

1920 – A Caesura in Social Theory?*

WILLIAM OUTHWAITE**

University of Newcastle

Abstract: The centenary of Max Weber's death raises the question of the wider significance of 1920 as marking a break in the history of social theory. This essay focuses on Germany and Austria, where the political break with the past was particularly sharp and the discontinuities in the social and intellectual configuration of the social sciences were most obvious. Three trends are particularly striking: the development of neo-Marxist social theory with György Lukács and Karl Korsch and the later emergence of critical theory, the polarisation between neo-positivism and interpretive sociology, and the consolidation of the sociology of knowledge.

Keywords: Max Weber, Germany, social theory, generations

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Introduction

The centenary of the death of Max Weber suggests some reflections on whether that year has a wider significance in the history of 20th-century social theory. As for Weber himself, it is worth recalling that his brother Alfred, only four years younger, survived until 1958. He resigned from his chair at Heidelberg in 1933 and went into internal emigration, helping to re-establish the university after 1945. In 1954 he was unsuccessful in his candidacy against the incumbent, Theodor Heuss, for the federal presidency. We can only speculate what Max Weber might have done if he had seen more of the 20th century.¹ Less close to socialism than Alfred (who joined the SPD after the Second World War) but more outspoken, we may assume that he would have had to choose emigration. And there was sadly only one of the Weber brothers for most of the Weimar Republic.

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** Direct all correspondence to: William Outhwaite, University of Newcastle, e-mail: William.Outhwaite@newcastle.ac.uk.

¹ As one of his biographers, Joachim Radkau [2008: 335], wrote in a bad-tempered reply to a review symposium, 'Just as the pious Christian asks "What would Jesus say?", the Weberian cannot help asking "What would Max Weber say?"'.

The coming of the republic, formally inaugurated less than a year before Max Weber's death,² was however a sharp caesura in Germany. Oskar Schlemmer, admittedly not the soberest of commentators, declared in a 1923 retrospective: 'The crisis of the time was also a crisis of the mind. A cult of the unconscious, the uninterpretable, an inclination to mysticism and sectarianism arose from the search for ultimate facts, which threatened to lose their meaning in a world of doubt and division.'³ This suggests that we might look in Germany rather than, say, France (where the Durkheimian tradition persisted) or the US for an impact on social theory.⁴

Although the consequences for science in Germany were far less dramatic than in 1933, 1945, or 1990, there was a substantial generational shift among sociologists,⁵ with Alfred Weber's generation of those born around the middle of the previous century, the generation of Ferdinand Tönnies (1855–1936) and Werner Sombart (1863–1941), replenished by a new generation from the later part of the century, the 'war generation' [Peukert 1991: 16]: figures such as Karl Mannheim (1893–1947), Max Horkheimer (1895–1973), Hans Freyer (1887–1969), Emil Lederer (1882–1939), and Alfred Schütz in Austria (1899–1959). Dirk Käsler [1984: 43] provides a fuller list of names for the period 1909–1934, with a 'core' made up of Franz Oppenheimer, Sombart, Tönnies, Max Weber, and Leopold von Wiese, an 'inner circle' including Max Adler, Hans Freyer, Hans Kelsen, Mannheim, Max Scheler, Georg Simmel, Othmar Spann, Ernst Troeltsch, Alfred Vierkandt, and Alfred Weber, an 'outer circle' including Carl Grünberg, the founding Director of the Institut für Sozialforschung, and Robert Michels, as well as a number of less socialist-inclined figures, and, on the 'periphery', Theodor Geiger, Max Horkheimer, and a number of others.

