The Weimar Republic Sourcebook, eds. Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, Edward Dimendberg (1994).

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ALFRED WEBER

The Predicament of Intellectual Workers

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There is a rigid and abstract quality to capitalist-mechanistic society, which has to a certain extent become invisible to unrefined examination. The personal organization that was socially visible and became most vivid in the salons and courts of the ancien régime has collapsed; all that remains is the anonymous public, which, indeed, was already there in the background—the public of newspapers, magazines, books, theater, concert halls, exhibitions, and museums—out of which the actual constituent elements were only occasionally brought together by means of various loose organizations or lectures, concerts, and the like. These constituent elements are nonetheless there, each as something with its own life. The high capitalism of the prewar period even recreated for them a unique, new form of integration into society. It operated in a twofold fashion on the educated elite which survived the collapse of court society as landed aristocrats, urban patricians, and a secular and ecclesiastical bourgeoisie with civil service appointments. Those segments of the elite already situated closer to practical life and more interwoven into it were cast by prewar capitalism into the ups and downs of its crises and booms, transforming landed aristocrats into large-scale agriculturalists and patricians into *haute bourgeoisie,* denuding both in cultural terms by thoroughly economizing them and subjecting them to the hectic tempo of modern business life. In the intellectually satiated atmosphere of the patrician household of "debit and credit," the modern big industrialist who, forced by circumstances, hangs on the telephone from morning to night, is stuck in conferences and therefore scarcely has the chance for any intellectual content beyond his ledger the pietist and romantically enthralled Junkers of the time of Bismarck's youthful letters became the agriculturalists fighting over prices and grain duties in the period since the 1870s and 1880s. This depletion of the intellectual, which results from the dynamic of the new economy and the new tempo of life, has, as if via a kind of contagion, spread to the greater part of the higher civil service employees: the privy councillor who sits from nine o'clock in the morning to eight o'clock at night over his files (there are even supposed to be ministers of this sort in Germany) cannot possibly remain productive culturally to any degree as a recipient of works, or amount to a strong intellectual factor at all. I choose not to speak at all of the currently desiccated pastorate.

That is the one side. High capitalism, which in those places where it took vigorous hold caused the old, educated elite to wither, created, on the other hand, sites for intellectual

refuge. It separated off from the second and third generation of the ascendant *haute bourgeoisie* a monied stratum that was generally no longer active in business life, but on the whole related to it only in the capacity of rentiers (one thinks of the character Tonio Kröger [in Thomas Mann's novella of 1903]). From this monied stratum was generated a new elite typified by its cultural and idealist concerns: the modern intellectuals.

The category of the modern intellectual is almost exclusively made up of rentier intellectuals. It possesses small or moderate liquid funds, not generally of a magnitude that spares it the necessity of a profession and income, but such that these funds as a whole comprise the background that makes it possible to get through the lengthy period of preparation and qualification to the point of earning a full income from intellectual activity. Insofar as the private funds later supplement the earned income, they simultaneously form the basis of this elite's freedom in relation to the tyranny of the position occupied or the particular job undertaken.

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HANS ZEHRER

The Revolution of the Intelligentsia

First published as "Die Revolution der Intelligenz," *Die Tat* 21, no. 7 (October 1929), 486–507.

FRAGMENTS OF A FUTURE POLITICS

To those who consciously breathed the air of the imperial regime, who yet continue to bear resentment against the royal Prussian police, the Junkers, and the military, it may seem paradoxical to declare that no air could be more stifling than today's.

To those who believed themselves, at least emotionally and in their imaginations, to be experiencing a revolution in 1918, it might seem just as ridiculous to declare that we have never been farther from freedom than we are today.

Those, however, who shake their heads in incomprehension no longer count. They are satisfied either because they already possess power or because they consider themselves contenders for power. They are old, and therefore one can no longer demand that they break with an ideology that has become dear to them, that offers them security. Or they are young, and therefore they are merely mediocre individuals eager to conform, whose way is clear along paths that the independent intelligentsia cannot travel for reasons of conviction. They might be strong in number, but their qualitative intellectual potency is slight. Whoever enjoys success today is either part of an average too lacking in individuality to have convictions to protect, or succeeds at the expense of his convictions. Neither species, however, is capable of establishing a new beginning, a new authority on the basis of the power they are striving for or already hold.

