Werner Jaeger

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Werner Jaeger held the chairs of Friedrich Nietzsche, Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, and Paul Shorey. A University Professorship, above all departments and requiring small teaching and no administrative obligations, was created for him at Harvard University. He enjoyed the finest education available in the history of classical studies. He founded two journals and what Eduard Spranger first called "The Third Humanism." He published widely in the fields of Greek education and philosophy and the Greek church fathers. He stressed Christianity as the continuation of Hellenism rather than its destroyer. His students included men of the rank of Richard Harder, Viktor Pöschl, and Wolfgang Schadewaldt. Today what was acclaimed as his most famous work is read only by dilettantes too naïve to perceive its defects. The Third Humanism has become a passing fashion, an aberration of the dying Weimar Republic, of as little abiding influence as its rival, the George Circle. His name is rarely cited in footnotes of the learned. Modern students of his own subject no longer recognize his name. Who was this man? What did he do? Why is he forgotten? Is there a permanent achievement?

Werner Wilhelm Jaeger was born 30 July 1888 to Karl August Jaeger and Helene, née Birschel, in the small town of Lobberich in the lower Rheinland near the Dutch border. He lived the first twenty-one years of his life there. We know almost nothing of this crucial formative period and he is our only source. He was an only child. His father, like his grandfathers, held a managerial post in a local textile factory. Jaeger's background was small-town and petit-bourgeois. It was also Protestant, not pious, but the Protestantism of the Enlightenment. This made his family distinctive, for Lobberich was overwhelmingly Catholic. The Protestant boy attended the Catholic Thomas à Kempis Gymnasium (today the Werner Jaeger Gymnasium), but was forbidden to play with Catholic boys. He watched the Bishop of Münster visit his

diocese, followed by the faithful peasantry on foot and horseback. Every house displayed the red-and-white church flag. One was a Catholic first, a Prussian second. The pattern of life and thought remained late medieval and ecclesiastical. The powerful Christian impact of the Lobberich years eroded but was never obliterated.

Precocious and intelligent, with no close friends among his contemporaries, young Jaeger was always in the company of doting adults, the darling of parents and grandparents, and without a rival, either at home or at school. As a result, when he had grown to manhood, he found he could never abide a rival. He early learned to get his way by wheedling, for a child has no other way. The legacy was that throughout his life he lacked a strong moral sense and easily resorted to flattery. This led to accommodation with National Socialism and a loose way with women. In addition, his teaching never really agreed with the man.

"The start of my own work was History," he wrote. Growing up where Belgium, Germany and Holland meet, hearing low German, Dutch, Flemish, and French early gave him an idea of Europe. Round about him were the walls, castles, and churches of the Middle Ages and the roads and excavated forts of Rome. He enjoyed the inestimable advantage of beginning Latin at age nine and Greek at age thirteen. Latin never seemed a foreign language to him and he spoke and wrote easily what he called the "lingua angelorum." He first learned Greek the better to understand Rome and saw Greece through the eyes of Cicero and Horace. He had nothing like the intellectual conversion that Wilamowitz experienced at Schulpforte. The teaching must have been uninspired and by rote. He told me once that the Rector ordered his pupils to memorize the names of Horace's friends. When the boy Jaeger asked why, the Rector snapped, "When you are as old as I am, you will know why." Jaeger continued, "I am older than he was and I still do not know why." Such stupid mechanical drill must have provided an impulse in later years for his missionary zeal in restoring life to the classics.

Poor teaching caused him to read widely on his own. When he wrote a paper on the foolish theme, "What would have happened if Alexander had marched West?," he astounded his teachers by citing the Alexander historians in Greek. At age sixteen he read privately Wilamowitz's *Griechisches Lesebuch* and his edition with introduction and commentary of Euripides' *Herakles*. "I became from far away a student of Wilamowitz. . . . A new world opened up for me." The stupendous erudition, the mastery of Greek, and the colorful depiction of Greek life stood in starkest contrast to the pale epigoni of the great period of German idealism and the philology of the first half of the nineteenth century. He learned the universality of his field by reading August Böckh's *Enzyklopädie und Methodenlehre der philologischen Wissenschaften*. In summer-semester 1907 Jaeger, age eighteen, matriculated at the University of Marburg. He could later write of his school years: "I always sought to perceive the intellectual in its connection with the reality of Greek life and Greek history. There the original, existential motive for my life operated." He had learned two difficult ancient languages well, had read far beyond the normal schoolboy's need in them, and already was a convinced historist.