This generational divide was cut across by a more political one between conservative or, in Fritz Ringer's terminology, 'orthodox' mandarins, who saw the regime change in national and academic politics as a defeat, and those he terms 'modernist' or, more cautiously, 'accommodationist' – those who accepted the new republican institutions, at least conditionally. These 'Vernunftrepublikaner', as one of their number, the historian Friedrich Meinecke, called them, republicans of the head rather than the heart [Ringer 1969: 203], included Tönnies,

² Weber participated very actively in the last two years of his life and the first two of the post-imperial era, both in active political discussions and in his writing. He died just a week after the election ending the 'Weimar Coalition' of DDP and SPD, which is sometimes held to mark the beginning of the end, or of the Republic's slide to the right.

³ 'Manifest zur Bauhaus-Ausstellung 1923', cited in Ulrich Linse [2019: 20, n.13]. An article on the crisis in sociology by Kurt Singer [1920] is however rather silent about the social context.

⁴ The new state of Czechoslovakia would of course be another place to look; here, the political success of Tomáš G. Masaryk and Edvard Beneš removed them from active work in sociology. For a characteristically illuminating and judicious reflection on national traditions in sociology, see Wagner [2004].

⁵ On the earlier generational divide in the early 1870s, see Turner [1986: 3–5].

Alfred Weber, and the legal scholar Gustav Radbruch (1878–1949).⁶ Sombart, professor since 1917 in Berlin, was already beginning his trajectory from socialism to what became national socialism. Carl Schmitt's critique of Weimar constitutionalism [Schmitt (1922) 2005, (1923) 1985, (1927) 2014, (1928) 2008] gradually developed into a full-blown defence of dictatorship. In the liberal camp, the theologian and historian of religion Ernst Troeltsch (1865–1923) traced the emergence of this counter-current to the revolution, which was one element of the polarisation of Weimar: 'The academic class...has become more and more conservative, monarchistic, and nationalistic...' (*Spektator-Briefe*, p. 90; quoted by Ringer [1969: 206]). The liberal-conservative sociologist René König, who was a student in the late 1920s, contrasted the quiet provincial milieu of the pre-war academic with the hectic and chaotic twenties: 'Whereas before the 1914 war a scholar could work off [abreagieren] his distaste for modernity thoroughly and comprehensively in the peace of academic provincialism, in 1918 he found himself suddenly plunged in a witches' cauldron in which there were no longer any provincial refuges, in which inflation remorselessly ate away his last financial reserves, while there broke out spontaneously around him an almost raging lust for life.' [König 1971: 22]

Austin Harrington [2016] has convincingly argued that Ringer, Jürgen Habermas [1987], Wolf Lepenies [2006], and others have overstated the pathologies of Weimar's intellectual political culture. As Klaus Eder [1985] had pointed out in relation to the earlier period, the problem was not so much the *weakness* of German liberalism but the *strength* of its competitors and opponents.

Where Ringer suggests the possibility that the language of 'idealism' had something to do with this, a more obvious explanation might be that, as Mannheim brilliantly documented in *Das konservative Denken* (1925) and *Ideologie und Utopie* [(1929a) 1936], social polarisation is conducive to totalising explanations of ideology and other social processes.⁷ Harrington [2016: 2] concludes that 'by the close of the nineteenth century through to the revolutionary years of the Weimar Republic, intellectual life in Germany sees the genesis of movements with an unparalleled alertness to facts of the relativity, contingency and fragility of knowledge-claims in European world-pictures.' Ringer [1969: 240] had indeed remarked: 'It has always struck me as particularly interesting that so many of the great debunking analysts of modern culture have been German or Austrian, not English or French'. At the same time, however, Harrington [2016: 70] suggests that 'a shortcoming of Ringer's, Habermas's and Lepenies's narratives...was to infer too much from the preceding fifty years of German history and unduly to downplay the impact of the caesura of the war and its consequences'.

⁶ The term however understates the republican commitment of some of these figures [Harrington 2016: 94].

⁷ Mannheim's habilitation in Heidelberg in 1925 was opposed by the literary scholar Ernst Robert Curtius; Harrington [2016: 130] suggests that he may have felt threatened by Mannheim's analysis of conservatism. There was also strong opposition to Mannheim's appointment to his Frankfurt chair in 1930.

