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Berlin Historians and German Politics

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Berlin Historians and German Politics
by Charles E. McClelland
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The result was a blending, rather than a collision, of the largely unpolitical heritage of German philosophical idealism and historicism with the endless thirst of the Prussian state for intellectual recognition. Nowhere was the process more clearly discernible than among the historians at the University of Berlin. To arrive at that pinnacle, they had in theory to represent the best the German historical profession had to offer; in practice they had to pass through the channels of acceptability created by the Prussian Ministry of Education. Neither criterion implied a duty of participation in national political life. Yet the Berlin historians were deeply involved in contemporary political questions.

In examining the Berlin historians and politics at the beginning of the twentieth century, we may ask how they came to be selected in the first place, why four such historians in particular may be singled out for analysis; and how these four – Hans Delbrück, Max Lenz, Dietrich Schäfer, and Gustav Schmoller -- interpreted and attempted to influence political events.

In some respects, the Berlin historians of 1900 had less reason to abandon political detachment than the preceding and succeeding generations. The faculty of 1900 was not merely the "intellectual bodyguard of the Hohenzollern realm", as its rector, DuBois-Reymond, had proudly proclaimed in 1871. The passions aroused by the unification of Germany had died along with such historians as Sybel and Treitschke, and the compulsion of an even older generation, typified by Ranke, to write lofty and quasi-theological defenses of the Prussian monarchy now seemed old-fashioned. By a combination of Prussia's territorial conquests in 1866 and the subsequent extension of Berlin's central position in the galaxy Prussian universities, Berlin University, in less than a century, had attained a dominant position in Germany and the world. It should have reinforced the detachment of the historians. Unlike their successors after 1918, they did not have to defend their country against "Allied propaganda" or make agonizing choices about domestic politics. Consciously at least, the Berlin historians, led by Max Lenz, paid lip service to scholarly detachment, to the spirit of Ranke, and turned their backs on the partisanship of their recently-deceased colleague, Treitschke. Even as they rejected neo-positivism, the Berlin professors, influenced by Dilthey, discovered they could still be called "scientists" because of the division of "science" into a realm of nature and a realm of spirit (*Geisteswissenschaft*).

Yet the Ranke renaissance was more illusion than reality.³ Not only in their actions, but sometimes in their words, the Berlin historians betrayed a desire to continue the long tradition of German historians who made history as well as wrote it. Gustav Schmoller, the dean of German economic historians in 1900, had already recognized the inter-relationship between pure research and practical (including political) application a year

before being called to Berlin in 1882. "We remain a part of the problem that we wish to investigate and recognize. The search for truth should not demand its reward today or even tomorrow -- it should always remain a priestly office in the service of the nation and humanity.... All practical political-science discussion therefore takes some of its support from some system of belief, from a moral Weltanschauung: that is, it is in some respect a practical cause, no matter how much it is based on the results of exact research."⁴ This candid admission, a rarity in late nineteenth-century German academic literature, was provoked by the countercharge that partisan engagement in the affairs of the nation was a mark of Cain, a sign of unscientific and even dishonest academic method.

To understand the reasons for actual political engagement against a background of asserted scientific detachment, one must recall the general picture of Berlin's political geography and the specific picture of Prussian university policy in the age of the "secret minister of education", Ministerialdirektor Friedrich Althoff. Many of the temptations to political engagement in Berlin flowed from the physical location of the university in the center of the capital. Although the Berlin professorate typically lived in the elegant comfort of the Gr̈unewald or Dahlem, this relative physical isolation was an inadequate guarantee against their being caught in the press of capital life: one of Althoff's dreams was to move Berlin University out to the suburban Dahlem domains of the king and there create a "German Oxford" far from the madding crowd. The old university building stood almost in the geographic middle of Germany's political life. A few hundred yards away, at either end of Unter den Linden, stood the royal palace and the Reichstag. From his palace Wilhelm II proclaimed the same ideas about being "above party" as the Berlin historians, while nevertheless manipulating politics as best he could. The Reichstag parties down the street gave constant examples of how petty and divisive parliamentary life can be, but like the professors (some of whom sat in the Reichstag or at least the Landtag), they proclaimed their loyalty to "patriotic ideas"-except, of course, for the Socialists. If these distractions were not enough, the various ministries in the government quarter around the university became increasingly willing to solicit the opinion and support of Berlin historians in the most diverse matters -- if only to further propaganda campaigns. Not far from the university rose the working-class quarters of industrial Berlin, their grey ugliness reminding everybody of the "social question". Very few universities were located in such unavoidable proximity to many microcosmic manifestations of national life and problems. But the temptations of Berlin were not the Berlin historians' first brush with politics. They had first to undergo the scrutiny not only of their future colleagues in the Philosophical Faculty but also of the Prussian Ministry of Education. The two processes were by no means identical. The faculty continued to operate along the classical lines of scholarly desiderata tempered by the inevitable academic vices of preferment, prejudice, and politics. Against this were pitted the less clear preferences of the section for higher education in the ministry, increasingly dominated from the 1880s onward by Althoff.⁵ Among the criteria for selection, loyalty to the House of Hohenzollern was primary. This condition fell lightly on those Protestants devoted to the Bismarckian Reich and the Hohenzollern monarchy, and on those not given to even faintly revolutionary ideas (as the expulsion of the Social Democrat and Privatdozent Leo Arons in the 1890s showed). Of course the government demanded acceptable political *Gesinnung*; acceptable *Gesinnung* was above party or could be reconciled with membership in the Conservative, Free Conservative, or National Liberal parties. Membership in the Catholic Centre, Socialist, or left-Liberal parties was emphatically not a part of good *Gesinnung*. The Berlin historians largely abstained from joining parties, even the acceptable ones, for their political positions shifted ground with a

regularity which was repellent to men of principle and risky for those who wished always to be on the side of the government.

Beyond loyalty to the Protestant-dominated, Prussian-oriented state of the Hohenzollerns, other factors played a role in the selection of Berlin historians. As a result of the high standing (and even higher perquisites) of Berlin, personal fame and even controversiality were practically universal characteristics of the historians there. In almost every case they had made national reputations as crusaders for some highly-charged cause before they were "called" to the Ordinariat, the coveted full professorship which, in German academic practice, brought with it certain rights of self-government in the affairs of the university. Indeed, blandness of views was almost a kiss of death to a historian who wanted to end his career at Berlin, even though public notoriety was not a guarantee of receiving a call.

From the sketchy evidence available, it would appear that Althoff attempted to use vacant chairs (most obviously those at Berlin) as a carrot to entice academics who were too prominent to ignore and ambitious enough to make concessions in return for appointment. A fascinating unpublished handwritten account by Delbrück of his negotiations with Althoff describes this process as his "life crisis", and reveals a mood of desperation which others must have felt when playing for the highest stakes with the ministry.⁶ Delbrück was already famous as the successor of Treitschke as editor of the *Preussische Jahrbücher* when the question of his appointment to full professor came up in 1895. According to his account Althoff tried to oblige him to subject the journal to a sort of tacit censorship. After several months of great distress, Delbrück was ready to sacrifice the prospect of a professorship. Only after lengthy negotiations and visits to the royal family was he able to achieve his goal without concessions. Delbrück was not the only Berlin historian who observed the rather contemptuous treatment of men of learning by Althoff. Meinecke, among others, remarked on the cruelty of Althoff's practices, which included keeping professors waiting for hours in a dark room with nothing to do but fret and read a cynical wall inscription, "in diesem Zimmer dachte ich oft/Hier wird man alt, indem man hofft".⁷

But even beyond the personal decisions of Althoff or those of the Philosophical Faculty, higher political figures or changes in general policy could influence the selection. Schmoller, for example, was nominated to a vacant chair by the Berlin Philosophical Faculty three times before the ministry endorsed him -- the last time after "the misgivings of the ministry about his tendencies in social policy were set at rest".⁸ To take another example: Delbrück's original appointment as a lecturer in 1881 may have been due to his own merits; but his papers show that he attempted to exploit his close ties to the royal family (he had been tutor to Prince Waldemar, the son of the later Emperor Friedrich III, in the 1870s).⁹

Another incident from Delbrück's academic life indicates the close connection between politics and professional careers. Delbrück had finally achieved the coveted promotion to Ordinarius in 1895. Arrangements had been made to bestow the honour formally on the day of the unveiling of a statue of Friedrich III, a ceremony arranged by Delbrück and attended by Wilhelm II. The unveiling of national monuments offered repeated occasions to German historians for flattering speeches in the presence of royalty and government officials. At the last minute the bestowal of the professorial dignity had to be postponed because the Ministry of the Interior had initiated a court action against Delbrück for allegedly insulting the Prussian police in the *Jahrbücher*. It is

impossible to prove that this action was orchestrated by Althoff to reinforce his demand that Delbrück pay the price of self-censorship in return for his new post, but the coincidence is striking.¹⁰ Delbrück finally did get his chair (he succeeded Treitschke in 1896), but the interconnection of politics and historical chairs at Berlin was not limited to his case.