Freedom! Clear the way! The German people—and this might again sound paradoxical to many—has had its great experience of freedom. It has also had its revolution. The revolution began in August 1914; it ended in November 1918. As the fire slowly burned out, as the bloodlust drew to a close, no one was concerned with power. War is always one step closer to metaphysics than revolution is. Internal power fell into the hands of those

THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC SOURCEBOOK

EDITED BY

ANTON KAES

MARTIN JAY

EDWARD DIMENDBERG

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Imagining America: Fordism and Technology

Charlie Chaplin, jazz, boxing, Henry Ford, chewing gum, Chicago gangsters: American culture and life-styles captured (or colonized?) the German imagination from the inception of the republic. At once Germany's victor on the battlefield and the impetus for wide-ranging economic and social change in its aftermath, the United States was seldom absent from the mirror that politicians and writers of all persuasions regularly held up to the republic. Economic assistance, a regular diet of Hollywood films and popular music, and the influence of ideologies such as Taylorism and Fordism led many to discern "Americanism" everywhere and to posit it as a characteristic Weimar phenomenon. Typically, as in Rudolf Kayser's essay, it is described in the language of pre-1914 vitalist philosophy, as a new type of culture unburdened by history and directly related to nature and the body. Such idealization of sports and the trim physique of the athlete quickly became incorporated into the aesthetic of the New Objectivity. Equally revealing is Kayser's opposition of America and Russia, a dialectic of civilizational forms that presents Germany and Europe as privileged terms of synthesis. Yet such an image is deceptive. For while the America cult never reached the apogee in Britain or France that it reached in Germany, enthusiasm for "American objectivity" and technological prowess remained potent in the Soviet Union throughout the 1920s.

While such commentators as Felix Stössinger openly acknowledged Americanism as a European construction, most brought less methodological self-consciousness to their ruminations. Simplistic oppositions between an imaginary organic totality of European culture and a mechanistic, profit-driven "Yankee civilization" were frequently drawn by conservatives. Adolf Halfeld's excoriation of America as a land of mass civilization, cultural sterility, and rationalized uniformity typifies the hostility of many traditionalists to Americanism. More than a few observers discerned a powerful economic subtext to such debates, especially evident after the infusion of American capital from the 1924 Dawes Plan. While already employed before the war in the factories of such large concerns as Bosch and Daimler-Benz, rationalized production techniques greatly expanded during the years 1926–1928, as Otto Bauer notes. The German publication in November 1923 of Henry Ford's autobiography boosted public awareness of Fordism and Taylorism, and a year

later the first automobile rolled off the assembly line at the newly constructed Ford plant in Cologne. While Taylorism favored time and motion studies and the segmentation of the assembly line production process to increase worker efficiency, Fordism promoted set work norms, higher wages, employee loyalty, and a leisure ethic. Both doctrines eventually integrated the ideas of a more psychologically oriented prewar science of work (*Arbeitswissenschaft*) into a uniquely German theory of scientific management. While Bauer, a Marxist, criticized rationalizing practices for leading to unemployment, the conservative industrial spokesman Friedrich von Gottl-Ottlilienfeld praised Fordism for its efficiency and elimination of labor conflict. Others raised concerns about psychological and social consequences. In his 1923 Marxist analysis, *History and Class Consciousness,* Georg Lukács attacked rationalization for fragmenting the personality of the worker, while pointing to its growing omnipresence throughout capitalist society. Liberal critics advanced the now familiar theses of industrial psychology, while noting the danger for office workers of the disappearance of the soul (*Entseelung*) through work, a loss of individual experience (*Erfahrung*), which forms a recurrent motif in German philosophy from Wilhelm Dilthey to Walter Benjamin.