Sociology benefited from political support in the new state, with Carl Heinrich Becker seeing it as a valuable resource for extending interdisciplinary research and teaching.⁸ Although other educational reforms rather fizzled out over the years, sociology was able to consolidate its position, notably in the newly founded universities of Frankfurt, Cologne, and Hamburg. To outline the extent and nature of the intellectual break represented by 1918 and the years which followed would require a much fuller study than I can attempt in this brief essay. As well as the *Kölner Zeitschrift*, founded in 1921 by von Wiese [Moebius 2017], other relevant sources in the academic and publicistic literature would be *Die Gesellschaft*, edited by the Marxist socialist Rudolf Hilferding, and the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, edited by the Austro-Marxist Lederer.⁹ The *Archiv* included in the early 1920s Walter Benjamin on violence (Gewalt), two articles by Lederer on the labour movement and his pioneering work on white-collar workers, several essays by Michels, and one each by Tönnies (on the concept of progress), Geiger, the jurist Schmitt and Mannheim (on historicism). Other topics covered included Bolshevism, German nationalism, US imperialism, and the rise of fascism in Italy.

How far there was a change of direction, reflecting the change of regime and a new political culture, is hard to assess from a limited range of such material, but Harrington [Harrington 2016: 89] cites a number of references in the period to an 'axial' turn. Spengler's 1918 book, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, enjoyed enormous success after the war and Karl Kraus in Vienna wrote ironically of 'Untergangster'. In the history of philosophy Herbert Schnädelbach [1983: 15–16] also confidently describes the Weimar period as a new epoch. 'Under the Weimar Republic many things came to an end and there was a change of direction, recognizable even in philosophy, in that the great controversies which provide the framework for our current discussions all go back to those years.' It can however also be argued that the changes of the 1920s were already underway before the First World War, and that they merely became more obvious after it [König 1971: 14; see also Lepsius 1987].

Three trends in social theory

In social theory, one can, I think, identify three main trends: the emergence of neo-Marxism, the polarisation between empiricist and interpretive approaches, and the sociology of knowledge. In all three cases, Schnädelbach's image of path-

⁸ A liberal-oriented *Hochschule für Politik* to match those of the socialist and conservative parties was also established in 1920, with Meinecke, Sombart (not yet on the hard right, despite his highly ambiguous attitude to Jews) and Troeltsch teaching in its first year. [Lehnert 1989: 445]

⁹ There are historical accounts of the *Archiv* by Factor [1988] and Lenger [2018].

setting is appropriate, since, as with Nietzsche a generation earlier, their main impact was not felt until near the end of their leading protagonists' lives: 1947 for Mannheim, 1959 for Schütz, and 1971 for the Hungarian Marxist György Lukács. There was a similar lag in the reputation of the historical sociologist and theorist of 'figurational sociology', Norbert Elias (1897–1990), who had been Mannheim's assistant in Frankfurt and whose importance was only properly recognised after the publication in English in 1969 of the first volume of his major work, *The Civilising Process*, which had first been published in 1939. Elias's longevity enabled him to enjoy two decades of prominence after his retirement from Leicester University in 1962.

Already in 1929, Mannheim argued that the institutional recognition of sociology in the 1920s was a belated response to the achievements of the previous generation, and in particular to the work of 'Max Weber, Ernst Troeltsch and Max Scheler (to name here only those already dead) ...'. This work, taken as a whole, 'surpasses at a stroke the level of Western sociology' and provides a legacy to be developed further.¹⁰ Mannheim [(1929b) 433 n.3] stressed in a footnote his own indebtedness to these figures. Lukács also clearly saw himself as developing an approach originating with Marx and Hegel, which was later strikingly illustrated in the discovery of Marx's Paris Manuscripts of 1844, as well as inspiring critical theory.