Three of the four Berlin historians to be discussed here – Delbrück, Schäfer, and Schmoller – had developed clear political profiles before being called to Berlin. The fourth, Lenz, offers example of the erosion of the principle of objectivity in face of the practical imperative of engagement for the fatherland. These four were the senior historians at Berlin around 1900. Ranke, Droysen, Gneist and Treitschke at the university and Sybel at the Prussian State Archives had all died, and Mommsen, an outstanding example of the politically-engaged historian of the older generation, had retired. All four men were in their fifties or early sixties at the turn of the century. They had studied for the most part under the now-deceased spokesmen of the Prussian school -- Sybel (Delbrück and Lenz), Duncker (Schmoller), and Treitschke (Schäfer). The other Berlin historians of the time belonged to the coming generation, the remarkable one born in the 1860s. Some, like Otto Hintze, climbed steadily through the Berlin ranks. Others, such as Hermann Oncken and Erich Marcks, left after teaching in the lower ranks and would not return until the 1920s." There were also scholars outside the ranks of the Philosophical Faculty who were interesting as both historical and political writers -- such as Delbrück's brother-in-law Adolf Harnack (Berlin Theological Faculty) and Max Lehmann (Dahlem Archive). But the four selected here, representing widely differing historical approaches and fields of interest, offer the most forceful collective example of German historians in politics around the beginning of this century. Schmoller was the leading economic historian of his day; Delbrück, a wide-ranging military historian; Schäfer, a medievalist; and Lenz, a modern historian specializing in lofty generalized presentations of history which he had derived from Ranke's *Ideenlehre*.

Schmoller, born in 1838 and trained for a civil service career in Württemberg, had made life difficult for himself in south Germany because of his admiration for Prussia. He felt more at home in the Prussian-administered universities of Strasbourg and Berlin. As a founder and leading spirit of the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* he was both hampered and advanced by the divided opinions in Prussian government circles concerning his approach to the "social question", but the turn of Bismarck and even the young Wilhelm II towards winning over the working class, plus the firm grip of Schmoller's allies in the *Verein* on German academic economics, assured his eventual triumph.¹² Schmoller was not only appointed to the Prussian State Council (1884) and the *Herrenhaus* (1889) but was ennobled in 1908 for his services.

Hans Delbrück, born in 1848 into a large and influential family of Prussian civil servants, had been with Schmoller in Berlin since the early 1880s. Although his scholarship was more limited than Schmoller's, his involvement in political questions as editor of the *Preussische Jahrbücher* was even more varied than his senior colleague's. Delbrück had served in the Franco-Prussian war, and since that time had devoted himself to military history. Beginning with a biography of Gneisenau in the early 1880s, he had worked away at a theme which said much about his interest in politics -- "the history of the art of war in the framework of political history".¹³ It was an attempt to raise military history above the level of technical analysis and sandbox strategy, to the annoyance of generals and other historians. He hoped to create a school but failed. Among the Berlin historians he was the most

conspicuous outsider, a lone wolf in historiography and politics alike. His influence was exercised chiefly through the *Jahrbücher*, which he edited alone from 1889 to 1919. His "political correspondence" section there showed considerable independence of mind and called into question many reigning political orthodoxies. Delbrück was also unusual in another respect: he was one of the few Berlin historians of his generation who had tried to influence politics directly by standing for election to the Landtag (1882-85) and Reichstag (1884-90). Until his open break with Baron Stumm in the mid-nineties, he was affiliated with the Reichspartei (Free Conservatives).

Max Lenz, Delbrück's close friend until the two went their divergent ways over political questions in the first world war, was much less politically engaged than Delbrück or Schmoller when he came to Berlin in 1890. Born in 1850, the son of a Prussian official, Lenz revered Ranke and tried to use his historical method and ideology, but found he could not withstand the temptation to mix history and politics. He stands symbolically for many other German historians who -- unlike Schmoller and Delbrück -- could not take the full stride towards open engagement in political questions because of their commitment to historical objectivity. The result was a repression of overt political involvement and a rechannelling into unconscious politicization of Lenz's entire historical opus. To be sure, he took to writing in the popular press from the 1890s on, but he did not have his own journal, as Schmoller and Delbrück had. Although Lenz is remembered primarily for his study of the University of Berlin,¹⁴ his most interesting work for our purposes is his attempt to extend Ranke's viewpoint onto the global scale of the conflicts of the age of imperialism.¹⁵ Like so many others, he made a scholarly effort to justify Germany's *Weltpolitik*. As one of the leading Luther experts of his day he also defended Prussian Protestantism against the presumed threats of Catholics, Jews, Liberals, and Socialists. Finally, he did his part in making a hero of Bismarck.

Dietrich Schäfer came to Berlin at the end of a highly unusual career. His was a rare case -- a Berlin professor who had begun life (in 1845) as a dock-worker's son. His family was extremely poor, but too proud to accept charity even after the father's early death. Rigid application of the work ethic and some lucky patronage enabled Schäfer to transcend his origins and reach the most envied heights of German academic life. All his works breathe the sober, humorless, pedantic spirit of the petty-bourgeois schoolmaster (which he had been before beginning his academic career). Schäfer had one basic political idea, which came easily to him as a native of Bremen: he believed utterly in Germany's mission as a great commercial, naval, and colonial power. His *idée fixe* was the glory of the Hansa, and his political engagement revolved around ways of restoring and enhancing that glory. Schäfer was modern enough to defend any and all overseas involvements, and medieval enough to distort the colonizing mission of the Hansa and the Germanic Order into a modern imperative of *Drang nach Osten*. He was the most convinced and uncritical spokesman for imperialism among the Berlin historians. It is no surprise that Germ war aims debates from 1914 on would find Delbrück and Schäfer leading the opposing camps among the professorate.

Apart from Schäfer, who was truly a son of the people, the Berlin historians shared typical professorial backgrounds -- their families had all been civil servants. Schmoller, like Gneist before him and his student Hintze after him, proclaimed the virtues the administrative caste from which so many Prussian professors sprang. But like many Prussian bureaucrats, the Berlin historians shared a sense of responsibility for the state. Insofar as the

Prussian bureaucracy offered one of the major alternatives to English-style parliamentary opposition, the professors (who were also state officials) were carrying on an old family tradition in trying to judge the acts of their rulers soberly and to advise where they could. The prestige attached to their position, the traditional role of German historians as commentators on political event and -- perhaps most decisive -- the erratic moods and policies of Wilhelm II, drew them irresistibly into politics.

