rights of these children—to
repress, marginalize, segregate, and ultimately annihilate those who could not
be integrated into the national community through the cultural and financial
resources available to them.

Although Peukert's work has already achieved the well-deserved status of a
minor classic, his work is problematic in several respects. While he rightly
argues that the attempt to rationalize the sphere of working-class reproduction
was a contradictory undertaking which from the very beginning contained the
seeds of its own crisis, his own analysis of the logic of this process led him to
underestimate the importance of the many contradictions and conflicts gener-
ated by middle-class social reform initiatives and prevented him from fully
understanding the implications of these counterforces for his own analytical
framework. Peukert suggests that the contingent event of the Great Depression
ultimately forced social reformers to abandon all attempts to balance between
emancipation and discipline, as well as between the integratory and segregatory
effects of these programs, and, instead, to increasingly subordinate the integra-
tive-emancipatory aspect of Progressive pedagogy to its disciplinary-exclusion-
ary dimension in a way which revealed fascism to be the most radical pathol-
ogy latent in the Progressive project. However, despite his intentions, Peukert's
argument constantly reduces the dialectic of emancipation and discipline to a
one-dimensional process which bears unmistakable similarities to the bleak vi-
sion of Weber's iron cage and Horkheimer and Adorno's "dialectic of enlight-
enment."[4]

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[3] Gerhard Ritter, *Der Sozialstaat. Entstehung und Entwicklung im internationalen Vergleich* (Old-
enbourg, 1989). Despite Ritter's argument in favor of the term "social state," I have decided to
retain the term "welfare state," while attempting to unpack the many, frequently conflicting conno-
tations attached to this term.

[4] This tendency to subordinate the conflicts generated by social rationalization to an analysis of
the logic of the process is accentuated even further in "The Genesis of the 'Final Solution' from the
Spirit of Science," in Thomas Childers and Jane Caplan, eds., *Reevaluating the Third Reich*
(Holmes & Meier, 1993), pp. 234–52, where what Peukert calls the logidicy and logomachy of the

Perhaps the best way to describe the intent of the present study is to say that it aims at constructively brushing the social discipline paradigm against the grain in order to shift the focus from the logic of social rationalization to the conflicts it generated and, through this, to the politics of welfare reform, the bitter struggles for control over the normalizing process and the sphere of social reproduction, and the implications of these struggles for both the structure of the Weimar state and the ultimate crisis of the Republic itself. The contradictions of this rationalizing process manifested themselves in three distinct areas:

1) Although the process of social rationalization described by Foucault and Peukert may well have been universal, it was neither anonymous nor uncontested. Instead, it led to the proliferation of welfare reform groups and social service providers whose political and religious cleavages mirrored those of German society itself and whose struggles to shape the process of social rationalization and normalization in their own image were the decisive factor in the process of state-formation in the welfare sector.

The proliferation of social reform groups was a natural part of the process of social differentiation, and the first groups active in this field regarded voluntary associations as the best vehicle for transforming the poor into responsible, providential, and hygienic individuals and solving the social question by integrating these self-disciplined subjects into that modern civil society which was taking shape in the political windstill created by the sovereign state. However, between the middle of the nineteenth century and the end of the Weimar Republic the nature of these welfare reform associations underwent a transformation from loose notable associations (*Vereine*) to rationalized, centralized organizations (*Verbände*). This process was similar to the transformation undergone by political parties in the transition from the liberal, representative system to mass, class-based parties, held together by a permanent party organization and a caucus system, and by economic interest groups in the transition from free trade to the cartellization of key industries within the framework of organized capitalism and economic nationalism. In the welfare sector, this retreat from both the liberal model of representation and the conception of political parties and voluntary associations upon which it was based set in motion a dynamic of political confrontation which, by the end of the 1920s, ultimately eroded the fragile foundations of parliamentary democracy in Germany.

Before World War I, the differences dividing these welfare reform groups were held within manageable limits by the limited degree of state intervention into the sphere of social reproduction and by the political constraints imposed by the Wilhelmine state. However, throughout the Republic, the antagonisms repelling these groups proved to be much stronger than the integrative forces of the parliamentary system. These groups were committed to antithetical religious

social sciences move even further into the foreground of his account of the pathologies of liberal modernity. For a critique of the accounts by both Peukert and Donzelot of the birth of fascism out of the spirit of social discipline, see Edward Ross Dickinson, *The Politics of German Child Welfare from the Empire to the Federal Republic* (Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 286ff.