Lukács, in exile since the fall in 1919 of the short-lived communist government in Hungary, published in 1920 the first of the essays which make up his *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* of 1923. In Perry Anderson's terms, this was unquestionably the source of what he called 'Western Marxism', with its base more in the academy than in the 'unity of theory and practice' typical of the earlier generation of Marxist activist theorists. Lukács is an anomalous figure in this contrast, since it was only the force of circumstances which excluded him, for most of his life, from a more active role. His essays published in 1920 attracted criticism from his Heidelberg friend Max Weber, though his mediation between Marx and Weber in his concept of reification shaped a whole current of neo-Marxist and even post-Marxist thought.¹¹ *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* was also unwelcome to communist orthodoxy. As Kostas Axelos wrote in his 1959 preface to the French translation, the book was for a long time excluded from both history and class consciousness: '*Histoire et conscience de classe, une des pièces maîtresses de la pensée marxiste du XXe siècle, se faisait expulser de l'histoire et de la conscience,*

¹⁰ Mannheim, 'Zur Problematik der Soziologie in Deutschland', reprinted in Meja and Stehr [1982: 427].

¹¹ See, for example, Rose [1978]. Gillian Rose's Oxford PhD dissertation [Rose 1976] was on the concept of reification, arguably the central concept of western Marxism. In a striking instance of Popperian falsification she demolished the widespread misconception that Marx had used the term: it appears once, but only in the posthumously edited volume 3 of *Capital*.

sans avoir aucune prise sur la classe (prolétarienne).¹² Korsch, whose *Marxismus und Philosophie* [1923] was published in the same year as *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein*, was expelled from the communist party in 1926 but very active in German politics until 1933.

For Schütz, an academic career was a remote prospect for 'racial' as well as personal reasons. Richard Grathoff [1995: 19n.] cites a letter from J. Herbert Furth pointing out that, of a large number of subsequently famous young scholars from Vienna, all the non-Jews attained academic posts and all the Jews (including Schütz, Felix Kaufmann, Fritz Machlup, the Indologist Moriz Winternitz and the historian Friedrich Engel-Janosi) had to work in other spheres. Some time later, Schütz, who was already planning his emigration to the United States, turned down an offer from Edmund Husserl in 1937 to become his assistant [Grathoff 1995: 22; see also Fleck 2011: 141].

Schütz's earlier and initially unpublished work, of which the most substantial is the 1927 text 'Lebensformen'¹³ und 'Sinnstrukturen', drew largely on Bergson; it was not until the publication of Husserl's *Vorlesungen über das innere Zeitbewusstsein* that he realised his importance for his own work [Grathoff 1995: 20–21]. Already in these early sketches, however, one can see the main direction of his intellectual project. In an outline that the editor of Schütz's Bergsonian manuscripts, Ilja Šrubař, labelled as Entwurf C, Schütz wrote that 'philosophy in the last half century has done nothing for the human sciences' (Geisteswissenschaften).¹⁴ Distancing himself from neo-Kantian and Husserlian approaches and from the attempt to apply natural scientific methods to the social world, Schütz refers to Bergson, Scheler, and Max Weber and calls for the examination of 'pre-scientific material of life as a totality' [Schütz 1981: 326]¹⁵ Another text, written in 1925, provides a fuller account. One possible approach aims to produce observational sentences, but another, wholly distinct approach is 'to bring a series of phenomena into an intelligible (verstehbare) connection', which interprets the world as an experience (Erlebnis) and can also justifiably 'claim to be a science' [Schütz 1981: 209].

It was Schütz's radicalisation of Max Weber's conception of interpretive sociology which came much later to mark one pole of the emergence of 'two sociologies' [Dawe 1970, 1978]¹⁶. The other pole was the incorporation of the logi-

¹² http://classiques.uqac.ca/classiques/Lukacs_gyorgy_bis/histoire_conscience_de_classe/histoire_conscience_de_classe_preface.html

¹³ The term *Lebensform*, now often associated with the Ludwig Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations*, posthumously published in 1953, was in fact introduced much earlier, in 1914, by the philosopher and psychologist Eduard Spranger in his very popular book *Lebensformen* [1919] (translated as *Types of Men*, by M. Niemeyer in 1928). There is however no relation between the meanings given by him and Schütz to the term.

