

Chapter 2

The Winding Road to Logical Empiricism: Philosophers of Science and the Youth Movement



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2.1 A New Perspective on the History of Logical Empiricism

Many representatives of the Logical Empiricist movement in interwar Germany (organised into the Berlin Group and the Berlin Society for Empirical/Scientific Philosophy)¹ were active in the Youth Movement that preceded the period. This remarkable fact indicates important parallels in the early intellectual biographies of Logical Empiricism's subsequent membership. Thus, the examination of certain such biographies promises a new understanding of this philosophical movement. Rudolf Carnap, Hans Reichenbach, Kurt Grelling, Kurt Lewin, and Karl Korsch are the most prominent examples; from approximately 1910 onwards, all these individuals who would later become logical empiricists were active in the Youth Movement.² That a number of leading representatives of the logical empiricist movement played important roles in what Walter Laqueur referred to as “Young

¹ From the second half of the 1920s, the Berlin Group was a discussion group consisting of progressive, liberal, and/or left-oriented scholars from a variety of scientific disciplines. The Berlin Society for Empirical (later: Scientific) Philosophy addressed a wider public and organised lectures and seminars in addition to coediting the journal *Erkenntnis* with the Ernst Mach Association. See, for instance, Reichenbach 1936, Strauss 1963, Rescher 2006, Milkov 2013, and Sandner and Pape 2017.

² The term Logical Empiricism' was coined by the Finnish philosopher Eino Kaila and Otto Neurath (see Stadler 2011, n. 59). There are, however, other names for the same phenomenon, such as Logical Positivism' or Neo-Positivism.' In fact, 'there was no uniform use of these terms [i.e., Logical Empiricism' and Logical Positivism, 'G.S.] either among the members, opponents, or sympathisers of the Vienna Circle and the Berlin Group' (Uebel 2013, 87). Hans Reichenbach preferred the term Logistic Empiricism', and Karl Korsch was, strictly speaking, not a representative—or at least not a 'full member'—of the movement.

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Germany” (Laqueur 1984) does not suffice to demonstrate a programmatic coherence or even ideological continuity between the two movements. However, the fact does warrant a closer look.

The German Youth Movement was ‘no monolithic movement’ (Laqueur 2015, 28). Even political agents and groups that opposed one another could make use of its broad ideological reservoir. As various authors have suggested, the Youth Movement’s ideological spectrum ranged from left- to right-wing, from socialist to *völkisch*, and from religious to gymnastic groups. All of the movement’s participants envisaged an alternative society and political order that would allow young individuals to lead autonomous and independent lives while experiencing a strong sense of community. The Youth Movement included Christian, nationalist, socialist, and idealist groups, among them the “Bird of Passage” (*Wandervogel*) group, Scouts (*Pfadfinder*), the Free German Youth (*Freideutsche Jugend*), the Free Student Movement (*Freistudenten-Bewegung*), and many others.³ Was there common ground or a shared ideology among these different groups?

The question of the connection between the philosophical movement of Logical Empiricism and the Youth Movement in Germany and Austria affords an answer whose various facets structure this essay. First, the essay focuses on the German Youth Movement itself, its history, its programme, its worldview, and its ideology. Second, it presents similarities and differences between the Youth Movement in Germany and Austria, as both Berlin and Vienna were centres of the logical empiricist movement in continental Europe. Third, the essay discusses concrete examples of the Youth Movement’s effects on Logical Empiricism. What are the intellectual biographies, themes and ideological content, philosophical ideas, and approaches to the philosophy of science that could help clarify these possible connections?

2.2 The German Youth Movement

2.2.1 A Controversial History

In 1925, Elisabeth Busse-Wilson, a member of the Sera Circle (*Serakreis*),⁴ wrote a book-length history of the Youth Movement. Her book addressed a number of ideas and issues that were crucial to the movement’s development, such as social pedagogy and education, the question of generation, youth culture, socialism and communism, and anti-Semitism. Most importantly, Busse-Wilson was one of the very first representatives of the movement to recognise the importance of the question of

³Ahrens (2015, 27–47) provides an overview of the prewar history of the *Wandervogel* and *Pfadfinder* movements/groups.

⁴The Sera Circle was a branch of the Youth Movement led by publisher Eugen Diederichs (see sect. 2.4 in this essay, the contributions by Damböck and Werner in this volume, as well as Werner 2003, 275–307).

women.⁵ She critically examined the movement's relevance and its consequences. Yet despite her admiration for the movement's focus on freedom and autonomy, she saw no long-term effects.⁶

Until the 1960s, historical studies on and documentary accounts of the Youth Movement in German-speaking Europe were mostly written and/or published by the movement's (former) members.⁷ The authors of these publications often tried to downplay the movement's problematic aspects, such as German nationalism and anti-Semitism or the role it played in National Socialism.⁸ Obviously, the necessary distance between the authors and their subject was often missing.

German-Jewish intellectual Walter Laqueur (b. 1921) was one of the first historians from the "outside"⁹ to present an analytical study on the subject. In an intelligent and differentiated book from 1962, he coined the term 'Young Germany' (*Young Germany. A History of the German Youth Movement*). Laqueur analysed ideological traditions and influential representatives, discussed mainstream as well as peripheral ideas, and focused on problematic topics that were undoubtedly part of the Youth Movement's history, including anti-Semitism, anti-feminism, elitism, and hostility to democracy.¹⁰ The movement also included factions, however, that represented opposing, more progressive interests, including the fight against anti-Semitism, equal rights for men and women (including co-education), and the demand for democratisation.

In 1964, German author Harry Pross published a study that sought to address this wide ideological range. Pross provided many facts and observations without ignoring the many problems the movement posed.¹¹ Ten years later, in his pioneering and informative studies on the alternative ideological milieu, historian Ulrich Linse concentrated on the left wing of the German Youth Movement and life reform.¹² Decades later, in the early 1990s, Reinhard Preuß examined the liberal and partially

⁵For a critical approach to Busse-Wilson, see Großmann 2017.

⁶Busse-Wilson 1925, 8.

⁷See, for instance, Kindt (1963), Kindt (1968), and Kindt (1974). The publisher of Kindt's books was *Eugen Diederichs Verlag*, managed at the time of these publications by the sons of the legendary publisher. Werner Kindt is a particularly informative example. In 1934, he contributed the essay 'Kriegswandervogel und Nachkriegswandervogel' to the volume *Deutsche Jugend. 30 Jahre Geschichte einer Bewegung*, edited by the well-known Nazi author Will Vesper. The book's aim was to demonstrate a continuity between the German Youth Movement and National Socialism. Kindt was director of the *Pressestelle des Reichsbundes für Volkstum und Heimat* in National Socialist Germany. After 1945, he became one of the most active writers and documentarists of the history of the Youth Movement. See also the critical remarks in Ahrens 2015, 13–17.