Jaeger was only one semester at Marburg. It was long enough. A conversion took place there. He described it himself over fifty years later: "In my first semester at the University of Marburg, I came into close contact with philosophy which there, in the neo-Kantian school of Cohen and Natorp and under the influence of the logical insights gained from it, had turned to the study of Plato. Plato, interpreted in the neo-Kantian sense, was the very center of the intellectual life of the university—no small matter for a young man who was looking for a guide and who cherished the idea of an antiquity that was alive. This influence turned me definitively toward Greek philosophy" (*Essays*, 29). Here for the first time men of intelligence were taking an ancient author, Plato, seriously, as a guide for living, rather than a collection of syntactical peculiarities. Jaeger saw suddenly, after the arid apprenticeship of school, that his adored Greeks possessed "obvious philosophical relevance." Ironically the Marburg semester, although philosophical in its effect, intensified his philological proclivities, because the interpretation of Plato that he was given conflicted "with my historical-philological sense." This provocative misunderstanding of Plato made him an historian of ideas or, as he expressed it, turned him to *Geistesgeschichte*, not remote and antiquarian but vital and of central importance. "Quae philosophia fuit, philologia facta est." Seneca's epigram describes Jaeger at Marburg.

In the Prussia of 1907 the center of philological research was certainly not Marburg and was no longer Bonn. Usener had died in 1905. Buecheler had retired in 1906. Berlin, since the appointment of Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff in 1897 by Friedrich Althoff, had become the center of philological science in Europe. Four Berlin scholars molded Jaeger's approach to Greek literature and thought. The aged Johannes Vahlen, who still lectured in Latin, continued the narrow word philology he had learned from Friedrich Ritschl in Bonn over fifty years before. Jaeger heard his lectures and benefited from the severe discipline of his seminar for two semesters. Vahlen taught him to beware brilliant conjectures and to study the linguistic usage of an author with microscopic attention. Often a conjecture is unnecessary if only the difficult passage is correctly understood. Vahlen braked the young student's impetuosity; and Jaeger to his credit remembered what he owed Vahlen's method, while Wilamowitz contrarily was often impatient with him. Jaeger was able to share in a continuing seminar concerned with readings in Aristotle held by the lively octogenarian, Adolf Lasson, "the last Hegelian," who had heard Böckh and Lachmann and had known the learned schoolmaster, August Meineke, personally. Already Jaeger was alert to tradition. Lasson taught with fiery passion and wit. He continued the exegetical method of Trendelenburg and Bonitz. On Friday evenings he met advanced students (Jaeger was by far the youngest) in his house. There they read together select problematical Aristotelian texts. Lasson read to understand the thought, as opposed to Vahlen, who wished to understand only the word. Jaeger sought to combine the best of both.

But the two great figures remained the *dioskouroi*, Hermann Diels and Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff. The content of Jaeger's later work recalls often Diels's interests: Aristotelian philology and chronology, presocratic thought, and Greek

medicine. His dissertation, later expanded into the book that made his reputation, was directed by Diels and colored by Vahlen's method. But it was Diels *per libros non vir* that influenced him. The *Doxographi Graeci* and *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, volume I of which had appeared shortly before Jaeger's arrival in Berlin, provided a scientific foundation, along with his monographs on Parmenides and Heraclitus, for the transmission, authenticity, and therefore interpretation of preserved fragments of the presocratic philosophers. The edition in twenty-eight volumes of the *Commentaria in Aristotelem*, edited by Diels and younger colleagues, provided invaluable early material for the elucidation as well as variant renderings necessary for any scientific reconstruction of Aristotle's texts. Jaeger owned the set and continually cited it in publications and lectures. Of the man he reports that he did not attend his lectures Über die Ethik des Aristoteles and that Diels lacked any inner affinity (*innere Wahlverwandschaft*) for Plato. Jaeger would become something like an enlightened Christian Platonist and often called *Paideia* "a road to Plato." Diels's lack of interest in Plato was a defect. There is a further reason. "Papa Diels," with his long snowy beard, was a productive, thoroughly honest, hardworking scholar to whom we can only be grateful. As a man he was uninteresting; as a lecturer, dull. In later life Jaeger spoke as often of Wilamowitz as he was silent about Diels. The Berlin letters (after 1897) of Diels to Wilamowitz are loyal, correct, thoroughly to the point and eminently forgettable. The modest son of a railroad employee never had the personality of the confident Junker from east of the Elbe. Wilamowitz was field marshal, actor, prima donna. Jaeger wanted to be all three. And Wilamowitz was a Platonist: "*Fidem profiteor platonicam.*"

Jaeger had read Wilamowitz at school. At Marburg he encountered his oldest student, who was also the son-in-law of Vahlen, Ernst Maaß, who suggested that he read Belger's life of Moriz Haupt. At Berlin in the winter-semester of 1907–1908 he met the man whom he would call "master" and to whom after his death he would offer *Heroenkult*. Wilamowitz lectured with brilliance on expansive topics. In that semester: the history of Greek literature in the Attic period; next semester: exegesis of his Greek reader, a title that belies the importance of his theme;, in the following semesters: the cultural history of antiquity since Nero, introduction to philology, the epic poetry of the Greeks and the Romans, Hellenistic poetry. Seminars held concurrently with the lectures were devoted to the great authors or subjects: Thucydides, Sophocles, Horace, Plato, Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia*, Menander. Years later Jaeger described the lecturer to Americans: "He was an actor, a brilliant *conferencier*, a spectacular figure, enthusiastic, with a high tinny voice that snapped when touched by pathos."

