UNIVERSITY AND DEMOCRACY

In the turbulence of modern democracy, the idea of the university must stand out as a ray of hope. The *sapientia universitatis* must emerge as a welcome check upon the *confusio multitudinis* of the pluralistic society. An institution which embodies the fusion of the sciences must be greeted as an antidote to the confusion of popular opinions. The unity of learning must be hailed as a replacement of the occasionality of the people’s daily routine. *Lux et veritas*: as the torch of Prometheus let the troglodytes see the truth, universities could shed light and bring truth into a democratic world which has become increasingly obscure and false.

Universities are the opposites of modern democracies in many respects.

The constituents of democracies are citizens; those of universities are academic citizens. Democratic communities are composed of the mass of the people; universities, of a fraction of that mass. Democracies are egalitarian; universities, élitist. These basic distinctions have prevailed to our day. Whereas more people are in universities now than ever before, more people also participate in the democratic process. The growth in the number of academic citizens has not substantially affected the élitist character of universities.

The aim of universities is the search after truth; that of democracies, convenience. When pronouncing the principle *salus populi suprema lex esto*, Cicero may well have shared the belief that the welfare of the people only can exist in truth. However, while this belief recognizes the possibility that the people will rise toward the search of the truth, the chances are that their aims will be of a less exacting nature. Even Cicero felt that the search after truth would come only after physical wants have been satisfied.¹ One can dispute the idea expressed in Hegel’s *Philosophy of Law* that the people do not know

¹ Cicero, *Offic. init.*
what they want. They know pretty well what for the time being is convenient for them. Marx regretted that the people are unwilling to make sacrifices for a revolution. Be that as it may, they generally are unwilling to make sacrifices for the search after truth. They like to consume, but are unable to create, the fruits of research.

Universities, while not immune to emotion, are strongholds of rationality. Modern democracies, while not devoid of rational features, in a large measure have become theaters of emotions. Whereas democracy could be a rational form of government—and was so conceived by its modern founders in England, the United States, and France according to principles laid down by such men as Coke, Locke, Montesquieu, and the authors of The Federalist—modern democracies, having become mass democracies, have tended toward emotionalism and irrationality. By the time of Ortega y Gasset, de Tocqueville’s fears had been borne out. Ariosto’s and Goethe’s skepticism toward the rationality of the masses, appears to have been more justified than the neutralism Hegel expressed at a time when men still harbored great hopes for rational democracy. On the other hand, due to the advance of the natural sciences and their research methods, universities have become more, rather than less, rational. Even Ortega, critical as he was of modern universities, recognized them in his Mission of the University as strongholds of rational behavior which stood in sharp contrast to the irrationality of modern mass rule.

Democracies have become unstable. Universities have remained relatively stable. It is true that in recent years universities have been faced with problems of stability; nevertheless, instability in universities is still exceptional. By contrast, instability has become the rule in modern democracies in spite of the survival of various stability factors. Having often been plagued by instability (the cities of ancient Greece and the American states under the Articles of Confederation are examples), democracy in the twentieth century has tended toward

2 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Sämtliche Werke (Stuttgart, 1949), VII, 409. See also 383f., 413f.
3 Ibid., 425.
instability on account of the irrationality of politics and the growing elimination of checks upon those in power. Democratic governments change fast according to popular whims and desires. University tenure regulations prevent a frequent turnover of personnel. To please their constituents, democratic governments increasingly have engaged in changing the laws. With a few exceptions, universities have observed time-honored customs, rules, and regulations. Paraphrasing Coke's distinction between natural and artificial reason, it could be said that in democracies the natural reason of the citizens can always determine what the law is and what it ought to be. On the other hand, the natural reason of academic citizens always is under the rules and regulations of science, under some kind of artificial reason which has been compiled by great minds over generations.

Modern democracies have become challenges to law and order. In spite of outbreaks of violence on several campuses, universities generally have retained their laws and orders. The predicament of democracies is not surprising, for it follows from the natural instability of democracy. As long as constitutions were recognized as supreme laws controlling democratic processes, the issue of law and order could not easily arise. It was bound to arise when constitutions were no longer unequivocally so recognized, and when, due to the march of democracy, the contents of constitutions became determined by legislation or judicial adjustment. Constitutional legitimacy was replaced by a mere legality under which rulers could transmute into law ideas that could challenge law and order.

Finally, modern democracy has accepted equality for its faith, whereas universities have continued to believe in liberty. In the democratic revolutions in England, the United States, and France, democracy was conceived as a liberal democracy in which equality meant equality before laws which permitted the free use of unequal abilities. In modern times, de Tocqueville's prediction that the march of democracy would move toward egalitarianism has been borne out. The primacy of liberty increasingly has become replaced by that of equality. The latter no longer means equality before the law but equality through the law. This development has not taken place in universities. While universities are more egalitarian today than previously because the influx of students has led to a certain levelling of requirements, universities in general still emphasize the free development of the individuals' unequal abilities over the equal development of all.

If one looks for a common denominator in the features which dis-

4 Coke on Littleton, § 97b.
distinguish modern universities from democracies, one could say that it is clarity. In contrast to convenience, the major aim of democracies, the inherent aim of universities, truth, implies clarity. *Wahrheit, Klarheit; Klarheit, Wahrheit.* Characteristically, truth is depicted as a nude holding a mirror clearly showing herself.\(^5\) If truth means clarity, then an academic community, devoted to the search for truth, must reflect greater clarity than a community of ordinary citizens, who are primarily interested in the enjoyment of the Garden of Eden—a veritable labyrinth of the conveniences of daily life. There cannot be much doubt that rationality is clearer than emotions, that there is greater clarity in stability than in instability, that law and order represent clarity better than anarchy and disorder. Also, liberty is clearer than equality. It stands out in an egalitarian environment, an environment which usually is devoid of clarity. Furthermore, it is questionable whether in an egalitarian environment, tending as it does toward passivity, there can be achieved as much as in a libertarian one, conducive as it is to activity.\(^6\)

**UNIVERSITY, TRUTH, AND REASON**

Clarity factors in today's universities reflect the original idea of the university. They exist because throughout history universities, while never absolutely realizing the ideal University, have done their best to approach it. To Hegel's dictum, "what is reasonable is real; and what is real is reasonable," \(^7\) can be added that what is, in large measure is reasonable because universities have upheld the idea of the university. Hegelian reasoning might not have achieved its dominating position had not friends of the idea of the university, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Fichte, Schleiermacher, and Steffens, helped to found the University of Berlin. In turn, that university never could have been founded had not the idea of the university been kept alive and had universities not successfully defended that idea against outside encroachments.

In his lecture "On the Calling of the Scholar," delivered at the University of Jena shortly after the French Revolution, Fichte considered the scholar "a priest of the truth," a man committed to do, dare, and suffer anything for the truth, willing to be persecuted, hated, and even

5 "Hinter dieser Augen Klarheit/ruft ein Herz in Lieb' und Wahrheit"—Goethe./ "Du weisst, Betrug und Tand umringt die reine Wahrheit/verfälscht ihr ewig Licht und dämpft ihre Klarheit"—Haller.
6 See the author's *In Defense of Property*, esp. 139ff.
to die in its service. He had in mind a personality quite different from the occasionalist romanticist who was his own priest, who would announce and arrange his own truths or half-truths, and often advertise them as the only undisputable truth. He had in mind the kind of hero Nietzsche wanted—a man willing to be martyred for the truth. Unequivocally committed to the search for truth, the University was to be a rock oftrustworthiness and a symbol of clarity.

