INTRODUCTION

This book is based on substantially revised and expanded versions of the Tanner Lectures on Human Values that I presented at Yale University in November 2019. The Tanner Lectures have no precise mandate, only a governing intellectual frame. Their benefactor and founder, Obert Clark Tanner, a British Mormon philosopher, lawyer, theologian, industrialist, and philanthropist, seemed to mirror his own unspecialized spirit in the loose rubric he offered for them in 1978: “I hope these lectures will contribute to the intellectual and moral life of mankind. I see them simply as a search for a better understanding of human behavior and human values.”

Eventually, the rubric of the lectures was more narrowly circumscribed to “advance and reflect upon the scholarly and scientific learning relating to human values.” The circumscription sustains the ambiguous nomenclature of “values”—a nomenclature designating what we esteem or care for detached from the question of how or why, and a nomenclature so confessional of its status as an achievement or choice that the adjectival “human” is redundant except to underscore that values signify and perhaps secure an important dimension of humanness. However, the narrowing performs a different feat, which is to establish scholarship and science as distinct from, yet “relating” to, values. Is knowledge, then, imagined
as detached from values until specifically brought to bear on them, to scrutinize, philosophize, historicize, or otherwise understand them? Are values entailed by knowledge, embedded in knowledge, or merely informed or guided by knowledge? Is there also a conceit that to know the world—as scholars or scientists—is to know what to esteem within it?

The revised rubric of the Tanner Lectures, it would seem, still glides on Enlightenment assumptions about a distinction between truth and value, and about truth’s capacity to inform value. It carries whiffs of the hope invested in this distinction and capacity, and especially in the idea that “learning” bears on the principles according to which life—individual and collective—ought to be lived. Yet it also throws us directly into the flood tide of modernity’s other effects, where science first wrecked the foundations of value in God and tradition; then choked the redemptive value of value by elevating its economic meaning over others; then collapsed Enlightenment conceits about the link between knowledge and emancipation, knowledge and progress, knowledge and collective well-being, knowledge and choosing what to value or protecting what we value; and finally fell into crisis itself. What was science anyway if not a radically human production of one kind of truth valued above all others yet incapable of telling us what to value or how to craft the world accordingly?

All of this preceded our disorienting contemporary condition, in which philosophical, social, economic, ecological, and political coordinates for value and values are profoundly unsettled, both in knowledge practices and the world. There is today the rise of ferociously anti-democratic forces
in settled as well as relatively newer liberal democracies, forces that openly affirm autocracy, theocracy, violent exclusions, or racial, ethnic, and gender supremacies. These emerge not only from far-right formations and parties but from assaults and corruptions of electoral systems from within and without, above and below—ranging from capture of politicians by dark money and capture of electorates by increasingly quotidian disinformation campaigns, to warping elections with voter suppression, gerrymandering, corporate funding, and foreign influence. There are the digital technologies continuously revolutionizing work, knowledge, governing, social relations, psyche, soma, and subjectivity, and bearing, along with enhancements of human capacities, novel ways of estranging, surveilling, and manipulating them. There is the political-economic transformation that unleashed finance as a force more powerful and less bound to human and planetary thriving than even capitalist commodity production. There is the chaos of the interregnum between the Westphalian global order and whatever might succeed it, a chaos marked by unprecedented boundary trespass and boundary policing of ideas, people, religions, capital, labor, technologies, violence, pollutants, and goods. And, there is the existential emergency posed by climate change, plummeting biodiversity, and the debris of a manic century of production piling up, unmetabolizable, in floating ocean islands and earthly fields of waste. This last includes more than a billion humans themselves cast off as waste: One in eight people now live in make-shift shanty towns, refugee or homeless camps within or abutting cities across the globe, with minimal access to civilizational basics—sanitation, nutrition, education, health care, and protection from the elements.
How to plot “values” within this disorienting present? On the one hand, we cannot orient ourselves exclusively by the compass points offered by established political-intellectual traditions. It is not only that the categories, concepts, and methods of these traditions are often inapt to the technologies, forms of capital, and climate emergency of our present, that they imagine the earth and human activity in an outmoded fashion. They are also saturated with the very assumptions and conceits generating many of our predicaments today. These range from a reckless anthropocentrism and racist, sexist humanisms, to rationalist or objectivist conceits of knowing and accounts of labor that exclude care work or accounts of “nature” that render it as passive material. They include deep ontological and epistemological oppositions—between nature and culture, fact and value, human and animal, animate and inanimate, civilized and barbaric—and more prosaic ones—between speech and action, or public and private. They include formulations of time and space that disavow their often violent exclusionary, predatory, or colonial predicates. No discipline of knowledge, in its methods, contents, boundaries, or Weltanschauung, is immune to this upbraiding.

At the same time, de novo theorizing is its own fool’s errand in trying to understand contemporary predicaments and possibilities within it, and this for at least two reasons. First, intelligent reckonings with our singular present must be historically minded. Even as we chart certain novel powers, technologies, subjectivities, and political formations today, we must also reckon with the long historical forces that frame and intersect them—among them nihilism, capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy—
themselves transforming as they engage multiple effects of globalization and climate change. Second, this complicated reckoning, at once deeply historical and appreciative of the distinctiveness of the present, is often abetted by studies of earlier theorists. This abetting occurs not by applying past thinkers’ analytics of power, diagnoses of conditions, historiographies, or strategies for change to our predicaments but by thinking with and against them about these predicaments. There is something else. Many enduring social and political theorists are such not only because they invented profound and illuminating new frameworks, but because they were actively struggling for a cartography of their own disorienting times. We are not the first in history to wrestle with the problem that humans have never been here before; only the “here” is singular.