Although individual historians such as Delbrück and Schmoller had spoken out on political questions before the end of the nineteenth century, the largest single impetus towards political engagement came from the favorite project of the emperor himself, the building of the German fleet. The fleet towed behind it several other questions about foreign policy. Historians already active politically redoubled their efforts in the fleet question previously passive ones, such as Lenz, were drawn into the public discussion of political issues. The fleet seemed to be the ideal issue to unite German professors behind the government. At first it seemed harmless enough. Everybody agreed that Germany enjoyed a flourishing commerce, a modest but promising colonial position, and an undisputed place as a world power. A fleet was a logical corollary. Further more, naval imperialism had been seen to be popular in England and the United States. As Bernstein's writings revealed, navy imperialism -- which required little taxation and no extension of conscription -- might even have some appeal to members of the SPD (Social-Democrats) itself. Tirpitz, the German naval genius found it easy to enlist the professors (led by Schmoller and Lat Schäfer) in his cause. Indeed, it was Schmoller who recommended a young Berlin historian, Ernst von Halle, to be Tirpitz' coordinator of professorial propaganda for an expanded fleet.¹⁶

The fleet question and, behind it, the larger question of imperialist Weltpolitik, provided a common cause which could be backed by members of the Verein für Sozialpolitik as well as reactionaries. For the left end of the professorial political spectrum, the fleet and colonies held out the hope of an economical bright future, with full employment and a low cost of living blunt the edge of revolutionary propaganda. An "overpopulated" Germany could send some of its surplus to new colonies without losing productive labor. The new fleet, which would give more weight to the bourgeois officer class, might counterbalance the dominance of the Prussian Army officer corps. The German right was led to support a naval building program for more immediate reasons, such as economic benefits to heavy industry or to curry favor with the court.

Even though the majority of German professors and the overwhelming majority of Berlin professors supported the building of a modern German fleet, there was division over tactics. Some historians, notably Schäfer, lent the weight of their reputation to the Flottenverein (Navy League) despite its compromising complicity with heavy industry. Schmoller and most other historians preferred to avoid dubious lobbies and founded the Freie Vereinigung für Flottenvorträge (Free Association for Naval Lectures).⁷ This squeamishness indicates how self-conscious the Berlin historians were about their scholarly neutrality precisely this attitude, coupled with the notion that the fleet necessity, as ascertained by "science", lent their support even weight among the public. If Germany's best historical minds "proved" the necessity of the fleet, then the obvious self-interest of many members of the Navy League did not seem so important. It did not seem dubious to Schmoller that he had helped to organize "clean" fleet propaganda at the request of Tirpitz: he presumed that a directive from the Reich government was "above politics." Schmoller was merely reflecting the view of Miquel and others in the Reich and Prussian

governments; if the policy was successful, it would mend the "petty partisan fissures" which were weakening Germany.

At the other end of the political spectrum, represented by Schäfer, the argument was more concerned with foreign policy: Germany must expand or die. The wide differences in the motives for fleet support among the domestically progressive wing of the Berlin historians (exemplified by Schmoller) and the national-conservative, aggressively expansionist wing (exemplified by Schäfer) became clearer as the fleet was built up. By the eve of 1914, some original supporters of the fleet, such as Delbrück, were openly concerned about its disastrous effect on German-English relations. Others, both in peacetime and wartime, saw Germany's only salvation in pushing ahead at any cost.

At the outset, in 1897, the differences were not so readily apparent. Schäfer, drawing on arguments of his teacher Treitschke, had set the tone in an early and much quoted book, *Deutschland zur See*,¹⁸ a typical synthesis of current arguments for fleets and colonial possessions. The same colonial arguments were used by Schmoller and others. Colonies were an outlet for population surpluses which would otherwise be "lost to the fatherland" by emigration elsewhere; even if they did not pay in the short run, they promised long-term economic rewards and outdoor relief for the upper and middle classes; they were a hedge against the future possibility of closed commercial empires; great powers needed colonies if only to keep abreast of other great powers; and the "civilizing mission" of German Kultur was no less noble than that of other European states. Without colonies, Schmoller wrote in 1899, "We shall have a one-sided development as an industrial state, be threatened in our exports, soon have either massive emigration to foreign countries or over-population at home, with consequent downward pressure on wages and proletarianization of the masses."⁹ Delbrück, who also used the standard arguments for colonies, dwelt on the special plight of the educated class. "Here we have the greatest oversupply. Among young men who have passed their school-leaving examination, studied hard for three years at universities, passed two further state examinations, and are already in the second half of their twenties, many would be happy to have the salary of a twenty-year-old Berlin bricklayer." If only Germany, like England, had an India, where 60,000 surplus trained men could find work!²⁰

The arguments for colonies were rarely original, for colonies served mostly as an excuse for the fleet. Delbrück and Lenz, who defended the fleet, were always lukewarm about colonies. Even for Schäfer, a consistent colonial advocate, the fleet question was paramount: without sea power, no colonies. Schmoller saw that Germany might be able to get along with her own food-producing colonies but that she would never be secure, as a food-importing industrial country, without the sea power to protect her trade routes. By 900o the better territories of the non-European world were already divided up among the great powers. Thus Germany's economic future depended on a strong fleet. At worst it would provide German merchants with access to world markets and protect them against latter day pirates, as Schmoller called men such as Cecil Rhodes. At best, it would give Germany a position of strength in future, probably unavoidable, conflicts. The Berlin historians all assured their readers that this strength would be used justly. Once strong at sea, Germany would be a "bulwark of peace and a protection against force" (Schmoller), an element of stability in an unstable world (Delbrück and Lenz). Even Schäfer proclaimed, "We have no intention of driving any people, and certainly not the English, from the ocean; but we

not want and cannot allow ourselves to be driven from it."²¹

Nothing better illustrates the dependence of Berlin historians on official policy than their poorly-conceived and lame defense German colonial expansion, especially in connection with their spirited and ingenious advocacy of a big fleet. These two aspects of German Weltpolitik were hard to reconcile in any case. The fleet Tirpitz conceived, the "risk fleet", was designed for the head-on confrontation of great national navies in the North Sea. A truly colonial navy, on the other hand, would have concentrated more on small ships or ones with long cruising range -- on gunboats and cruisers, not battleships. If the Tirpitz navy was to win colonies for Germany, it would have had to do so on the political level, in confrontation with England, not on the colonial level confrontation with native chieftains.

The most dynamic side of their engagement in fleet propaganda was their reassessment of England and English history.²² In this area they and their students outdid themselves in ardor. Schäfer the nationalist historian of the Hansa, had the least difficulty reconciling his political bias and his historical perspective. Although he, like Treitschke, had been an Anglophile in the 1860s, by 1900 he regarded England as the historical enemy Germany's efforts to gain her natural rights at sea. Passages such as the following abounded in his later writings:

People have accused the German merchant of sometimes brutally abusing his medieval mercantile superiority. Everything that can be laid at his door in this respect is innocent child's play compared to the horrors of colonial and maritime history in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries... Never has international law been worse bent, never has raw force been invoked more openly than the mercantile and maritime questions of the age of Dutch and English maritime domination... And no power has ever represented its maritime interests more brutally and selfishly than "Britannia, ruler of the waves".²³

After Schäfer, whose resentment of England's success reached all the way back to the decline of the Hansa, Schmoller had the least difficulty in attacking England, which to him represented the bastion of "Manchesterism". As spokesman for a bureaucratically-controlled economy with concessions to the public welfare, he had always upheld List's economic philosophy and combated laissez faire ideology, previously widespread in Germany. While attacking reigning conceptions of England, however, Schmoller was essentially advocating that Germany adopt the English prescription for commercial success, based on sea-power, wise governmental regulation (which Schmoller thought more typical of England than "Manchesterism"), and a certain degree of flexibility. He never used Schäfer's school-masterly tone of moral indignation about England, but he did dissociate himself from the admiration of British parliamentary institutions typical of German liberals, and wanted firm limits to emulation of the British economy: "We want to be neither an industrial state nor a colonial state nor a sea power like England; we want to remain a continental and military state, and we never want to abandon our agriculture like England."²⁴ For Schäfer and Schmoller, England represented the most successful industrial, colonial, and naval power in modern history. They explained this success in terms of calculation, governmental protection, ruthless exploitation of sea power, and sometimes Germanic "racial stock", all of them available to modern Germany as well. Unlike liberal historians of earlier generations, they rejected such explanations as a "free constitution", a unique geographical position, and the accidents of history as causes of England's enviable wealth and power. Above all,

their confrontation with England in their writings assumed significant proportions only in the wake of Flottenpolitik.