We may well maintain that it is. Truth, of course, may cause pain. Still, the saying, “who increases knowledge, increases pain,” is dubious. The very fact that there is truth gives us assurance. Truth provides security because it is indestructible. Truth gives confidence: “When the world is about to drown, it must be saved through a revelation of truth” (Mong Dsi). Truth encourages: once we have sensed it, we want to search for it restlessly, hoping that the mind will find peace through its discovery.

Pilate’s question “What is truth?” suggests that there is no such thing. Indeed, this question has been answered in such a variety of ways that doubts about the existence of truth seem to be justified; however, the question has been answered in a variety of ways only because men are fallible. From an objective point of view, there can be only one truth, although men may not know what it is. Goethe, who wrote Reinhard “that the various modes of thinking are rooted in the differences of men and for this reason a general uniform conviction is impossible,” still wrote in “Zahme Xenien”:

Wenn ich kannte den Weg des Herrn,
ich ging’ ihn wahrhaftig gar zu gern;
führte man mich in der Wahrheit Haus,
bei Gott! ich ging’ nicht wieder heraus.

The fact that men are unable to discover the truth does not prove that it does not exist. Errors prove the existence of truth. Error multiplex, veritas una. Intellectual history is a history of discovering errors and replacing them by truths, a continuous diminution of error, a never-ending progress toward truth. Perhaps Pilate sensed this. His question, while revealing doubts whether men can know the truth, also reveals hope in the existence of truth. Whereas men may not know the truth, they may strive toward knowing it. In the last analysis, their search

8 Karl Jaspers, Von der Wahrheit (München, 1947), 453.
10 See ibid., 733; Max Scheler, Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik (4th ed., Bern, 1954), 70, 204.
cannot be disappointing. It may often yield few results. It may be difficult and frustrating. *La vérité ne se découvre qu'avec peine.* Still, there always will be satisfaction in having progressed a little further toward one's aim, and even the awareness of errors will result in a pride for having advanced.

The search for the truth has been given high ranking throughout the history of Western civilization. Cicero considered it the most important intellectual endeavor. The passage where he mentions this is, according to Cardinal Newman, but one of the many similar passages by a multitude of authors.\(^\text{11}\) Serving the truth has generally been considered the major aim of the University, from its inception in ancient Greece to the studies of Jaspers and Ortega and others in our era.

The University's aim for clarity, following from its commitment to the search after truth, is enhanced by the way it goes about that search. There can be no doubt that many a truth has been discovered by mere speculation. Without speculation there is no advancement of learning; however, even the results thus found are accepted only upon scientific verification. The search for the truth is a scientific pursuit. Its aim for clarity is advanced through clear methods.

ImPLYING clear methods to attain the clarity of truth, science has certain assumptions. The slogan "science assumes nothing" is justified only insofar as science cannot admit any restrictions upon its advancement. It must be skeptical not only toward such things as religions and *Weltanschauungen* but also toward generally accepted beliefs, even if they are held by respected scientists. *Vérité dans un temps, erreur dans un autre*, wrote Montesquieu. Science refuses to accept anything as an absolute truth, just as it refuses to consider anything unworthy of scientific investigation. Science assumes that nothing limits the scope of inquiry. Scientific inquiry is endless. The scientist is a Faustian by definition. *Wer immer strebend sich bemüht, den können wir erlösen*, the angels sing when they admit Faust into Heaven. In the lecture referred to, Fichte said that the scholar as the servant of science must forget what he has done as soon as it is done and think only of what else there is to be done. Science is ruthless. It takes on Gods, it deprives saints of their haloes. It destroys the myth of popular heroes. It challenges the results of scientific investigation. As a priest of the truth, the scientist is without mercy. Unlike the blindfolded eyes of *Justitia*, his eyes are wide open, always looking to find fault and to condemn. Obsessed with discovery, he need not care about consequences. Sir Arthur Fleming discovered penicillin, and Otto Hahn split the uranium atom, opening the way for unforeseen blessings and

destructions. In good faith, leading scientists awarded the Nobel Prize, made possible by the inventor of dynamite, to both. Destroying and building, the scientist provides the dynamics of learning.

Scientific research assumes daring. It assumes that the scientist let himself be guided by the "schemes of ideas" Kant had in mind, by ideas and hypotheses which might enable him to gain new insights—often by pure chance. He must offer the discovery of truth a chance, remote as it may be, even though the chances of coming closer to the truth by mere daring may be slim. While scientific work presupposes daring, it also assumes that the scientist determine the direction and scope of his investigation. Furthermore, it assumes that he is open to criticism. The scientist cannot deny the principle of contradiction. As a search for the truth, science presupposes the validity of the rules of logic. The scientist controls his plans and is controlled from the outside. His daring and devotion are complemented by discipline.

The latter is related to what has been considered inseparable from and the equivalent of science—method. Complementing the approaches of Grotius, Hobbes, Spinoza, Pufendorf, and Wolff, Descartes, in his *Discours de la méthode*, gave classical advice for research in clarity: resolve every problem into its simplest elements; proceed by the smallest steps so that each progress of the investigation may be apparent and compelling; take for granted only what is perfectly clear. These remarks, which Descartes believed to be generalizations of the process by which he had discovered analytical geometry, were similar to those one finds in Galileo’s dialogues on mechanics. The method proposed came to be applied by scientists generally. The deductive method was complemented by the inductive method. Characteristically, the discovery of new scientific truths was matched by an ever-increasing invention of new names and types of methods. But irrespective of whether scholars have felt that a method was, or should be, regressive, analytical, progressive, synthetic, systematic, heuristic, genetic, critical, dialectic, akroamatic, erotematic, and what not, there has always existed consensus concerning the necessity of some kind of method, suited to the subject-matter to be investigated. *Methodenstreit* has not disparaged but aided method. Mere guesswork or planless attempts which result from subjective ideas and mere whims have been generally rejected.12

Methods contribute to the cogency of scientific knowledge, which exists on account of purely rational evidence. Scientific knowledge requires no personal commitment. Galileo could well recant before the Inquisition. His retracting the hypothesis that the earth moves in no

way affected the truth which soon gained universal validity. Following his trial, he is reputed to have said, "But it moves nevertheless." That scientific findings can be verified by anyone makes science an outstanding demonstration of clarity which must give assurance to the mind. This assurance will prevail in spite of the fact that what is universally accepted at a particular time will not necessarily always be considered valid. However, every scientific result, short-lived as its universal acceptance may be, is a step toward the final truth. It will give us the satisfaction of having achieved what our means enabled us to. While scientific discoveries often are of a temporary nature, they form bases of clarity upon which we can build a clearer, better world.

Die klare Welt bleibt klare Welt, im Auge nur ist's schlecht bestellt (Goethe). Science means a perpetual striving to arrive and continuous arrival.

I twill be argued that what has been said applies mainly to the natural sciences, to science in the English sense of the term, but not to Wissenschaft. The general pursuit of knowledge, however, also can be undertaken in a scientific manner and is concomitant to the search after truth. As was shown, that search often will yield results which sooner or later will be no longer considered truths but mere knowledge. Even then, these results continue to serve the truth, if only because we know that they are not truths. Similarly, the pursuit of knowledge, undertaken to find the truth, is likely to yield truths. The inclusion of the natural sciences in Wissenschaft is indicated when, in the first scene of the drama, Faust enumerates what he studied of the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities and deplores "that we cannot know." While knowledge and truth perhaps should not be identified, truth is as much the aim of Wissenschaft as of the natural sciences. A Wissenschaft disparaging truth would be a contradiction in terms, for it would defy the natural sciences—that is, the very components which have grown most conspicuously and whose research methods have increasingly influenced other component disciplines.

