

Carl Vogt, *Studies of Animal States* (1851)

[NB: It might be useful to read “government” (*Regierung*) for “state” (*Staat*) throughout, though Vogt does not employ the term. The bourgeois revolutions of the nineteenth century were indeed changing the very sense of “government,” while Vogt’s metaphor is presumably referring to the entire apparatus of the state.]

Introduction

From time to time I am dogged by a mild doubt: is man really the most perfect creature? People go to so much trouble to make us understand this from an early age! When, as children [in Catholic church services], we followed the flight of the votive candle with our eyes, shaking our heads and not being able to see why the perfect human being [viz., Jesus Christ] had to lurch along meanly and slowly on solid ground, while the imperfect bird nevertheless soared high in the clouds as king in the realm of the air. If we could not see this, we were told that the hawk’s eye is keen, but our mind’s eye is much keener; its flight is indeed fast, but our flight of thought is even faster and can rise above the clouds even to the stars, and to the dear Lord himself. [3]

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I have doubted the relative perfection of man for a long time. An absolute perfection does not exist at all, perhaps not even in the brain distillations of young Hegelian philosophers. But I believed that man was the most perfect animal. Childish faith!... [5]

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The forms of state of the animal world have a wearisome duration. Not that they offer any special constitutional guarantees, such as laws on states of siege and the like—the only guarantee of their existence is uniformity in the diet of the nationals [i.e., subjects]. Pollen and honey, honey and pollen are the only means of sustaining bee life. Here, too, the opposites are opposed, as in coffee and potatoes—fresh pollen in summer stimulates the bee colony to swarm, to wander, while in winter the honey food confines them to the hive and keeps them there, like honorable citizens, in company [society], where at most they buzz a little. But the change remains confined to a very narrow circle – legal progress! – completely imperceptible to the stupid eye of those uninitiated in the mysteries of the bee colony, but still present. In this way the stupid eye of the peasant, the citizen, often does not notice legal progress, with which sometimes even March Ministers have made their *Land* happy.*

The researcher into the history of animal states therefore needs no folios, no old documents. The present mostly offers him the same material unchanged that the past would show. Not that we don’t possess the documents. Our knowledge of many animal states goes back to the time of sagas and fairy tales; for some of those that have come closer to civilization, like, for example, bee and ant colonies, we often find very satisfactory information in the old writers. [8] Where written documents are lacking, we often possess monuments and memorials that

* A reference to the short-lived cabinets appointed in response to the March 1848 Revolution, with many offices held by (in Vogt’s view) overly timid Liberals.

reach back to the dawn of antiquity. The gazelle and buffalo on the plains of the Eastern Cape of South Africa keep watch even today over cities and palaces built up from clay and earth by the ancient dynasties of termites, contemporaries of the pharaohs, perhaps even the blacksmith Tubal-cain. Old, splintered oak trunks often show us in their interior the secret paths and crooked passages through which mischievous diplomatic worms from the beetle state in the time of Christ or even earlier wound their way. Yes, the documents left behind by the animal states reach further back into the history of the earth than those of human societies. The socialistic monster-phalansteries [*phalanstère* was Charles Fourier's neologism for shared residential buildings in a utopian community] of corals and polyps had already settled in the seas furrowed by fierce ichthyosaurs and plesiosaurs, and the bottom-building colonies of oysters and mussels, which as serfs are confined to their [bivalve] feet and tied to the floe, vegetated already in their helot life under the dominion of the above-mentioned king lizards of the oceans.

Isn't this a sign of perfection? Can the historical school, can the legitimistic party, can the advocates of the right of government by the grace of God, the worshipers of genealogical trees, deny that something is more sacred, more untouchable, more perfect, the older and foggier its origin is lost in the depths of time? The builders of the Frankfurt Imperial Constitution, who in bold pride will dare to erect a mighty cathedral for the eternity of the German Empire, [9] and yet they only managed to create a house of cards which collapsed at the first puff of Manteuffel [Otto, the ultra-conservative face of Prussian reaction to the March Ministers], despite the heavy lifting by the noble Heinrich von Gagern [Hessian president of the Frankfurt Assembly]. Will they not be filled with amazement and awe when they behold these animal states which have undergone the most monstrous revolutions, and formed anew from destructions whose dreadfulness we cannot imagine, imperishable in their essence as well as in their exterior design? The womb of the earth has opened repeatedly to let mountains rise from within, lands sink into the abyss. Deluges and outbreaks of fire have repeatedly annihilated all living beings and spread the shroud of general devastation across our planet. Yet out of these appalling catastrophes the idea of the Oyster State, the Jellyfish Republic, the Polyp Phalanstery, and so many other state forms of the thinking animal organism, has always been rescued and begun its formative embodiment anew. Will the state idea of the professors, German unity embodied in the Kaiser, survive all revolutions in the same way and always rise again from the storms of the present and the future, like the phoenix from the flames? We doubt it and bow our heads sadly at the thought! Like the ephemeral appearance of the drone state on Isle Bourbon, or the sea cow monarchy on the shores of Kamchatka, this state idea of the best men has perished, crushed in the mighty clash between absolutism and democracy. It has disappeared, not to appear again. But just as one could deduce the diet of these animals from the remains of the trees [10] stuck in the dental ridges of the fossil rhinoceroses, so later researchers will also conclude from the fossilized remains of the German Kaiser-makers that they lived on parchment and fed themselves with paragraphs.