Lenz and Delbrück, who also campaigned for the navy, took a less economically-oriented approach. Both were fascinated by political power in the grand sense and unwilling to dignify trade as the most important factor in English history. Both fell prey to that abstraction of diplomatic historians, the "balance of power". Since they both had a much more international horizon than the essentially national historians Schäfer and Schmoller, they took a different view of the fleet question. For them, a fleet was more a symbol of great-power status than an end in itself. A fleet would give Germany the chance to play its justified role in the balance power game. Lenz, who cannibalized Ranke's thoughts on the fruitful, mutually balancing tensions of the European gr powers, spread his net all over the globe. He paid tribute England for upholding the balance, just as Ranke had. But 1815, he wrote, English policy had taken a sinister turn with "betrayal" of the Vienna Congress system in favor of the pursuit of England's own objectives amid the confusion of European South American rebellions. To Lenz, Canning and Palmerston had been as ruthless and selfish as Chamberlain and Balfour whose "plundering attack on the Transvaal" he roundly c condemned.²⁵ Thus even to this champion of Ranke, the concern the present clouded the picture of at least the recent past.

Delbrück had fewer inhibitions than Lenz about abandoning the Rankean heritage. His judgments, both historical and political, were formed more by his editorship of the *Jahrbücher* than by his professorship. He changed his position more readily than his fellow historians, partly because he often followed policy shifts in the governments of Bülow and Bethmann-Hollweg. He admired both and corresponded frequently with Bethmann.²⁶ Delbrück's cooling zeal for the fleet and his restraint in writing about England were not entirely unconnected with the attitude of the government, as a letter to Oncken in 1912 shows. Oncken, a student of Lenz, had addressed the Navy League, arguing that bigger navy without a bigger army would offer little protect against England and a temptation to Russia. Delbrück had discussed the general situation with Bethmann, who was a opposed to the magnitude of Tirpitz's latest demands. "Under the circumstances", Delbrück wrote to Oncken, "I urge you to send a copy of your speech and a letter to both the Chancellor a Kiderlen [the Foreign Minister], and to emphasize that the speech was delivered to the Navy League itself. That will put a new weapon into the Chancellor's hands, which he will certainly not fail to use."²⁷ This preoccupation with questions of naval policy -- and by extension with judgments about English policy and history -- constitutes the most striking example of the connection of historiography and politics. The fleet and England were themes that hardly appeared in their works before 1897; once the signals fr the government were given, they never ceased to be major on For the decade after Tirpitz came to power until such isolate historians as Delbrück began to distance themselves from chorus of naval enthusiasts in the wake of the first Morocco crisis the Berlin historians were the mouthpiece of the Reich Naval Office.²⁸

In more general foreign-policy matters, including the preparedness of land forces, they were less united and less vocal. The one common theme, that Germany was only acting defensively as the embattled champion of a just world order, foreshadowed similar ideas common in German war propaganda. Given the dynamics of imperialism, however, Germany could hardly expect to play the same diplomatic role she had in Bismarck's day unless she expanded her power base to match the growth of the other great states. A "genuine" world balance of

power was invoked to justify aggressive dynamism on Germany's part. The balance of power system of earlier periods, on the other hand, was often described as a mere trick of the British, a form of "divide and conquer". Lenz and Delbrück qualified this notion considerably, the first saying Britain had cynically exploited the balance only since 1815, and the latter that Britain had always upheld the balance unless its interests were directly threatened.²⁹ Delbrück even recognized the danger for German policy in denouncing the historical evolution of the balance of power just because it had been disadvantageous to Germany. Schmoller and Schäfer, the economic historians, were as skeptical about the "English" balance of power as they were pious about Germany's idealistic and defensive use of unilateral power. Younger Berlin historians, such as Oncken and Hintze, openly spoke of England's manipulation of the international system to isolate Germany.³⁰ Since France was written off as Germany's hereditary enemy and Russia as a foe for the immediate future, the Berlin historians could see the balance of power in only two ways: the one in which England sought to check Germany was sinister; the other in which Germany enforced her desires was benign. Delbrück saw that the second an illusion, and that only negotiations with England gave Germany a chance for working within a healthy balance.

Since they all wrote in fulsome praise of Bismarck,³¹ it is surprising that the Berlin historians could not find a way to deploy his diplomatic tactics to Germany's current dilemma. Their answer to the Franco-Russian pincers was the same as the government's: more soldiers. Delbrück, so perceptive in other ways, lent his full support to expansion of the army at every opportunity. The ideas of general disarmament or a world court were unthinkable to him as to the other three. As he wrote in a review of Ivan Bloch's pacifist study of war, disarmament would be more disadvantageous to Germany than to any other power. Delbrück even turned Bloch's arguments against him: if modern military technology had made war too horrible to contemplate, then disarmament would encourage war! In the same article he depicted the idea of a world court as a shallow trick of Tsar Nicholas. Even Schäfer, who might have been expected to oppose army expansion as detrimental to naval building, was a central figure in founding the Wehrverein (Army League) in 1912. The purpose, as Schäfer put it, was "to make our people mature enough to fulfill its most important duty -- sacrifice to Mars." As in his activities with the Navy and Pan-German Leagues, Schäfer's zeal for the biggest possible army actually embarrassed the government. Schmoller, who evidently felt war was unavoidable, blamed democracy and financial speculators for European tensions in 1913. At the same time he urged Austria-Hungary to make war in the Balkans, assuring that country that the Berlin historians present and future would uphold its right to do so.³² In military and diplomatic affairs, as in the naval question, the Berlin historians willingly abandoned independence of mind. Historical objectivity, as well as political differences, tended to stop at the water's edge.

On domestic affairs the Berlin historians held much more divergent opinions. Even the right-of-center parties in the Reichstag found it easier to agree on fleets and armies than on schools and taxes. One can conveniently group the major internal issues of the German Empire around 1900 under five headings: the "social question", nationality problems, church and school policy, political reform, and financial reform. Of course not all these questions held the same immediacy for Lenz, Schmoller, Schäfer, and Delbrück. Lenz was most interested in defending the historic alliance of throne and (Lutheran) altar. The other three engaged in discussions of one or more of these five questions.

The "social question", a persistent problem of the German Reich, had been raised by rapid industrialization and social dislocation. Put negatively, it was a question of preventing Marx's prophecies from coming true. Schmoller, the expert on social policy, proposed an alliance of workers and the Prussian bureaucracy. Properly rewarded workers would be happy, the state would be secure, and the capitalists, if somewhat less rich and independent, would still be satisfied. No doubt it was his praise of the Prussian bureaucracy, rather than his paternalistic concern for the workers, that brought him a call to Berlin.³³ Schäfer did not share Schmoller's concern for social welfare legislation. As a poor child whose widowed mother had worked as a cleaning woman rather than accept charity, he had imbibed a contempt for those who could not help themselves. Socialism, he believed, was merely envy, a desire for Gleichmacherei (leveling) which would ultimately destroy all culture.³⁴ His contribution to the solution of the social question was to urge the government provide colonies for poor but honest Germans. His message malcontents was that a powerful Germany would become much richer; they should therefore support the state rather than quibble over the division of existing wealth. Lenz, like Schäfer had little to say on the social question. Only Delbrück was acutely aware of social problems as Schmoller, but his ideas were generally less dirigiste.