and political systems, mutually exclusive visions of both the nature and scope of public authority and the role of individal and family in civil society, and irreconcilable conceptions of social work. Consequently, instead of helping to integrate their members into the state, the polarization of these welfare organizations—like that of the political parties with which they were closely linked—intensified their desire to carve out within the broader sphere of public welfare a quasi-private domain within which they could pursue their respective visions of social rationalization free from parliamentary intrusions. In turn, this political survival strategy—which was both a defensive reaction against the expansion of state welfarist activity and an offensive attack on the very idea of the sovereign state—tended to hollow out the public sphere which had been created through the institutional modernization of the welfare sector since the 1890s. Although this tendency was contested by the Social Democrats, who remained staunch advocates of direct democratic control of public welfare, one of the main goals of the major welfare organizations—especially the umbrella organizations representing Protestant and Catholic charities—was to reprivatize this recently created domain of public activity. Although it was inevitable that the resolution of this conflict over the nature and scope of public welfare activity would directly influence the structure of the Weimar state, the compromises reached between 1919 and 1924 were intrinsically unstable, and the subsequent search for alternative forms of political organization played a pivotal role in the demise of parliamentary democracy in the welfare sector—a development which encapsulates in miniature the general crisis of the republican political system.

The contradictions of this process of social rationalization, the proliferation of competing social reform discourses and organizations, and the resulting fragmentation of the public sphere have some important methodological implications for the concept of modernization because they effectively decenter the notion of a single, universal modernizing process as a metanarrative for understanding the development of the welfare state in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although Peukert's most important achievement is to have shown how these contradictions were inherent in the very idea of using social services to rationalize the sphere of working-class reproduction, in his later work this insight was increasingly pushed into the background by his relentless analysis of the latent (logical) pathologies of the Progressive project. Nevertheless, it is impossible to dispense entirely with the concept of modernization because this multiplicity of competing social reform discourses can only be understood in relation to the—logically prior—provocation of modernity. Consequently, the task should be to rethink the idea of modernization in order to understand the contradictory unity of social rationalization without, however, imposing a false homogeneity upon it or subordinating these antithetical discourses to a nonexistent telos.

2) The claim—which is closely related to the vision of social rationalization as a universal, uncontested process—that this process results in the progressive diminution of the sphere of individual rights, ultimately culminating in fascism,

is also problematic. Since the 1880s welfare reformers had articulated a new conception of social citizenship in which more extensive individual obligations to the state were linked to the expansion of the social rights of the individual vis-à-vis the state. These reformers regarded preventive, therapeutic welfare programs as the most important means of compensating for the concrete social inequalities of industrial capitalism without undermining property, family, or the freedom of individual contract. The development of a broad spectrum of "social relief" (*soziale Fürsorge*) programs during this period marked the beginning of the transition from bourgeois-Christian individualism and the rule of law to social citizenship within the welfare state, and this new approach to the social problem was ultimately codified by the major pieces of welfare legislation passed in the early years of the Republic. However, these new insights into the social nature of poverty, and the preventive, therapeutic programs established to secure the basic social rights of the individual, set in motion a dialectic of assistance and discipline which altered the conception of individual rights and responsibilities which underlay nineteenth-century poor relief and charity.

The pivotal question raised by the expansion of social relief and the subsequent codification of a preventive, therapeutic approach to poverty in the Republic was that of the relationship between social *rights* and the attendant social *duties*. Before the revolution, the subsidiarity of social relief provided by public agencies and voluntary organizations—that is, their reluctance to provide such assistance until the individual and his or her family had exhausted all of their own resources—and both the social stigma and political disabilities entailed by the receipt of such assistance had limited the effectiveness of such preventive programs. However, although welfare reformers applauded the increasing codification of these social rights after 1918, at the same time they began to worry that the increasing emphasis on prevention was undermining the personal responsibility of the recipients and upsetting the delicate balance between social rights and social duties upon which their conception of social citizenship rested. In turn, these concerns raised the complex, but politically important, question of the extent to which state power could be used to compel the needy to accept such help and the punishments which could be meted out to those who refused or subverted therapeutic assistance. By the end of the 1920s, reflections on these problems had moved to the center of the influential Progressive analysis of the contradictions of the republican welfare system. This book will explore the ambiguous relationship between the emancipatory and disciplinary dimensions of preventive, therapeutic social services by analyzing the competing visions of social citizenship articulated by the major welfare reform groups after the revolution as well as the rationale advanced on behalf of the idea of a correctional custody (*Bewahrung*) law. This analysis will show that the meaning of the simultaneous extension of both the social rights and the social obligations of the individual can only be grasped through more aleatory concepts of rights and justice than those employed by liberal-conservative jurisprudence and that, since the net impact of this transformation can only be determined in

concrete, historically specific instances, it cannot be described in the categorical terms employed by Peukert.[5]

3) The third major problem complex focuses on the professionalization of social work within the process of social rationalization and the ambiguous role of social workers as both the agent and the object of this process. Although the bourgeois women's movement had argued since the 1880s that social work represented a peculiarly feminine sphere of activity and had attempted to employ this idea to legitimate their own emancipatory aspirations, the revolution destroyed the political space within which this feminist vision of social work as a vehicle for social reform had existed. At the same time, the entry of women social workers into an increasingly bureaucratized public welfare system entangled these women in intensely gendered conflicts with those same abstract, bureaucratic—ostensibly masculine—modes of thought and action against which they had originally defined their own conception of social work as nurturing and personal help.