The animal state, as it arises from material needs, is also founded on the gratification of these material needs, and hence its durability in formal relation. Our professors misunderstood this simple condition of stability – their state idea died of emaciation, dried up like a plant in the open air, and the fructifying dew which a revolution might bring will not call this withered idea back to green life! Look at the animals, with what wisdom they select, work, prepare, and level the ground for a new state building. Rarely do they use given ratios; they force what is available to reshape itself in accordance with the new creation. The juvenile swarming oysters who want to found a new state (called a bank by the money-men) will never presume

to found it on old mighty oyster states, on existing polyp phalansteries, on vigorous worm predatory states – they look for fresh soil, since they lack the means to conquer it. The mason bee builds cells for eternity, stronger than the mortar of Roman and Egyptian monuments, but the next colonist in line does not use the weather-beaten state debris of his ancestors without rebuilding and redesigning them from the ground up. The animal knows that the weak, starting out and striving toward future power, must not lean on the strong [11] without danger of being devoured by him, and likewise the animal is well aware that the strong, once he has disarmed his opponents, must not give them back the weapons he has conquered, otherwise they will inevitably be turned against him. People do not grasp that men who were on fire with perfection (in their view) remained ignorant of these simple principles of animal politics.

Oh, they are clever, the founders of animal states, these heroes of animal civilization. The more I study their constitutions, their forms of government, their progressive development, the more I blush at ourselves! How high do these creative intelligences stand above the imperfection of our kind [*Geschlecht*, sex, gender, but in Vogt's day it would have been translated as "race"], which has been declared perfect out of hubris! With what care do the brute wise men of the animal state go about their work laying the foundation for the freedom and unity of their state, their fatherland, with what wise calculation of the future do they know how to lay the foundations, to sow the seeds for the further development of their greatness! A wise plan of gradual development is followed, and all circumstances are anticipated with such discernment that success is assured. [12]

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A friend of mine had an apiary – a monarchical federal state of, I think, eighteen or twenty constitutional bee monarchies – a true paragon of Messrs. Waitz, Beseler, and Dahlmann.* The competence of the individual independent states was strictly limited; the federation itself was enclosed by a solid constitutional building, which of course did not arch towards cathedral dome..., but ended with a northern tiled roof. Also, let it be said, for the consolation of the party of toilers, [17] this federal palace was not of stone, but simply of wood, and rested on four posts which were sunk in stone bases. The apiary stood against an old wall, to which it was attached with iron bindings – as you can see, it was based on the existing conditions. Some linden branches cast their shadow over it. In order to prevent the toiling ants from gaining access, the bases on which the four posts stood were hollowed out in the shape of a bowl and filled with water, so that the whole thing was sealed off in an insular manner, which is known to be one of the most necessary conditions for the prosperity of a constitutional monarchy. The ants gathered in swarms at the bases – the lake which lapped the base of the posts was too wide for their pioneers. We even admired our understanding, which by such precautions had forestalled the instincts of the ants.

After a few days the ants were nonetheless in the apiary. As real toilers, they had used the connection to the existing conditions as a starting point for the execution of their pernicious plans and marched in large crowds up the old wall and over the iron bindings through a crack in the rear paneling into the apiary. Reason broke off the bindings – although the federal state became a little less solid as a result, and it swayed and creaked in the strong wind – but one wanted at all costs to exclude the social-democratic sons of the ant republic from the monarchical federal bee state. For a few days we marveled anew at the superiority of the human mind over the instincts of the ants. [18]

* Professors and prominent advocates of federal unity at the Frankfurt Assembly.

The social democrats were once again in the monarchical federal state. We searched for quite some time until we found their pathways. In long columns they went up the linden trees, along the branches to the twigs, and when they were over the hive roof they dropped, clung to the tiles and slipped inside. Of course, retreat was cut off for them – they settled in the bee colonies, and feverish restlessness, anxious humming, revolutionary agitation of the wings and antennae were already evident there. We sawed off the overhanging linden branches. The monarchical federal state was saved once more – saved by the superiority of reason over instinct.

The water in the bowl-shaped cavity of one base had dried up. The whole base was swarming with ants – the complete opposite of the Rheinstraße of the Grand Ducal Hessian capital and residence of Darmstadt, about which the song says:

The entire Rheinstrasse, as wide as it is,
It's overrun with – an Accessist!*

But, in spite of the enormous number of ants, peace and order prevailed, as in Prague when the Kaiser was present. Chance had served the apiary better than reason. We thought it stood on four posts – it only stood on three. The fourth post did not reach the bottom of the bowl-shaped depression in the base – it was at a distance of about half an inch, and the ants, stretching as they might, could not reach the post from the base. They climbed one on top of the other – in vain! They then reached the foot of the pole with the antennae, but they could not hold on. [19] Council of war! They communicate via antennae about the difficulties of the situation. Suddenly, an unusually large ant appears. Two comrades stand firmly together, she climbs on their backs, raises herself vertically on her hind legs – finally, after unspeakable efforts, she succeeds in clasping a protruding sliver with one antenna horn and one foreleg. She holds on, swings up – she's conquered the post! Instinct would have driven the victor to the honeycomb of the monarchists, but our ant was a socialist in the sense of Mr. Druely, Federal Counselor [Henri, prominent Swiss Liberal federalist]. She wanted and exercised (in the latter distinct from Mr. Druely) the subordination of the individual to the whole. Our ant stayed where it was, clinging tightly with its six legs and stretching its abdomen and head with the antennae as far down as possible. The ants in the base seized theirs with their tentacles, hacked at each other, swung themselves up, and thus marched, one man up, over the living bridge on the posts and further into the interior of the apiary. My friend wanted to crush the bold champions, but I held him back. "Leave them alone," I cried, "they have more sense [reason] than we do!"

One need not kill someone who voluntarily starves for the common good. At that moment the murder of that ant would have seemed like a crime against humanity.