Schadewaldt detects three abiding characteristics that Jaeger's work owed Wilamowitz: 1) expert acquaintance with texts and manuscripts that early turned him into a brilliant textual critic, emendator, and editor; 2) the conviction that *Geistesgeschichte* must be built on concrete examples; 3) the conviction that *Philosophiegeschichte* cannot be pursued in isolation but as part of what Jaeger's student, Harald Patzer, called Wilamowitz's *Totalitätsideal*, itself a legacy from Friedrich Gottlieb Welcker and

Otto Jahn. I should add three others to these: 1) the preference for great writers and little patience with the second-rate, whom he gratefully left to others; 2) the conviction, itself Platonic, that the teacher is more important than the research scholar; 3) the unshakeable conviction that what he was doing was not a luxury but of supreme urgency. Jaeger became more than a student. A friendship began. He soon attended regularly the Wednesday evening at-homes at Eichenallee 12, where Wilamowitz met informally with gifted students. The preserved correspondence between the two (1911–1928) chronicles the rise and fall of the friendship.

The twenty-two-year-old's dissertation, *Studien zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Metaphysik des Aristoteles*, appeared in 1912. This was expanded in 1923 to *Aristoteles: Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung*. The impact was immediate and dominated the interpretation and historical criticism of Aristotle for half a century. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the Scottish Hellenist Lewis Campbell discovered that Plato's increasing avoidance of hiatus in his prose, an avoidance owed to Isocrates, provided a convincing criterion for establishing the relative chronology of his dialogues. Jaeger, after reconstructing Aristotle's earliest work, the lost *Protreptikos*, noticed its strong Platonic coloring in form and content. He went on to argue that the missing criterion for the relative chronology of Aristotle's esoteric works is his progressive distancing from his master, Plato. Necessary for this insight was his stress on the origin of the Aristotelian corpus as lecture notes (the Hegelian parallel may have given him the idea) and the need to explicate them in terms of genre as well as content. After a stay in Italy devoted to manuscripts, in 1914 he submitted his Habilitation on the church father, Nemesius of Emesa, and his indebtedness to Poseidonius. As the book concerned authors out of the classical mainstream, it never enjoyed the influence of the dissertation.

Before leaving the crucial formative years, I should note what Jaeger did not study. I know no testimony that he ever attended lectures on archaeology or on ancient history (Eduard Meyer!). Archaeologists dealt with objects and not with ideas, which are nobler. History, as Aristotle tells us in the *Poetics*, deals with the particular; poetry (one might add philosophy) with the universal. Historians were bound to use their sources for lesser ends than the philologist. Part of this aversion to *Realien* is the fact that Jaeger spent his *Wanderjahre* in libraries rather than museums and, unlike Wilamowitz, never visited Greece until old age and then largely to receive an honorary degree from the University of Athens. His idea of Greece could only be damaged by the reality. He told me on his return to Cambridge that, while driving him to Delphi, his chauffeur offered by a small detour to show him the crossroads where Oedipus slew Laius. " 'No!' I said to him. 'Drive on!' " This is symptomatic of the vagueness and excessive abstraction that historians find in *Paideia*. Arnaldo Momigliano wrote of the book: "But this historiography, with its scant grip on reality, bears the mark of an epoch of political dissolution. . . . That this historiography could degenerate into Nazism was a danger, which was confirmed by some of Jaeger's pupils who had remained in Germany."