However, the problems faced by the social work profession went far deeper and were related in a much more integral manner to the broader questions of social rationalization. In the early 1920s, the ideas of friendly visiting and social motherhood were both reinterpreted as social pedagogy in conjunction with the codification of a preventive, therapeutic approach to poverty. The problem was that the same social forces which were driving the development of the social work profession were at the same time undermining the preconditions for personal help—what the Germans called *Hilfe von Mensch zu Mensch*—which continued to underpin this idea of social pedagogy. The Social Democrats insisted that the problems which had led to the creation of a vast network of social assistance agencies could only be resolved through the transformation of the social system itself. However, the marginalization of the Social Democrats created a political space within which bourgeois feminists, male Progressives, and the confessional welfare and social worker organizations could institutionalize their own conception of social work as organized helping based upon an ethics of selfless service, which was itself underpinned by the explicit or implicit religious beliefs of these persons. However, this repression of politics was only possible at the cost of reinscribing within the structure of social pedagogical action all of the various manifestations of the contradiction between the ideal of personal help and the underlying social problems which this help was intended to correct.

While the resistance of their clientele inevitably led social workers to intensify both the integrative-pedagogical and exclusionary-disciplinary dimensions of their work, the theoretical blindness of the social work profession to the

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[5] See Gary Finder, *"Education not Punishment": Juvenile Justice in Late Imperial and Weimar Germany* (dissertation, University of Chicago, 1997), and David Crew, *Germans on Welfare, 1919–1935* (Oxford University Press, 1998). Similarly, Marcus Gräser attributes the crisis of the republican welfare state not so much to the successes of Progressivism, but to the success of the conservative church charities in blocking Progressive reforms. Gräser, *Der blockierte Wohlfahrtsstaat. Unterschichtjugend und Jugendfürsorge in der Weimarer Republik* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995).

limitations of social pedagogy led them toward two complementary, yet contradictory, diagnoses of the crisis of their nascent profession. On the one hand, they argued that the root of the broad variety of motivational problems created by the resistance of their clientele lay in the personality of the social worker and could, therefore, only be solved through an increasingly intense commitment to an ethics of selfless service, whose cultivation was regarded as the *raison d'être* of the social work schools. On the other hand, the leaders of the social work profession argued that the resistance of their clientele which could not be overcome through such a commitment could only be eliminated through the comprehensive reform of the institutions through which this help was provided—a strategy which would have entailed the de facto break-up of the public welfare system and the reversal of those very developments which had originally made possible the emergence of social work as a distinct profession. As a result, by the end of the decade the crisis of the social work profession had become another central dimension of the crisis of the social welfare system and that of the Republic itself.

The analysis of these three levels of conflict will provide the three major themes of this book.

The Contradictions of Modernity and the Fragmentation of the Public Sphere in the Welfare Sector

The Weimar welfare state was the end product of developments reaching back to the *Vormärz*. The first stage in the proliferation of both antithetical discourses on the nature of poverty and the place of individual and family in civil society and the corresponding attempts to rationalize the sphere of social reproduction on the basis of these worldviews was the emergence of distinctly Lutheran and liberal social reform programs in the *Vormärz*. These competing visions were identified most closely with the Inner Mission, which was founded in 1848 by Johann Hinrich Wichern, and the variety of liberal reform initiatives which were ultimately gathered together under the umbrella of the Central Association for the Welfare of the Working Classes (*Centralverein für das Wohl der arbeitenden Classen*), which was founded in 1844 in Berlin by a coalition of reform-minded bureaucrats, industrialists, and intellectuals. Although both of these organizations believed that voluntary associations could provide a model for the creation of a modern civil society because they held the key to solving the "social question," they each hoped for very different things from these associations.