I pondered this observation long and often, and I brought other people onboard. I had found the solution to the riddle of reason. The microscope paved the way to do this. [20] It has shown the life and death of every part of the body; it has demonstrated to us that even the firmest parts of the body are constantly deteriorating and being renewed, wearing out and being replaced. Bones and flesh, nerves and skins, brains and entrails – everything is apprehended in constant decomposition, in constant renewal. The ways and means by which this renewal is accomplished are not uniform. The flesh fiber of the carnivore is different

* Meaning an ambitious, entry-level administrator unconcerned about his lack of experience.

from that of the herbivore. We therefore eat neither foxes nor cats. The secretions of the carnivorous animals are different from those of the herbivorous ones. I can change them at will by changing the diet – I can put hippuric acid, benzoic acid, or uric acid in the urine at will. And the secretions of brain matter, the thoughts, shouldn't they be subject to this law?

Nature knows no exceptions. The key to the riddle lay in my hand. Regular food, regular thoughts, instinct; irregular food, extraordinary thoughts, reason!

I inquired into the animal kingdom – my law was correct. The stupid constitutionalism of the bees, with its ever-recurring revolutions and the impossibility of progress through them to a higher form of government, can be explained just as much by the eternally uniform food as the social-democratic ant-state, with its individual anarchy and the high reason of the individual, found its basis in the infinitely changing food. Flower nectars, aphid milk, wood fibers, animal corpses – everything serves as food for the ant and through this diversity it climbs to the highest level [21] of intelligence in the animal kingdom. Whence the high parliamentary culture of the raven and the whole family of crows than through the diversity of food? Where does this stupidity of the bovines come from if not from the eternal uniformity of grass?

Many phenomena, the reason for which is still being sought, became clear to me. Domestic animals have in part attained a higher level of intelligence through domestication, but in part have also declined from it. The wild goose is a model of cunning intelligence – in the open field it has to make do with grass, worms, snails, fish, grain, berries – with everything that the barren nature of winter offers. The tame one, living only on grain and potatoes, is a paragon of stupidity. The dog has been ennobled; as his sphere of nourishment was enlarged by domestication, and expanded to include prepared meat as well as vegetables, his intellectual scope increased in like manner. The tame elephant that devours rice, turnips, potatoes, cabbage, rum, and wine, how high it stands above the wild one, which finds only monotonous food in tree branches!

Similar effects met me in the human world. When Mr. Bassermann[§] used to treat his electors to copious amounts of wine and beer during his forgotten toiling period, he certainly did so in the secret materialistic consciousness that this significant supply of unfamiliar substances would significantly change the brain secretion of thoughts. Famine and abundance both usually have political upheavals in their wake – they change the usual secretion of thought, which alone forms the basis, [22] the firm foundation of state stability. “Tell me what you eat and I'll tell you who you are,” is the motto of Brillat-Savarin's book on the physiology of taste. Never has a mortal spoken a truer word; but never has the word of a wise man been less respected.

Of course, many people had a notion. Mr. Sepp even spoke of the differences between wine, beer, and schnapps peoples! One can really assert that the confession of a physical truth must be unchallenged when it has taken root even in those strata of the lowest mental activity in which Herr Sepp thrives. But the more precise proofs are missing; the more specialized studies have been neglected. Here and there a man of letters has spoken only superficially of wine-green* gentlemen, of the potato disease of the people. But the scientific pursuit of phenomena in political and social domains with regard to food and the connection to it is still

[§] Friedrich, Baden politician active in Frankfurt Assembly.

* A reference to used oak casks that no longer contribute anything to the aging of wine.

a new field for future researchers. This scientific work will produce immeasurable results – of this I am sure in advance – results which will bring us closer to the blissful times we have dreamt of, and political hatred, the eagerness of political parties to engage in persecution will be banished from the earth. Apostasy, relapse, malevolence, aristocratic or revolutionary disposition and action will no longer be hated and persecuted from the different point of view of the parties – they will be regarded simply as the result of the food eaten and, by the expedient arrangement of the regime of those concerned, seek to explain or effect their disposition. [23]

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The study of nature [*Naturforschung*] will be used in its natural right in future state formations within mankind. The aspiring luminary can now only [27] unfold his activity in two directions, towards peaceful organization or towards violent overthrow. The natural scientist masters the former, the warrior the latter. German youths who want to be effective and active for the unity and freedom of your fatherland, you may only become zoologists or soldiers. The curse of sterility rests on all other sciences [*Wissenschaften*] – only when the young generation steps onto the battlefield with the sword in one hand and the code of animal constitutions in the other will the new age be able to triumph. We therefore do not yet believe in any revolution. Manteuffel can sleep in peace on the bed made by the Gotha party – the democratic voles [*Wühlmäuse*, again playing on “toiling”] will not gnaw at the straw under his body. The revolutionary zoologists and the revolutionary generals are just going to the schools and cadet houses [i.e., officer training] – we’ll have to wait until their education is complete. [28] [completed in December 1849]

The Bees’ State

The bee colony has been known since ancient times; innumerable observers have tested their ingenuity on it, giving free rein to their imagination when contemplating it. It was already a prototype of a monarchical institution for the Greeks – and yet the proximity of the Hymettos* could not convince the Athenians that the monarchical form of government was the best. The unfortunates! They had a Demosthenes, but no Dahlmann§ who could have convinced them of the need for the “old donkeys” to come to the throne of their ancestors. The Athenians ate the sweet honey, burned the white wax of the bees of the Hymettos, and, despite the monarchical example, remained republicans, who even conducted their affairs of state in the open market and not, like the monarchical bees, in enclosed, dark little rooms.

May this sovereign contempt for the animal example remain far from our civilized epoch. It would take terrible revenge, just as it took revenge on the Athenians or the shepherds of Arcadia, who in paradisiacal innocence gave concerts on the shepherd’s flute to their swarming bees, without suspecting the profound meaning that could confront them in this swarming, in the entire living and weaving of these inconspicuous animals. [35]

To serve as an example I choose the bee colony as the subject of the first meditation. I might also say, because one knows the bee colony longer and better – if I could or might admit that the word “know” would be profaned in this way. Go and ask the statesmen who have praised monarchy as the best form of government, go and ask them how many eyes or feet a bee has,

* The mountain range around Athens.