¹⁴ Ludwig Gumplowicz [1905: 355] had been similarly negative about philosophy.

¹⁵ Schütz was impressed by reports of Weber's lectures in Vienna when he returned there from military service [Wagner 1983: 14].

¹⁶ Dawe, writing before the English-language publication of Schütz's *The Phenomenology*

cal empiricism of the Vienna Circle and its equivalent in Berlin into a model of positivist social research and theory, with the verification principle modulating into a broader conception of the formation and testing of hypotheses. From this perspective, as Otto Neurath (1882–1945) put it, *Verstehen* might be useful for the social scientist, but no more so than a good cup of coffee [Neurath and Cohen 1973: 357]. This approach became the dominant one in social science, with German-language logical empiricism blending with related approaches already present in America.

The third major strand, Karl Mannheim's sociology of knowledge, also emerged around 1920. In 1918 Mannheim was already lecturing on the topic of his doctoral dissertation and what became his 'structural analysis of epistemology'; the paper with that title was published in Hungarian in 1918 and in German in 1922. Here, although the reference points feeding into epistemology are internal to philosophy (psychological, logical, and ontological), one can already see the focus on presuppositions and perspectives which is central to his sociology of knowledge. In a 1924 essay on 'Historicism' he refers to philosophies 'being constantly constructed anew from still more *comprehensive new centres* in such a way that the old insights are incorporated in the new and invested with new significance' [Mannheim (1923) 1952: 90]. His essays on *Weltanschauung* (1923), *Historicism* (1924) and on the sociology of knowledge (1925) were followed by his habilitation dissertation on conservative thought (1927) and his major work *Ideology and Utopia* [Mannheim (1929a) 1936]. Max Scheler was working simultaneously in the same area, with an essay on *Weltanschauung* of 1922 and *Die Wissensformen und die Gesellschaft* in 1926.¹⁷ Mannheim was, however, keen to stress the difference between his approach and Scheler's, writing rather dismissively of his 'grandiose systematic sketch, full of profound intuitions but lacking in a clear, practicable method of investigation suited to a sociologically oriented, cultural science'.¹⁸ The sociology of knowledge was not new: Wilhelm Jerusalem had addressed the topic in 1909 [Jerusalem 1909] and was in contact with another strand of the sociology of knowledge which was initiated by Émile Durkheim, who established a section of the *Année sociologique* on 'the social conditions of knowledge' in response to Jerusalem's article [Huebner 2013: 441; see also Lukes 1973; Schmaus 1994]. It was, however, Mannheim's version which defined the developing field and attracted a good proportion of the hostility attaching to sociol-

of the Social World, framed the question slightly differently as the opposition between a sociology of social control and one of social action. Max Weber of course anticipated this theme in his reference, in his 'Objectivity' essay, to two versions of economics: 'as a despairing Viennese examination candidate complained'. Sombart went one better with his 1930 book *Die drei Nationalökonomien*, and Ralf Dahrendorf [1960] referred to 'three sociologies' in a review of Helmut Schelsky's *Ortsbestimmung der deutschen Soziologie* [Schelsky 1959].

¹⁷ Scheler is also of course an important figure in philosophical anthropology [see also Plessner 1928; Honneth and Joas 1988].

¹⁸ 'The Sociology of Knowledge', reprinted in Mannheim [(1929a) 1936: 279].

ogy more generally in Weimar Germany [Meja and Stehr 1990; see also Meja and Stehr 1982]. We can only guess how this would have played out in the absence of the catastrophe of 1933. As Mannheim put it prophetically in 1929, 'For the moment we do not wish to be martyrs' [Mannheim (1929b) 433].