Even before the growth of the natural sciences, other disciplines were advanced scientifically. Their advance was based upon scientific assumptions, and they employed scientific methods. Their findings were arrived at rationally. It is true that these findings often were not universally accepted. Frequently based upon speculation, they were more difficult to verify than the findings of the natural sciences. This does not mean, however, that they defied verification forever and that they could not come as close, or even closer, to the truth than the findings in the natural sciences. Just as the result of a dolus eventualis
might be more severe than that of a plain *dolus*, a *veritas eventualis* might well turn out to be closer to the truth than a temporarily accepted *veritas evidentissima*. The frustrated scholar in the humanities who for some time fails to have his ideas universally accepted in the end may well be rewarded for his efforts and find that he has come closer to the truth than many a celebrated natural scientist.

As to the relationship between science and philosophy, Jaspers correctly finds close ties between the two. One cannot exist without the other. Philosophy motivates the will to know. It furnishes the ideas from which the scientist derives his vision, the ideas which determine his choices. In turn, philosophy acknowledges its bond to science. It does not permit itself to ignore realities. It demands to know what is cogent. Those who philosophize are impelled toward the sciences and seek experience in scientific methods.\(^\text{13}\) Since the attitude of the scientist guarantees truthfulness, philosophers as lovers of the truth must be as interested in the protection of science as scientists as pursuers of the truth must be interested in philosophy. In a way, the true scientist is a philosopher and the true philosopher, a scientist. Since, like the scientist, the philosopher serves the truth, he belongs to the University as much as the scientist. Like the scientist, he contributes toward making the University a haven for clarity.

Home of the search for truth, the University has been a haven of clarity throughout history. Its very beginnings in the middle of the twelfth century mark it as a clarifying force. It emerged as an antidote to the turbulence of the investiture controversy. The quest for studies came about in a world which was torn by a dogmatic struggle between emperor and pope. About a hundred years later, *studium* had become firmly established next to *sacerdotium* and *imperium*. Its legitimacy was considered as valid as that of the pope and the emperor. The concept of historical translation was applied to studies as much as to the papacy and the empire. Just as, according to the Letter to the Hebrews, priesthood was transferred from the Old to the New Testament and from Jerusalem to Rome, and just as emperorship was transferred from Troy to Rome and Germany, *studium* was transferred from Greece to Rome and then, by Charlemagne, to Paris. The University of Paris became the prototype of the University as a haven for the pursuit of studies.

*Studium* was supposed to complement *sacerdotium* and *imperium*, to be an equal in a trinity of powers expressing a trinity of virtues—the spiritual, the temporal, and the rational. The study of things divine

\(^{13}\) Karl Jaspers, *The Idea of the University* (Boston, 1959), 25f.
and human, of theology and law, and of the reason behind them, was hoped to bind together the spiritual and temporal powers which were about to fall apart. It was to reconcile faith and temporal justice and to restore clarity to a world which had become confused through the investiture controversy. Furthermore, studying was to restore clarity not only to the relationship between pope and emperor but also within the church and the empire. The University as the main seat of studying stood out as a demonstration of clarity not only in the confusion of the investiture controversy but also in the confusions of the Interregnum and the Great Schism.

Furthermore, the University became a clarity factor from the middle ages to modern age. Just as the co-imperium provided by St. Augustine’s two swords theory erupted in the investiture controversy, the new triune theory, rather than reconciling sacerdotium and imperium through studium, resulted in a challenge of the former by the latter. As it turned out, studium was not just a mediator between but became a competitor of the church and the empire. This was natural. While an ad hoc task of studying, such as the reconciliation of the spiritual and temporal realms, could be conceived in the specific historical situation of the investiture controversy, studium, due to its unlimited nature, was to emancipate itself from any limitation of scope. Meaning a never-ending search for the truth, studying was bound to question institutions which could, and often did, veil or restrict the truth. It was bound to challenge faith with reason in both the spiritual and temporal realms. It was bound to question church and state. Since the pursuit of studies was located mainly in the universities, the latter became an important power after the church and state, aiding both in their attempts toward rationalization and clarification and at the same time admonishing them to remain within the scope of their respective ratio. In Reflections on History, Burckhardt spoke of the three powers, the state, religion, and culture. As the central institution for studying, the University can be considered a formidable exponent of culture, constantly furthering and limiting the other two powers.

Plato’s academy was closed on orders of Emperor Justinian. The School of Alexandria was destroyed by Kalif Omar. The University has survived so far. Since the twelfth century, its development has been continuous. This longevity may well be due to the fact that studying, implying rational inquiry and a constant quest for truth, is innately immune to dogma and shifts in power. Considered the child of the church and the empire and usually founded with papal sanction, universities originally were based upon Christian belief. This rule was not questioned by the fact that the “antichrist” Frederic II
founded the University of Naples to aid the emperor against the pope, that the University of Heidelberg resulted from the Great Schism, or that the University of Wittenberg was established without papal sanction. Under Charles V, the University of Paris assumed the title “eldest daughter of the King.” In due time, the universities admitted liberal and antichristian positions. They became places of tolerance and the free search for the truth. Humanism, the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment not only “secularized” but also liberalized the University. In the name of the free mind, the pursuit of knowledge strove for an “open” conception of truth.

Originally the child of the church and the state, the University outgrew both. Equipped with neither a powerful clerical nor temporal organization, the University stood for nothing but the power of reason. Yet reason conquered dogma and the sword. The Catholic church founded many universities for the furtherance of its dogma but was unable to withstand the power of reason which clarified and often challenged dogma. The precursors of the Reformation, Wyclif and Hus, were university men. Luther taught theology at a university when he nailed his theses to the church door at Wittenberg. In the nineteenth century, Cardinal Newman, discussing the scope and aim of a university, came out in favor of “knowledge which is its own end, . . . liberal knowledge, or a gentleman’s knowledge, . . . Knowledge which I have especially called Philosophy or, in an extended sense of the word, Science.” “Liberal Education,” he stated, “makes not the Christian, not the Catholic, but the gentleman. It is well to be a gentleman, it is well to have a cultivated intellect, a delicate taste, a candid, equitable, dispassionate mind, a noble and courteous bearing in the conduct of life;—these are the connatural qualities of a large knowledge; they are the objects of a University.” 14 To this day, Catholic and Protestant institutions of learning have tended toward liberalizing and rationalizing religious dogmas, thus bringing clarity into the world of faith.

The situation is similar with respect to the state. Emperor Frederic I may have founded the University of Naples to train men for the imperial service. Absolute kings may have founded universities in order to educate civil servants who would support their regimes. If universities worked toward these aims, they generally did so in order to contribute to the rational government of the state rather than to the pursuit of reason of state. As a matter of fact, for the sake of reason, universities would pursue policies that could challenge prevalent political systems. Whereas it appears open to doubt whether the Univer-

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University, an ideal, can ever be absolutely realized, by the nineteenth century many universities approached that ideal. They had become strongholds for rational thinking, institutions in which man's knowledge was accumulated and handed down to new generations. Through an ever-growing revelation of the truth, they gave to the world an ever-increasing clarity.

Since the idea of the university was realized through a growing emancipation from faith, modern trends toward making universities representative of new faiths must be steps backward. A university reflecting the outlook prevalent in a state, the outlook of a government, of an establishment, is likely to lose its quality as a University unless the established order is permeated by an unequivocal recognition of the value of rational investigation and instruction.