§ Friedrich, one of the writers of the Frankfurt constitution.

a bee whose state they have just praised as a model – the statesman will have to lower his eyes in embarrassment and admit his ignorance. Thus they claim to know the threads by which history guides mankind in mysterious ways; and if you ask them how man is formed, what his interior looks like, about which they talk and chatter so much – they will lower their eyes again and have to admit their ignorance.

They don't know the animals, and they don't know the human being – they have only seen its flimsy exterior reflected on paper in a distorted image with stupid eyes made smoky by the study lamp. They know the animals still less – they have turned away from them as unworthy of attracting the gaze of the best men. Knowledge is not the reason why I prefer the bees' state.

The German sky is now full of constitutional fiddles. They are somewhat out of tune at first; the ministerial arches seem to be smeared with soap instead of rosin, and elicit only grating tones – but what does it matter? The debate over the question of whether major or minor is the true key of the concerto still occupies the German people. [36] One no longer asks whether this or that is good, appropriate, reasonable – one only asks whether it is constitutional. Here one is constitutional by taking existing conditions into account; there one is constitutional by disregarding existing conditions; here one seems to keep one's word when given, in order to appear constitutional. "Constitutional!" is shouted in all chambers, "constitutional" is whispered in all courts. On the beer stool, behind the stove, in railroad cars, and on farm carts, everywhere the conversation revolves around the word constitutional; everywhere one asks: what is constitutional?

Well then, you Constitutionals, I will give you an answer to your questions, one which shall have horns and teeth! I will show you this constitutional monarchy in the animal kingdom, with the absolute ruler at the top, who even kills his own children to keep himself on the throne, with the hereditary peerage, based on non-obligation to work, with the poor, oppressed people, who must direct their touching concern to the care of their children and the feeding of their offspring, and who only occasionally pull themselves out of slavery in order to sink into it again! I want to show you this constitutional monarchy in the animal kingdom, with the mysterious wheels of its governing organism, which shy away from the light, with its periodically recurring revolutions, which are based on the existence of privileged estates, with its systematic dumbing down of the people, with its systematic raising of a stunted proletariat condemned to work and renunciation! I know well that you will not become any wiser because of this. [37] You believe the voice of nature just as little when it speaks through animals as when it speaks through man – you have not heard the sighing of the people in their misfortune, the thunderous voice of their anger in their rebellion – you do not hear the dull roaring, which runs under your feet and trembles through the soil of old Europe with gentle vibrations – you will not hear what the bee is whispering in your ears with a soft buzzing!

The bees belong to that infinitely numerous class of insects, distributed over the whole land surface of the globe, which in many respects plays the part among the invertebrates that has fallen to the birds among the vertebrates. Like these, they live mostly in the air, flying and hopping; like these, they compete in variety of external form, in splendid colors. The insects all have a clearly differentiated head, which bears eyes, antennae, and the variously formed mouth parts, a central body, the rings of which serve as attachments for three pairs of legs on the lower surface and up to two pairs of wings on the upper surface, and a ringed abdomen, in which the heart, digestive, respiratory and genital organs are located. The bee is also designed according to this general organizational law. Her head sits on a short, thin neck, on

which it turns slightly in all directions; two whip-shaped feeler horns, composed of a short handle and a jointed end, similar in shape to a short whip, are fastened to the front side of this head. On either side lie two enormous eyes, composed of thousands of microscopic [38] eyes jutting out from a common transparent cornea. On top of the head there are still three point-shaped, round, isolated little eyes in a triangle, which guide the flight into the distance. With the large compound eyes the bee looks nearby, keenly, just as we do with loupes and magnifying glasses – the small round eyes on top of the head look out into the distance for swallows and bee-eaters, for flowers, and for the beloved homebase. The bee's gaze is focused on the near and the distant at the same time. The tiniest bit of pollen escapes her inquiring eye just as little as the large proportions of the space in which she roams in search of food.

What would we, what would the German people have gained if we could have given the “best men,” the central figures, the round-the-clock constitutional enthusiasts these kinds of distant little eyes possessed by bees. Good heavens, what a turn German and European history would have taken! But the stupid tunnel vision of the constitutional party always saw only the anarchic motes blown before them by the wind, on enlarged scale of the solar microscope as hydras, boa constrictors, and other fabulous sea monsters. They lacked the distant eyes to look into remote spaces. The murky clouds of reaction, from which the bolts of martial law were hurled at their heads, were held by the short-sighted to be beautifully folded curtains, tinted the deepest blue of trust, behind which they suspected the pure, golden, constitutional sun. You poor people! [39] If you had had bee eyes, you would not be standing in the downpour and hailstorm, wading in shifting sand or deeply sodden dirt, and freezing in the frayed, constitutional penitentiary shirt in front of the Lord's Castle, miserable and without a crown, like Kaiser Heinrich in the court of Mathilde before the absolute Gregory. Make yourself bee eyes! [40]

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It can already be seen from the above that the bees' state is composed of three different castes, which also differ in external characteristics: a monarch, the queen; an aristocracy, the drones; and the third class, the workers. The queen is female – she alone has the right and ability to lay eggs – she is in truth the epitome of the whole people, as the former republican Keller* in Berlin defines the people; she really does carry her people around with her in embryo in her abdomen for a while.

The queen resembles the worker bees more than the drones—the throne rests on the third estate, against the arrogance of the nobility. Only her abdomen is much longer than that of the worker bees, [44] and her wings much shorter, so that her mobility is very limited. She also rarely leaves the residence – either to indulge her passions or to give way to a rival. The drones, or males, are considerably larger than the workers; their compound eyes, looking around only for food and love, are so large that they meet on top of the head, the wings are long and broad, the feet lack tools, the body is without weapon.