⁸See Flitner 1968, 10–17.

⁹Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that Walter Laqueur was a member of two groups of the Jewish Youth Movement. See Laqueur 1995, 106.

¹⁰See Laqueur 1984, especially the sections on the war between the sexes (56–65) and the Jewish question (74–86).

¹¹See Pross 1964.

¹²See especially Linse 1974 and Linse 1981.

left-oriented wing of the Youth Movement.¹³ A number of open questions remain, and the Youth Movement continues to be a subject of critical investigation.¹⁴

2.2.2 *Youth Re-evaluated*

In its early stages, the Youth Movement was primarily a movement of high-school and university students.¹⁵ According to pedagogue Gustav Wyneken, the term youth' designates young people between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five years.¹⁶ At the turn of the century, a fundamental re-evaluation of the phenomenon of youth can be observed. Approximately 1900, the prefix youth-' was a nearly magical term that appeared in many different contexts. On the semantic level, it included not only temporal but also biological and, above all, aesthetic and political dimensions.¹⁷ Different political movements from both the left and right campaigned for a new appreciation of youth, and many reform movements and ideologies (e.g., life reform, return to nature, new forms of settlement, nudism, reform pedagogy) were included in this trend.¹⁸ Most of these movements viewed youth as an agent of change.

In her bestselling *The Century of the Child* (1900), famous reform pedagogue and women's activist Ellen Key insisted that the purity and innocence of childhood had to be protected from external threats. Adolescents (rather than children) who were adequately educated as children appeared as the saviours of a threatened human culture.

Higher birth rates, lower infant mortality, and longer periods of education resulted in what Austrian psychologist and Youth Movement activist Siegfried Bernfeld termed 'extended puberty' (*gestreckte Pubertät*).¹⁹ Bernfeld was referring to the concept of adolescence of American scholar Stanley Hall.²⁰ For the first time in the history of modern society, the bourgeois middle class came to perceive the transition between childhood and adulthood as a problematic period and the apparent the source of particular psychosocial issues. The temporal distance between puberty and marriage increased. While sexual maturity had begun a few years earlier in the nineteenth century, marriage now was delayed because of extended education.²¹ It was precisely this extended gap that marked the limits of the period of youth.

¹³ See Preuß 1991.

¹⁴ See, for instance, Stambolis and Reulecke 2013 and Stambolis 2015.

¹⁵ See Pross 1964, 12.

¹⁶ See Wyneken 1913.

¹⁷ See Brunotte 2004, 17.

¹⁸ See Dahlke 2008, 112–113.

¹⁹ See Bernfeld 2010, 139–160.

²⁰ See Hall 1904.

²¹ See Brunotte 2004, 17.

2.2.3 *The Wandervogel*

The *Wandervogel* was only one of the Youth Movement's many affiliated organisations, albeit one of the most important and influential. Karl Fischer, a teacher, founded the *Wandervogel* in 1896 in Steglitz (today a district of Berlin).²² The organisation's history, however, did not unfold along a straightforward course. In fact, the *Wandervogel* underwent many splits and reunifications in its history, the latter especially prevalent in 1912/13, but the Old *Wandervogel* (*Alt-Wandervogel*), a group that considered itself to represent the organisation's original idea, continued to be a separate entity.²³ Hiking, living in communities, emphasising nature, and singing folk songs were the group's central attitudes and activities. Its core ideology was education, specifically self-education, aimed at complementing and improving the traditional education of both the repressive school system and parenting.²⁴

The *Wandervogel* included high-school students but not university students. Additionally, it was a male-oriented movement that mostly excluded girls. However, there was also a *Mädchenwandervogel*.²⁵ Prior to the Great War, the question of girls (*Mädchenfrage*) and that of homosexuality were among the most important issues dividing the movement. One of the movement's most eccentric representatives was Hans Blüher (1888–1955), who was not only one of the first members of the *Wandervogel* but also one of its earliest historians. His three-volume history of the movement—first published in 1912—was extremely controversial and isolated him within the group.²⁶ By interpreting the *Wandervogel* as an 'erotic phenomenon' (Blüher 1912a, b, c) and advocating for homosexuality, Blüher elicited a strong rejection from a vast majority of *Wandervogel* members.²⁷ However, he remained influential within the movement. Blüher was also an anti-feminist. 'What is Anti-Feminism?' was the title of one of his essays, a question that he answered as follows: 'It is the will to achieve the immaculateness of male societies' ('Der Wille zur Reinheit der Männerbünde', Blüher 1915). Blüher was a contradictory thinker, and in any case, he was not only an anti-feminist but also an anti-Semite.²⁸

The reform pedagogue Gustav Wyneken (1875–1964) was probably both the Youth Movement's most important educational theoretician and its most important practitioner. His lectures and writings contested the educational authority of not

²² See Bias-Engels 1988.

²³ For examples of the conflicts in the history of the *Wandervogel*, see Bias-Engels 1988, 23–26.

²⁴ See Ahrens 2015, 29.

²⁵ See Busse-Wilson 1925, 93–103. For the controversial debate on the role of girls in the *Wandervogel*, see, for instance, Kindt 1968, 97–98, 139, 190–192.

²⁶ For more information on the controversy surrounding Blüher, see the documents in the Hans Blüher Papers, Sign. N 4, 13, Archiv der deutschen Jugendbewegung, Witzenhausen (Germany).

²⁷ One of the many polemics against Blüher was written by the leader of the Austrian *Wandervogel*. See Keil 1913.

²⁸ Nevertheless, in the debate surrounding his *Wandervogel* history, certain right-wing factions in the movement denounced Blüher as a Jew. See Wilker 1913, 48–50.

only parents but also schools. For Wyneken and his followers, youth meant purity, and this purity was threatened by the rules and regulations of civilisation and modern society. To shelter youth from these harmful outside influences, Wyneken established a free school community in the German village of Wickersdorf. This reformed school was free from traditional authority figures and encouraged young people's independence and autonomy. In this particular context, Wyneken coined the term 'youth culture' (*Jugendkultur*). He defined youth culture as a unity, a collective sensibility, a style, and a creative instinct.²⁹ While Wyneken appreciated that the *Wandervogel* movement provided an alternative model to the traditional family, he concluded that youth culture required more. It also required opposition to the existing school system.³⁰ With respect to his own project, he was convinced that the free school community had the ability to form and establish a new youth culture. A key term in Wyneken's booklet, which was based on a lecture he delivered to the pedagogical section of the Free Students of Munich, was the 'intrinsic value' (*Eigenwert*) of youth. This phenomenon was envisioned by Wyneken, but it was one that other educators, such as Hermann Lietz (1868–1919), did not share.³¹

According to the already noted study by Pross, the decisive representatives of the Youth Movement were not people such as Gustav Wyneken but rather younger ones, especially those born in the years following 1890. This is the first—albeit indirect—link between the Youth Movement and Logical Empiricism, for both of the later editors of the logical empiricist journal *Erkenntnis*, Hans Reichenbach and Rudolf Carnap, were born in 1891. Kurt Grelling and Karl Korsch were born in 1886, and Kurt Lewin was born in 1890.