Jefferson and Wilhelm von Humboldt could well conceive of a university in the service of a state which recognized the value of permitting citizens to think rationally, saw the rationale for its existence in the protection of rational pursuits, and was, to use an expression by Robert von Mohl, a Verstandesstaat—a state governed by reason, a state of reason. As that name implies, there is in such a state no conflict between reason and state. Jefferson saw this kind of state approached in the United States, whose founders checked irrational politics by applying principles of political science. Von Humboldt saw it approached in the Germany of Beethoven, Goethe, Hardenberg, Savigny, Schiller, and Stein. Both Jefferson and von Humboldt hoped that the "state of reason" would prevail in the future because it precluded conflict between reason and state.

The situation was to be different as soon as the Verstandesstaat was replaced by a Weltanschauungsstaat which, while it could rationalize its organization into an effective power structure, no longer considered the pursuit of reason its raison d'être but made individuals follow a Weltanschauung. Rationalized as the latter might be, such a state would not suffer the unrestrained existence of reason. Instead of subordinating the state to reason, it would subordinate reason to the state. The state of reason would give way to reason of state. In such a situation, universities either would lose their quality as universities or become estates in defense of reason in a state of antireason.

The experience of National Socialism demonstrated the possibility of both alternatives. Under that regime, the universities in many respects lost their quality as strongholds for the cultivation of reason. The exodus of scholars like Einstein, Kelsen, Röpke, and others aided in reducing the universities' academic standing. Hitler's program of Gleichschaltung and the surveillance of university administrators and
professors through the Gestapo and student leaders further promoted the decline. Yet the universities probably remained the most rational of public institutions, matched perhaps only by the judiciary, which incurred Hitler's anger because the judges would not pass judgments according to the *gesunde Volksempfinden*—the "sound popular sentiment." Much as the brown fire, which burned all of Germany, may have injured the universities, it was unable to destroy them. As in the past, reason proved to be stronger than faith. A short semester at the University of Berlin made me aware that the neoclassic spirit of Wilhelm von Humboldt was not dead even in the Third Reich. The Freiburg School of Economics, the student revolt at Munich, and many other manifestations bear witness to the fact that even in a most oppressive *Weltanschauungsstaat*, universities guarded the idea of the university and remained harbors for rational pursuits. This is borne out again in our own day. Participants in international conferences are impressed by the fact that the delegates of universities in totalitarian nations often act in a way that indicates a relative immunity of their academic institutions to the irrational slogans of political life.

That the University is conducive to clarity because it cultivates reason is not altered by modern trends toward specialization and the "multiversity."

At first sight, such trends suggest confusion. As was shown, the aim of the University is to find the truth (singular!). This is what Fichte had in mind when he called the scholar the priest of the truth and what is meant by the mottoes of American universities: *veritas* (Harvard), *lux et veritas* (Yale), *veritas vos liberabit* (Johns Hopkins). People might argue that if it is the aim of the University to find the one truth, then a specialized school will only find a specific part, and a multiversity, specific parts, of that truth. Such parts must be mere part-truths or perhaps half-truths. It might be asserted that partial or half-truths must confuse men, that specialization and the multiversity must add to the turbulence of youth in our time.

While these arguments ought not to be dismissed lightly, they can be countered. Trends toward specialization probably are not conducive to a general education. They will be detrimental to the educational ideal of *paideia*. They will lead to an alienation of the individual by providing him with too narrow a *Weltbild* and will result in frustration and confusion. However, a genuine and comprehensive education perhaps is no longer possible. We may have to put up with specialization. And perhaps trends toward specialization are not even as bad as they appear. They hardly are detrimental to the pursuit of truth.
and the achievement of clarity. In a way, they are even implied in the idea of the university. The University, it must always be remembered, is *universitas scientiarum*—the university of sciences (plural), the union of various disciplines. While one could think of exploring all disciplines together, one can also examine them separately without contradicting the idea of the university. If the latter method was possible when there were relatively few disciplines and when it still was possible to know them all, then it must recommend itself when the various disciplines on account of their growth in number and complexity no longer can be mastered together. The truths found through specialized investigation in the end may well do more for the discovery of the truth than attempts to master all disciplines at once. Accumulated, these truths form an impressive mass of evidence. They also can be made fruitful by interdisciplinary collaboration, which appears to be a modern possibility of demonstrating the unity of the sciences.

The viability of special research has been demonstrated in the history of the University. The *studium generale* originally was established as a general place of study for the whole province of a monastic order because the *studia particularia*, the local monastic schools, were considered insufficient. The universities originally cultivated general, as distinguished from special, studies. The deductive method prevailed. With the expansion of knowledge and academic disciplines, particular studies were emphasized, and the inductive method gained ground. Specialization resulted from the desire for scientific investigation.

Special studies seldom hurt general studies. Specialization goes back to an early age. Medieval Salerno specialized in medicine, and Bologna, in law. This did not prevent these schools from becoming full-fledged universities. Göttingen in large measure was founded in order to provide education for the public service. It soon had a Lichtenberg, a Gauss, and a Weber and became a good all-round university. In the twentieth century, it became the Mecca for mathematicians and physicists. Hilbert, Planck, Hahn, and Heisenberg taught there. The latter also became known for his philosophical writings. Another physicist, von Weizsäcker, now holds a chair in philosophy. As Planck said, universal science no longer stands at the beginning but at the end of specialized research. There is a new universal science in the making “which is continually oriented and perfected by particular sciences.” ¹⁵ This verdict of a scientist is matched by the statement of the philosopher Alois Dempf, who feels that the process of

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¹⁵ *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse* (Berlin, 1932), liif.
differentiation will automatically result in a unity of the sciences.\textsuperscript{16} As a multiversity, the University has held on to its mission in a society that to a large extent has become a multi-society.

\textbf{UNIVERSITY AND FREEDOM}

The advancement of the truth was due not only to the advancement of reason but also to that of freedom. For a rational discovery of the truth is not possible without freedom. Freedom is the alter ego of truth and reason: it is their end as well as their prerequisite.

Whereas the truth makes us free, freedom also lets us know the truth. Freedom is rooted in the openness to truth, but it also aids the discovery of the truth. I n maintaining this I do not want to contradict John 8:32. I merely distinguish freedom as a reward for knowing the truth from freedom as a condition for doing so.

Christ, thinking he knew the truth, could well say, “Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free.” For most mortals, however, the truth is not some finished product generously given to them, something that can be found along the road and picked up casually. Rather, it is to be discovered through an unending and laborious search. Perhaps the passage just quoted implies such a search. If Christ spoke these words, he may well have realized that reports on his teachings might blur the truth and that future generations would have to labor toward coming closer to it. Perhaps his statement, connected as it is with men’s struggle against sin, was meant to be an imperative to begin with. Certainly the scientist knows that he does not know the truth and that he must struggle for it. He senses that without effort there will be no reward. Knowing that matter does not disappear, he also knows that nothing comes about without putting something into it. \textit{Rien pour rien. Ohne Fleiss kein Preiss}. If the reward for knowing the truth is freedom, he will expect to have to pay in kind and use his freedom for the discovery of the truth.