Jaeger was never *assistent* and only briefly *dozent*. Between dissertation and habilitation he presumably survived on stipendia and maternal support. In the epochal year 1914, he habilitated (inaugural lecture at Berlin 14 June 1914), married Theodora Dammholz (28 March 1914), and at the age of twenty-six accepted the chair of Friedrich Nietzsche at Basel. He never fought for his country, so his influential discussion of Homeric military heroism in *Paideia* I is all secondhand. He was only a year at Basel and had neither influence nor doctoral students. His inaugural oration, *Philologie und Historie*, is programmatic and, seen in retrospect, anticipates the Third Humanism. He accepted an *Ordinariat* at Kiel in 1915, where Wilamowitz had advised his appointment. There he became a colleague of Eduard Fraenkel and Felix Jacoby and there he found his first and loyal disciple, Richard Harder. The shattering experience of World War I, the trauma of being on the defeated side, and the attendant collapse of everything, convinced him of the rare value of continuity and tradition. He was an eyewitness of the November Revolution at Kiel (3 November 1918). His letter to Wilamowitz of 24 July 1917 already reveals his awakening. It is a document of fundamental biographical importance. Jaeger writes: "From week to week this war tears more deeply apart the foundations upon which until now my life was built and accordingly, because I am a young man, the more existentially and painfully I must endure and struggle with these problems, the less aware I am of anything at all about me that is solid and so I lapse all the more into silence. Doubt about everything that had become second nature to me from childhood has sometimes so brutally overmastered the initial momentum of my rather shy attempts at flight that even my philological work suffers."

Schadewaldt wrote of his teacher: "Intellectual continuities were for him what really constituted history and also what turned its changes into rational changes. For most men the fact that something persists and stays is scarcely worth notice. One takes it for granted and it requires no explanation. For Werner Jaeger the fact that in the passage of time there was any continuity at all was a marvel. The alertness to tradition had been there since boyhood. The November Revolution transformed a tendency into an obsession."

Jaeger always saw Christianity as a culmination of the Hellenic tradition rather than a rejection of it. He could never understand Tatian. On the wall of Jaeger's Harvard office hung two icons, a portrait of the aged Wilamowitz and another of one whom as a young philologist I did not recognize. It was the church historian Adolf Harnack. Jaeger saw the two great men united in himself. He was never Harnack's student at Berlin nor did Harnack turn Jaeger to Gregory. Wilamowitz vigorously maintained, in the *Kirchenväterkommission* against Harnack—who preferred theologians—that a trained classical philologist was more competent to edit a Greek church father. Hence Schwartz's Eusebius and Jaeger's Gregory of Nyssa. In a letter accompanying the first copy to Wilamowitz, dated 8 March 1921, he writes: "You are entitled to the first: you summoned me to the task when after my doctoral examination I stood for the first time without any idea of what to do and you added an important dimension to my philological education. You loyally advised me during

composition and proof reading; and you placed your vast philological experience at my service. That way you often preserved me from error or set me in new directions." Four days later Jaeger was offered the Berlin chair. He could do things on time. Ironically, the endless project that in his lifetime seemed to classicists so remote, even unnecessary, may well prove his most enduring contribution. Early Christian texts, like Byzantine ones, had lagged far behind their classical counterparts in accuracy and scientific reporting of manuscript evidence. Believers usually make poor editors and often knowledge of a pagan source can determine the true reading, knowledge that a theologian usually lacks. Jaeger later discovered that the preparation of a minor work of Gregory appealed to American doctoral students, who wanted something concrete with a clear beginning and end—a text, not ideas. E. K. Rand, his Harvard colleague, dealt with Servius, not always happily, in the same way. The Kiel years had prepared the teacher and orator, provided the psychic impetus for *Paideia*, and initiated the Gregory. But Jaeger was too great for Kiel.

Wilamowitz was forced by new and unwelcome legislation to retire from his Berlin chair in 1921. This was a blessing for posterity, because it freed him for research and the last period of great creativity. By exceptionally good luck, Jaeger, who was fourth on the list, secured the post. Eduard Schwartz (aet. 63) and Hans von Arnim (aet. 62) were named by the faculty *honoris causa* and expectedly passed over by the Ministry because of their age. The Minister of Higher Education, the Orientalist Carl Becker, could not have approved their politics. Franz Boll (aet. 54) was asked but unexpectedly declined to stay at Heidelberg. That left Jaeger, who accepted immediately. For years, as proven by his letters, he had shamelessly flattered Wilamowitz. Here was the reward. He was entirely apolitical and, unlike Wilamowitz, had no difficulty in accommodating the Weimar liberal, Becker. The Jaegers lived at Kaiser Wilhelm Straße 11 in Steglitz. In spring 1927 his later Harvard colleague, J. H. Finley, visited him. He reports:

> In the Berlin years he and the tall, beautiful first Mrs. Jaeger . . . with their two sons and a daughter inhabited a square, high-ceilinged, mansard-roofed, tree-surrounded house in the suburb Steglitz. Its resemblence to certain houses on older back-streets of Cambridge suggests that German tastes accompanied German academic standards to Mr. Eliot's Harvard. I was kindly included in a Sunday-afternoon party for students which nobly stretched from tea to well past dinner. The others all wore frock coats; I thought myself lucky in a fairly new blue serge suit.