Wichern regarded the social distress of the pre-1848 period—and ultimately the revolution itself—as the product of the dissolution of traditional familial and communal bonds and, with this, the spread of individualism and religious rationalism, whose logic inevitably led to materialism, atheism, communism, and revolution. This view of poverty also lay at the root of the conservative Christian diagnosis of poverty and crime as the result of *Verwahrlosung*, that is,

the moral endangerment or neglect resulting from the absence of patriarchal authority or other communal institutions capable of restraining the innate sinfulness of the natural will. The goal of Wichern and the Inner Mission was to solve the social question through the renewal of popular piety and the restoration of the traditional authority of the family patriarch. Wichern hoped that, by restraining both the natural sinfulness of the free will and the egoism of the isolated individual, the patriarch would teach the child to love both God and his or her fellow human beings; this display of love and authority would inculcate in the child all of those values upon which individual salvation and the existence of civil society depended (obedience, humility, self-sacrifice, and, above all, respect for authority in all its forms) and thus allow the patriarch to function as the bridge between the natural and supernatural realms.[6] The end product of this renewal of popular piety would be a Christian civil society modeled on the Lutheran doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. In such a society, the social question would be solved through "the voluntary charitable engagement of the *awakened* (*heilerfülltes*) *Volk* in order to bring about the Christian and social rebirth of the *heillses Volk*" which continued to wallow in its own sinfulness. For Wichern, this "inner mission" *of* the German people *to* the German people would be "a confession of faith through an act of redeeming love."[7]

In contrast to Wichern's modernization of Christian conservativism and his emphasis on the familial sphere as the primary object of Christian social reform, the aim of the liberal social reform movement was to give the individual the spiritual and material resources necessary to compete successfully in the dynamic, expanding sphere of civil society and the market economy. Although the various economic causes of pauperism and proletarianization—concepts which were used interchangeably through the 1840s—were visible to many, what most concerned contemporaries were the moral effects of material destitution. They feared that material need deprived these people of the economic independence, opportunity for education, and self-respect which were the defining characteristics of the members of that *Mittelstandsgesellschaft* which represented the liberal model of civil society. Paupers and proletarians were those persons who lacked the *Bildung* and material security necessary to engage in public, political activity concerning the common weal and who did not adhere to those norms through which the *Mittelstand* distinguished itself from those social groups located above and below it in the social hierarchy. Though by no means scornful of the ideas of order and authority, liberal social reformers

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[6] Wichern presented his diagnosis of the social crisis of the *Vormärz* and his reform program in "Die innere Mission der deutschen evangelischen Kirche. Eine Denkschrift an die deutsche Nation," *Sämtliche Werke*, ed., Peter Meinhold (Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1958ff.), I:175–363. On Wichern's social thought and social Protestantism, see Günter Brakelmann, *Kirche und Sozialismus im 19. Jahrhundert. Die Analyse des Sozialismus und Kommunismus bei Johann Hinrich Wichern und bei Rudolf Todt* (Luther Verlag, 1966), and William O. Shanahan, *German Protestants Face the Social Question* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1954).

[7] Wichern, *Werke*, I:103. Although this second motto has been passed down through the literature on the Inner Mission, I have not encountered this exact phrase in Wichern's writings.

believed that the dual goal of reducing the social insecurity of the pauperized underclasses and promoting individual independence in the dawning world of city and factory could be achieved through the combination of education, industry, and thrift. They hoped that, in addition to the material security they provided, participation in voluntary self-help associations would lead the poor beyond the sphere of their immediate material interests and open the way to both a broader understanding of the common good and participation in public, political affairs.[8]

Between the 1880s and World War I, the qualitative transformation of the nature of the social question caused by rapid urbanization and industrialization led to the formation of several other major social and welfare reform groups, each espousing their own distinct worldview. In the 1880s and 1890s, the convergence of the interests of a broad group of male social reformers (many of whom were associated with the *Verein für Sozialpolitik*), municipal poor relief officials, and bourgeois feminists gave birth to a distinctly Progressive strategy for social reform, and the reform of poor relief in particular. These policies were associated primarily with the left wing of the National Liberals, the various branches of the Progressive Party, Friedrich Naumann's national social movement, and, after 1918, the German Democratic Party (DDP). To a far greater extent than both liberals and Christian conservatives, these Progressives were willing to extend the scope of public (though not necessarily state) activity into the realm of family and social reproduction in order to enhance the welfare of the individual citizen and, in so doing, increase the economic and military strength, as well as the social unity, of the nation. The German Association for Poor Relief and Charity (*Deutscher Verein für Armenpflege und Wohltätigkeit,* DV), which was founded in 1880/81 to promote the rationalization of poor relief and charity, rapidly became the most important organization for the promotion of Progressive welfare reform ideas (though its membership embraced persons from every point along the political spectrum). Much of the practical work in the cause of Progressive reform was carried out by bourgeois women—often the wives and daughters of these male officials and social reformers—who viewed social work as the logical extension of their supposedly natural nurturing and caring powers and who hoped that social work would both provide an avenue for their own emancipation and serve as a mechanism for class reconciliation through the expiation of class guilt.[9]

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[8] On the Central Association, see Jürgen Reulecke, *Sozialer Frieden durch soziale Reform. Der Centralverein für das Wohl der arbeitenden Klassen in der Frühindustrialisierung* (Peter Hammer, 1983).