2.2.4 Hans Reichenbach and the Wandervogel

Hans Reichenbach's involvement in the Youth Movement started with the *Wandervogel* before the war. As one of its Jewish members, Reichenbach participated in the movement's debates on anti-Semitism. A controversy on Jews and their possible exclusion had already commenced. The Austrian section of the *Wandervogel* introduced an Aryan paragraph in 1913, and at approximately the same time, the so-called Jewish crisis began in Germany.³² In 1913, Reichenbach elaborated in an article opposing anti-Semitism that polemicising against Jews was unacceptable for anyone who adhered to the Youth Movement's idea of community.³³ His article was

²⁹ 'Kultur ist eben eine Einheit, ein einheitliches Empfinden, ein Stil, ein gemeinsamer Instinkt, der sich schöpferisch äußert, und das verstehen wir auch unter Jugendkultur' (Wyneken 1913, 27).

³⁰ See Wyneken 1913, 12–13.

³¹ See Wyneken 1913, 14.

³² See Laqueur 1984, 42. For examples of aggressive anti-Semitism within the *Wandervogel* see, for instance, *Wandervogelführerzeitung*, Heft 11, October 1913. See also Winneken 1991.

³³ See Reichenbach 1913. The periodical's (*Berliner Börsen-Curier*) supplement included a number of contributions on anti-Semitism.

a reaction to the *völkisch* publication *Deutsch oder National!* edited by Wilhelm Fulda in 1914, which favoured the exclusion of Jews. For Reichenbach, it was shameful that his movement had published such a booklet. Although he was not the only opponent of anti-Semitism in the organisation, he clearly did not represent the majority.

2.2.5 From the Meißner Meeting to the War and Afterwards

The most important event in the history of the Youth Movement was the meeting at the *Hoher Meißner*, a mountain in Hesse, Germany, that occurred on 11 and 12 October 1913. The various groups that participated in the meeting were referred to with the umbrella term ‘Free German Youth’ (*Freideutsche Jugend*). At the event, the so-called Meißner formula was issued, and in the context of the meeting, a Festschrift was published. The brief formula was a crucial programmatic text of the Youth Movement. It stressed the Free German Youth’s destiny and responsibility, its authenticity, and its inner liberty. The text added that all future meetings would be nonalcoholic and tobacco-free.³⁴ Many well-established scholars were invited by Eugen Diederichs and Arthur Kracke, to contribute to the Festschrift, including Friedrich Jodl, Gustav Wyneken, Ludwig Klages, Alfred Weber, Paul Natorp, Leonard Nelson, and many others (approximately 30 in total).³⁵

The meeting was directed against the official festivities celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Nations in Leipzig.³⁶ Both Carnap and Reichenbach participated in the Meißner Meeting – Reichenbach as a representative of the Free Student Movement and Carnap as a member of the Sera Circle. The meeting sparked a controversial debate about youth, morality, and the destiny of youth in Wilhelmine Germany. This debate, however, did not continue for long. With large numbers of Youth Movement adherents joining in the euphoria of August 1914 and placing their other activities on hold, World War I was a caesura in the movement’s history. In the years after 1918/19, the Youth Movement lost its former relevance. In the words of Laqueur:

The *Wandervogel* had been a movement of reform and protest, but the society it hoped to reform and against which it protested—that of Wilhelmian Germany—had been swept away by war. Just as the *Wandervogel* would have been unthinkable fifty years before it

³⁴ In their monograph on the Hoher Meißner meeting, Winfried Mogge and Jürgen Reulecke 1988 include a facsimile of the Festschrift. The formula reads: ‘Die Freideutsche Jugend will aus eigener Bestimmung, vor eigener Verantwortung, mit innerer Wahrhaftigkeit ihr Leben gestalten. Für diese innere Freiheit tritt sie unter allen Umständen geschlossen ein. Zur gegenseitigen Verständigung werden Freideutsche Jugendtage abgehalten. Alle gemeinsamen Veranstaltungen der Freideutschen Jugend sind alkohol- und nikotinfrei’ (Mogge and Reulecke 1988, 52).

³⁵ See Kracke 1913.

³⁶ For Bias-Engels (1988, 143), the Meißnerfest was a ‘counter-event’ (*Gegenveranstaltung*) and a ‘counter-celebration’ (*Gegenfest*).

appeared, so it was itself out-of-date in the post-war Germany of inflation and permanent political crisis. The old romanticism, the songs with lute accompaniment, the mixed groups—in fact, everything in the old *Wandervogel* spirit—seemed totally out of place in this new Germany (Laqueur 1984, 129).

2.3 The Student Movement

2.3.1 *The Free Student Movement*

Many former members of the *Wandervogel* joined student groups on beginning their university studies. Most of these groups were so-called corporations with a strong German national and/or confessional Christian identity. However, there was also a group that had the objective of representing the students outside these corporations: the Free Students (*Freistudenten*), also called finches (*Finken*) or savages (*Wilde/Wildenschaft*).³⁷ It was this particular formation within the larger Youth Movement that appealed to the later philosophers of Logical Empiricism.

The Free Student Movement was established at the turn of the century, mainly centred at the Universities of Leipzig and Berlin but also at the Technical University of Charlottenburg (which was not part of Berlin at the time).³⁸ The Free Students fought for rights equal to those of the corporate students, whose ideology and rituals they rejected. The opposition to duelling, drinking rituals, social exclusiveness, and courts of honour was constitutive of the self-image of the Free Student Movement. Although the Free Students represented the non-incorporated students, they were far from being a homogeneous group. Their programme included contradictory ideological elements, and their political orientation ranged from national-liberal to social-liberal to social-democratic. Additionally, the movement was open to Jewish students, and it was one of the very few student movements that did not exclude women. Questions of women's rights and feminism were not only major issues in those days but also crucial themes in the Free Student Movement's debates.³⁹ Most Free Students supported the eligibility to study for women, while the student corporations rejected it.

In the summer of 1900, a nationwide association of the Free Student Movement was created. However, its development in Germany differed regionally, and not all Free Student groups became members of the German Free Student association.⁴⁰ Ideologically, the movement drew inspiration from the idea of community versus society. It stressed the importance of the community of teachers and students, which

³⁷ See Wipf 2004, 12.

³⁸ See Wipf 2004, 31.

³⁹ The Free Students of Charlottenburg, for instance, organised lectures by women's rights activists such as Alice Salomon, Lilly Braun, Marie-Elisabeth Lüders, Minna Cauer and Adele Schreiber. See Wipf 2004, 49.