There was a garden where roses grew. Wilamowitz visited them in 1926 and transmitted to his wife "a description of your castle . . . which impressed me enormously." There is a hint of irony. Jaeger's wife was rich.

Except for *Paideia* I in 1934, the fifteen Berlin years yielded no great publication. The reason was that Jaeger put first things first. A thirty-three-year-old from provincial Kiel had succeeded the greatest Greek scholar of modern times, in the most prestigious chair of the subject in the world. For the first ten years of Jaeger's

professorship, Wilamowitz was very much there. He taught a full schedule. He regularly visited the department that he had founded in the University's west wing, which he had built. He directed dissertations. He served tirelessly in the Academy and the German Archaeological Institute. Although deprived of his vote upon retirement, Wilamowitz regularly attended faculty meetings. Jaeger told me that members, as in the Roman Senate, were asked their opinion in order of seniority. Wilamowitz would rise, say No emphatically, and no one dared oppose him as he watched the vote. Jaeger either could become dispensable or he must prove his independence even if the cost was that Wilamowitz would think him disloyal. Of course he chose the latter and paid the expected price. Rather than compete vainly with Wilamowitz in research, he emphasized what age had made unwelcome or difficult for the septuagenarian. Jaeger excelled in three areas: charismatic teaching; work within the profession among colleagues and schoolmasters; popularization of his subject on a national scale. As part of this effort he founded for his students a monograph series, *Neue philologische Untersuchungen*, where they could publish dissertations written under him. For the guild he founded a journal devoted to scholarly reviews of high quality. He appointed his Kiel student, Richard Harder, managing editor of *Gnomon*. For pastoral work among the educated laity he founded *Die Antike*. Only *Gnomon* survived World War II. *Antike und Abendland* (*mutatis mutandis*) continues *Die Antike* in Western Germany; *Das Altertum* continues in the German Democratic Republic.

Just the fact that he was so young made him less remote to students. He was an older brother, not a grandfather. There was room for change. Since 1918 there had been impatience with the traditional unquestioning reverence for all things Hellenic. The brutality of the war and the devastation of defeat had destroyed illusions. The unspoken assumption of historicism that the innate excellence of antiquity justified the attention lavished by a nation's most brilliant men no longer went unchallenged. Paul Friedländer states the dilemma in a moving letter of 4 July 1921 to his teacher Wilamowitz:

> The war has changed me a great deal; and I could not, like other men, start in again in 1919 where I had broken off in 1914. For me now things must have far higher demands. Also I should not like to say anything any more that is not finished and of importance. I do not want to write any more notes and articles simply because chance has cast something in my path. I do not want to "share in the debate": that is, to make an observation as C because A and B have made observations . . . and as to editing texts: I do not have the strength, my life is simply too short, to edit what is peripheral simply for the sake of editing it . . . So you see, here are all sorts of inhibitions. But I find it good that these inhibitions are there.

Because of his naïveté and self-assurance Jaeger lacked the self-doubt of the Berlin Jew and war veteran, Friedländer. A return to Hellenism had revitalized Europe twice before, in the Renaissance and the age of Goethe. Why not a Third Humanism with Jaeger as Erasmus and Berlin as Weimar? His energy, his organizational skill, his

ability to delegate work to others (students called him "our unmoved mover"), and his flair for showmanship worked wonders. There were endless speeches, meetings of schoolmasters and colleagues, scholarly conferences led by Jaeger with speeches by the faithful. The most famous he held at Naumburg Whitsuntide 1930, a colloquium on the spacious theme of "Antiquity and the Problem of the Classical." There were eight addresses by men like Johannes Stroux, Wolfgang Schadewaldt, Paul Friedländer, Eduard Fraenkel, Bernhard Schweitzer, and Matthias Gelzer. Teubner hastened to publish the addresses in a handsome volume. Wilamowitz thundered from Berlin: "Whenever I read *Die Antike*, a millwheel goes round and round in my head; but the wheel does not grind any meal; for me it does not. . . . I have an idea what classical Physics are, and classical music also exists. But other than these? English literature is rich enough. Does one find the classic there? Is Shakespeare classic? . . . I have never been able to make a start with the word classic which for me is a horror; and so I do not expect that others do."

The movement was well-meant. Jaeger wanted to preserve an endangered civilizing tradition that he believed irreplaceable. The catchword was *paideia*, the Greek word that Cicero translated as *humanitas* (*puerilitas* was not possible) and that meant both culture and its transmission, that is, education. The word provided the title of what Jaeger often called his "three-volume history of the Greek mind." Eduard Spranger early gave the movement its name in his address "The Position of the Humanities Today and the School," delivered at the Fifty-third Congress of German Philologists held at Jena on 27 September 1921. He said, "But a difference between our Humanism, which one might call the Third and that Second, lies in the breadth of our quest and the understanding which we moderns are able to bring to it." The friendly voice of a former believer, Wolfgang Schadewaldt, summarizes what Jaeger tried to do: "Jaeger's new humanistic approach is characterized by the fact that he set the Greek world of human values as a system of rationally working formative power into the history of Europe. It was, to state the matter epigrammatically, an historicizing of human values or as well a humanizing of our European history."