[9] On the *Deutscher Verein*, see Hans Muthesius, ed., *Beiträge zur Entwicklung der deutschen Fürsorge: 75 Jahre Deutscher Verein* (Heymann, 1955), and Florian Tennstedt, "Fürsorgegeschichte und Vereinsgeschichte. 100 Jahre Deutscher Verein in der Geschichte der deutschen Fürsorge," *Zeitschrift für Sozialreform* 27:2 (1981), pp. 72–100. The absence of a comprehensive study of German Progressivism is a major lacuna in the existing literature. On the British discourse on poverty and social reform in this period, see Gertrude Himmelfarb, *Poverty and Compassion. The Moral Imagination of the Late Victorians* (Knopf, 1991). For the literature on social work and the women's movement in the *Kaiserreich* and the Republic, see chapter 5.

During the last decades of the century, social Catholicism began to abandon its integralist opposition to the modern world and come to terms with industrial society and the sovereign state, and in 1897 the *Deutscher Caritasverband* was formed to modernize Catholic charities and represent their interests in relation to public poor relief. Although the Caritasverband shared the social conservativism of the Inner Mission, its natural law principles and its unremitting hostility to the sovereign Protestant state gave the Catholic charity and welfare reform program a distinctly different tone than that of its Protestant counterpart. Though the organization languished in the prewar period, it was to play a dominant role in the welfare reform debates during the Weimar Republic.

The last decade before the war was characterized by increasingly intense clashes between the Progressives and both the liberals and Christian conservatives of both confessions, who believed that state intervention was undermining the religious bases of the family and who linked their hostility to the intrusion of alien worldviews into the sphere of social reproduction with a defense of personal help and the role of voluntary social engagement. These conflicts were especially intense in the area of youth welfare, whose centrality for social reproduction made it the focal point of this struggle. From the 1880s into the 1930s, the Progressives (and later Social Democrats) in the DV were the leading advocates of the modernization of public assistance from a national, social perspective, and the conflicts generated by Progressive reform strategies will be one of the leitmotifs of the story being related here.[10]

The revolution posed an existential threat to both of the confessional charities, and the politics of welfare reform were further radicalized by the creation of a Social Democratic welfare organization Workers' Welfare (*Arbeiterwohlfahrt*) in 1919.[11] While the unprecedented extension of state welfare and social policy programs during World War I accelerated the politicization of welfare reform debates, the collapse of the authoritarian Wilhelmine state burst the narrow limits which had been previously imposed upon social reform and created a vast, essentially contested space within which the major political groups struggled with each other to put their imprint upon the new Republic. At the same time, the competition of ideas within the parliamentary system compelled the various political parties and welfare reform groups to anchor their welfare reform programs in comprehensive worldviews, and the outcome of the multidimensional "cultural struggles" (*Kultur-* or *Weltanschauungskämpfe*) of the early years of the Republic played the decisive role in determining the

[10] Although the Social Democrats were to play a crucial role in the politics of welfare reform in the Republic, before 1914 their categorical rejection of the institutions of bourgeois society and their political marginalization provided them with relatively little incentive to participate in poor law and charity reform debates.

[11] I refer to the Caritasverband and the Inner Mission as "confessional" (*konfessionell*) organizations because they insisted that social work had to take place within the religious framework defined by the two positive Christian confessions (*Bekenntnis*). While the word "denominational" is more widely used in English, I have decided to retain the word "confessional" because of its greater faithfulness to the original German.

shape of the Weimar state and the way state power would be used to reshape civil society in the Republic. The reform strategies advocated by these organizations were based on very different understandings of the causes of Germany's decline and antithetical visions of the new society, and the debates over welfare reform served as a lens which focused and amplified these differences. They forced all of the major participants to articulate—on the basis of their respective worldviews—distinctive visions of social citizenship, which coupled the constitutionally guaranteed extension of social rights with the extension of the obligations of the individual toward society, but which diverged from one another in their account of the nature of these rights and the scope of these duties.

The creation of the Weimar welfare state required more than constitutional formulae, and the task of reconstruction and the need to create a viable social foundation for the new republic made it urgent to resolve the inherited tensions of urban, industrial society. This, in turn, drew into the political maelstrom of the early republic those conceptions of property, work, and family which had formed the basis of bourgeois society and which had been safeguarded by the doctrine of the rule of law. By altering the relation of individual, family, society, and the state, the debates over welfare reform forged new conceptions of citizenship, social rights, and social obligations and helped constitute a new, postliberal public space.