This potential for the mechanization and standardization of individual experience represented everything most worrying about Americanism. Popular curiosity about technology remained palpable during the Weimar Republic, as evidenced by the success of Fritz Lang's 1926 film, *Metropolis.* Yet many feared the machine and a reduction of all values to quantities (brilliantly parodied in Friedrich Sieburg's description of a Taylorized American beauty pageant). In his noted essay, "The Mass Ornament," Siegfried Kracauer discerns in the movements of the Tiller Girls, a popular chorus-girl ensemble, "the aesthetic reflex of the rationality aspired to by the prevailing economic system." Transformed into a de-eroticized spectacle suggestive of later Busby Berkeley films, the Tiller Girls raise the spectre of a world marching toward total rationalization. A similar cry of despair is evident in Stefan Zweig's essay "The Monotonization of the World." Prefiguring the critique of inauthentic existence Heidegger would develop two years later in *Being and Time,* Zweig's attack on the homogeneity of media environments in the 1920s hints at themes subsequently developed in Marshall McLuhan's theory of the global village.

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RUDOLF KAYSER

Americanism

First published as "Amerikanismus," *Vossische Zeitung,* no. 458 (September 27, 1925).

Americanism is the new European catchword. It suffers the usual fate of catchwords: the more it is used, the less one knows what it means. It is certain that in this case the range of meanings is enormously broad, far exceeding particular minor phenomena, and that it applies to the fundamental character of our time. So the remarkable situation has arisen in which, for the designation of a truly radical change in the inner and outer forms of our life over the last few decades, we have no expression other than the name of a foreign continent that previously appeared to us infinitely far away, and not only in the geographical sense.

What is it then with Americanism?

Certainly it has nothing or only little to do with the American, whom we, after all, know less than any other national type. As a literary type, the American is also much less familiar to us than that of the European or the Oriental. The French citizen, the English lord, the Russian peasant, the Eastern sage—they have become palpable realities to us through their literatures, offering perspectives on the spiritual and social structures of their nations. There are those who say we do possess the figure of the American in literature. But what do we know of their writings? Who in Germany reads [Joseph] Hergesheimer, [Theodore] Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis, [H. L.] Mencken . . . ? In Eugene O'Neill we became acquainted with our first American dramatist, and—let us be honest—he left us cold.

But we have other things: trusts, highrises, traffic officers, film, technical wonders, jazz bands, boxing, magazines, and management. Is that America? Perhaps. Since I have never been there, I can make no judgment. But I do know that the images of these things come to us from America. But does all this then amount to Americanism? Are these phenomena not much more than the external and revealed symptoms of a more secret, spiritual, soulful essence? Is Americanism not a new orientation to being, grown out of and formed in our European destiny? This is a question that the Viennese writer (who died a year ago) Robert Müller first raised and answered: "Americanism is therefore either a method or a fanaticism." And with this we come much closer to its character and its Europeanness.

In fact, Americanism is a new European method. The extent to which this method was itself influenced by America seems to me quite unimportant. It is a method of the concrete and of energy, and is completely attuned to spiritual and material reality. The European's new (Americanized) appearance corresponds to it too: beardless with a sharp profile, a resolute look in the eyes, and a steely, thin body; and the new female type (explained only minimally by sexology alone): boyish, linear, and ruled by lively movement, by her step, and by her leg. It is altogether fitting to the method of Americanism that it expresses itself very strongly in the corporal, that it possesses body-soul. This in no way implies superficiality, only a clear turn away from abstraction and sentimentality and a transformation of even our noblest capacities into the concreteness and wakeful liveliness best revealed by the body. (Sport is therefore but one symptom of this new inner split.) Concrete and unsentimental, thus in a positive sense naïve—such is the method of Americanism, in the life of the soul and the spirit as in practical affairs. No burden of culture weighs this method

down. It is young, barbaric, uncultivated, willful. It has that free and strong breath we sense in the poems of Walt Whitman and which already enchanted Baudelaire. It follows no abstract or historical ideal, but instead follows life. Americanism is fanaticism for life, for its worldliness and its present-day forms.