Not even Schmoller, the leading academic spokesman for social policy, worked out final answers to the social question. Historically he invoked an ideal (and simultaneously created severe historical distortions) in the social policies of Friedrich Wilhelm Friedrich II, and the reformers Stein and Hardenberg. Bismarck's social legislation naturally found his warm support. To Schmoller's annoyance however, the policies of the Prussian state around the turn of the century no longer corresponded to his bureaucratic ideal. Like Delbrück, he saw the monarchy and its officers allying themselves with the "aristocracy of money" against the people, and tried to persuade the Prussian bureaucracy make common cause with workers, peasants, and artisans through active social reform. He sometimes toyed with the idea that trade unions might provide a means of promoting bureaucratic action but he thought of them only as a desperate last choice. It was security and protection, the "social peace" offered to the work that he approved in unions, not militancy. Actual rule by the people as a solution to social problems was unthinkable to Schmoller. Rule by political parties, he claimed, led to class rule at best and to paralysis most of the time. Unlike the bureaucracy, parties could not "stand as honest broker between workers and entrepreneurs". If the other parties were class-bound, Schmoller had special words of vituperation and ridicule for the SPD. In addition to being unpatriotic, the Socialist program was "utopian"; its appeal to the voters merely reflected their anger with the government for failing to carry out comprehensive social reforms. But much as he disliked the SPD for its materialist philosophy, its systematic opposition to the Prussian monarchy and threats of armed uprising, Schmoller preferred toleration to repression. His conciliatory attitude rested on the faith that the SPD could never gain wide support and could therefore be drawn eventually into supporting the social monarchy. Even moderate and evolutionary approaches to a parliamentary solution to the alienation of the working class, such as Naumann's, were too utopian and too much of a threat to the bureaucratic-monarchic state for Schmoller. His goal -- social justice -- was inextricably bound up with his means to the end -- the strong, paternalist monarchy. Finally, Schmoller repeatedly emphasized that he was not opposed to capitalism. He explicitly approved of the gigantic

concentrations of industrial power in the German cartels provided they were watched over by the state.³⁵

Even more strongly did Delbrück approve of capitalism and the rights of the entrepreneur, wishing only to see the "harshness" the system alleviated. His answer to persistent unemployment which he dismissed as "unnecessary", was a national right to work. This right would not include the right to do what one was trained for, but only to employment in public works projects at pay lower than in private industry. He did not wish to repeal Bismarck's social legislation, but neither did he press hard for its extension. Further limitation of the working day, he argued, would simply bring on more unemployment.³⁶ Unionization, with the ultimate result of collective bargaining (as Delbrück saw the future England) offered a solution which was better than nothing but from ideal. The optimal economic order would do away with strikes altogether. Although not hostile to the Verein für Sozialpolitik and Naumann's group of "national social" politician and scholars, Delbrück participated in the Evangelical-Social Congress, a group which carried on the economically shaky traditions of Stöcker without the former court preacher's "demagoguery".

Like Schmoller, Delbrück belittled the SPD. He consistently underestimated its vote-getting potential and explained its growing strength by reference to the stupidity of the bourgeois and agrarian parties. A "social-democratic memorandum", which Delbrück wrote but presented as a "captured internal document" in his *Jahrbücher*, put forward his own analysis. "Our prospects of ever winning over a majority of the voters in the Reich are not only quite small, they are in fact non-existent", Delbrück's fictional SPD official wrote.³⁷ Delbrück consistently saw it as a party called into existence and furthered by official anxiety and repressive measures, such as Baron Stumm's *Umsturzvorlage* (Revolution Bill). The party's only hope lay in an alliance of farmers and the educated middle class, which would rescue it from its dependence on the "protest vote" of the petty bourgeoisie. Destroying Bismarck's universal male suffrage for the Reich elections would only allow the SPD to hide its actual limited appeal, which Delbrück predicted could never bring it more than 50 or 60 seats. Despite this ridicule, however, Delbrück sometimes advocated cooperation of liberal parties with the SPD, as in the Prussian elections of 1903. His fears of extreme conservatives and the Catholic Centre were great enough to overcome his scruples.

The Conservative Party is leaning more and more towards a feudal class policy and seeks to gain control of the entire administrative apparatus, all important state offices. The Ultramontanes attained an influence which Protestants and even liberal-minded Catholics cannot observe without anxiety.... The greatest danger threatening us today remains a Conservative Party which is politically and economically backward and goes hand in hand with the Centre in deepening the gulf which divides our people, leaving ever larger masses into a pure opposition which could be avoided by a moderate and conciliatory policy.³⁸

Delbrück's views on social policy were not informed by economic knowledge or modern views of society. His concern was always with political effects and how to master them, not underlying socio-economic causes. He was enough of a liberal (though a very conservative and self-interested one) to oppose extreme oppression because it would cut the ground from under independent-minded intellectuals like himself. And he was sympathetic enough to free capitalist enterprise to support the establishment of the Institute for Exact Economic Research, a scheme financed

by industrialists to counter the influence of the Verein für Sozialpolitik.³⁹

No less sharply controversial than the social question was the nationality question, a heritage of Bismarck's unification for which not even optimists could offer positive solutions. Frenchmen, Poles, and Danes, because of language, and Catholics and Jews, because of religion, did not fit into the Prussian theory of the German Volk. In the case of the Catholics, the nationality question took on a peculiar cast. Not the free exercise of the Roman liturgy but rather ultimate loyalty to the Pope made German Catholics suspect in the eyes of the Berlin historians, all of whom carried the intellectual baggage of the Kulturkampf, which took place in their early manhood. The "Jewish question", which had greatly exercised the previous generation of Berlin historians (notably Mommsen and Treitschke), no longer aroused high academic passion around 1900, despite the existence of the fading Antisemitic Party. None of our four historians took up the philosemitic cudgels of the elderly Mommsen. Delbrück had admitted privately in 1889 that he shared Treitschke's attitude towards Jews,⁴⁰ but there is little doubt that all four shared the general moderate antisemitism of their class and time without allowing it to become a mania.

The heart of the German nationality question now lay elsewhere – in the resistance of the borderland populations to linguistic incorporation into the sphere of German culture. Here the extremes were represented by Schäfer and Delbrück, with Lenz and Schmoller playing comparatively negligible roles. Schäfer, a medievalist, had long extolled the virtues of German colonization in Eastern Europe and saw no reason to differentiate between medieval and modern conditions. Delbrück, who approached the problem as a moderate pragmatist, inclined to the side of the minorities. It is telling that his moderation involved him in many conflicts with parties and the bureaucracy, where Schäfer's calls for Germanization brought no reprisals. Schäfer's first major article on the nationality problem, written about Alsace in 1870, shows clearly how his desire that the province be German overrode his observation that it was equally French in culture. Then as later, he defended the annexation Alsace-Lorraine in a simple way: "It was a matter of regaining lost territory, to recover what was lost to the Reich by robbery."⁴¹ As a leading member of the Ostmarkenverein, Schäfer defended the Germanization of the Prussian Polish territories as a right duty. He had organized the local branch of the Verein in Tübingen in 1894,⁴² and he later came into contact with the Pan-Germans because they supported its work. Schäfer also sympathized with certain conceptions of Germanentum (making the English, Scandinavians, and other Germanic linguistic groups into ethnic cousins) which had become rather unfashionable in Germany by 1900. When linguistic affinities with peoples outside the Reich promised heightened political and economic power to Prussia-Germany, Schäfer was for promoting international contacts; when they worked against the solidarity of the Reich, he opposed such exchanges. Although an ardent overseas imperialist in the naval question, he wished to strengthen *Deutschtum* in Europe rather than German communities overseas. He proposed no further direct annexations to the Reich in World War I, preferring the idea of client peoples subject to German control. Even though he agreed in general with Bethmann-Hollweg's September Program of 1914, he still opposed the Chancellor and became a leader of various super-patriotic groups. Bethmann was for diplomacy and flexibility while Schäfer was for brute power. Nowhere does Schäfer more clearly reveal a blindness reality, a national provincialism raised to a point of passionate stupidity, and a more shocking inconsistency of principle than his active participation in the nationality question. His open consorting with representatives of big agriculture and industry⁴³ would alone raise serious

questions about his historical objectivity if he had not himself admitted his inability to differentiate between history and the national cause: "History is not a science which can be furthered by international activity", he wrote of scholarly exchanges. "National convictions will always be determinant for its views."⁴⁴