The history of the Weimar Republic was in many ways the history of the struggle to determine the concrete meaning of the fundamental rights enumerated in the Weimar constitution. In view of centrality of the compromise between organized labor and big business, the historiography of the Weimar welfare state has long concentrated on the changing balance between capital and labor and the relation of these organized interest groups to the state bureaucracy.[12] Though it would be wrong to ignore the role of social policy legislation in the creation of the welfare *state*, these battles were fought out in parliamentary debates over economic policy, wages, working conditions, and collective bargaining regulations. However, the debate over the welfare *system* was framed in very different terms. The collapse of the old political order and the social dislocation caused by the war accentuated a widely perceived crisis of social reproduction, which dominated the discourse of welfare reform throughout the Republic, and the historiographical focus upon the political economy of the Republic overlooks the fact that the postwar debates over welfare reform focused to a greater extent than ever before on the family and social reproduction—rather than on the needs of social classes—and were carried out primarily in a language of religion, culture, and gender.[13]

[12] Gerald Feldman, *The Great Disorder: Politics, Economics, and Society in the German Inflation* (Oxford University Press, 1993), and Werner Abelshauser, ed., *Die Weimarer Republik als Wohlfahrtsstaat. Zum Verhältnis von Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik in der Industriegesellschaft* (= *VSWG*, Beiheft 81, 1987).

[13] This insistence upon the independent dynamic of the cultural discourses underlying the welfare reform debates of the Republic and their relative autonomy from the political economy of the republican welfare state also has important implications for the ongoing rethinking of both the class

In the relatively brief period between 1914 and 1924, the welfare sector recapitulated a development which had taken place in the political and economic spheres over a much longer period: the expansion of public intervention into that sphere of social reproduction previously regarded as private; the mobilization of competing societal groups seeking to shape this sphere in accordance with their own distinct moral and religious systems; the creation of increasingly centralized and rationalized organizations to facilitate the pursuit of these goals; the countermobilization of traditionally marginal social groups who were affected by these developments; and, within the highly fragmented Republic, the intensification of political and cultural conflict among these organizations. Although this organizational modernization and rationalization had been undertaken to insure their political influence and financial survival during this turbulent period, these survival strategies ultimately brought about a fundamental transformation of the very nature of these organizations.

The societal welfare organizations which emerged from this process were increasingly concerned with creating an autonomous sphere within which they could undertake their pedagogical work in every aspect of the milieu of their clients, free from unwanted political control which threatened to limit their autonomy in the name of other, antithetical religious and political values. This tendency, as well as the increased potential for conflict among these organizations, was intensified by the postwar codification of a new approach to poverty, which regarded the many manifestations of need as symptoms of inner distress requiring remedial, therapeutic intervention. This was true for both the Progressives and the confessional welfare organizations, both of whom argued that, even though this distress might have been caused by social or economic forces which lay beyond the control of the individual, effective therapy still required personal help in addition to the alteration of the material environment. The growing consciousness that no dimension of this need could be considered as ethically indifferent provided the stimulus for the intensive and extensive rationalization of the major national welfare organizations, which felt compelled to expand their activity to address every possible aspect of the need of their clients and legitimate these new forms of social work scientifically from their own moral or religious perspective. In turn, this strategy intensified competition for influence at the local level, especially in the field of youth welfare.

This creation of a semiprivate domain within what had—especially since the war—become both a sphere of eminently public concern and the object of public, political regulation can be described as the *corporatization* of the welfare sector. Here, the concept of corporatism will be used to describe those efforts to supplement (or replace) liberal modes of political representation—

concept and the social interpretation of the welfare state. The most important contributions to this critique of the social—or social democratic—theory of the welfare state are Peter Baldwin, *The Politics of Social Solidarity: Class Bases of the European Welfare State 1875–1975* (Cambridge University Press, 1990), Gøsta Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton University Press, 1990), and Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Harvard University Press, 1992).

which aimed at transcending the particular economic and cultural interests which constituted the fabric of civil society in order to represent the general interest—with a form of functional representation intended to insure the most transparent representation *of* those interests.[14] Although the concept of corporatism has been applied most frequently to describe the influence of economic interest groups on the political process, it is equally applicable to the analysis of social fragmentation along religious and cultural lines, which were the key lines of cleavage within the Weimar welfare system.