It is important to realize that only the freedom of the individual can aid in the discovery of the truth. Even among those who believe that truth is a sleeping beauty that was kissed awake by the Son of God and Man for the salvation of the human race, many realize that men have since obscured the truth. Others reject the idea of revelation altogether. Yet, most people believe that there is such a thing as the truth. They are eager to know it, although their desire is directed toward an

ideal that cannot easily be realized. If knowing the one and only truth carries comprehensive freedom as a reward, and if men can receive only what they give, then freedom can be earned only through the total use by the human race of its total freedom for the discovery of the truth. It is obvious that this aim cannot be achieved easily. The ideal can be approached only through individual effort. This follows from the very nature of the human race. Since that race is composed of individuals, its freedom is the sum of the liberties of the individuals. The freedom of humanity thus presupposes the liberties of the individuals who compose it. In using their liberties for the discovery of the truth, individuals aid the human race in becoming free.

The individual, then, in order to help emancipate the human community, must be free in the specific organizations of that community. Leaving the individual free to pursue the discovery of the truth is the price a community has to pay for the final reward of freedom for those who compose it and, in the last analysis, for the freedom of mankind. Within a given community, this implies that the government or any group must abstain from interfering with a climate which is indispensable for the progress of science, including not only the natural and the so-called “positive” sciences but also philosophy and theology. For a philosopher’s search for the truth may prove to be as important as that of a positive scientist, and the search for God may well prove to have been a search for truth.

Whereas the freedom of philosophy is not more important than that of the so-called positive sciences, it may warrant a greater emphasis on account of its smaller immunity from restrictions. The “value-freeness” of the positive sciences generally will not bring them into conflict with external powers. Moreover, that the findings of those sciences can be proved rather easily provides them with a certain immunity because interference appears peculiar or ridiculous. This was as evident in Hitler’s attempt to create a “German” physics as it was in Stalin’s emphasis upon a “Communist” natural science. On the other hand, philosophical thinking often will favor values which conflict with those of the existing powers. Moreover, philosophical thinking cannot easily be verified and is rather vulnerable to attack. Since a philosophical inquiry often will pass beyond objectivized thought, it will hardly be possible without a dialogue which is “open.” Perhaps philosophical knowledge is advanced more through the confrontation of thoughts than knowledge in the positive sciences. From the clash of ideas light is born. The situation is similar in theological thinking which also requires a climate of freedom if it is not to degenerate into a soulless formalism that is a caricature of faith. This has been recog-
nized not only by Protestant but also by Catholic leaders. As Leo XII said in *Immortale Dei*, it is important "to watch with the greatest care lest anyone be compelled to embrace the Catholic Faith against his will, for as St. Augustine wisely remarks, man is able to believe only by full consent."

Important as freedom from external interference is for finding the truth, it is not sufficient. It provides for the environment necessary for the pursuit of the truth but does not secure that pursuit. It is the legal guarantee of the freedom to seek the truth but not a command to the moral will to make use of that freedom. It is a device for the scholar's security but not for the daring sacrifice which is a prerequisite for finding the truth. This sacrifice must be made by the individual. Without the individual's willingness to dare and sacrifice, external freedom will be meaningless. For that freedom implies nothing but an abstinence by external powers from interference. To make sense, its basically negative character must be positivized by those who profit from it. Governmental passivity must be complemented by the individual's activity. Here lies an important difference between liberal rights in general and the particular liberal right of seeking the truth. The former rights protect but do not require specific actions. As a matter of fact, the protection of freedom of speech is perhaps as valuable in the absence of speech as in its presence, for freedom of speech often has spawned nonsense, insult, and obscenity. The situation is similar in the case of such liberal rights as freedom of assembly, religion, the right to carry arms, etc. On the other hand, the protection of the right to seek the truth is without value if the truth is not actually sought. The freedom to seek the truth implies the duty to seek the truth. Just as law is an "ethical minimum" only, external freedom to seek the truth provides for an "academic minimum" only. And just as the individual citizen is expected to maximize the ethical minimum by leading not only a law-abiding but a moral life, the academic citizen is expected to maximize the academic minimum into a maximum by complementing his legal, external freedom by a moral, internal freedom.

The latter can manifest itself in a variety of ways. Although external freedom establishes certain legal limitations, these limitations often are blurred. For instance, a university administration, perhaps under pressure from a state government or a board of trustees, while not openly opposing the work of a professor, may do so deviously. It will not dismiss him or reduce his salary, but it may hurt him by not raising his salary, a means which in our age of tenure and rises in the cost of living is a subtle but effective way of interfering with academic freedom. The professor must then do all he can to promote the practical,
and not just theoretical, existence of freedom. He must denounce every­
thing which in his opinion in any way interferes with the free pur­
suit of the truth. External freedom must be nourished continually by the individual's unwavering willingness to assert it vis-à-vis the powers that are: he must demonstrate his internal freedom by ruthlessly ex­
posing and challenging those above him. If he cannot muster the courage to do so, he must assert his internal freedom by continuing his work irrespective of disadvantages.

The same applies to his relations with his peers. The scholar must refrain from ingratiating himself with the members of his profession. For the sake of truth, he must not be afraid of deviating from what is generally accepted by them. He must be willing to go far out in criti­
cizing established ideas, even at the risk of being ridiculed and of be­
coming unpopular. This attitude may cost him offers from other insti­
tutions and bring him other disadvantages. All of this must not deter him from maintaining his internal freedom.

As the scientist demonstrates his internal freedom from the powers above and around him, he also must assert it against those under him. He must resist the temptation of becoming a “popularizer” if that in any way makes him swerve from, or slow down, his pursuit of the truth. He must refuse to give in to popular tastes, be they expressed by the people at large, or, as happens frequently, by his students. The scientist must be willing to sacrifice popularity for his beliefs. He must acclaim truth, not men. He must strive for the truth, not for popular acclaim. For instance, in an environment of chauvinism during a war, he must be as willing to advocate pacifism, as in a climate of pacifism he must be willing to favor war.\textsuperscript{17} He must approve research for pur­
poses of war as much as for purposes of peace, for the search after truth is independent of war and peace. Discoveries useful for war usually will prove to be useful in peace, and vice versa. Nobel's invention of dynamite proved to be as much of a blessing in times of peace as it proved destructive in war. Even where such blessings cannot be dis­
covered immediately, and irrespective of whether they will ever exist, the scientist must always assert his inner freedom to search for the truth. Nobel prizes for peace are matched by those for the sciences, and the winners of the latter are not judged by the popularity of their discoveries.

Some of the inner obligations of the scholar were prescribed by Fichte: "He should be motivated and confess to be motivated, by the love of his profession and of science only, irrespective of his own, or others', interests. . . . I could not imagine a priest of science, who

\textsuperscript{17} Cf. Weber, \textit{Wissenschaft als Beruf}, 584f.
thinks of ordaining new priests of science, not saying what the latter
do not like to hear because they do not like to hear it, in order that
they may continue to listen to him. . . . Every word the academic
teacher announces must reflect science and his eagerness to spread it.
Every word must unveil his dearest love for his audience—not as his
listeners, but as the future servants of science. Science and the living
avidity to make it comprehensible, not the teacher, shall speak. Aspir­
ing to talk in order to talk, to talk beautifully in order to talk beauti­
fully so that others may know it; the mania for forming words and
beautiful words, is undignified for any person if he does not say any­
thing on the subject matter, especially for an academic teacher who
represents the dignity of science to future generations.”

What Fichte called the priest of the truth, then, must have the inner
courage to question. The scientist must have the internal freedom to
“wonder why the universe should be as it is,” to reduce “the actual to
fluidity by breaking up its literal sequences in his imagination.” He
must take a new look at the world and challenge existing knowledge
for the promotion of the truth. The free scholar must “let being be.”
He must leave reality and truth alone and contest everything that obsc­
cures reality and the truth.

The freedom to discover the truth makes the most sense if it is exer­
cised rationally. Just as freedom is the end as well as the prerequisite
for truth, it is the end as well as the prerequisite of reason.