⁴⁰ See Wipf 2004, 11.

was viewed as a community opposed to the capitalist exploitation of science. This exploitation, as the Free Students put it, was a typical element of modern society. In the worldview of the Free Student Movement, the agrarian, organic community stood against the modern and rational, individualistic society. Politically, this antagonism between community and society was ambivalent. It had not only a progressive but also a conservative meaning. The influence of Ferdinand Tönnies and his book *Community and Society* (1887) was obvious. Its second edition (1912) and later editions in the 1920s provoked much discussion. The antagonism was mostly interpreted in the form referred to above: The agrarian, organic community stood against the modern and rational, individualistic society.⁴¹ It is evident that the Free Student Movement's programme addressed not only university politics but also politics in general.

The movement had strong educational ambitions.⁴² One of the Free Students' core ideas was to transform society by means of scientifically oriented education. Humanism, self-, and co-education were among the programmatic cornerstones of the movement's educational vision. School revolution and the seizure (or at least equal distribution) of power in the universities were political catchwords. There were three main fields of interest: (1) the improvement of the social standard of living of students; (2) scientific events, such as lectures and seminars; and (3) educational activities for workers.⁴³ The Free Student activist Ernst Joël (1883–1929), for instance, focused on the social dimension of Free Student activity. Such activity included the organisation of courses and seminars for workers, the provision of legal assistance in juvenile courts and social help for students, and the development of educational, cultural and travel activities, including civic education and the promotion of a community spirit.⁴⁴

2.3.2 *The Great War*

Only a few Free Students were pacifists. The vast majority were enthusiastic regarding the war, especially at its outset.⁴⁵ Hans Reichenbach was among the movement's few pacifists. He rejected the militarisation of education and strictly opposed any form of nationalistic indoctrination.⁴⁶ Prior to the war, Reichenbach was a follower of Gustav Wyneken. In a public debate, he strongly opposed Leonard Nelson (1882–1927), who had identified the pedagogue Hermann Lietz as the leader of a new educational movement. For Reichenbach, none other than Wyneken could play

⁴¹ See Lichtblau 2012.

⁴² See Reichenbach 1978b, 122.

⁴³ See Harms 1909 and Wipf 2004, 49–50.

⁴⁴ See Joël 1913, 27.

⁴⁵ See Wipf 2004, 237, and Werner 2014.

⁴⁶ See Reichenbach 1914c.

this role. Whereas Reichenbach questioned Lietz's role as an educational leader, mathematician Hans Adolph Rademacher defended Nelson and his views.⁴⁷

Shortly afterwards, Reichenbach changed his view of Wyneken and criticised his booklet *The War and Youth* (*Der Krieg und die Jugend*, 1914).⁴⁸ This booklet was the written version of a lecture the educator had presented to the Free Students of Munich. Wyneken's booklet was an unmistakable justification of the war. Conversely, Reichenbach represented a nearly militant pacifist position within the Youth Movement as (not only) his letters to Wyneken show. In his view, the army represented the most restrictive form of community, one that left no room for individual freedom and autonomy. For him, a war produced nothing but apathy and madness ('Dumpfheit und Wahnsinn'). He was convinced it was the older generation that had brought war upon the youth and that the youth must reject it. It was clearly not *their* war.⁴⁹ Reichenbach was convinced that youth should fight against war as such and not against the perceived enemies of other nations. Wyneken, in contrast, made few concessions. He expected Reichenbach to admit that he, Wyneken, was right and invited him to return to his camp.⁵⁰ Reichenbach did not even consider the proposal. Instead, he summarised his position in an article in which he rejected the idea that the military could educate young people. According to Reichenbach, there was a non-reconcilable contradiction between the military and the idea of education.⁵¹

2.3.3 *Programme and Ideology*

The President of the Free Student Movement in Berlin was none other than Walter Benjamin, and the Vice Chair was Hans Reichenbach's brother Bernhard,⁵² who had developed a strong political profile. The Berlin Free Students established the partially radical and socialist journal *Der Aufbruch*, published by Diederichs. In addition to Hermann Kranold, Herbert Kühnert, and others, Hans Reichenbach was one of the major contributors to the movement's programme. In contrast to another leading representative, Felix Behrend, Reichenbach rebuked the idea that there were 'objective interests.' There was broad debate on the question of whom exactly the Free Student Movement represented. Did it represent the entirety of non-corporate students or only its declared followers? In Reichenbach's view, interests were strictly subjective. He argued that only the individual could formulate their own

⁴⁷ See Reichenbach 1914a, Reichenbach 1914b, and Rademacher 1914.

⁴⁸ See the essay of Flavia Padovani in this volume and the correspondence between Reichenbach and Wyneken in the appendix.

⁴⁹ See Hans Reichenbach to Gustav Wyneken, 18.2.1915, N 35, 1716, Gustav Wyneken Papers, Archiv der deutschen Jugendbewegung, Witzenhausen (Germany).

⁵⁰ See Gustav Wyneken to Hans Reichenbach, 18.3.1915. According to Wyneken, Reichenbach should return 'mit fliegender Fahne'. For more details on this controversy, see Gerner 1997, 20–27.

⁵¹ See Reichenbach 1916, 66–67.

⁵² See Wipf 2004, 192.

interests, depending on personal values that did not function according to the rules of logic. Therefore, there are no such things as ‘public interests.’ Reichenbach concluded that the interests represented by the Free Student Movement were those of a particular group. It was ‘only the free volitional decision of the individual (that) can determine membership in this group’ (Reichenbach 1978b, 109). He continued as follows:

We require the autonomous creation of the ideal; that is, we require that each person, of his own free will, set the goal to which we will aspire and follow none but a suitable course of action. The individual may do whatever he considers to be right. Indeed, he ought to do it; in general, we consider as immoral nothing but an inconsistency between goal and action (Reichenbach 1978b, 110).

For Reichenbach, the Free Student Movement could never embody the non-corporate students as a whole, which would contradict his strong position on the autonomy of the individual and the right to self-determination. Obviously, his position was a programmatic one with far-reaching strategic consequences. Reichenbach’s manifesto-like text regarding the Free Student Movement was also a demand for democratisation. The core element of such a demand was a student committee or parliament.⁵³

2.3.4 *The Socialist Student Party of Berlin*

Hans Reichenbach had already left the Free Student Movement before the war. During the war period, he wrote an article in which he reflected on his years in the movement. His conclusions were ambivalent. According to him, the movement was effective as a party in university politics but had failed to develop a new style of living and a new youth culture.⁵⁴

After 1918, left-wing and liberal students insistently called for the autonomy of the universities and participated in what Ulrich Linse refers to as the ‘university revolution’ (Linse 1974). During the Weimar Republic, Hans Reichenbach became involved with the Socialist Student Party. In 1918, he wrote his remarkable manifesto *Socialising the University*.⁵⁵ Although references to socialism had already appeared previously in a variety of Reichenbach’s publications, his final turn towards a socialist worldview occurred with his 1919 booklet *Student and Socialism*.