Americanism thus appears as the strongest opponent of romanticism, which sought to flee worldliness. It is the natural enemy of all distraction from the present, whether through a backward-looking conception of history, through the mystical, or through intellectualism. Americanism is very northern, clear, and secure; it billows with a seawind. It has a strong and exact relation not only to the exactness of a machine, organization, economy but also to nature. It does not experience nature as a symbol of subjective feelings or as a Rousseauian idyll but as the mightiest and most extravagent reality, which people do not face, but in which and with which they live. This new experience of nature reverberates most strongly in the books by Knut Hamsun, as in the Scandinavian character in general—one thinks too of Johannes V. Jensen—he is very close to Americanism (which Robert Müller likewise emphasized). But it is Prussian in its sober technical methods and reaches down into the Latin countries insofar as clarity of form and rationalism are at issue. Nothing, however, is more foreign and bygone to Americanism than the old Russian East, its fatigue and passivity. Americanism hates unfruitful passions, the unplumbable depths of the soul, and a stifling, deadening religiosity. Only in the world of reality does it find a worthy test for humanity.

Marcel Proust's declaration, "Toute action de l'esprit est aisée, s'il n'est pas soumise au réel,"[1] is easily understood by Americanism (and, incidentally, understood in the sense of the American philosophy of pragmatism). But Paul Valéry's elevation of architecture to an ideal—not in the sense of classical laws of form but by virtue of the experience of building and statics—also contains a recognition, despite the writer's formal strictness and musicality, of reality. Perhaps, though, the proximity of these two Frenchmen to Americanism is controversial. Its literary inroads become clearer in cases of writers who consciously turn away from tradition in their desire to create a new world in a new form out of the radical experience of the immediate present, for example, the epic writers Alfred Döblin and Ilya Ehrenburg. Their novels are carried by the experience of collectivism; they are visions bursting with vitality and monumental legends of the present. Electrical centers explode into action and send their energy waves through the mechanized world. In the most recent Parisian literary fashion, Surrealism, the attempt is made to reduce this new experience of reality—a near total opposite of the old biological–romantic naturalism—to a theoretical formula.

But literature follows Americanism only minimally at first. Its vitality is still too overpowering and uncultivated, so that it is still sensed as nearly antiliterary. Its intellectual potential is still problematic. Perhaps it marks an end or an intermission in the cultural history of Europe; but perhaps as early as tomorrow we will find ourselves confronting a surprisingly new flowering. It would be fruitless to pose and solve puzzles here. On the other hand, it would be wrong to want to recognize the epoch only in the external phenomena of economy and exchange, thereby passing over the new orientations of the spirit. The present clings to reality as the most powerful creative substance, as energy, as mastery of the world.

Now should we complain or rejoice over Americanism? Neither. We sense its vitality and should not measure its manifestations against false standards.

1. "All action of the spirit is easy, if it is not subordinated to the real."

The jazz band, too, is force and sound, magical in the wild brilliance of its rhythm. But why, as we listen to the pounding of its instruments, speak of classical music?

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STEFAN ZWEIG

The Monotonization of the World

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Monotonization of the World. The most potent intellectual impression, despite the particular satisfactions enjoyed, of every journey in recent years is a slight horror in the face of the monotonization of the world. Everything is becoming more uniform in its outward manifestations, everything leveled into a uniform cultural schema. The characteristic habits of individual peoples are being worn away, native dress giving way to uniforms, customs becoming international. Countries seem increasingly to have slipped simultaneously into each other; people's activity and vitality follows a single schema; cities grow increasingly similar in appearance. Paris has been three-quarters Americanized, Vienna Budapested: more and more the fine aroma of the particular in cultures is evaporating, their colorful foliage being stripped with ever-increasing speed, rendering the steel-grey pistons of mechanical operation, of the modern world machine, visible beneath the cracked veneer.

This process has been underway for a long time: before the war [Walther] Rathenau prophesized this mechanization of existence, the dominance of technology, would be the most important aspect of our epoch. But never have the outward manifestations of our ways of life plunged so precipitously, so moodily into uniformity as in the last few years. Let us be clear about it! It is probably the most urgent, the most critical phenomenon of our time.

Symptoms. One could, to make the problem distinct, list hundreds. I will quickly select just a few of the most familiar, uncompromising examples, to show how greatly customs and habits have been monotonized and sterilized in the last decade.