Seeking the truth implies judgment. Just as the judge, confronted
with facts and laws, renders a judgment and, by obeying the legal im­
perative, frees himself and his fellow men from legal dispute and un­
certainty, so the scientist, faced by facts and laws, through his judg­
ment fulfills his obligation to the scientific imperative and frees him­
self and his fellow men from scientific dispute and uncertainty. In dis­
tinction to the scientist, however, the judge may bring a sacrificium
intellectus. Following Kant’s statement that “a legal, although not very
legitimate, constitution is better than none,” he judges in conformity
with the laws, irrespective of whether he considers them just or not.
In passing a verdict, he may pronounce a legal truth which by the
standards of ultimate truth is an error. He may do so with a relatively
good conscience, for he is not a lawmaker and his obedience to the ex­
isting, if unjust, law fulfills an important function of the law, namely,

18 Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Ueber das Wesen des Gelehrten, und seine Erscheinungen im
Gebiete der Freiheit (1805), Sämtliche Werke, VI, 437.
19 William James, Psychology (New York, 1892), 369.
20 “Freiheit enthüllt sich jetzt als das Seinlassen von Seiendem . . . das Sicheinlassen
auf das Seiende.” Martin Heidegger, Vom Wesen der Wahrheit (Frankfurt, 1954), 14.
21 Immanuel Kant, Zum ewigen Frieden (Königsberg, 1795), Appendix I.
legal security. Plutôt une injustice qu'un désordre. The scientist cannot with a good conscience make an intellectual sacrifice. To begin with, there is no such thing as scientific security to justify such behavior. Science is insecure by definition and must remain so as long as the search for the truth continues—probably as long as science exists. The scientist must never make a judgment in order to conform to accepted laws. It is true that his judgments, like those of a judge, often will be based on existing laws, but whereas the judge must conform to the laws, the scientist must not. He must challenge them if he considers them wrong and untenable. He must render his judgment not in conformity with what men have said the law of science to be but according to his own investigations of the truth. Unlike a judge, a scientist is not always bound by the facts and the laws that rule them. He discovers new facts and new laws. In rendering judgment, the judge obeys the human legislator; the scientist can be "legislator." A judge obeys what men think they have discovered of the laws of nature and of God. A scientist discovers the laws of nature and the creations of God. A judge is bound by the work of men. A scientist is bound only by the work of God. For the judge, the principle non sub homine sed sub deo et lege is an ideal, but it is a reality for the scientist.

True judgment is rational judgment. Indeed, judgment could be called applied reason. If freedom therefore is the reward for judgment, freedom also must be the reward for reasoning. Furthermore, freedom is a prerequisite for reasoning, or active reason: there can be no fair judgment without the freedom to reason.

It has been generally accepted, from the ancient Greeks through the Middle Ages down to our time, that the power of self-determination is an attribute of reason and that without reason there can be no freedom. Perhaps the decline of freedom in our century is due to the fact that freedom has become detached from reason. More and more people feel they can do without rational reflection and live, as Heidegger put it, as "anonymous somebodies" on the level of "the daily chatter," be they influenced by Marx who considered freedom the result of technical progress, by Nietzsche who defined freedom as the will to power, by Gide who called freedom a gratuitous act, or by Sartre who felt that freedom was a choice which is nothing but pure invention. Freedom presupposes choice, and choice implies reasoning. Freedom without reason does not make much sense. The more rational a decision or judgment is, the freer it is. The mathematician Spinoza was a natural advocate of academic freedom, for mathematical judgments,

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reflecting a maximum of rationality, enjoy a maximum of freedom. Only a fool will challenge them.

Just as freedom does not seem to be possible without reason, reason does not seem to be possible without freedom. Whereas reason makes us free, freedom permits us to reason. Even St. Thomas, who emphasized that reason is the ultimate foundation of freedom, spoke of a *liberum judicium*, a free judgment as distinguished from a judgment that makes free.\(^{23}\) As reason generates freedom, freedom activates reason into reasoning. Freedom provides reason with a rationale and gives sense to reason. Freedom enables reason to be reason-able.

As to the various aspects of the freedom to reason, the remarks made in connection with the freedom to discover the truth basically apply. This is not surprising in view of the close relationship between reason and the truth. While the two are not identical—all too often the truth is reasoned away—they are in a large measure interdependent and come close to being alter egos. The truth is mainly discovered by reason and is reasonable.

There are, then, external and internal freedoms of reasoning. The former guarantees a minimum of the freedom to reason from interference by outside powers; the latter implies the assertion and maximization of that minimum. The external freedom of reasoning involves legal guarantees upon which the individual can base claims. The internal freedom involves a moral duty to stand up and bring sacrifices for the freedom of reasoning. Making the most of one’s internal freedom appears to be a fair compensation for profiting from external freedom. Having originally obliged external powers to recognize external freedom, internal freedom now obliges the individual to show himself worthy of external freedom. While profiting from external freedom will be easy, living up to the moral requirements of internal freedom will often be an arduous task. That task cannot be achieved by the many Papagenos that populate this world but only by the few Taminos who will be rewarded admission to the temple of wisdom.

The freedoms to reason and to seek the truth are the basic ingredients of academic freedom. Academic freedom thus is more than merely the right to pursue research and teaching. It implies the obligation to promote learning. Aside from pursuing his own learning, the individual must promote learning in an absolute sense. He must protect everything conducive to learning and fight everything detrimental to it. If learning is promoted by the government, then the government ought to be supported. If learning is promoted by professors and stu-

\(^{23}\) St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, p. I, qu. 83, a.1 and a.3 *ad 2.*
students, they ought to be supported. If learning is prevented by the government, the government must be fought. If learning is prevented by professors or students, then they must be fought. Academic freedom must be blind to status.

The individual will not always be confronted with simple alternatives which make a choice easy. Often the situation will be blurred. He will be faced with difficult choices which will be true tests of his readiness to stand up for academic freedom. For instance, he must risk being called illiberal and denounce academic license. For academic license is a perversion of academic freedom and can be as detrimental to learning as external oppression. Since such license often will appear in the disguise of internal academic freedom and denounce the existing external academic freedom, the individual, unaware of the disguise, will think he is faced with an option between the former and the latter. He will tend to favor the former, thinking that internal freedom probably brought about external freedom to begin with, that the former is supposed to nourish and expand the latter, that it reflects a moral maximum rather than a legal minimum. While these thoughts deserve consideration, they may not warrant preferring internal over external academic freedom. Whereas the former can come close to a maximum, it will only be a vague moral maximum—something unsafe. On the other hand, while external freedom generally will only constitute a minimum, it is a concrete legal minimum—something safe. It probably is better to have this safe minimum which can be maximized than the unsafe maximum which, being without legal sanction, can all too easily be minimized out of existence. While in the presence of external freedom, internal freedom can yield enormous results; in its absence, it might not amount to anything.

Academic freedom is not license. Its practical existence presupposes a legal order. While it is conceivable to have freedom without such an order, the world has not yet reached this stage. Legal orders are the main guarantors of freedom, including academic freedom. Their governments must maintain academic freedom against anything that jeopardizes the progress of learning, irrespective of whether it derives from the government, from the public, from faculty, or from students. Governments thus may have a role in putting down riots, something universities often will be unable to do. Whether governments also should have a part in the promotion and hiring of faculty is another question. There can be no doubt that in that respect the self-administration of universities has disadvantages. "Fear of outside competition and of excellence tends to turn self-administrative bodies into monopolistic cliques interested in safeguarding their own mediocrity. Inevi-
tably, the promotion and hiring pattern will then reflect a gradual and almost imperceptible lowering of standards. The system of co-option by itself will fail to produce ever better men and will instead favor a mediocre common denominator.” 24 While this danger can be reduced by taking hiring and promoting out of the jurisdiction of the respective departments and by assigning it to interdepartmental committees, a power outside the university might be preferable. Still, government activity in the hiring and promotion of faculty is risky. It might introduce politics into the universities and be detrimental to academic freedom.