For Reichenbach, socialism at the university meant that gifted proletarian students would have an opportunity to study, while many less-gifted upper-class students would not. He concluded that studying at a university should be a question of

⁵³ See Reichenbach 1978b, 119–120.

⁵⁴ See Reichenbach 1914c.

⁵⁵ See Reichenbach 1978d. Additionally, see the typescript *The Socialisation of the University* (*Die Sozialisierung der Hochschule*) he prepared for the Socialist Student Party Berlin in 1918: Reichenbach Papers, HR 023–23-02, Philosophisches Archiv, Universität Konstanz (Germany).

merit rather than one of money and social class. However, his approach remained paternalistic in that he was convinced that the intellectual class had to enlighten the proletariat regarding socialism, and he viewed it as the duty of the intellectual class to disseminate the treasures of cultural knowledge. In Reichenbach's opinion, no one was better destined to perform this task than university students. The Socialist Student Party wanted to guide students towards socialism and transform the old university into a new, democratic, and socialist institution.⁵⁶ In summary, an elitist ideology of education and claims for emancipation occur concurrently in Reichenbach.

The political manifesto of the Socialist Student Party of Berlin, which was included in Reichenbach's booklet, asked students to become members of one of the socialist parties. Interestingly, the booklet did not mention any particular party. Given the rivalry, hostility, and even political violence between the Majority Social Democrats (SPD), Independent Social Democrats (USPD), Spartacists (Spartacist League), and the Communists (KPD), this restraint was remarkable.⁵⁷

It makes sense at this point to review the biographies of the Reichenbach brothers. Hans Reichenbach was one of the Youth Movement's most colourful characters: a *Wandervogel*, Free Student, member of the left-leaning *Aufbruchkreis*, and Chairperson of the Socialist Student Party of Berlin.⁵⁸ His brother Bernhard was also part of the *Aufbruchkreis*, which was based on the previously mentioned journal *Der Aufbruch*.⁵⁹ Bernhard Reichenbach was an important left-wing activist in the Youth Movement. In contrast to Hans, he also followed this path during the interwar period, both in Germany and during his exile in Great British exile, where he remained after the war and until the end of his life.⁶⁰ A third brother, Herman Reichenbach (1898–1958), was also a *Wandervogel* and Free Student. Herman helped shape the short history and policy of the left-wing youth organisation Resolute Youth (*Entschiedene Jugend*).⁶¹

2.4 Grelling, Reichenbach, and Young Germany

A brief overview of the history of Logical Empiricism in Germany reveals that many of the philosophical movement's representatives were followers or even protagonists of the German Youth Movement. To underline this observation, I list the

⁵⁶ See Reichenbach 1919, 8–10.

⁵⁷ See Jones 2016.

⁵⁸ See Linse 1974, 12.

⁵⁹ See, for instance, B. Reichenbach 1915. This article was partially censored; see B. Reichenbach 1954.

⁶⁰ See Linse 1981, 248–251.

⁶¹ See Linse 1981, 252–256.

most important examples and address the cases of Hans Reichenbach and Kurt Grelling in more detail.

Rudolf Carnap was a leading representative of the Sera Circle around publisher Eugen Diederichs (1867–1930).⁶² The name ‘Sera’ originated from a processional dance, and it was also part of a salutation. The group did not last very long. Following the war, the circle discontinued its activities. Carnap was also active in other Youth Movement organisations, such as the *Akademische Freischar* in Jena and the Free German Youth.⁶³

Another representative of the Berlin Group who was a member of the Free Student Movement was psychologist Kurt Lewin. Although he attracted the attention of the scientific community of the time, his earlier days in the Youth Movement went largely unnoticed.⁶⁴ More striking were the undertakings of Karl Korsch, who had been a friend of Lewin since their student days in Berlin.⁶⁵ Korsch was an important activist in the Free Student Movement in Jena and published a number of articles in the movement’s journals. In contrast to Lewin research, scholarship has previously examined Korsch’s role during this period.⁶⁶

Around the time of World War I, both Hans Reichenbach and Kurt Grelling were political writers and, at least to a certain degree, political activists. As young students and philosophers, they were followers of Immanuel Kant. In the late 1920s, they became members of the Berlin Group and the Berlin Society for Empirical/Scientific Philosophy. Their later careers, however, differed considerably. While Hans Reichenbach became a widely acknowledged philosopher of science, the author of successful books, a university professor and standard-bearer of Logical Empiricism, Grelling was comparatively unknown. He headed the Berlin Society, remained in the city until 1936, and left Germany relatively late. He had already been forced into retirement in March 1933 but escaped to Brussels in 1937. He was captured and held in a French internment camp before eventually being transported to Auschwitz, where he was murdered together with his non-Jewish wife.⁶⁷

Reichenbach and Grelling probably first became acquainted in 1912/13 as students in Munich, but they had most certainly met by 1914 in Göttingen. Grelling was a cofounder of the Free Student Group in Göttingen, and in 1914, both he and Reichenbach were delegates for Göttingen at the Free Student meeting in Weimar.⁶⁸ Within the movement, Reichenbach was widely known in Germany as a contributor to various Free Student journals, whereas Grelling was active only in the regional Göttingen group.

⁶² For further information on Carnap, see the essays of Christian Damböck and Meike G. Werner in this book. For further information on Eugen Diederichs, see Bias-Engels 1988, 126–132; Hübinger 1996, 259–274; Sontheimer 1959; Werner 2003; and Heidler 1998.

⁶³ See Kindt 1963, 1050.

⁶⁴ See Schönplflug 2007.

⁶⁵ See Elteren 2007, 224.

⁶⁶ See Buckmiller 1980. See also Michael Buckmiller’s article in this volume.

⁶⁷ See Peckhaus 1994, 64–69.

⁶⁸ See Peckhaus 1994, 58–59.

A central personality within the German Youth Movement who played a decisive role in the relation between Reichenbach and Grelling was Leonard Nelson. Nelson was the founder of the Friesian School and edited the respected *Proceedings of the Friesian School* (*Abhandlungen der Fries'schen Schule*). Grelling came to know him in Göttingen. Initially, Nelson was a liberal but became a non-Marxist radical socialist who founded organisations such as the International Youth Association (*Internationaler Jugend-Bund*) and later the International Socialist Combat League (*Internationaler Sozialistischer Kampf-Bund*).⁶⁹ These organisations were radical in many ways and applied high standards to their young members in regard to leaving the church, vegetarianism, and an 'abstinent' way of life (which included the refusal not only of alcohol and tobacco but also of sex).⁷⁰ Despite a temporary alliance with the Social Democratic Party, Nelson's Youth Association remained marginal and was of little political importance. Nevertheless, Nelson represents an intersection of the German Youth Movement and Logical Empiricism not only through his decisive influence on Grelling⁷¹ but also because of his formative impact on an organisation close to the Free Students, the so-called *Freibund*, to which Grelling also belonged.