If Schäfer and his non-academic friends regarded the nationality policy of the Prussian government as too weak and vacillating, Delbrück periodically criticized it as too harsh. This does not mean that he -- or any other Berlin historian -- regarded the Germanization of subject nationalities as wrong in principle. But he saw much more clearly than Schäfer that politics is the art of the possible. Schäfer, and to some extent even Schmoller and Lenz, regarded the discords within the Bismarckian Reich as a painful and regrettable fact which they would have liked to replace by a harmonious Gemeinschaft. Delbrück went as far as regarding the tensions in German political life as a necessary and even fruitful condition.⁴⁵ His attitude towards Poles, Danes, and Frenchmen was that of live and let live. Twice he spoke out against drastic measures against linguistic minorities in the Reich. In 1898-99, he attacked Prussian policies in Schleswig-Holstein in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* and was rewarded with another disciplinary investigation by the government, and in 1901 he signed a "Polish petition" along with the Berlin professors Paulsen, Pfeleiderer, Seeberg, and Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (Mommsen's son-in-law) deploring the extreme Germanization in Polish-German schools that had led to riots in Posen.⁴⁶ Since Delbrück was no friend of the Centre Party, his support of the right of Polish-speaking schoolchildren to receive at least religious instruction in their mother tongue was designed to reduce the political and cultural tensions which promoted the Conservative-Catholic alliance that Delbrück feared above all else.

Lenz and Schmoller did not involve themselves in the nationality issue to any great degree. Lenz shared the views of his hero, Bismarck, about the "enemies of the Reich", but he tended to dwell on the larger religious issues which criss-crossed nationality lines.⁴⁷ Nor did Schmoller often touch on this question. For him, people filled economic, not linguistic roles. But silence did not mean sympathy with minorities, as his occasional statements showed. "In an empire which is not called "German" for nothing, it is for a German not a matter of politics but a matter of course to think as a German nationalist, especially where a nationality struggle exists, and to use all institutions in such a way that they do not benefit the enemies of Germanism."⁴⁸

Closely intertwined with the nationality question, the problem of church and educational policy also tempted the Berlin historians to speak out. Formal loyalty to Protestantism was, as noted earlier, virtually a precondition for appointment to the university. But, led by Lenz, the Berlin professors made it clear that their commitment was more than formal. For them, the spirit of Luther and the spirit of free research were more or less identical. The establishment of a professorship at Strasbourg in 1903 specifically for a representative of Catholic historiography provoked a storm of protest. Most Berlin historians regarded the chair as a blatant bribe by the government to win cooperation from the Centre Party. Lenz, who made the most out of this issue, refrained from personally attacking the holder of the chair, Martin Spahn, who was after all his own student. What he did question was whether a truly believing Catholic could possibly pursue "scientific" historical studies.⁴⁹ Delbrück, though less concerned with religious questions in scholarship or political life, still regarded Protestantism as the foundation of liberty and scientific detachment. Only Schmoller held himself relatively free of involvement in religious questions, though he probably shared the views of Lenz. Schmoller's Verein avoided the kind of religious connection which Stöcker,

Naumann, and even Delbrück included in their "social policy" groups. Schmoller and especially Delbrück were capable of criticizing false piety and blind clerical conservatism, but most of the critical words written by the Berlin historians on religious matters were reserved for the church of Rome.

In school questions they played a surprisingly minor role. Schäfer, the former school-teacher, belonged to the German School League and wrote in defense of the undemocratic and authoritarian Prussian school system as a necessary element in Germany's unity and technical advance. But he did criticize the snobbishness of regarding the elementary school and its teachers as inferior in importance to the higher schools. Delbrück saw even more clearly than Schäfer that school reform was the best safeguard for the classical humanist education. The only way to preserve Greece and Rome for the few, he argued, was to give modern languages and science to the many and recognize their equal status.⁵⁰

Two final areas of domestic politics at the turn of the century deserve mention. The reform of the Prussian electoral system remained at the talking stage until 1914. Everybody but extreme conservatives acknowledged that the three-class electoral system was outdated, but agreement on its replacement was difficult. Moreover, the necessity of arming against "encirclement" had forced the Reich once again to confront the problem of taxation. All four historians declared their hostility to "democracy" and opposed the adoption by Prussia of the Reichstag franchise. Schäfer came closest to sharing the conservative view that no reform was necessary; Lenz wrote nothing on the subject. Delbrück and Schmoller, much as they praised aristocracy, bureaucracy, and monarchy in theory, went along with various proposals of the Bülow and Bethmann governments to alter the franchise to favor the educated (as opposed to the propertied) middle class.⁵¹ Both men supported these token reforms primarily to prevent worse things later on. Their attitude to new taxes had similar motives. Schmoller concluded that the Reich should levy both indirect (consumption) and direct (inheritance) taxes to reduce inequalities. Delbrück engaged in a lengthy defense of a proposed inheritance tax in 1909, for example, and ultimately found himself supporting the Bülow government against the Agrarian League in the columns of the *Jahrbücher*.⁵² Both Delbrück and Schmoller were repelled by the gap between the tactics of economic interest groups concerning taxes and their pious proclamations of patriotic self-sacrifice. Schäfer, though personally close to the Agrarians, knew when not to speak in their interest. He too demanded whatever financial sacrifices had to be made to ensure a strong military establishment. On the other hand, Schmoller and Schäfer were ardent defenders of the older and less economically progressive sectors of the German economy -- landowners and artisans. They did not want to see either of these groups taxed harshly.

What relation did the political opinions and activities of these men bear to their work as historians? Schmoller's political and historical writings came closest to unity. Through his writings, his journal, and his leading position in the *Verein für Sozialpolitik*, he enlarged the scope of social history. With Schmoller, history served as a corrective to the theoretical economics of Vienna and Manchester. An historically-oriented social science was supposed to provide a guide to action, and so Schmoller's historical works usually had application to contemporary problems. Schumpeter perhaps exaggerated Schmoller's personal influence when he called him one of those rare "artists" who create value judgments and set goals which seem as controversial to his own generation as they are indisputable to the next, but he was right to stress the reasons for Schmoller's differences with

theoretical economics: the latter takes economic reality as a datum while Schmoller questioned it and wished to change it by legislative action.⁵³ What limited his appeal outside Germany was the tight connection of his views with the particular circumstances of that country. Lenz, the least overtly political of the four, nevertheless did much to buttress the status quo. His major scholarly works -- on Luther, Bismarck, and the University of Berlin -- attempted to raise these historical subjects to a status at once heroic and above criticism. It must not be forgotten that objectivity was not the only part of Ranke's heritage which Lenz tried to appropriate; he also absorbed Ranke's semi-mystical glorification of "ethical forces" in history. These reached their peak for Lenz in the Lutheran church and the Prussian monarchy. Ranke sought these ethical forces in European and world history; Lenz found them primarily in the history of Prussia and Protestantism. His apparatus of historical objectivity and up-to-date scholarship served chiefly to create conservative heroes and armor them against attack, rather than to portray his subjects as men making decisions of a relative and historically conditioned value.