Similar considerations apply to private universities. These institutions are legal communities of administrators, employees, and students, implying academic freedom and the obligation not to interfere with learning. Although academic freedom is blind to the status of the members of an academic community, its defenders cannot afford to be blind to the fact that the university government gives sanction to the university order and is the protector of academic freedom. This government—usually the administration and tenured faculty—has the duty to protect that freedom. The members of a university government who fail to put academic license in its place, who fail to maintain the regular process of learning, forfeit their place in the university as much as those who threaten academic freedom by interfering with learning through license and violence.

The history of academic freedom has been most obvious with respect to the freedom from external interference, and the universities played a major role in securing that freedom. This role was already evident in the Middle Ages when the universities were under the control of the church. In 1229, the University of Toulouse invited teachers, promising them the liberty to study Aristotle. John Wyclif was backed by Oxford University in his early opposition to the church. After John Hus had been condemned by the Council of Constance, the University of Prague tried to save him. When, early in the sixteenth century, Pietro Pomponazzi denied that the immortality of the soul could be proven by Aristotelian methods and risked persecution by opposing church dogma and the clergy, Italian universities clamored for his services. The University of Bologna raised his salary in order to keep him. When Luther posted his 95 theses, he was backed by the University of Wittenberg. Giordano Bruno perhaps lived as long as he did only because he was sheltered by northern universities. In 1588, he thanked the University of Wittenberg for having permitted him the liberty of philosophical research. A little earlier, the Uni-

University of Leiden was founded to reflect the liberalism and cosmopolitanism of the Netherland towns and to follow a policy of academic freedom. Professors were not required to make doctrinal commitments in their simple loyalty oath to the university and the city; Jews were admitted; a Catholic professor whom Protestants in town had driven to resign because he defended religious persecution was asked by the university to return.

Following the publication of treatises favoring academic freedom—notably Bacon's *Prometheus* (1609) and *New Atlantis* (1627) and Milton's *Areopagitica* (1644)—universities intensified the promotion of that freedom. In 1673, Spinoza was invited to Heidelberg with the assurance that he would be given "the most ample liberty to philosophize," provided this liberty would not be "abused to disturb the religion publicly established." He declined the invitation largely on account of the latter proviso. Before the century was over, in 1694, the University of Halle was founded with a view to rejecting the principle *cuius regio, eius universitas*. Although that university had to labor to remain independent of Pietist and royal influences, as was evident in the dismissal of Christian Wolff, a staunch advocate of academic freedom, its courageous faculty attacked the Aristotelian concept of science based on deductions from principles. A new concept of science, based upon observation, experience, experiment, and mathematical equations, came into being. Research was put on a par with teaching. New disciplines were discovered. Laboratories, institutes, clinics, and seminars were introduced. In this process of change, the University of Göttingen, founded in 1737 to promote academic freedom, played a major role. One hundred years later, seven of its professors (the famous *Göttinger Sieben*), led by the liberal F. C. Dahlmann and including the brothers Grimm, stood up for freedom under the constitution. Their dismissal by the king in 1837 outraged liberals throughout Germany. As a result, the National Assembly of Frankfurt, counting among its members most of the dismissed professors, provided in section 152 of its draft for a German constitution that "science and its teaching are free." The same text can be found in section 20 of the Prussian constitution of 1850. These provisions reflect the ideal of the University of Berlin, established in 1809. Its founders stressed that, aside from the self-administration of the university and its right to adjudicate matters within its jurisdiction, academic freedom implied the individualistic principle of free creative learning and teaching. Wilhelm von Humboldt had been the author of *Ideas to an Attempt to Determine the Limits of State Activity*, a study which attacked enlightened absolutism. Favoring "total individuality," he felt
that this aim could best be achieved in a university which served the "pure idea of science." Academic freedom had reached a dimension to which not much could be added.

The individualistic nature of academic freedom makes its existence in authoritarian communities tenuous. This has been obvious throughout its history, showing oppressions by the rulers of church and state, claims to academic freedom by individuals and universities, and the final guarantee of that freedom by the authorities. While up to the nineteenth century academic freedom increased, the twentieth century has witnessed growing infringements by totalitarian regimes.

This is not surprising. Whereas it is conceivable that at some future date the truth will have been discovered and be represented by a totalitarian government, our civilization has not yet reached that stage. No existing regime can claim to represent the truth. Governments making such a claim must be telling a lie. Consequently, they must be afraid of and opposed to a freedom which is to expose the lie. If totalitarians would admit that they are opposed to the truth, the discussion could end. Such an admission is improbable however, because it would call their legitimacy into question. Hitler's statement, "The bigger the lie the better," while it was an ominous forecast of things to come, expressed a political design to come to power rather than an admission that his regime would be one of the big lie. Totalitarian regimes maintain that they represent the truth and pay homage to their version of the truth, acting as their own judges.

Naturally, totalitarians must be afraid of the scientists, the priests of the truth, and must fight academic freedom. Academic freedom, being the freedom to discover the truth, presupposes that the truth has not been discovered. It must contest the "truths" or ideologies of existing regimes and provoke these regimes to counter-measures. Modern totalitarian regimes, under which Weltanschauungen have become new state religions, extended the principle of the peace of Augsburg, cuius regio, eius religio, into the principle, cuius regio, eius universitas. As institutions pursuing the rational search after truth, universities came under attack. Whereas they became separate islands in which scien-

artists retained a greater degree of autonomy than ordinary citizens, they became politicized at the cost of academic freedom.

This was evident under the Hitler regime which made plain that its ideology in large measure was based upon belief. It is evident in today’s totalitarian nations. Stalin is reputed to have said: “We are confronted by a fortress. The name of this fortress is science with its innumerable branches. Youth must take this fortress, if it wishes to build a new life, if it wishes to replace the old guard.” 26 He undermined the universities by stressing the scientific character of communism. While the communist regime made certain concessions to academic freedom, it still emphasized that “discussion of any scientific problem should be based above all on the Leninist principle of the party nature of science and scholarship, and participants in a discussion must approach the solution of all disputes from a position of Marxist-Leninist methodology, the only scientific basis for cognition of the objective world. Fruitful discussion can be based only on the Marxist outlook.” 27

On reading this, one tends to agree that “no state intolerant of any restriction on its power for fear of the consequences of a pure search for truth, will ever allow a genuine university to exist.” 28 In other words, “the university is unassimilable, because of its function, a function of profound significance for the political order: the search for truth. Those who are dedicated to it, and to the extent that they are, will of necessity withdraw from the battle cries of the market place into the quiet laboratory and library, there to reexamine the assumptions upon which the actions of rulers and their helpers are based.” 29 In totalitarian regimes, the general absence of external academic freedom must be made up by an extra assertion of internal academic freedom. While oppression is as little the father of all things as war, it is perhaps in the face of oppression that an unwavering loyalty to the truth can best be proved. Perhaps only under conditions of hardship can the individual show his willingness to bring sacrifices to the truth. Perhaps only then can the scientist prove his courage to make material sacrifices in order not to make intellectual sacrifices. Perhaps only then can he demonstrate that for the truth he would jeopardize not only his earnings but also his physical liberty—and even his life. Perhaps only then can he illustrate his determination to be the martyr

28 Jaspers, Idea of the University, 121.
29 Friedrich, Man and his Government, 633.
Nietzsche hoped he would be as a servant of *humanitas*. Perhaps only in the face of adversity can the scholar become a saint.