The most conspicuous is dance. Two or three decades ago dance was still specific to nations and to the personal inclinations of the individual. One waltzed in Vienna, danced the csardas in Hungary, the bolero in Spain, all to the tune of countless different rhythms and melodies in which both the genius of an artist and the spirit of the nation took obvious form. Today millions of people, from Capetown to Stockholm, from Buenos Aires to Calcutta, dance the same dance to the same short-winded, impersonal melodies. They begin at the same hour. Like the muezzin in an oriental country call tens of thousands to a single prayer at sundown—like those twenty words, so now twenty beats at five in the afternoon call the whole of occidental humanity to the same ritual. Never, except in certain ecclesiastical formulas and forms, have two hundred million people hit upon such expressive simultaneity and uniformity as in the style of dance practiced by the modern white race of America, Europe, and the colonies.

A second example is fashion. Never before has such a striking uniformity developed in all countries as during our age. Once it took years for a fashion from Paris to reach other

big cities, or to penetrate the countryside. A certain boundary protected people and their customs from its tyrannical demands. Today its dictatorship becomes universal in a heartbeat. New York decrees short hair for women: within a month, as if cut by the same scythe, 50 or 100 million female manes fall to the floor. No emperor, no khan in the history of the world ever experienced a similar power, no spiritual commandment a similar speed. Christianity and socialism required centuries and decades to win their followings, to enforce their commandments on as many people as a modern Parisian tailor enslaves in eight days.

A third example: cinema. Once again utter simultaneity in all countries and languages, the cultivation of the same performance, the same taste (or lack of it) in masses by the hundreds of millions. The complete cancellation of any individuality, though the manufacturers gloriously extol their films as national: the *Nibelungen* triumphs in Italy and Max Linder from Paris in the most German, most nationalistic constituencies. Here, too, the mass instinct is stronger and more authoritarian than the thought. Jackie Coogan's triumphal appearance was a more powerful experience for our day than was Tolstoy's death twenty years ago.

A fourth example is radio. All of these inventions have a single meaning: simultaneity. Londoners, Parisians, and Viennese listen at the same second to the same thing, and the supernatural proportions of this simultaneity, of this uniformity, are intoxicating. There is an intoxication, a stimulus for the masses, in all of these new technological miracles, and simultaneously an enormous sobriety of the soul, a dangerous seduction of the individual into passivity. Here too, as in dance, fashion, and the cinema, the individual acquiesces to a herdlike taste that is everywhere the same, no longer making choices that accord with internal being but ones that conform to the opinion of a world.

One could infinitely multiply these symptoms, and they multiply themselves from day to day on their own. The sense of autonomy in matters of pleasure is flooding the times. It will soon be harder to list the particularities of nations and cultures than the features they share in common.

Consequences. The complete end of individuality. It is not with impunity that everyone can dress the same, that all women can go out in the same clothes, the same makeup: monotony necessarily penetrates beneath the surface. Faces become increasingly similar through the influence of the same passions, bodies more similar to each other through the practice of the same sports, minds more similar for sharing the same interests. An equivalence of souls unconsciously arises, a mass soul created by the growing drive toward uniformity, an atrophy of nerves in favor of muscles, the extinction of the individual in favor of the type. Conversation, the art of speaking, is danced and sported away, theater brutalized into cinema; literature becomes the practice of momentary fashions, the "success of the season." Already, as in England, books are no longer produced for people, but increasingly as the "book of the season"; as in radio an instantaneous form of success is spreading which is announced simultaneously from all European stations, and annulled a second later. And since everything is geared to the shortest units of time, consumption increases: thus does genuine education—the patient accumulation of meaning over the course of a lifetime—become a quite rare phenomenon in our time, just like everything else that can be achieved only by individual exertion.

Origin. What is the source of this terrible wave threatening to wash all the color, everything particular out of life? Everyone who has ever been there knows: America. The historians of the future will one day mark the page following the great European war as the beginning

of the conquest of Europe by America. Or, more accurately, the conquest is already rippingly underway, and we simply fail to notice it (conquered peoples are always too-slow thinkers). The European countries still find the receipt of a credit in dollars a cause for celebration. We continue to flatter ourselves with illusions of America's philanthropic and economic goals. In reality we are becoming colonies of its life, its way of life, slaves to an idea profoundly foreign to Europe: the mechanical idea.