In recent literature, the concept of corporatism has been used to analyze the influence of organized interest groups upon the state. It has been employed by sociologists and political theorists in opposition to both the conservative followers of Carl Schmitt, who viewed this "societalization of the state" as the first step toward social civil war, and advocates of a pluralist theory of democracy, who recognize the legitimacy of societal influence on state policy formation, but who downplay the political dimension of this process and overlook the structural constraints imposed upon their idealized vision of corporatist mediation. In theory, such a corporatist system would depoliticize the conflicts inherent in bourgeois society—and thus stabilize the existing system—by involving organized interest groups in the formulation of state policy and, by delegating to them a limited degree of public authority, force them to accept responsibility for the implementation of those policies which they helped formulate. In turn, although state sovereignty would be limited through the delegation of public authority to these organizations, which would enjoy a quasi-public, quasi-private status, these limitations on state sovereignty would be offset by the delegation of state authority to these previously private or voluntary associations— that is, the "etatisation of society"—which would impose certain limits upon their autonomy and give the state a certain degree of oversight and control over their activity.[15]

These theories have presented corporatist representation as a hybrid form of politics which successfully transformed the problems caused by the blurring of the state-society distinction—which many commentators viewed as signs of the terminal crisis of liberal democracy—into political virtues.[16] This was, however, by no means the case in the Weimar Republic. Here, the recognition of the

[14] On the relation between these two modes of representation, see Joseph Kaiser, *Die Repräsentation organisierter Interessen* (Berlin, 1956).

[15] Suzanne Berger, ed., *Organizing Interests in Western Europe: Pluralism, Corporatism and the Transformation of Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), Philippe Schmitter and Gerhard Lehmbruch, eds., *Trends Towards Corporatist Intermediation* (SAGE Publications, 1979), Ulrich von Alemann and Rolf Heinze, eds., *Verbände und Staat* (Westdeutscher Verlag, 1979), and Cornelius Mayer-Tasch, *Korporativismus und Autoritarismus. Eine Studie zur Theorie und Praxis der berufsständischen Rechts- und Staatsidee* (Athenäum Verlag, 1971).

[16] Werner Abelshauser, "The First Post-Liberal Nation: Stages in the Development of Modern Corporatism in Germany," *European History Quarterly* 14 (1984), pp. 285–318. For an interpretation of the welfare sector along these lines, see Rolf Heinze and Thomas Olk, "Die Wohlfahrtsverbände im System sozialer Dienstleistungsproduktion. Zur Entstehung und Struktur der bundesrepublikanischen Verbändewohlfahrt," *Kölner Zeitschrift* 33 (1981), pp. 94–113.

quasi-public status of the major welfare *Verbände* did not help integrate them into the state or forge a new sense of common purpose. Rather, it accelerated the fragmentation and hollowing out of the state, increased the antagonisms among these *Verbände*, and encouraged the search for authoritarian alternatives to parliamentary government in an increasingly fragmented and polarized society. The conflict among the major national welfare organizations from 1925 onward accelerated the transformation of these organizations into what Sigmund Neumann called—in contrast to classical representation parties—"integration" organizations, which embraced every aspect of the lives of their members and, correspondingly, placed greater demands upon their loyalty.[17] However, the formation of such organizations amplified, rather than mitigated, conflicts over the causes of need, the goal of the new welfare apparatus, and the social effects of the support it provided and thus undermined, rather than consolidated, the tentative compromises upon which the Republic had originally been founded. These conflicts were displaced directly into the political sphere through the close correspondence between political, economic, and religious interests within the relatively stable social milieux which had shaped the nation's political landscape since the *Kaiserreich*, and the struggle to find a new mode of political representation within the welfare sector both reflected and intensified parallel difficulties of the political system in general.[18]

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: POOR RELIEF, CHARITY, AND THE EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL WELFARE IN GERMANY, 1830–1918

Like all other scholarly works, this one is the product of choices, choices which are in part imposed by the available material, but which are ultimately imposed upon this material. It is not about the German poor or the conflict-laden interaction between social workers and welfare recipients. Although this perspective often yields rich material, such subjects can only be approached through case studies because in Germany poor relief and charity were too localized and fragmented to permit generalizations about national developments. Nor is this a history of the dense network of specialized social welfare programs which constituted the infrastructure of the Weimar welfare "system"; although a knowledge of these programs is indispensable, general assistance, social hygiene, maternity and infant welfare, and youth welfare programs each developed according to their own dynamic and can only be approached through specialized studies of these fields of social engagement.

This book is about the formation of welfare policy at the national level, the conflict among the organizations which were key participants in welfare reform

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[17] Sigmund Neumann, *Die Parteien der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart, 1965), pp. 18–19, 105ff.

[18] M. Rainer Lepsius, "Parteiensystem und Sozialstruktur: zum Problem der Demokratisierung der deutschen Gesellschaft," in Gerhard A. Ritter, ed., *Die deutschen Parteien vor 1918* (Köln, 1973), pp. 56–80.