But there was something sham about it all. The time had passed when the values of Periclean Athens could be a formative educational force in Germany. In 1935, in a famous review of *Paideia* I, the Hamburg classical scholar, Bruno Snell, with wit and learning wrote the epitaph of a Third Humanism just fourteen years old. He showed how Jaeger was forced to interpret evidence (Homer is the obvious case) unhistorically in order to sustain his thesis that *paideia* provides the cornerstone on which to build an intellectual history of Greece. The educational function of poetry is a discovery of the Sophists, foreign to Homer. Snell corrects specific misinterpretations and then prophetically warns of the dangers of Jaegerian humanism. These he sees particularly in what Jaeger considered the superiority of his Third Humanism to the Second Humanism of Goethe and Humboldt; namely, its politicization. Greek political institutions cannot be exemplary in 1935 in the way that a Greek drama was circa 1800 for Goethe, a statue for Schadow, a building for Klenze. Jaeger misses the difference. Greek tolerance of slavery alone is decisive. Indeed, says Snell, Jaeger's

Greek politics easily boil down to heroism and Platonic authoritarianism. The vagueness of Jaeger's humanism allows it to become the servant of any kind of politics. That means it is always in danger of becoming a literary game (*Literatentum*). It was the *Dienstbarkeit* of Jaeger's politics, the readiness to serve any master, the preference for accommodation over reform, that made them unacceptable to Bruno Snell. At the risk of making his Greeks trivial, Snell prefers the revival of Wilamowitzian historicism to Jaeger's humanistic evangelism. We scholars can do no more than describe what was Greek truthfully and without presuppositions.

In 1980 Johannes Irmscher stated clearly the dangers only implied by Snell in 1935. "Many used to speak of the Third Humanism as the correlative in educational policy to the Third Reich's theoretical vision of the state." Obviously Jaeger did not devise nor Spranger name the movement for that purpose. On the other hand, Jaeger undeniably sought, albeit unsuccessfully, accommodation with National Socialism. Of the some seventy classical scholars who fled Nazi Germany, the Minister of Education in the Hitler government thanked Jaeger *alone* for his German work and granted him official permission to accept the Chicago post. A secret directive of the Hitler government in 1941 forbade critical mention of Jaeger in the German press. The same directive forbade posthumous mention of the seventy-fifth birthday of Eduard Norden, Jaeger's Jewish teacher and colleague. Jaeger never resigned from the Berlin Academy, which had expelled Norden and many others, and continued to publish in Nazi Germany as late as 1944 (*Paideia* II), after he had become a citizen of a country at war against Hitler! The document most often cited by scholars to prove Jaeger's early attempt to reconcile his Third Humanism with the Third Reich is "Die Erziehung des politischen Menschen und die Antike" ("Antiquity and the Education of the Political Man") (*Volk im Werden* 3 [Leipzig, 1933] 43–49). Jaeger argues that the classical curriculum in the schools could be presented in a manner supportive of the new system. He draws attention to the ideal of the Spartan citizen in Tyrtaeus, the prophetic strength of Solon's political poetry, the presentation of work as heroism by the peasant poet Hesiod ("Arbeit ist keine Schande; Nichtarbeiten ist Schande"—so much for welfare programs), and the Homeric "heroism of the defender of his fatherland" (Hector, presumably, rather than Achilles). The "fateful struggle" of tragedy would strike a welcome note and we climax with Thucydides' Pericles as a *Führergestalt*. History has granted to the classicists of Germany an urgent task: "The particular task which History today has set before the German people is the forming of the political human being. We ought not of course to demand from the schools and scholarship what has not earlier grown organically within the reality of national life. But at the moment when a new type of political man is taking shape, we shall obviously have need of antiquity, as a formative force."

Jaeger nowhere perverts his sources. He simply picks, chooses, and ignores to make a welcome point. But if one recalls Jaeger's immense prestige at the time, publication of such an article at such a time in such a place must have weakened considerably the hand of any decent schoolmaster who sought in the classics approval of the democracy just lost. Hitler had become Reichskanzler on 30 January 1933.