But our economic obedience seems to me minor compared to the spiritual danger. The colonization of Europe would not be so terrible politically; to servile souls all slavery is mild and the free always know how to preserve their freedom. The genuine danger to Europe seems to me to be a matter of the spirit, of the importation of American boredom, of that dreadful, quite specific boredom that rises over there from every stone and every house on all the numbered streets. The boredom that does not, like the earlier European variety, come from calmness, from sitting on the park bench playing dominoes and smoking a pipe—a lazy waste of time indeed, but not dangerous. American boredom is restless, nervous, and aggressive; it outruns itself in its frantic haste, seeks numbness in sports and sensations. It has lost its playfulness, scurries along instead in the rabid frenzy of an eternal flight from time. It is always inventing new artifices for itself, like cinema and radio, to feed its hungry senses with nourishment for the masses, and it transforms this common interest in enjoyment into concerns as massive as its banks and trusts.

America is the source of that terrible wave of uniformity that gives everyone the same: the same overalls on the skin, the same book in the hand, the same pen between the fingers, the same conversation on the lips, and the same automobile instead of feet. From the other side of our world, from Russia, the same will to monotony presses ominously in a different form: the will to the compartmentalization of the individual, to uniformity in world views, the same dreadful will to monotony. Europe remains the last bulwark of individualism and, perhaps, of the overly taut cramp of peoples—our vigorous nationalism, despite all its senselessness, represents to some extent a fevered, unconscious rebellion, a last, desperate effort to defend ourselves against leveling. But precisely that cramped form of resistance betrays our weakness. Rome, the genius of sobriety, is already underway to wipe Europe, the last Greece in history, from the table of time.

Defense. What to do now? Storm the capitol, summon the people: "To the trenches, the barbarians are coming to destroy our world!" Cry out once more in Caesar's words, this time more earnestly: "People of Europe, preserve your most sacred possessions!" No, we are no longer gullible enough to believe that with associations, with books and proclamations, we can rise up against a world-encompassing movement of such a monstrous sort and defeat the drive to monotonization. Whatever one might write, it remains a piece of paper cast against a gale. Whatever we might write, it does not reach the soccer players and the shimmy dancers, and if it did, they would no longer understand it. In all of these things, of which I am mentioning only a few, in the cinema, in radio, in dance, in all of these new means for mechanizing humanity there is an enormous power that is not to be overcome. For they all fulfill the highest ideal of the average: to offer amusement without demanding exertion. And their insurmountable strength lies in the fact that they are unprecedentedly comfortable. The new dance can be learned by the dumbest servant girl in three hours; the cinema delights the illiterate and demands of them not a grain of education; to enjoy radio one need only take the earpiece from the table and hang it on one's head, and already there is a waltz ringing in the ear—against such comfort even the

gods would fight in vain. Whoever demands only a minimum of intellectual, physical, and moral exertion is bound to triumph among the masses, for the majority is passionately in favor of such; whoever continues to demand autonomy, independence of judgment, personality—even in entertainment—would appear ridiculous against such an enormously superior power. If humanity is now letting itself be increasingly bored and monotonized, then that is really nothing other than its deepest desire. Autonomy in the conduct of one's life and even in the enjoyment of life has by now become a goal for so few people that most no longer feel how they are becoming particles, atoms in the wash of a gigantic power. So they bathe in the warm stream that is carrying them off to the trivial. As Caesar said: *ruere in servitium,* to rush into servitude—this passion for self-dissolution has destroyed every nation. Now it is Europe's turn: the world war was the first phase, Americanization is the second.

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FRIEDRICH VON GOTTL-OTTLILIENFELD

Fordism

First published in *Fordismus. Über Industrie und technische Vernunft* (Jena: Verlag von Gustav Fischer, 1926), 6, 15, 16–18.

While the creativity of Fordist methods is manifest on the level of immense systems of plants taken together, the Taylor system is meant for exclusive application to single plants that have already been established and organized. The goal of the latter is to improve plant operations in a single, one-sided fashion—namely, through technical refinements in the way work is performed, that is, in the execution of jobs in the plant. The basic idea of the system derives from its focus on regular drudge work: loading iron ingots, shoveling ore, etc. The story of Schmidt, the valiant ore shoveler, continues to circulate through the world making propaganda for the Taylor system.