Schmoller and Lenz, men of radically different views about the line between scholarship and political engagement, both contributed their part to the attempt to shore up the Prussian-German monarchy. Schmoller had fewer illusions than Lenz about that line, but both developed their views consistently. Delbrück and Schäfer, on the other hand, were less aware of the dilemma. Delbrück was politically engaged from the start and developed his full historiographical activity only later. Schäfer's interests were at first antiquarian; only gradually did he come to be involved in political debates. Delbrück, perhaps because of his choice of military history as an academic field, was able to draw a clear line between historical and political work. He had to fight for recognition as a historian, partly because his Berlin colleagues resented him as a political appointment, partly because military history was not then fully recognized. Thus his lectures and historical writings, while consciously recognizing the political element in warfare, hardly seemed the work of the crusading editor of one of Germany's most prominent political journals. Delbrück criticized heroes instead of creating them. Schäfer's historical writings, like Delbrück's, were somewhat remote in time and topicality, but he managed nevertheless to integrate them into his political views. The more his work on the colonial and maritime greatness of late medieval Germany parallel to public interest in restoring that greatness, the more he drawn into political associations and causes. While open to the charge of opportunism, he received immense encouragement government and private circles, and seemed unaware of conflict between the obligations of scholarship and his patent political engagement. Schäfer had simply absorbed all the nationalistic teachings offered him as a youth, poured these into well-researched books, was raised to a pinnacle of the system he admired, and was then exploited by that system. His very partisanship makes him representative of many sectors of the German historical profession around 1900. Only the depth of his commitment to political causes -- which left him almost no time for original research after coming to Berlin -- set him apart.

For all the time and effort invested in politics by the Berlin historians, their success is difficult to assess. Despite the role of Delbrück and Schmoller in parliamentary assemblies were not directly engaged in preparing legislation. Only De had a popular mandate and belonged for any length of time to a party. Schmoller, disdaining both popular election and par held only appointive office. If Schäfer's memoirs are any cation, the Berlin professors had great difficulty campaigning personally among constituents and referred proudly to inability to be "demagogues". Yet if the Berlin historians generally disdained political d with the third estate, they were that

much keener to influence other ones, including the fourth. Delbrück occasionally boasted that the *Preussische Jahrbücher* had swayed Reichstag or ministerial decisions. He and Schmoller were in a position to be asked advice and comment by Chancellors Bülow and Bethmann-Hollweg, not to mention civil servants of lesser renown. T wrote voluminously for the learned and popular press. Schmollers *Jahrbuch* and the *Preussische Jahrbücher* were not only read by the political elite but were widely quoted in the general press. Schäfer, in addition to his tireless speech-making and journalism, wrote history books specifically for the broader public. That he should do so came from Tirpitz, and the number of editions of *Weltgeschichte der Neuzeit* (1907, with eleven editions and *Deutsche Geschichte* (1910, with eight editions by 1921), bore witness to his popular appeal.

Even more than in their role as publicists and advisers Berlin historians exercised a general kind of political influ through their scholarship. For all their undeniably careful and exhaustive research, they clothed the naked facts in splendid verbal robes woven of untested assumptions and absolute value judgments. The cults which resulted were not, of course, solely their handiwork. But Lenz, with his glorification of Bismarck and Luther; Schmoller, with his exaltation of bureaucratic rule and paternalistic monarchy; Schäfer, with his tendentious distortions of medieval German colonization and trade; and even Delbrück with his insistence that war and foreign policy, not the petty concerns of domestic politics and the life of the people, were the backbone of history – all in their way reinforced some of the notorious and dangerous misconceptions among the educated public in Germany.

Delbrück, Lenz, Schäfer, and Schmoller were not the only Berlin historians at the beginning of the twentieth century, but as a sample they are revealing and characteristic. Their attitudes were marked by a certain disdain for parliamentary politics that nevertheless did not stop them from playing a remarkable role in other spheres of national political life. Their very presence in Berlin was a virtual guarantee that they would support the general principle of the Prussian-German monarchy. Although the state sometimes used and even more often threatened to use its right to discipline its professional civil servants, the process of selection from middle-aged and well known teachers and writers virtually obviated the necessity, except in Delbrück's somewhat unusual case. The broadly-based consensus about Germany's foreign policy was present even before Tirpitz inaugurated the large-scale systematic exploitation of academic talent in service of an officially-sanctioned political cause. In domestic questions these Berlin historians showed an equally solid consensus with the basic structure of the contemporary German state with widely divergent views about tactical approaches to persistent problems. All wished to preserve Bismarck's creation, but each perceived different enemies and methods of defense. Despite more or less emphatic protestations of historical objectivity were no more immune to the political world of their time any other generation in any other place.

ENDNOTES

1 Fritz Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community 1900-1933* (Cambridge, MA 1969), 127.

2 Cf. Friedrich Meinecke, *Werke*, ed. E. Kassel, VIII, *Autobiographische Schriften* (Stuttgart 1969), 117. Meinecke here placed his finger on a major socio-psychological reason for the rejection of neo-positivism in Germany – it was too close to the forbidden ideology of the socialists.

3 See Hans-Heinz Krill, *Die Rankerenaissance, Max Lenz und Erich Marcks* (Berlin 1962).

4 Gustav Schmoller, Preface, *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft im Deutschen Reich* (hereafter SJ), 1881, 3,8.

5 Both the Fakultätsakten of the University of Berlin and the Nachlass Althoff are in the Deutsches Zentralarchiv II, Merseburg (GDR), and were not made available to me. I have consulted Althoff's voluminous personal correspondence in the manuscripts department of the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in East Berlin.

6 Hans Delbrück, "Aus meinem Leben" (1895) ms. in Nachlass Delbrück, manuscripts department, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Fasz. 95. This is the only autobiographical manuscript in Delbrück's papers and refers only to these events.

7 Meinecke, *Werke*, VIII, 132. Max Weber, among many others, attacked Althoff's so-called Revers system, whereby Althoff would induce professors to sign conditions in return for verbal promises of advancement. These conditions were said to include promises to turn down outside offers, give extra unpaid lectures, stay away from public assemblies, and keep silent on various matters. See the *Tägliche Rundschau* of the first few days of November 1911. The Althoff Nachlass in East Berlin contains voluminous clippings of attacks on Althoff.

8 Otto Hintze, "Gustav Schmoller", *Deutsches Biographisches Jahrbuch, Überleitungsband II* (1912-20), (Berlin 1928), 128.

9 In 1888, for example, Delbrück wrote to the royal family asking for assistance in obtaining a full professorship. See Nachlass Delbrück, Briefausgang, Konzept of 30 May 1888. He had made a similar effort in 1879. See Hans Schleier, "Treitschke, Delbrück und die "PJ" in den 80er Jahren des 19. Jahrhunderts", *Jahrbuch für Geschichte*, 1967, 137 f.

10 See Thomas Nipperdey, "Nationalidee und Nationaldenkmäler in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert", *Historische Zeitschrift*, 1968; Delbrück, "Aus meinem Leben". Heinrich Mann's novel *Der Untertan* parodied the jostling for fame and favor which surrounded the creation and unveiling of national monuments in imperial Germany.

11 The coming generation -- Marcks, Hintze, Oncken, and Meinecke -- began to exercise considerable influence only on the eve of World War I. As Meinecke himself put it: "I belong to the generation in Germany that lost the world war. I was then in my fifties, and men in their fifties and sixties, according to Treitschke, are those who rule the world." *Werke*, VIII, 4.

12 Schmoller proudly noted in his opening words to the 1899 meeting of the Verein that "practically all national economists in Germany and Austria are members. Only because the

seminars of all our German and Austrian universities are in close contact with our Association has it been possible for us, whenever we want to take up a question, to have a dozen or more scholars, sometimes even 30 to 50, at our disposal." Schmoller, *Zwanzig Jahre deutsche Politik* (Munich 1920), 35 f. German industrialists, hardly friends of the Verein shared this assessment sufficiently to back an academic antagonist of its view Professor Ehrenburg, in setting up an Institute for Exact Economic Research a major university. Stresemann and other representatives of German industry promised the necessary funds.