The years around 1920, then, in the German-speaking world, can be seen to have set up a number of theoretical currents which eventually shaped the social theory of the last third of the 20th century, often blending together into new forms, as well as sharpening oppositions between them.¹⁹ The revival of interest in Marxism in the West led to a corresponding rediscovery of classical sociological theory and the canonisation of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim (and eventually Simmel) as founding fathers. While the Weber and Durkheim industries developed independently of each other, there were also synthetic moves by Giddens [1971] and others to bring out their interrelations. This diverse Western Marxism blended with system theory, emerging out of the functionalism of the 1920s, both in West Germany and in North America, and later with the economicistic strand of rational choice theory. Schütz's approach, enduringly (mis)labelled phenomenological sociology, blended for many sociologists with Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics, despite substantial conflicts between their more partisan supporters, and fed into the critical theory of Karl-Otto Apel and Habermas (1967) and the contemporaneous presentation by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) of their Schützian theory of social construction as a sociology of (everyday) knowledge.

All this suggests some conclusions about the temporalities of social theory. In the mid-20th century, the dominant features were the delay caused by the war and, much more importantly, the contribution of the intellectual diaspora from fascist Europe [Fleck 2011]. European thinkers who had established their careers in the 1920s had to re-establish or even reinvent themselves in alien environments. Theodor W. Adorno, for example, described his difficulty in dumbing down ('zurückschrauben') his work on Husserl into terms intelligible to his Oxford colleagues, who however appreciated his piano-playing and his taste in wine [Müller-Doohm 2005: 193].

Mannheim's evolution is one of the most striking. Securing his Frankfurt chair over substantial opposition in 1930, mostly from a conservative direction (though his approach was also criticised by the critical theorists), he was rapidly forced to flee (along with a third of Frankfurt faculty) into a second exile, without even time to return his borrowed library books [Woldring 1986: 37]. On his arrival in England, having proposed an ambitious research project to the Rockefeller Foundation (which may also have been designed to support colleagues who had also found refuge there), he seems to have reoriented his work in more practical and applied directions, while remaining committed to broader theoretical and

¹⁹ A similar argument can be made for philosophy [see Eilenberger 2018].

historical perspectives. He wrote in 1943 to the director of the Institute of Education at the University of London, Frederick Clarke, of the danger that 'there will be only ad-hoc sociologies' [Woldring 1986: 54].

Perry Anderson, in an article in *New Left Review*, suggested that, of the English-speaking countries, the United States received the more progressive exiles and the United Kingdom those who were less so.

A process of natural selection occurred, in which those intellectuals with an elective affinity to English modes of thought and political outlook gravitated here. Those refugees who did not, went elsewhere...It is perhaps significant that no important Germans did so, with the brief exception of Mannheim who had little impact. The German emigration...avoided this island. The Frankfurt School of Marxists, Marcuse, Adorno, Benjamin, Horkheimer, and Fromm went to France and then to the USA. Neumann and Reich (initially to Norway) followed. Lukács went to Russia. Brecht went to Scandinavia and then to America, followed by Mann. This was a 'Red' emigration, utterly unlike that which arrived here. It did not opt for England, because of a basic cultural and political incompatibility. [Anderson 1968: 18]

This provocative claim was undoubtedly overstated, and Thomas Mann would be surprised to find himself described as part of a red wave, but it remains true that the diversity of academic and other opportunities in the United States made it a promising site for the exiles.