What has been said about the position of the University in totalitarian communities is relevant to its position in democratic communities. That Western democracies acknowledge academic freedom should not blind us to the possibility that democratic communities can hurt the University. This is evident in the case of democratic totalitarianism. Because its function is to search for truth, the University must be "unassimilable," not only in the totalitarian dictatorships described but in any kind of dictatorship, including that of the majority. Whereas I am reluctant to agree with Hitler and Stalin that their regimes were more democratic than Western counterparts, it is not unlikely that both men generally executed the will of the majority. Since there is no basic difference between the oppression potential of the majorities that supported Hitler and Stalin and majorities that exist in Western democracies (the latter are, in view of the constant support for certain types of legislation, not as "temporary" as is often believed), majority rule in Western democracies can be ideological and oppressive. Consequently, a university "committed" to totalitarian democracy must be as dubious as one committed to other forms of totalitarianism, especially if its commitment implies a reluctance to question democratic tenets. The University cannot be committed to refrain from questioning, for questioning is indispensable to its function. Just as the idea of the university was realized by questioning dogmas such as "the voice of the church is the voice of God" and "the voice of the king is the voice of God," it must now be realized by questioning the dogma that the voice of the people is the voice of God.

The evil of democratic despotism must not let us ignore the potential evil of constitutional democracy, small though it may be. The tension between constitutional democracy and universities seldom is evident. It usually is subtle. But it is this very lack of evidence, this very subtlety, that requires us to be on our guard. What constitutional democracy might be unable, or not want, to achieve through the force of law, it might try to bring about through moral pressure. The "phantom public" might attempt to prevail upon the University. The University must resist such pressures, camouflaged and inveigling as they may be. I must be as "unassimilable" in a free society as in an unfree one. The University's sole commitment must be to the truth.

The obligation of the University not to be committed ideologically is stronger under free governments than under authoritarian ones because the former generally guarantee a greater degree of academic
freedom, which puts greater obligations upon those enjoying it. The “commitment” of the University under totalitarian regimes can be compared to a mutilation, even a murder, of the University by the public power. The University is a victim, although often an innocent victim. Under a free government, an ideological commitment of the University by those who run it is less excusable. It is like self-mutilation or suicide. In the former case, academic freedom is trampled upon by the authorities outside the University; in the latter, it is disregarded and abused by the members of the University themselves. Academic citizens commit the most sinful of academic sins when, instead of complementing external academic freedom by a vigorous assertion of internal academic freedom, they neglect the latter and make the former meaningless. The moral responsibility of scholars and scientists is greater under free governments than under authoritarian ones. When scholars and scientists refrain from asserting academic freedom in the face of governmental oppression, they only miss becoming saints. When they voluntarily render academic freedom meaningless, they become traitors.

It follows that the emphases these days upon the University’s obligation to “public service” and “community service” is detrimental to the idea of the university unless such service promotes the rational exploration of the truth. The University is neither a trade school nor a community center. To the degree that a university becomes a “community school,” it loses its quality as a university. The disastrous results of “committing” a university to public service are evident in the Free University of Berlin and in Columbia University.

The Free University was founded as an antithesis to the unfree university in East Berlin. Unfortunately, its founders went beyond establishing a university for the sake of freedom. Attributing the absence of academic freedom in the University of East Berlin to the absence of democracy under the Ulbricht regime, they believed that democracy was a prerequisite for, and perhaps the only guarantee of, freedom. They committed the new university not merely to freedom but to democratic freedom. In contrast to Wilhelm von Humboldt, for whom freedom meant the freedom to doubt everything, they believed that democracy was beyond doubt. This belief was reflected in the constituent act in which students, faculty, and the government of Berlin participated. It was reflected in the university’s charter which provided for the government of the university by students and faculty. However, a free university serving democracy is a contradiction in terms unless democracy is unequivocally committed to the exploration of the truth. While democracy may serve the truth better than other
forms of government, it is not doing so by definition. Aside from being harmful to the truth, democracy also can be detrimental to freedom, especially if it degenerates into absolute democracy. Soon, the Free University’s commitment to democracy became its undoing. The parity among veritas, libertas, and justititia, indicated on the university’s coat of arms, became shaken beyond the intentions of even the most democratic of its founders. Democratic justice came to overshadow truth and liberty. Not surprising in view of the fact that social democrats had been predominant in the founding of the Free University, the left-wingers within the university became stronger and stronger. Organized in groups such as “Communes” and the Socialist German Student League (SDS), they attempted to further democratize the Free University, to engage it increasingly in the service of social democracy, and to make it more community-conscious. Their plans made one wonder whether they wanted to communize the university in spite of their denunciations of the Communist regimes in East Germany and Russia. Carrying red flags, they used terror and violence and truncated the Free University.

Terror and violence under red flags also mutilated Columbia University. While not founded with the idea of serving democracy, that university became the victim of the democratic trend toward social democracy, of attempts to make it serve the community. The rioters put their community-consciousness above the idea of the university. They blamed Columbia for promoting research and analysis relating to national defense and domestic riot control. In their opinion, such research was detrimental to a world community without imperialism, a community desired by themselves and by antiwar demonstrators. Specifically, they attacked Columbia’s plan to build a gymnasium in a park located between the university and Harlem, maintaining that the university was encroaching on the negro community, although the park belonged as little to Harlem as it did to Columbia, the gymnasium was to occupy only two out of the park’s thirty acres, and the land for the construction of the gymnasium had been leased to the university by the City of New York.

University commitment to community beliefs is a disservice not only to the University but also to the community. Since today no world, national, state, or local community knows the whole truth, subordination of the University to any community must delay the enlightenment of the community and the blessings that come with it. It must be kept in mind that the best service to the community is the furtherance of the truth—not that what according to public opinion is good for the community is necessarily true but that only what is true
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is necessarily good for the community. What people think is good for the community must not be the guiding principle of the University, for only respect for the immanently guiding principle of the University—the search for the truth—can be good for the people.

In view of the basic differences between modern universities and democracies, making universities serve the wishes of democratic communities must mean subordinating an educated, liberty-promoting elite to less educated, equality-possessed common men and denying the latter education and emancipation. It amounts to subordinating trends toward order to trends toward anarchy, to depriving communities of stabilizing factors. It means subordinating institutions in which reason prevails to the masses in which emotions run higher and depriving the masses of a chance to become more reasonable. It amounts to subordinating clarity to confusion and to depriving communities of the light that could let them see the truth and move into clarity.

A University serves a community best if it refrains from catering to the temporary wishes of men and instead aids the long-range aim of humanity to make humans humane by showing them the way to truth. Born of the humane quest for the truth, the University’s mission is to serve humanity through the pursuit of the truth. Since that pursuit is a matter of the human brain, it can be undertaken by individuals only. Consequently, the best service the University can render to the community is to emphasize the freedom of the individual to search for the truth irrespective of community desires. Against the self-contradictory democratic triune, liberté, égalité, fraternité, a triune which resulted in the increasing deterioration of liberty, I would pit, as an antidote to the mysticism that surrounds the number four with most primitive communities, the clear scientific quaternion, universitas, libertas, veritas, humanitas.