2.4.1 *Pacifism*

As previously discussed, Hans Reichenbach was one of the few intellectuals in the Youth Movement who opposed the war in 1914. He polemicised against the militarisation of youth education, questioned authoritarian hierarchies requiring blind obedience, and staunchly defended the concept of an autonomous, free individual will. The case of Kurt Grelling was more complicated. Although he was no war-monger, Grelling did not side with radical anti-war positions in the debate over German war guilt. Rather, he railed against the anonymous pamphlet *J'accuse*, in which Germany was blamed for the war's outbreak. He repeatedly quoted British anti-war activists, such as Bertrand Russell, who criticised their government, and used these quotations to support his own German critique of Britain (Grelling, incidentally, translated certain of Russell's writings into German). The anonymous German opponent of war was none other than Grelling's father, Richard Grelling, a well-known writer and peace activist.⁷² The controversy regarding his pamphlet foreshadowed the later Fischer controversy on German war guilt.⁷³ At the beginning of the war, Grelling and Nelson wrote a memorandum, which was unpublished.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ See Link 1964.

⁷⁰ See Franke 1991, 152–154.

⁷¹ See Berger et al. 2011.

⁷² See Grelling 1915 and Grelling 1916a, b.

⁷³ Wolfgang Beutin has also drawn this parallel; see Beutin 1968, 99–142. In the early 1960s, German historian Fritz Fischer advanced the controversial thesis of sole German responsibility for the outbreak of the First World War.

⁷⁴ See Grelling and Nelson 1914.

Strictly speaking, this memorandum was not a pacifist manifesto. In addition to defending the *Burgfrieden* policy of the SPD, it conceptualised the model of a confederation of different national states collaborating in a peaceful Europe. In addition, the memorandum favoured a democratic future following the war's end. However, the war lasted much longer than Nelson and Grelling expected.

Both Reichenbach and Grelling were far from idealising or welcoming the war in the manner of many of their contemporaries. Reichenbach's pacifist position, however, was definitely more radical than that of Grelling.

2.4.2 Socialism

When they were members of the Free Student Movement, both Reichenbach and Grelling were socialists. For Reichenbach, the crucial question was what socialism meant with respect to the universities. Among other university and pedagogical reforms, he demanded open access to the universities for both women and the lower classes, argued against an exclusion of radical left-wing university teachers, and would accept no faculty members in theology. With respect to politics in a broader sense, he outlined that a general vote alone did not lead to equality as long as material and social inequalities continued.⁷⁵

In summary, Reichenbach's ideas were not based on Marxist analysis but rather embraced the viewpoint of idealist socialism. Nonetheless, his political writings later caused problems in the negotiations regarding his professorship at the University of Berlin in 1925 and 1926. Various members of the commission referred to his publications, especially *Student and Socialism* (1919), and questioned whether a serious scientist could write such political texts.⁷⁶

Grelling was also active as a socialist, especially as an author of articles and columns in the social democratic Socialist Monthly (*Sozialistische Monatshefte*) from 1911 onwards. In 1916, he contributed an essay to the 'Philosophical Foundations of Politics'. In his column 'Philosophy', he promoted the philosophical ideas of Fries and Nelson.⁷⁷ This journal, however, belonged to the socialism's 'revisionist' wing. Grelling participated as a delegate in the SPD party convention in Weimar in 1919 and advocated a socialist trade union. His political convictions as a Free Student included open access to education for all, the satisfaction of material needs and social egalitarianism. Political topics, questions of economy, and issues concerning standards of living played an important role in his intellectual activity.

⁷⁵ See Reichenbach 1978d.

⁷⁶ See Hecht and Hoffmann 1982, 654. See also Flavia Padovani's article in this volume.

⁷⁷ See Peckhaus 1994, 56.

2.4.3 Education

Reichenbach adhered to anti-authoritarian concepts, which involved the idea of self-education. Accordingly, education was not only the responsibility of teachers and educators but also that of autonomous individuals themselves. Freedom of decision and self-determination were basic elements of the ideology of the Youth Movement's left wing. Reichenbach advocated new didactics and novel forms of teaching in which pupils played a more active role.⁷⁸

Grelling criticised the numerous students who were not interested in pedagogical matters. He maintained that as future teachers, they required special pedagogical training. Students could not rely on the state but had to help themselves. With this philosophy, Grelling encouraged critical self-reflection. Students, he stated, were privileged because access to higher education was determined by a 'coincidence of birth' (Grelling 1914, 12) and social conditions. Therefore, he concluded that the student had the social duty to work as an 'educator of the people' (Grelling 1914, 12).

2.5 The Austrian Youth Movement

2.5.1 The Austrian Case

Was the Youth Movement only a *German* phenomenon, a German peculiarity? Various scholars (such as Laqueur) answered this question affirmatively. They identified the German traditions of Romanticism and Neo-romanticism as responsible for the robust development of the nation's Youth Movement in the early twentieth century.⁷⁹ However, there was also a sizeable Youth Movement in Austria. This movement's links to Logical Empiricism are not perfectly obvious. To my knowledge, there are no direct connections between the Austrian Youth Movement and the development of Logical Empiricism and its Austrian organisations, especially the Vienna Circle (*Wiener Kreis*) and the Ernst Mach Society. The exception is Rudolf Carnap, who moved from Germany to Vienna in 1926.

Within the Austrian Youth Movement, there was also a section of the *Wandervogel*. According to Laqueur, the Austrian *Wandervogel*—a subject he comments on only marginally—was even more political than its German counterpart. Its members emphasised the specifically German character of the monarchy and polemicised against Jews and Slavs. A German-Bohemian section of the *Wandervogel* pressed very early for the exclusion of Jews, and in 1913, the Austrian organisation introduced an Aryan paragraph. At approximately the same time in Germany, massive manifestations of anti-Semitism resulted in the de facto separation between 'Aryans'

⁷⁸ See Reichenbach 1912.