Jaeger's essay appeared a month later. The Association of German Classicists met in July. In 1933 the only high government official who dealt with classics in education was Bernhard Rust, a former student of the subject, later Reichsminister für Wissenschaft, Erziehung, und Volksbildung. At the urging of Rust, Jaeger, along with the chairman of the association, Kroymann, presented to the teachers of classics in Germany the program that the new government expected of them—that is, Jaeger, with all the prestige of his Berlin chair, agreed to act as mouthpiece to his profession for the new regime.

After a divorce from his first wife, whom he placed in a mental institution, Jaeger married his Jewish student, Ruth Heinitz, on 29 December 1931. A child followed. In 1934 Jaeger was Sather Professor at the University of California, Berkeley. His lectures were published in 1938 as *Demosthenes: The Origin and Growth of His Policy*. German and British scholarship of the time regularly extolled Alexander the Great at the expense of Demosthenes, an unscrupulous lawyer and *laudator temporis acti* obstinately refusing to acknowledge the reality of history and urging his fellow Athenians to a suicidal struggle against the inevitable. Jaeger rejected this view. He argued that the moral tragedy of the man Demosthenes was of greater interest than the political events of the time. By stressing a passage in the third *Philippic*, he sought to show that Demosthenes felt obliged to urge his fellow citizens to preserve the outmoded city-state against Macedonian expansion, although he feared the cause had already been lost. He did this because he was convinced that it was the only right course of action. To what degree was Jaeger's *Demosthenes*bild a self-portrait of his own predicament? One must defend humanism even if the cause had already been lost. Events moved rapidly. In 1936 Jaeger resigned the chair of Wilamowitz and accepted exile in Chicago, a city of gangsters and cattlemen, rather than divorce his wife and abandon his child. He immediately wrote an English article: "Greeks and Jews: The First Greek Records of Jewish Religion and Civilisation" (1936). What could not appear in *Volk im Werden* was eagerly accepted by the *Journal of Religion*. Jaeger was not an anti-Semite.

Ernst Bickel, the Bonn *ordinarius*, in 1943 called Jaeger in his Harvard period "the swan among geese." The swan left the Chicago geese, who had provided him and his family asylum, as soon as he could. In 1956 their bitterness still was undisguised. In 1939 he wisely declined the Laurence Professorship of Ancient Philosophy at Cambridge University (letter of F. M. Cornford to W. Jaeger 23 April 1939) and accepted the University Professorship at Harvard. He quickly learned that there were two great differences between Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Berlin, and expectedly accommodated. From the start he was denied any political influence of the sort he had wielded from his Berlin throne. E. K. Rand informed him on arrival that Americans expected Americans to run their departments. At a time when posts were few and those few allotted on the old-boy system, only women and priests, whose futures were secure, dared write dissertations with him. He could not place them. In over twenty years he had no student, in the sense of one whose dissertation he directed, who compared with his great German ones. Within the profession he went from leader to

outsider. The second difference Jaeger himself noted in his introduction to the *Scripta Minora*: "Without the continuing prestige of the ancient idea of Man in human culture, classical scholarship is just a waste of time. Anyone who does not see this ought to come to America and let himself learn from the way classical studies have developed there."

The history of Hellenism in America has yet to be written. In his epoch-making book, *Classica Americana: The Greek and Roman Heritage in the United States* (Detroit, 1984), Meyer Reinhold has meticulously documented the formative influence of the classical heritage in the colonial, revolutionary, and early republican periods. The populism, materialism, and attendant anti-intellectualism that accompanied the expanding frontier and the industrial revolution in nineteenth-century America relegated classics to a handful of underpaid professors of Greek, men not distinguished by a capacity to influence the great issues of their time. The middle twentieth century saw a revival of Greek influence on American literature and thought, not always directly but through three German thinkers, Freud, Marx, and Nietzsche. But in general Greek influence has remained in the architecture of banks, railroad stations, and plantation homes.

The classics Jaeger found at the Harvard of the thirties were a game of grammar and translation played by boys from good families who had graduated from pale American imitations of the great English public schools. No one dreamt of "believing" anything he read in an ancient author in the way Winckelmann, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Niebuhr, Wilamowitz, or Jaeger himself had. American classical scholarship derives historically from the German during its Ritschlian phase (that is, after K. O. Müller and before Wilamowitz), with its preference for the objective and technical (which too easily means the trivial and uninteresting), for what needs doing before what matters. Jaeger had no chance of influencing American thought the way he had briefly influenced German thought. Jaeger's last accommodation was resignation. Like Wilamowitz after 1921, he left the arena and wrote books: *Paideia*, three volumes in English translation (1939–1944); *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (1947); the Oxford critical edition of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (1957); *Scripta Minora*, two volumes (1960); *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* (1961). There was also volume after volume of the Gregory. Even so, much remained unwritten. He often called the footnotes of *Paideia* "the graveyard of projected monographs."