The population of the states is limited. The animal knows that too great an expansion of states brings about bad arbitrary government of the lower classes, especially of those in the more distant parts of the empire, and that too great an increase in the population brings about

* Friedrich, Swiss reformer and law professor in Berlin who took a conservative turn after 1848 and eventually became a Prussian peer.

poverty and famine in bad years. The constitutional bee monarchies therefore unite under one monarchy only 600-1000 drones and 15-20,000, in rare cases even 30,000 workers. And there are people who, faced with such a numerical ratio, still want to establish an aristocracy in a state where there are only about 800 individuals out of 16 million workers who have an annual pension of 10,000 thalers and are therefore not obliged to do any work! This would really be the true lumpazocracy!* In the constitutional bee state there is one nobleman for every twenty to thirty working individuals, someone who consumes the rents that nature bestows on him without having to work. And in contrast to this example, you want in a purely working state, where for every 20,000 individuals you get only one person with ten thousand thalers in rents, a peerage, an institution of hereditary non-obligation to work! [45] Nonsensical legislators, go to the Haidschnucken on the Lüneburg Haide and study beekeeping in their company!

It is not nature but rather a disgraceful upbringing that has denied the sweetest of all pleasures to the worker bees, which form the largest number in the bees' state. Nature endowed them with the most glorious gifts: with tools and with a desire to work, with the tenderest feelings for their offspring, which are nursed, cared for, nurtured, and raised by them with the most restless perseverance and with a capacity for self-sacrifice – which itself surpasses that of Mr. Heinrich von Gagern, who, according to the fragrant Biedermann's assurance, should be ready at any moment for Germany's greatness, power, and unity, a second Marcus Curtius, to throw himself into the open gorge as a victim. The worker bee is not only ready at any moment for any sacrifice for the community – she actually does it! However rich the portion of honey and pollen she collects, she keeps nothing for herself, she carries everything to the state, to the young; yes, even the food eaten [46] she extrudes again to feed the awkward larvae in the cells, the waiting nurses, the lazy drones, the idle queen! One could offer a bee two thousand sachets of pollen a month on condition that she accept it and buy herself a debt-free flower bed with it – she would reject the rich salary and, more noble than many human "nobles," use the rich gift for the common good. Of course, only poor, propertyless bees who live from hard, daily work act like that!

The worker bee is a female, but a stunted female, whose reproductive organs, left behind in youth by abuse and poor nourishment, remained undeveloped and rendered incapable of procreation. The worker bees possess these parts and, as we shall see, can be trained to become queens, fertile females, in the first few days by proper treatment and plenty of food. Most of the time, however, this does not happen. The poor larvae of the proletariat, though treated with tenderness and love, are ill-fed and malnourished. By depriving them of sexual pleasure by a diabolical state institution, stunted youth are turned into proletarians and lifelong unhappy, stupid individuals condemned to hard work. So terrible does the constitutional form of government in animals affect the morality of the lower classes, that although they are faithfully devoted to children, they nevertheless make themselves instruments of the degradation of these creatures, that they do so with calculated intent, with a kind of cruel passion let the offspring wither away to raise proletarians [47] from them, proletarians like them, subjects who seem made only to support a lazy, non-working noble class and a cruel, domineering monarch! Thus, with the animals and especially with the bees, the suppression of that oppressed worker caste affects the minds of the pariahs, so that they are unable to grasp the thought of saving at least the offspring from such miserable lives; that they believe that the young must become workers again because they are workers themselves.

* This is Vogt's neologism, but it seems to invoke the rule of the plebs, government by the *Lumpenproletariat* (a working class without political consciousness), a term coined several years earlier by Marx and Engels.

Horrible example of how far the dumbing down, the intellectual enslavement of the lower classes can be driven by the existence of privileged classes.

But also a proof of the truth of the statement that the proletariat is not born, but that it is made. Queen and worker, ruler and proletarian, are perfectly alike at birth. The eggs from which they hatch are right at the same stage of development; the larvae which emerge from the eggs are in no way different from one another for the first three days. But the eggs of the royal family are taken to well-kept, spacious rooms, to large cells, cared for with infinite diligence, the young larvae are fed with selected food, brought up and cleaned by special caretakers. The proletarian eggs, on the other hand, are stuffed into narrow, thin-walled cells, the little larvae fed meagerly, little cared for, never cleaned. Is it any wonder that proletarian women are produced here, queens there? Occasionally proletarian eggs are laid in royal cells, waited on as queens, nurtured, raised, and queens emerge from them. This succeeds during the first three [48] days of the childlike larval life of the proletarian. Later the poison of neglect has gnawed so deeply that the stunted bisexual being is no longer capable of any higher training.

This is how this proletariat is raised, raised by proletarians who themselves languish under the pressure of privilege, by proletarians who must expend all their labor, give all the fruit of their labor, to build spacious dwellings for privileged classes, to feed their children, to wait upon, to take care of! Some of the poor proletarian pupils become vigorous, strong, well-nourished – from the unfavorable circumstances at least a strong, fit-for-work, if partly stunted body struggles out. These fly out after honey and pollen, after food and building material. At least they can romp around freely in the fresh air, caress the flowers, enjoy the sight of the blooming meadows, the fragrant rapeseeds, the reddish clover fields. They can forget their slavery at home for a moment and roam with their comrades in the fields and forests, on heaths and in gardens. Certainly there is some danger lurking there for these errand maids of bee society, as they have been called; wide-mouthed swallows snap at them, biting wasps pursue them, even the voracious sparrows sometimes do not shy away from their sting. But still they tirelessly fly from flower to flower, biting open stamens and honeypots, brushing and scouring the dust from their bodies, and finally return home with marvelous pollen baskets and full honey stomachs, humming happily. [49]

Meanwhile the thinner, weaker proletarians sit there, the housewives and nannies, who are entrusted with the care of the young, the maintenance of the larvae and pupae, and the cleaning of the cells. In busy haste these faithful nurses of the younger generation crawl from cell to cell to feed the hungry larvae with the food which they burst forth from their stomachs; there they put a lid on the stores filled with honey or pollen; here they close the cell in which a mature larva wants to pupate, to sleep towards the day of its birth as a bee; there they clear the cocoon in which the pupa hatched out of a royal cell, and put the rubbish aside. When the young are taken care of, these faithful creatures, confined in the dark house, build new cells to take in new provisions, new broods. They lick and brush the returning comrades, the privileged drones, and when the weather turns cold they crowd in dense groups around their beloved queen, to warm her and cheer her with a lovely humming of wings. Touching fidelity of a poor, stunted race [*Geschlecht*], which repays the mistreatment it has experienced with kindness, and gratifies itself in taking care of mean, obscure business with the feeling of faithful fulfillment of its duty!