⁷⁹ See Laqueur 1984, 29–30.

and Jews in the *Wandervogel* as well as in large parts of the Youth Movement.⁸⁰ The Austrian Youth Movement was not only part of the German nationalist political camp but also the anti-Semitic avant-garde. In a footnote of his book, Laqueur framed the matter as follows:

The role of the Austrian *Wandervogel* is usually disregarded in this context, although (from the very beginning) it was more consistently chauvinistic and racist than the right wing of the German youth movement and, according to some evidence, has remained so to this very day. Austria has been a small country since 1918, and the antics of some of Hitler's compatriots have attracted little or no attention (Laqueur 1984, 110).⁸¹

Already in 1913, the Austrian *Wandervogel* wanted to join the German organisation. Werner Kindt's collection of sources and documents pertaining to the movement also features striking examples of the aggressive political right-wing orientation of the Austrian section.⁸² However, there was also another history of the Youth Movement in Austria, a socialist one. In a way, the leftist Youth Movement in Austria developed in parallel to the Social Democratic Workers' Party (SDAP). At the turn of the century, there was already an association of young Austrian workers (*Verband jugendlicher Arbeiter Österreichs*) as a precursor of the Socialist Youth (*Sozialistische Jugend*).⁸³ Socialist pupils and students were also part of the Youth Movement.⁸⁴

The socialist intellectual Käthe Leichter wrote in her memoirs that although the Austrian Youth Movement initially shared the goals and convictions of the German movement, it remained different because of the important role in it played by Jewish youth.⁸⁵ In contrast to its German counterpart, she continued, the Viennese Youth Movement was not a strictly male society.⁸⁶ The most important topics its members discussed were education and future relations between the sexes. Moreover, there was a difference between the Youth Movement among the bourgeoisie and that of the proletariat. Adolescents from working-class families, both girls and boys, began to work at the age of fourteen. Thus, youth was experienced differently by different social classes. In retrospect, Leichter remained sceptical and distanced. Did the Austrian Youth Movement exert any political influence?⁸⁷ Obviously, she was not persuaded that it did.

Laqueur and Leichter seemed to have had different aspects of the Austrian Youth Movement in mind. In fact, in Austria, nearly the same or similar political contradictions and antagonisms were at work as in Germany. While Laqueur focused on

⁸⁰ See Winnecken 1991.

⁸¹ See Pross 1964, 171–175. For a representation of the *völkisch* Austrian *Wandervogel* by one of its members, see Keil 1913.

⁸² See Kindt 1963, 323–349.

⁸³ See Neugebauer 1975.

⁸⁴ See Scheu 1985.

⁸⁵ See Leichter 1997, 327.

⁸⁶ See Leichter 1997, 330.

⁸⁷ See Leichter 1997, 330.

the more powerful German national, anti-Semitic faction, Leichter was only aware of an obviously small part of the Youth Movement: its Jewish intellectual socialist version in Red Vienna.

In the Youth Movement's left wing, there were also connections between Germany and Austria. Between 1911 and 1914, the Austrian Siegfried Bernfeld (Vienna) and the German Georges Barbizon (whose real name was Georg Greter) edited the left-wing journal *Der Anfang*, a publication that the movement's right wing did not approve of. This periodical and its writers had a bearing on the development of the Youth Movement, even though these writers formed only a marginal group.

As this short historical overview confirms, the Youth Movement in Austria consisted of various very different ideological groups.⁸⁸ During the interwar years, these groups ranged from strongly anti-Semitic German nationalistic to socialist/communist formations and included both Catholic and Jewish groups. In the late 1920s, the National Socialists became stronger. Although the degree of organisation among the groups differed considerably, the Youth Movement in Austria was, without doubt, similarly heterogeneous as the German Movement.

2.5.2 *The Case of Otto Neurath*

Otto Neurath was most likely never a member of any of the organisations affiliated with the Youth Movement in Germany or Austria. Starting from the very beginning of his intellectual career, however, we find many references to thinkers and intellectuals who considerably influenced the Youth Movement. Tönnies and Key, for instance, had a great and extensive effect on the young Neurath. As discussed earlier, Tönnies' concept of community and society was a reference point for the Youth Movement's programmatic discussions, and Key's writings on education considerably influenced these debates.⁸⁹

There is no evidence that Neurath had contact with the Free Student Movement as a student in Berlin (1903–1906). If there had been such contact, however, it would come as no surprise, and in any case, a number of important movement representatives crossed his path. As a young man, Neurath published several articles in the journal *Der Kunstwart*, edited by Ferdinand Avenarius in Munich. Avenarius' son-in-law was Wolfgang Schumann (1867–1964), who became a close friend of Neurath. Hermann Kranold (1888–1942) was a dominant figure at the German Free Student journal *The New University (Die Neue Hochschule)*. In 1919, Kranold, Neurath, and Schumann together published their plan for the economic socialisation of Saxony.⁹⁰ Schumann later became a coworker of Neurath at the War Museum of

⁸⁸ See Gehmacher 1995.

⁸⁹ See Sandner 2014, 28–53.

⁹⁰ See Sandner 2014, 112.

Leipzig and the Central Economic Office in Munich. In British exile, Neurath and Kranold re-established contact and occasionally corresponded.⁹¹

There was also a link between Neurath and Diederichs, who organised three meetings at Burg Lauenstein during World War I. At one of these meetings in autumn 1917, which had the objective of addressing the *Führerproblem*, he invited Neurath to present a lecture. Although Diederichs did not mention Neurath in his biography, it has been established that they knew one another and occasionally exchanged letters.⁹²

When Neurath became president of the Central Economic Office in Munich in the spring of 1919, he collaborated with Ernst Niekisch. Niekisch was head of the Central Council and belonged to the political leadership of the country.⁹³ Although he was later contested as National Bolshevik,⁹⁴ he was an important authority in the German Youth Movement. Based on their common experiences in the Bavarian Soviet Republic, he presented a rather doubtful memorial of Neurath in his memoirs.⁹⁵

Another example is Friedrich Bauermeister, who belonged to the left-wing element of the Youth Movement. He advocated a nonmaterialist socialism that was typical for the movement, particularly in the pages of the journal *Der Aufbruch* (Bauermeister 1915), where Reichenbach was also active. Bauermeister moved to Vienna after the war and became active in the Settlement Movement, where he met Neurath. Later, he was one of Neurath's coworkers at the Viennese Social and Economic Museum. Interestingly, Bauermeister belonged to the small team that trained Russian statisticians in Neurath's Vienna Method of Picture Statistics in Moscow between 1931 and 1934; he married a Russian and remained in Russia thereafter.⁹⁶

Finally, there was also a connection between Neurath and Wyneken. In 1923, in the socialist *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, Neurath wrote a rather sorrowful article in defence of Wyneken who was accused of sexually abusing boys in his school.⁹⁷ Conservative periodicals strongly and systematically attacked Neurath.⁹⁸

It is of interest that in the years of his British exile, Neurath returned, at least indirectly, to the question of the German Youth Movement and interpreted the

⁹¹ See the Correspondence Otto Neurath – Hermann Kranold, Papers Otto and Marie Neurath, Sign. 1220–70, Handschriftensammlung, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

⁹² See the Correspondence Eugen Diederichs – Otto Neurath, Karton II, 1433-1-20, Teilnachlass Otto Neurath, Archiv der Republik, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv (ehemals Sonderarchiv Moskau). Additionally, see Diederichs 1938.