American students were colossally naïve. Recently a woman revealed in a national journal how, during written examinations, a friendly old man would give her and her friend chocolate cookies. This is what she remembered. He was a kindly eccentric, a man of stupendous learning and quaint ideas, harmless and liked from afar. He was sought after for doctoral examinations because he never expected American students to know anything and asked simple questions, often answering them himself. Again and again he lamented, "I have no school."

Americans did not think in terms of schools, of messiahs, apostles, and disciples. The reason was simple. The subject was not that important to them. American professors are dilettantes, Jaeger used to say, classicists from 9:00 to 5:00.

You must live your *paideia*! A *vox clamantis in deserto*—for them it was just a job, not a way of life.

Hildegard von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, in her memoirs of her father, recalls how, on his deathbed in September 1931, he delivered his final verdict on his student and successor, Werner Jaeger: "At that time Frau Jaeger came to my mother. He could not wait until my mother returned. When she brought the report of the divorce from Professor Jaeger, my father said: 'Up to now I have again and again defended him against all others. I see now; he is a bastard.' "

Dorothea Freifrau Hiller von Gaertringen said to me, "On his deathbed my father cursed Werner Jaeger." Not one member of the family attended Jaeger's memorial address to the Academy.

Wilamowitz condemned the man. Few could dispute him. He lacked moral conviction and inner courage, the assurance that he was right. This was in part the plight of his generation. The crisis of self-doubt that we saw in Friedländer necessarily brought an end to certainty. Why can't we sunder the work from the man? Wrong scholarship is forgotten. Right scholarship is absorbed—and then forgotten. Only in their conjectures do philologists win immortality. Jaeger's Oxford *Metaphysica* remains the standard text. Gregory has eclipsed all previous texts and provided a corpus of the genuine works and a paradigm for editions of other early Christian authors. Any history of Aristotelian scholarship in the twentieth century must evaluate Jaeger's contribution to the history of the corpus and the biography of the man. A brilliant idea, eloquently argued, led to a deeper historical understanding of the texts. Jaeger was an historian and philologist, never a philosopher.

What happened to the center of Jaeger's work during the Berlin years, "The Third Humanism"? It could not survive Bruno Snell and National Socialism. In one part of Jaeger's Germany, Marxism-Leninism replaced it; in the other part a revival of the historicism of Jaeger's teachers. In 1959 Jaeger denied ever having himself used the term, although in fact he had begun *Paideia I* with it. In America he won two influential apostles. His young Harvard colleague, John Huston Finley, Jr., learned from Jaeger that classics had something to say that mattered to young Harvard men of the forties and fifties. In a total break with his philological colleagues, most of them grammarians, paleographers, and exegetes, he delivered dazzling lectures on Greek literature in English translation to hundreds of undergraduates in the largest lecture hall of the university. He presented Homer as a text that could change our lives and won two generations of friends of classics in high places.

The other notable convert exerted a national, not a parochial, influence. Gilbert Highet, a naturalized Scot of boundless energy, translated all three volumes of *Paideia* into elegant English. That done, he began a popularization of the classics on a scale of which Jaeger never dreamed, introducing large lecture courses of classics in translation, writing endless articles and reviews for the popular press, lecturing tirelessly to schoolteachers and educated laity, and so on. But there was a striking difference from Jaeger. His message was not at all political; it was belletristic. Highet transformed into Anglo-Saxon terms Jaeger's profound conviction that clas-

sics had something to say to the modern world and he embodied this conviction in a comprehensive work that parallels but also productively contrasts with *Paideia*, *The Classical Tradition* (New York, 1949). Inspired by the failed Third Humanism, Highet returned to the apolitical Second Humanism with the result that while in 1936 several thousand American students read Homer in Greek annually, in 1986 several million read the poet annually in English, and the several thousand continue to read him in Greek. The beginnings of this vast popular movement owe much to Finley and Highet, who themselves had been ultimately inspired by Jaeger.

Within the profession, by his example and by his English books, which regularly cited German scholars, Jaeger did much to revive the German tradition that had dominated American philology from 1853 to 1914. This revival, in which Jaeger was aided by over thirty other refugees from Hitler's Germany, sought to rescue American scholarship from English dilettantism and return it to German scientific professionalism. The success of the von Humboldt stipendia and the emigration of outstanding German philologists to American universities are in part a result of Jaeger's revival of what Gildersleeve called our "Teutonomania." This transplantation of the Berlin humanistic tradition to the New World may not impossibly be Jaeger's most enduring achievement.

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The Jaeger papers are available at the Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Jaeger's professional library is part of the library of the Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington, D.C. A number of the books contain annotations.