13 Delbrück, *Geschichte der Kriegskunst im Rahmen der politischen Geschichte*, 4 vols. (Berlin 1900 ff.).

14 Lenz, *Geschichte der Königlichen Friedrich-Whelms-Universität zu Berlin*, 4 vols. (Halle 1910-18).

15 Lenz, *Die grossen Mächte: Ein Rückblick auf unser Jahrhundert* (Berlin 1900).

16 Wolfgang Marienfeld, *Wissenschaft und Schlachtflottenbau in Deutschland 1897-1906*, Suppl. 2, *Marine Rundschau*, 1957, 79. Schmoller and Treitschke were revered teachers of Tirpitz. See Alfred Tirpitz, *Erinnerungen* (Leipzig 1920), passim.

17 Among its founders were Schmoller, Delbrück, Lenz, and Schäfer, not to mention the Berlin professors Otto Giercke (law) and Adolf Harnack (theology). For a listing see Marienfeld, op. cit., Anhang 4.

18 *Deutschland zur See* (1897), reprinted in *Deutschland und England* (Leipzig 1915).

19 Schmoller, "Die wirtschaftliche Zukunft Deutschlands und die Flottenvorlage" (1899), in *Zwanzig Jahre*, 7, 9.

20 Delbrück, "Die Arbeitslosigkeit und das Recht auf Arbeit", in *Erinnerungen, Aufsätze und Reden*, 2 vols. (Berlin 1902), I, 373.

21 Schmoller, "Die wirtschaftliche Zukunft", 7, 15, 18. See also Delbrück, "Weshalb baut Deutschland Kriegsschiffe?", *Preussische Jahrbücher* (hereafter PJ), 1909, 149-61, and Schäfer, *Deutschland zur See*, 112.

22 For a fuller analysis of the revaluation of English history in the light of *Weltpolitik*, see the author's *German Historians and England: A Study Nineteenth-Century Views* (Cambridge 1971), chap. 10.

23 Schäfer, *Deutschland zur See*, 49.

24 Schmoller, "Die wirtschaftliche Zukunft", 17.

25 *Die grossen Mächte*, 283.

26 *Nachlass Delbrück*, Briefausgang, to Bethmann-Hollweg, and Briefeingang from the same. Delbrück sent offprints of articles to the Chancellor, who responded warmly and at surprising length.

27 *Nachlass Delbrück*, Briefausgang, to Hermann Oncken, 3 February Delbrück was the first to see the danger of Germany's moving too rapidly the fleet. He broke his ties with the Pan-Germans and pressed for political cooperation with Britain in colonial questions and a scaling down of the navy to avoid other conflicts. Annelise Thimme, *Hans Delbrück als Kritiker der*

Wilhelminischen Epoche (Düsseldorf 1955), 106, 112.

28 In addition to the author's *German Historians and England*, see Marienfeld, op. cit.; Klaus Schwabe, *Wissenschaft und Kriegsmoral* (Göttingen 1969).

29 Lenz, *Die grossen Mächte*; Delbrück, "Deutschland und England" (1904), in *Vor und nach dem Weltkrieg* (Berlin 1926), 50-60.

30 Hermann Oncken, *Deutschland und England: Heeres- oder Flottenverstärkung?* (Heidelberg 1912); Otto Hintze, "Die Seeherrschaft Englands, ihre Begründung und Bedeutung", *Neue Zeit- und Streitfragen*, 1907, 27.

31 Lenz and Schmoller collaborated with Erich Marcks, the biographer of Bismarck, to produce *Zu Bismarcks Gedächtnis* (Leipzig 1899). Delbrück wrote "Fürst Bismarck und die Weltgeschichte" (1898), in *Erinnerungen*, I. See also Lenz, *Geschichte Bismarcks* (Leipzig 1902), and Schäfer, *Festrede der Tübinger Bismarckfeier* (Tübingen 1895).

32 Delbrück, "Zukunftskrieg und Zukunftsfriede" (1899), in *Erinnerungen*, I, 517; Schäfer, *Mein Leben*, (Berlin 1926), 160; Schmoller, "Krieg oder Frieden" (193), in *Zwanzig Jahre*, 17-20.

33 Schmoller, "Das erwachende Verständnis für Aristokratie und Bureaucratie" (1911), in *Zwanzig Jahre*, 91-96.

34 Schäfer, *Mein Leben*, 29-32.

35 Schmoller, "Die englische Gewerkvereinsentwicklung im Lichte der Webb'schen Darstellung", *SJ*, 1901, 313; "Sinn und Wert des unparteiischen Studiums der sozialen Frage" (1897), *Zwanzig Jahre*, 27; "Die 110 Sozialdemokraten im Deutschen Reichstag" (1912), *ibid.*, 98 ff.; "Das erwachende Verständnis", *ibid.*, 92 f.; "Demokratie und soziale Zukunft" (1912) *ibid.*, 103-12; "Das Verhältnis der Kartelle zum Staat", *SJ*, 1905, 1594. For Schmoller's entirely negative view of American, French, and Swiss democracy, see "Die Demokratie auf der Anklagebank", *SJ*, 1913; for a posthumous collection of his thoughts on the social question, see *Die soziale Frage* (Munich 1918).

36 Delbrück, "Die Arbeitslosigkeit", 369, 379 f.

37 Delbrück, "Briefwechsel eines Theoretikers und eines Praktikers über Arbeiterorganisation und Streiks" (1890), in *Erinnerungen*, I, 147; "Eine sozial-demokratische Denkschrift" (1895), and "Eine zweite sozialdemokratische Denkschrift", in *Erinnerungen*, I, 276.

38 "Wahlausruf an die Wähler des Wahlkreises Teltow-Beeskow-Charlottenburg" (1903), *Nachlass Delbrück*, Fasz. 25.

39 Delbrück was one of the few professors to sign a petition backing the establishment of the Institute in 1908. Among the co-signers were Kapp, Kirdorff, Maffei, Emil Rathenau, and Stresemann. *Nachlass Delbrück*, Fasz 21.

40 Letter to Reimer (n.d.), *Nachlass Delbrück*, *Korrespondenzgang* (1889).

41 Schäfer, "Aus deutsch-französischen Grenzlanden" (1870), in *Aufsätze, Vorträge und Reden*, 2 vols. (Jena 1913), I; "Die neue Reichsgrenze", *Aufsätze* I, 41.

42 Schäfer, "Unser Recht auf die Ostmarken" (1911), *Aufsätze*, II, 205; *Mein Leben*, 151.

43 Schäfer's *Mein Leben* is full of reports of his contacts with these "patriotic gentlemen" whose company clearly flattered the dock-worker's son. Though he recognized the financial interests which moved them, he rarely criticized them. Of all the Berlin historians, he was the only one who expressly approved of the alliance between big industry and big agriculture. See his *Weltgeschichte der Neuzeit*, 2 vols. (Berlin 1907), II, 327. Schäfer admits in *Mein Leben*, 149, that the Navy Office requested him to write this modern history for the broad public.

44 Schäfer, *Mein Leben*, 163.

45 Delbrück, "Fürst Bismarck", *Erinnerungen*, II, 477.

46 Nachlass Delbrück, Fasz. 15, 25.

47 See especially Lenz, *Geschichte Bismarcks*, 372-96.

48 Schmoller, "Nachwort zu Hans Crüger", *SJ*, 1913, 825.

49 Lenz, *Römischer Glaube und freie Wissenschaft* (Berlin 1902).

50 Schäfer, *Mein Leben*, 47-50, 153; Delbrück, "Politische Korrespondenz", *PJ*, 1899, 182, 1900, 576.

51 Schmoller, "Die preussische Wahlrechtsreform von 1900", *SJ*, 1900. Schmoller explicitly soothed the fears of the nobility that semi-democratic reforms would affect their careers. Delbrück, "Politische Korrespondenz", *PJ*, 1907.

52 Schmoller, "Historische Betrachtungen über Staatenbildung und Finanzentwicklung", *SJ*, 1909, 64; Delbrück, "Politische Korrespondenz", *PJ*, 1909.

53 Joseph Schumpeter, "Gustav Schmoller und die Probleme von Heute", *SJ*, 1926.