In order to get a picture of the origin, duration, and decay of the bees' state, let us follow a swarm from its excursions. The queen flies in the midst of a flock of loyal servants crowding

around her on all sides. Observers from earlier times have asserted that she is especially surrounded by her [aristocratic] peers, [50] the drones, and that the workers only follow at a greater distance. This is not the case—on the contrary, it is chiefly the errand-maids, the stronger worker-bees, who support, carry, and surround the queen—the more sluggish drones and the weaker maids follow directly. Perhaps also that in earlier times the status differences of the bees were more respected at such public parades, that the drones had the privilege of flying as peers in the immediate vicinity of the queen, but that they have lost this privilege in the meantime. At least the observers who came forward after the French Revolution no longer speak of this fact, or they outright accuse their predecessors of inaccuracy. Perhaps both are right, and from this simple fact it could be concluded that the bees' state is tending very slowly towards a more democratic basis. We leave unexamined this difficult question, which may form the starting point of many complicated investigations for later historians. Probably the historians of Schleswig-Holstein, following the glorious solution of their memorable, legal revolution by the sword of Germany and the amicable Danish king, will successfully face up to this sight of secure, legal progress one day. [51]

After some swarming, the queen settles on a branch or somewhere else. Her servants cover her in thick masses. The whole people hangs together – and rests. Some errand maids fly out. They have already discovered a hollow tree, a cleft in the rock, a knothole. They reconnoiter it, report it, and now the whole people flies to that colony where the new state is to be established. Usually, even before the reporting maids start their journey, the human being with his cunning intervenes and offers a perfect dwelling. The bee gratefully accepts the generous offer; she moves into the new residence, sets up her state in it. Alas! she does not know that she has thereby fallen prey to a despicable egoist who [52] will rob her of her honey, who will destroy her artificially constructed honeycomb and appropriate it. For a few little boards and rings plaited with straw, the insatiable man demands the right to rule over the property and life of the inhabitants of his fiefdom. By accepting the hive, the bees enter into a kind of serfdom in relation to man. He thinks he can mistreat them in every way; in order to take their honey and beeswax, he smokes them out, stuns them with sulfur and water, chases them from one dwelling to another, even kills them when it seems to him that the people are threatened with famine. At times, indeed, he feels it his duty to feed his servants and serfs through harsh winters – but what wretched, meager [53] food he then gives them! This is man's paternal, fatherly rule over the feudal, serf bees' states. In such patriarchal relationships, whim and arbitrariness are the only law; property is valid only insofar as it belongs to the lord, and if he sometimes feeds his starving subjects out of self-interest (he formerly took their provisions), he still demands thanks and reward through redoubled work. We avert our eyes from this egoistic predatory system – the consciousness of our time has judged it, and the moment will come when the bee, conscious of its original animal right, will take it from the stars if it cannot receive it on earth.

The first work of the bees after they have moved into the new dwelling consists in caulking and blocking of all entrances except for a small entrance hole; in the complete blocking off of all light which could penetrate into the interior of the hive. On the buds and shoots of poplars, horse chestnuts, oaks, and many other trees, the workers scrape off with their mandibles a sticky resinous mass which coats the outside of these shoots. They collect this mass in their baskets and then use it at home for the purposes of sealing light from the interior. Not only cracks, air holes, and crevices are caulked with this stuffing wax, but also the glasses which could let light into the beehive, so that not only keeping enemies, drafts of air, cold, or rain out, but essentially keeping light out is the purpose of this caulking. [54]

The bees do not want the light to penetrate their constitutional state affairs. They know that the wheels of constitutional government can only turn in the dark for the sake of the people's happiness, and that strict adherence to official secrecy is the first condition of an orderly monarchical state life. The corruption of the constitutional state; the police economy, which plays shameful intrigues with worthless subjects against legitimate, valued, and beloved individuals; the slavery of the people, who indulge in stupid prejudices and allow themselves to be kept dependent; the impudence of the nobility, who lead an extravagant lifestyle only for pleasure and enjoyment; the moral corruption of the court, where palace revolutions, intrigues, and crimes accumulate and renew – we only ever speak of animal states – the clever animal conceals all these stains and ailments with night and darkness. At least it has that feeling of shame to clean one's dirty laundry in the dark and to show oneself outside only as a happy, free worker. At home he sighs under the pressure, the misery, the work. But he hides these sufferings which he cannot change, for the relief of which he lacks the courage, or the insight, or the strength. In the animal kingdom, constitutional government can only remain in the shadow of mystery. Here it can bribe vile subjects with finely spun threads, employ forgery and untrue documents to suspect the friends of the people, bring accusations against them, imprison them for months and finally martyr them to death.