⁹³ See Sandner 2014, 129–131.

⁹⁴ See Rättsch-Langejürgen 1997.

⁹⁵ See Niekisch 1958, 53.

⁹⁶ See Sandner 2014, 174, 185, 230, 233.

⁹⁷ See Neurath 1923.

⁹⁸ Seelenfang mit Steuergeldern. Wer ist Otto Neurath? In: Reichspost, 17 November 1923, 2. Was geschieht mit unseren Christenkindern, in: Schulwacht, 9 (1923) 2, 19–20.

movement as an intellectual expression of a particular ‘German climate’.⁹⁹ The Youth Movement’s intellectual references included authors and scholars such as Julius Langbehn and his book *Rembrandt as Educator* (*Rembrandt als Erzieher*) and Paul de Lagarde. Neurath referred to the ideas of these writers, especially in his letters.¹⁰⁰ Thus, Neurath was not only active within the ideological environment of the Youth Movement but later also contributed to the movement’s critical evaluation.

2.6 Continuities and Open Research Questions

There seem to be considerable ideological differences between the Youth Movement and Logical Empiricism. When reading certain of the Youth Movement’s most important programmatic texts (such as Wyneken’s ‘What is Youth Culture?’ [1913] and Bauermeister’s ‘Class Struggle of the Youth’ [1915]), their metaphysical and idealist character is obvious. While Wyneken focused on metaphysical categories (such as *Geist*), Bauermeister did not present a materialist analysis, despite the Marxist-sounding title of his essay. In contrast, he strongly supported the fight for what he termed the ‘spiritual autonomy’ of youth. For him, class struggle seemed not to have been a struggle between social classes but among different ways of thinking, attitudes, and ideas. These texts by Wyneken and Bauermeister are significant not only for the Youth Movement but also for the liberal left wing to which later certain logical empiricists belonged. Without doubt, Neurath would have banished much of the left wing’s wording to his *index verborum prohibitorum*.¹⁰¹ Moreover, there were a number of publications in which Reichenbach, Carnap, and other subsequent logical empiricists followed similar approaches. Reichenbach, for instance, proclaimed a new ethics based on the Nietzschean ‘revaluation of values’ and shared the idealistic sentiments that were a common element in the Youth Movement’s publications.¹⁰²

One can also observe a number of theoretical and programmatic continuities between the Youth Movement and Logical Empiricism, especially with respect to science, education, and knowledge transfer. Hans Reichenbach, for instance, was highly active as a student in the cultural struggles of his time and strictly opposed Roman Catholicism, which he viewed as opposing intellectual and scientific freedom. When the question arose as to whether Catholic students could become members of the Free Student Movement, Reichenbach vehemently opposed the possibility: ‘Unlimited dominance of Catholicism would be the death of science’,

⁹⁹ See Sandner (2011).

¹⁰⁰ For Neurath’s reflections on the German social climate, see Sandner 2011.

¹⁰¹ With his proposal for an ‘*index verborum prohibitorum*,’ Otto Neurath promoted efforts to unravel linguistic tangles that led to metaphysical confusion.

¹⁰² See Reichenbach 1912, 94. The logical empiricist’s non-cognitivism in regard to ethics and politics and its possible roots in the debates of the Youth Movement is the subject of Christian Damböck’s essay in this book.

he stated, and continued as follows: ‘Freedom from every extra-scientific authority is thus a condition for the existence of science’ (Reichenbach 1978a, 106). He was convinced there was an unsolvable contradiction between dogmatic religious thinking and the idea of science. In particular, the progressive wing of the Youth Movement, including the Free Student Movement, rejected any attack on the freedom of science by Christian churches, nationalists, and other political forces.

These progressives had good reason to do so because many of the later logical empiricists were Jews or had Jewish family backgrounds (such as Reichenbach, Grelling, Neurath, and Lewin). For them, a strict orientation towards scientific reasoning and a view of science as the only decisive, politically nonpartisan authority in both public discourse and internal debates was probably a necessary strategy. They insisted that scientific and academic arguments could not be rejected simply on the grounds that their proponents were Jewish, left wing, liberal, or all of these things. This is probably the reason why Reichenbach, Neurath, and others so often asserted that their research was ‘unpolitical.’ This declaration was of course ambiguous, as an insistence on scientific expertise was not unpolitical per se. Political neutrality in this context only meant that controversial issues had to be addressed in a scientific manner grounded on an empirical and logical basis.

There was also the matter of education and democratisation of knowledge, which played a vital role not only in the Youth Movement but also in Logical Empiricism. Only in 1930 did Reichenbach publish an essay on Maria Montessori and her alternative, anti-authoritarian approach to education. Reichenbach continued to favour education centred on the autonomy of the educated individual,¹⁰³ and in this sense, he kept the Youth Movement’s idea of self-education alive even after his years as an activist were long over. The new education would not be a top-down approach from teachers or parents to children involving knowledge transfer from above via authoritarian means but primarily an autonomous activity (*Selbsttätigkeit*). In this respect, Reichenbach remained a political thinker.

The idea that the dissemination of scientific knowledge contributes to social and political reform became popular. Neurath was perhaps the idea’s most important proponent.¹⁰⁴ The focus on education combined with an emancipatory understanding of science represents a decisive continuity between the logical empiricists’ early days in the Youth Movement and their careers as philosophers of science. The activities of the Berlin Society and the Mach Association are compelling evidence of this continuity.¹⁰⁵

During the interwar years, the heyday of the Youth Movement had definitely passed. In 1926, a writer named Ignaz Wrobel raised the question in the journal *Weltbühne* of what exactly the Youth Movement had achieved. Had it been at all successful? Had it been only an end in itself? What had been the movement’s impact? ‘I just don’t see it’ (Wrobel 1926a, b, 969), he concluded. Wrobel, however,

¹⁰³ See Reichenbach 1931.

¹⁰⁴ See Neurath 1996.

¹⁰⁵ See Sandner and Pape 2017.

was the pseudonym of a well-known author: Kurt Tucholsky. Although he might have only been considering the Youth Movement's right wing (which he condemned, naturally), his article is worthy of discussion. Did the Youth Movement achieve its goals? Did it even formulate its aims and ideas clearly and sufficiently align them with social tendencies? Käthe Leichter and Kurt Tucholsky were not the movement's only critics, and to a certain extent, they were probably right in their scepticism.

With respect to the philosophical movement of Logical Empiricism, however, the ideas of the Youth Movement had several long-term effects that have been overlooked in the literature. Thus, the continuities between the Youth Movement and Logical Empiricism, understood as a broad cultural and intellectual movement in interwar Europe, clearly merit a closer look.

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