For [Frederick Winslow] Taylor, the point of departure lies in plant management. That is always an important matter. A plant can be organized in this way or that and as a consequence be capable of greater or lesser productive potential, since everything finally depends on how able the directors and employees are in getting something out of it; or, more precisely, on what the administration and the workforce are able to wring from the plant once they seriously get down to work. That obviously depends on the output potential of human action, on how it is integrated in its manifold types and forms into the chain of effects represented by the plant. Now Taylor attempts to get the most out of it from the outset by aiming at the highest possible performance, toward which end those involved are expected to give their best. Maximum performance, however, is a goal that can be pursued in a wide variety of ways. The Taylor system represents only one of them! This striving for maximum performance, a very significant goal, I have called Taylorism, and it has filled the soul of every capable plant manager since long before Taylor. Taylor, however, has worked more effectively in its favor than anyone before; above all he has sharpened the critical eye focused on plant operations and preached the necessity of a regular stock-taking to management. No one but he, that is, can claim to have cultivated a science of work, the promotion of which is incumbent upon those branches of scientific research where the forms of expertise associated with the discipline intersect. [. . .]

Maximum performance reaches its peak in the plants of the Ford Motor Company. I do not mean so much the mathematical success that can be measured in the output potential of the individual worker, which may still be subject to increase by Taylorism. But the completely different approach adopted by Ford is infinitely more fruitful in terms of overall success. Here that "supreme individual potential," of which Count [Ferdinand] Degenfeld-Schonburg speaks in his instructive book,[1] is transmitted to the whole plant; it is transmitted down from the top—which in this case is Henry Ford. [Hugo] Münsterberg's representation of the "spirit of individual initiative at the margins" as one of the characteristic features of Americanism is well known; and the Ford plants themselves do in fact "Americanize" their numerous acquisitions, or they get rid of them—both principles quite contrary to Taylorism. But what radiates more strongly from the top—in absolute contrast to Taylorism—is the vital spirit of the personality! It blows through the whole gigantic operation and draws every last worker into its wake.

There are, for example, no departments at Ford, nor any permanent, titled positions. Someone needs only to deliver the proof that he, in some way or another beneficial to the indefatigable completion of the whole, knows how to produce a result, and he has obtained a position for himself and will be better paid for it. Departmental responsibilities do not exist; no one, however, not even the last drudge worker, is deprived of the purely human responsibility for what he does and does not do. There is no coordination of the lines of command of any kind, not a trace of the drab horror of a conventional office; a personnel office serves as the registry for the plant and that is all. Only the top management has a staff, such as the executive general staff for the really big issues. The only ones who hold their own up there are those who do not turn into narrow-minded experts; for what Ford wants to say, wants to believe, is this: that people already have the best solutions for everything in their heads. Nor could a more unpardonable offense to the spirit of the Ford plant be conceived. Nothing is already or ever will be fully developed and perfect in Henry Ford's eyes! He is dynamism personified. It is truly as if this most American of all industrial organizations were the intellectual embodiment of activism, of, strictly speaking, the meliorism of William James. [. . .]

It is no mere distance but a profound and purely intellectual contradiction that separates Ford from Taylor! What Taylor accomplishes through his ingeniously thought-out system of management Ford achieves as well, but through the completely different, thrilling verve of leadership. To judge by the many interesting examples Ford cites from the concrete world of his plants, the output potential of a Ford worker is scarcely inferior to that of a Taylor worker. It is only that this amounts to the whole of Taylor's success, with the question remaining of how much his direction detracts from it. Meanwhile it represents only a partial success for Ford when his workers owe the plant nothing in the way of honest performance, and this concerning a plant to which he lends such grandiose form quite independently of questions of individual output! For Ford plays not only the role of the watchmaker simply "mending" the flaws in plant operations; he is also the mighty forger who hammers the plant into shape in the red-hot glow of stormy transformations.

I scarcely believe that anyone would have to struggle harder than myself against the temptation of following in Ford's footsteps precisely in the context of his incomparable example of the administration of technical reason. I will content myself with a single example, which, however, is equally singular in kind. This example, incidentally, also blesses

1. Ferdinand Graf von Degenfeld-Schonburg, *Die Lohntheorien von Adam Smith, David Ricardo, John Stuart Mill und Karl Marx,* (Munich and Leipzig: Duncker und Humblot, 1914).