Only in obscurity can this constitutional government of the animal kingdom protect the wretched, [55] whom it buys by money or thrones, from the avenging atonement of the contempt with which the public punishes them; only through darkness can it keep the people in bondage, in adoration of the queen, in restless toil for the lazy privileged. As soon as the ray of bright day falls on this swampy pool of corruption, all those ugly toadstools show themselves which proliferate under the cover of night in the disgusting state structure, and then collapse withered, followed by scorn and contempt. Of course, these toadstools again form the pillars of the constitutional animal state, and darkness is one of the guarantees of its existence. It falls apart as soon as one persists in illuminating its innermost being. Attempts have been made to use glass beehives to study the constitutional system. The bees caulked over the glass panes with stuffing wax. Sliders were made over the glass, through which light shone only from time to time while one was looking into it. At the first ray everyone, but especially the noble idlers, fell into a great turmoil – they hastily crawl to the lighted place and darken it with their bodies – the errand maids fly out and get stuffing wax to keep out the light of day. For hours, however, one notices revolutionary agitation in the interior after such a lighting, violent, sharp humming of the workers, disturbance of the buildings, restless behavior of the noble drones, worried wanderings of the queen.

If one insists on illuminating the beehive, on repeatedly scraping the stuffing wax off the panes of glass, [56] revolutionary agitation increases. The proletarians gain insight into their situation. They don't work anymore, they don't feed the young, they don't build the honeycomb, they don't pay attention to the queen. They sit together in heaps, humming sharply. Terror grips the drones. The royal principle no longer enjoys any respect – abandoned and hungry, the queen crawls around the empty honeycombs. The fleeing courier maids return home without pollen baskets – they don't give away any superfluous honey – they emancipate themselves and only want to work for themselves. The tax payment of sweet honey to the queen gradually ceases; the formerly so devoted subjects roam independently, without returning home, in the fields and forests – the young larvae starve miserably. The queen grows weaker and weaker, the number of subjects fewer. But even now, in this state of supreme danger, the drones show no capacity for sacrifice, no devotion to the throne. Finally the queen, the constitutional principle of the animal state, dies of hunger and misery from the refusal of the honey tax. The last proletarians, who were at best still loyal and held out in the

hive, are scattering; the drones have long since left the state and withdrawn with their rents to other thriving meadows. The workers swarm freely, anarchically, in fields and meadows, in valleys and grounds, rejoice in the honey and pollen that lush nature offers them, and finally, when the goal of their life has been reached, disperse themselves as free animals in the cosmos from which they arose.

Thus ends the constitutional animal state as soon as [57] bright daylight penetrates into its interior. The one who has been taken advantage of comes to the realization of his miserable relationship, he shakes it off, throws himself body and soul into the anarchic movement, and as an individual seeks to catch the happiness that the state could not offer him. Of course, this attempt ends unhappily for most. Because the long slavery, the methodical stupidity, and the completely failed upbringing have robbed most worker bees of the ability to move in the anarchy and to be able to help themselves forward. It is just as impossible for them to found another state. Brought up in the narrow circle of animal-constitutional views, they are unable to raise their eyes to other social or even republican forms of government and thus form a gradual transition from constitutionalism to the anarchy of culture. They are incapable of comprehending any form of government other than that which they have shaken off at all costs and to which they have no intention of returning. So they throw themselves into the anarchy of raw individuality, and the bee colony perishes.

Sometimes there are penitent anarchists who strive to return to the constitutional system by seeking another bee-state in which they aspire to become citizens. Futile beginning! The penitent sinner is rejected with scorn, with contempt, with hatred, taken away from the state, exiled, yes, sometimes even treated with martial law by embittered royalist proletarians and offered as a sacrifice to the offended constitutional system.

Therefore, you dear anarchist,
Always remain what you were! [58]

We have seen that the constitutional system of animal states can only survive in the dark, and it should therefore not come as a surprise to us to learn that the bees, in their stubborn constitutional fury, make every effort to avoid in every way the illumination, the criticism of their system and their state. They permit any statistical calculation of the import and export of pollen baskets and the honey at the landing entrance to the hive – any state-economic study of the number of working hours of the proletarians – but they only allow a superficial insight into the use of the imported substances and the products in the state budget itself. The taxes, which are delivered directly to the queen regent in honey, and to the privileged estates in pollen baskets and honey, are quite unpredictable.

Patriarchal institution, where no estates of the people criticize and quibble about the civil list of their ruler by the grace of God, and thus about his dignity! Of course, it is also a sign of an incomplete development of constitutional custom. No budget! No regular tax allocation! Even that pearl of popular rights, the right to refuse taxes, which the people possess according to Beseler and Dahlmann so that they do not exercise this right: the bee state lacks even this adornment of popular rights! And yet its queen has the absolute veto, also for decoration, so as not to exercise it. Oh, Keller and Gerlach, if you had known this, what triumph would have been celebrated by you! But forgive me for letting a drop of wormwood drip into this belated cup of joy. The constitutional system of animal states is not able to withstand the light of criticism and falls apart [59] even before this spiritual potentate without further material attack, in order to dissolve into anarchy. Alarming indicator!

As soon as the future dwelling is plugged up everywhere and taped up except for a small entrance hole, the erection of the actual state building, the honeycomb, begins. In this caution the constitutional bees differ from their fellow human beings. The animals know that their system only thrives in the dark, that only after the soil on which they want to build has been duly cultivated and secured, can their honeycombs be solid and their entire state edifice endure. They do not hang their honeycombs here or there at random – they first examine whether they lack support and whether the conditions presented are sufficiently firm. They do not build honeycombs and arches in the air, content to see them well leveled and arranged side by side, so that they form a whole. Their first concern is the protection, the security, the solidity of the work they intend to construct. To this end they plug the holes through which the relentless wind blows, about which one does not know where it comes and goes from, and they seal up the cracks through which the torrent of reactionary downpours could penetrate, they barricade the entrances, through which larger enemies might attempt an attack, leaving only an easily defendable landing entry.