What, we may ask, would have happened to European sociology in the absence of the twin catastrophes of 1933 in Germany and 1938 in Austria and Czechoslovakia? One of the boldest suggestions was that made by Wolf Lepenies, following Käsler [1984] and König [1971]:

Looking back on the 1920s and the early years of the 1930s, we cannot today be in any doubt that with Karl Mannheim there opened up in Germany the hope of a new orientation and stabilization for sociology that was brought to nothing by the victory of National Socialism. Dirk Käsler and René König have convincingly demonstrated that Mannheim appeared to be called to overcome the stagnation which the discipline was caught in and to become the 'social "leader" of a sociology oriented towards social science'. [Lepenies 2006: 320–321]

Even in England, *pace* Anderson, Mannheim was beginning to have quite an impact on intellectual life by the time of his early death [Lepenies 2006: 328–333]. For Käsler [1984: 41–42], the importance of Mannheim was that, like Max Weber, he represented a 'specifically social scientific sociology' in the face of a polarisation of German sociology between a natural scientific model on the one hand, and a culturalistic approach on the other, the latter often tending towards 'ideological elements with a potential for political misuse'. Käsler [1984: 12] argues that German sociology, though institutionally quite robust, suffered from a 'search for

respectability' which meant that the response of its leading representatives to the rise to power of national socialism was 'theoretical and practical hopelessness or even susceptibility'.²⁰ One must probably also recognise that the Weimar period did not produce any work of comparable importance to that of the previous generation, though I think that Helmut Schelsky [1959] and Uta Gerhardt [2001] are rather too negative. Schelsky [1959: 37] notoriously claimed that by 1933 the main themes of German sociology were already played out, while skating over his own role as a young Nazi scholar. Gerhardt [2001: 394], in a later generation, also argues that '[t]he decline of sociological reflection in the Weimar period – compared with the life work of Simmel and Weber – was evident'. Heinz-Jürgen Dahme and Otthein Rammstedt [1984], by contrast, merely accentuate the positive legacy of the German and French classics.

Conclusion

This brief sketch suggests some reflections on the temporalities of social theory and of scholarship more generally. I referred earlier to the delayed impact of the work of many, perhaps the majority, of the thinkers discussed here. Marx and Nietzsche, the two thinkers whom Max Weber cited as major influences, are early examples. Marx in his lifetime was not seen, except in limited circles, as a major *theorist*; Nietzsche's reputation soared only during his period of incapacity and after his death. 'Reinventing the wheel' is also frequent: a theory is reinvented or rediscovered after a significant lapse of time. The sociology of knowledge is one example, with Wilhelm Jerusalem's work taken up more than a decade afterwards; the idea of the social construction of reality, formulated by Berger and Luckmann [1966], really took off much later with the vogue of postmodernism and was reinvented by John Searle [1995]. It was in fact Jerusalem who formulated the idea of what he called *soziale Verdichtung* (social condensation), the gradual reinforcement of beliefs and memories [Huebner 2013: 436]. There is a parallel with the phenomenon of scandal, in which, typically, something which

²⁰ See also Lukács [1946]. König, who emigrated to Switzerland and the UK, was similarly negative: 'Some decided in favour of national socialism, others against it, and history passed by all of them.' [König 1971: 33]. On the reinsertion of former Nazi sociologists such as Schelsky and Freyer, see, for example, Kruse [1994]. It is perhaps worth recalling that Geiger, appointed to a chair at Braunschweig in 1928, successfully blocked a proposal to appoint Hitler to a chair in 'organic social theory and politics' in one of many attempts to secure his naturalisation in Germany. (See, for example, his draft contract <http://www.vernetztes-gedaechtnis.de/dienstver.htm> and a cartoon depicting Hitler's 'inaugural lecture' from the socialist paper *Vorwärts*: <http://www.vernetztes-gedaechtnis.de/karika.htm>) A social democrat, Geiger emigrated to Denmark in 1933 and saw out the war in Sweden, representing Scandinavia in the founding of the International Sociological Association [Möbius 2017: 13].

has long been known to exist, such as police violence against ethnic minorities or the abuse of a dominant position in sexual abuse, comes to be thematised and addressed, as in Black Lives Matter and #metoo. Max Weber wrote of the way in which all scholars must know that their work will be superseded; the other side of the coin is that parts of it, like his, may be rediscovered and constantly re-evaluated in the further development of social and political theory.

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