debates, and the implications of these debates for the nature of the Weimar state. However, these debates did not take place in a historical vacuum. Rather, they were informed by a keen awareness of the implications of social dislocation and social unrest for the future of the Weimar Republic and by a historical consciousness of the transformation of public assistance over the preceding century. While the following overview of the history of poor relief, charity, and welfare in Germany from the *Vormärz* to World War I is designed to provide the reader with the background necessary to contextualize these debates, in so doing it also unfolds two theoretical issues which are crucial for understanding the politics of welfare reform in the Weimar Republic. First, it traces the transformation of the parameters of nineteenth-century poor relief and charity and the emergence in the 1890s of a new preventive, therapeutic approach to poverty. Although this logic of prevention extended the social rights and the social obligations of the individual, in so doing it inaugurated a dialectic of emancipation and (social) discipline which has been the focus of recent debate over the significance of the welfare state. Second, it shows how the state regulation of poor relief and the first efforts to rationalize voluntary charity during the middle decades of the century gave birth to a conflict between state regulation and voluntary initiative. This conflict was given a new urgency, first, by the intensification of public intervention into the sphere of social reproduction and, later, by renewed state efforts to control organized charities during World War I, and it played a crucial catalytic role in the politics of welfare reform in the Republic.

In the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars, Prussia and the South German states initially adopted diametrically opposite approaches to poor law reform and the crisis of pauperism. Although these reform strategies reflected the differences in the economic and political structures of the two regions, they both pivoted around the same issue: the relation between the local state and the sovereign, territorial state. In the post-1815 period, poor relief in Prussia was regulated by the *Allgemeines Landrecht* (1791/94), which simply gave the sanction of the sovereign state to traditional arrangements. No matter where the individual might find him- or herself at the onset of need, the destitute person received support from local institutions (the city, the parish, the manor, guilds) in his or her place of birth (or the community where the person had been explicitly admitted to the rights of citizenship). However, although the Prussian reforms had freed the subject population to leave their former residences, they did not guarantee that the newly emancipated persons would be accepted in other towns, especially if local authorities suspected that the immigrant was likely to become impoverished and a financial burden on the new community. In the 1820s and 1830s the problems created by this incongruity between the new freedoms of trade, movement, and marriage and the strictly localistic poor relief system provided the impetus for national poor law reform in Prussia.

In 1842/43, the Prussian government promulgated a set of laws regulating a tightly connected set of issues: the admission of new migrants into the community, communal responsibility for poor relief, disciplinary measures for vaga-

bonds, beggars, and the work-shy, and the acquisition and loss of Prussian citizenship. These laws, which all reflected the impact of social change on traditional notions of citizenship, clearly established the primacy of the sovereign, territorial state in this area and the priority of national over local citizenship. To create a poor relief system which was better adapted to the problems of a more mobile market society, this legislation established guidelines for the acquisition of a relief residence (*Unterstützungswohnsitz*), which was thenceforth to be responsible for supporting the person in time of need. In this way, the law encouraged the poor to migrate in search of work. Although both conservatives and liberals initially feared that the juridification of the moral obligation of the community to support its needy members would promote the communistic illusion that the poor had an actionable right to public assistance and thus further intensify the problem of pauperism, in practice the most important problem created by the relief residence system, as it came to be known, was the constant conflict between the urban bourgeoisie in the industrial towns along the Rhine and the landed nobility in the east over the use of these regulations to redistribute the costs of poor relief.[19]

In the south, eligibility for poor relief continued to be regulated by "home law" (*Heimatrecht*: literally, right of return). Home law was an integral element of municipal citizenship because those persons who were accepted as members in the local political community, given permission to settle and marry, and granted the right to practice a trade also acquired at the same time the right to poor relief in case of need. A person's *Heimat*—which in a stable society generally meant one's place of birth—was that place where he or she enjoyed a legal right to assistance in time of need; this right could only be lost by marriage outside the community (for women) or explicit acceptance into another community (for men). The defenders of *Heimatrecht* argued this system had one overriding moral advantage over the relief residence system: since no one could lose their right to poor relief in their hometown without simultaneously gaining an equivalent right elsewhere, the *Heimatrecht* system forestalled that erosion of communal bonds which was held by many to be the cause of both moral and material impoverishment. In contrast to the more economically developed north, in the southern states it was widely believed that the nascent crisis of pauperism was due primarily to the growing disproportion between population growth and available economic resources, rather than obstacles to freedom of movement. As the pauperism crisis intensified through the *Vormärz*, the south German states responded by passing legislation to shore up the foundations of local government and further tighten local control over movement, marriage, trade, and poor relief. However, this southern alternative proved inef-

[19] The best account of this legislation is Michael Doege, *Armut in Preußen und Bayern, 1770–1840* (Neue Schriftenreihe des Stadtarchivs München, 1991). On the subsequent conflict over the distribution of total poor relief costs, see George Steinmetz, *Regulating the Social: The Welfare State and Local Politics in Imperial Germany* (Princeton, 1993), and Steinmetz, "The Myth of an Autonomous State: Industrialists, Junkers, and Social Policy in Imperial Germany," in Eley, ed., *Society, Culture, and the State in Germany, 1870–1930*, pp. 257–318.