How differently their comrades acted in spirit and system, the constitutional Kaiser makers and Gotha wanderers!* The sharper the wind whistled through the cracks of the existing conditions, the more violently the reaction swelled [60] and flooded them through all the holes in endless torrents, the more eagerly they built their theoretical honeycombs, compassed out their paragraph cells, smoothed out their wax discs or, when the storm got too bad, even stuck head and posterior into the cells, so as not to hear or feel anything. One could shout to them a hundred times: “Plug the Austrian crack! Seal up the Prussian hole! Block the entrance on the Danish side!” They neither heard nor saw, they hummed and buzzed around in their paragraphs, and only occasionally did the noble “Roman” forehead of the “courageous Bassermann” or the defiant beard of the bold freedom fighter Droysen[§] peek out of a cell, to quickly disappear in the shining light and lie low and crouch submissively until the storm was over. In vain they built their honeycombs. When they tried to hang them up, the black-and-white branch that was supposed to hold them broke, and the storm washed away cells and paragraphs, articles and honeycombs – the whole constitution in a whirlpool, in order to destroy it completely. Oh, noble friends of the people, Essigblicker[¶] of the future, Curtius of the fatherland, Cincinnatus of Germany, get just a little constitutional bee-reason for want of common sense, which you will forever lack! [61]

[Vogt continues at length on the apian lifecycle and the dominance of the queen bee. Then he takes a provocative turn...]

Here, then, is a certain socialistic element, which intensifies even to the point of communism. In fact, despite the monarchical head of the state, despite the existence of a privileged estate, the conditions of the worker bees are based purely on communism and can only be explained in and through it. In the working class this communism goes to the point of complete abolition of property, even of the family; no worker has her own dwelling—she retires to whatever cell she happens to find, or mostly sleeps, like the serfs of the Russian nobles, with her comrades in the corridors and on the doorsteps of the royal palaces. The children are not

* Referring to attempts after the failure of the Frankfurt Assembly to create a smaller constitutional monarchy centered around Prussia.

[§] Historian Johann Gustav, liberal constitutionalist who advocated a central role for Prussia in German unification.

[¶] The term shows up in a book of Droysen, but the meaning is obscure to me, notwithstanding the “vinegar” element.

fed and brought up in the family, but collectively in the hives. Each warden feeds as many as she can without showing any particular affection for this or that little larva. Private property does not exist; the bee delivers the excess honey and pollen to the communal state storehouses, from which the colony is maintained in times of hunger and in winter. But only the workers have a right to these storehouses, which they fill themselves; the drones are excluded from enjoying them, and their violent attempts to seize this last resource of the workers provoke the bloodiest revolutions.

The existence of social institutions which extend to the furthest limits of communism is therefore perfectly compatible with the constitutional-monarchical form of government. So why this anger against [79] socialism, you constitutionalists? It has absolutely no tenable basis. One could also call the bees' state a social-democratic monarchy with hereditary caste institutions, if one did not have to fear that the constitutional state consciousness of the best men in Germany would be shaken to the core. Even the existence of a democratic monarchy with universal suffrage is incomprehensible to our rulers. They demand a certain census, guarantees of certain rights to the people, forced loans, statutory tax compulsion, restrictions on freedom of the press, the right of association, guarantees of property and inheritance rights. How should they even understand a communist monarchy without an actual strong government with constant self-participation and voluntary self-taxation of the citizen? Let us therefore spare the consciousness of the best men, the nobles who are called upon to save the German people through their constitutional system and to restore the Reich of the German nation. They could get confused about themselves – they could see the bottomless emptiness of their constitutional skull in horrible nakedness – they could even, according to the principle that duty goes no further than opportunity, give up the bright decoration of popular representation, the inevitable right to refuse taxes in the face of urgent necessity. And how, after such knowledge, should the German people be saved? The best men are the salt of Germany – but with what should one salt when the salt has become foolish?

No, no, tell them nothing of the bees' state, nothing of the communist basis of this animal monarchy! They shouldn't find out – they should keep their ideal of their [80] constitutional state and carry it in their hearts undistorted, undeterred by Camphausen's* and Schwerin's[§] proposals for mediation. They should believe that this system, as they hatched it in their sovereign subject reason that makes the people happy, is the only possible, only comprehensible one! I reproach myself for having published these results of my studies. If only they could help to make a single nobleman falter in his correct convictions, to distract him from his belief in Manteuffel's sincere constitutionalism and in the sincere will of the Prussian crown, to introduce a genuine constitutional state life for the narrow fatherland, the narrower federation, and even the broader federation – my heart could not endure the nagging reproach of such a crime against humanity and the holy spirit of constitutionalism!

....

Look to the bee-state, you constitutionalists, if you wish to know on what grounds a monarchy can be permanently established. Look there if you wish to learn how it is possible to plant the monarchical sense so firmly in every breast as in the veins of Mr. Welcker.[¶] Build

* Ludolf, briefly served as prime minister during the March days, but could not satisfy both Assembly and Prussian Kaiser.

[§] Maximilian, liberal parliamentarian.

[¶] Karl Theodor, law professor and liberal constitutionalist, mildly anti-Prussian in his unification aims.

your constitutional monarchy on the comfort of the workers, on the guarantee of their work, on the security of their old age, on the impossibility of suffering hunger and sorrow. Show them that in your constitutional monarchy they find opportunity for work, opportunity for income, that the income of the state, which they nevertheless brought in, is also used for them to improve their situation. Show them that in your constitutional monarchy their children are brought up well, made fit for work, so that no idlers and do-nothings, no standing army and no superfluous swarm of officials consume the state income, while the industrious worker starves. Show your [88] workers, your proletarians such prospects, and they will become thoroughgoing monarchists down to the last thread and with joy, like the bees, offer the first fruits of their work to the ruling person and honor their beneficial influence. But as long as you can only chatter about unity, power, greatness, peace, order, and strong government, and you offer only words instead of good deeds, only stones instead of bread, monarchism will not grow strong in the hearts and veins of your fellow human beings. Go and learn at the bees' state!

[February 1850]