This is what brings me to think with Max Weber in these pages, and in particular with his well-known lectures on knowledge and politics, conventionally rendered in English as “Science as a Vocation” and “Politics as a Vocation.” In these lectures, delivered at the request of University of Munich students in 1917 and 1919, Weber draws the contours, predica­ments, and potentials of both domains in an era he regarded as rapidly draining of meaning and integrity, and threatened by descent into “a polar night of icy darkness and harshness.”3 His searing indictments of the university in his time—its patronage system of hiring and promotion, its corrosively politicized scholarship and classrooms, its anti-Semitic and other exclusion of promising young scholars, its invasion by capitalist values, its low standards for teaching, and its hyper-specialization that withdrew scholarly work from worldliness—echo some features of our own. Weber’s
portrait of the conditions for aspiring politicians of integrity and purpose also was bleak and also has contemporary resonance: He depicted a political sphere populated with demagogues and bureaucrats but few genuine leaders, and dominated by party machines and manipulated masses. He cast democracy as unviable beyond a plebiscitary form and function. And he formulated political life in modernity as necessarily filled with permanently warring and undecidable values, themselves saturated with the distinctly political currencies of force and fraud.

These notes of relevance notwithstanding, thinking with Weber now will also seem counterintuitive, if not perverse, to many. Weber is often held responsible for setting twentieth-century social science knowledge on a dangerous and hubristic course of faux objectivity and ethical neutrality, along with the intense knowledge specialization and insulated disciplinary methods deterring the very knowledge practices required to understand and criticize rather than mirror and ratify the status quo. He is conventionally associated with founding the hard fact-value distinction underlying a century of positivism, not only identifying the one with truth (however provisional, given unending scientific progress) and the other with subjective judgment, but insisting that science could and must be value free. He is famous for charting varieties of action and authority in a conservative mode, drawing and valorizing ideal types, founding a problematic sociology of religion, challenging Marxism with an account of capitalism’s origins in Protestantism, and theorizing the rationalization and disenchantment of the world wrought by secular modernity in a manner that is now challenged by new materialists, philosophers of sci-
ence, and theorists of the secular alike. Notorious for straightjacketing the social sciences with his anti-normative mandates, refusing the depths of the hermeneutics he avowed, and defining politics narrowly, he is rarely adopted as a friend of critical theory today even as the early Frankfurt School and Foucault both drew on his thought. Politically, Weber is ordinarily regarded as sanguine about capitalism, state power, and competition among sovereign nation states. He is identified with intense German nationalism, anxious masculinism, and early attraction to that peculiar strain of neoliberalism that would later come to imprint the European unification project with undemocratic principles and techniques. He glorifies *Machtpolitik* and praises states and politicians who embrace it. He is considered not merely a realist but ardent anti-idealist, in both political and intellectual life.

Given these attributions, Weber may appear complicit with if not an architect of some of the most sinister forces contouring our present. The above synopsis, however, is a reductionist account of Weber's complex formulations of knowledge, history, politics, capitalism, and power. It ignores much of the ambivalence, complexity, subtlety, originality, and internal intellectual conflict that makes Weber invaluable to think with. These features are especially on display in the Vocation Lectures he delivered near the end of his life, the focus of my reflections here.

Weber was a dark thinker. This was not only a matter of his dominion, temperament, or times, though certainly each was treacherous. As important was his unrivaled appreciation of certain logics of modernity: its signature rationalities and forms of power; its generation of
“human machineries” with unprecedented capacities for domination; its simultaneous proliferation and depreciation of value and values (its reduction of morality to matters of taste); the inadequacy of democracy to resist or transform these developments, and the great challenge of cultivating responsible teaching and political leadership amid them. In a world he viewed as choked by powers destructive of human spirit and freedom as well as forthrightly dangerous, he sought to craft practices by which both scholars and political actors might hold back the dark with their work, and perhaps model purpose, or tender hope, in the fading light for each. This is one reason for turning to him now. We need sober thinkers who refuse to submit to the lures of fatalism or apocalypticism, pipe dreams of total revolution or redemption by the progress of reason, yet aim to be more than Bartlebys or foot soldiers amid current orders of knowledge and politics.

A second reason for turning to Weber pertains to his confrontation, early in the interwar period, with crises of political and academic life bearing certain parallels to our own, including a crisis of liberalism. Intellectually, Weber took Marx and Nietzsche to be major intellectual influences of his time, and though he regarded each as profound, he also saw them as dangerously wrongheaded and sought to repel anti-liberal critiques from the Left and the Right that each inspired. Politically, Weber took Germany in particular and Europe in general to be endangered by radical mass movements; by vain demagogues; by irresponsible nationalists and socialists; and by bureaucratic-legal statism—technocracies fantasized by academics and embraced by some politicians. Weber’s response to this
condition was not to rehabilitate the liberal statesman or representative. Rather, it was to cultivate an ideal of leaders as *rulers*, and in turn to task rulers with the pursuit of a political vision, responsibly pursued. He invested hope in those who would honor electoral democracy, the rule of law, and liberal limits on government while artfully using their power and persuasion to build political futures that could slip the constraints of bureaucratic administration, let alone socialist statism, and push beyond the stalemates of liberal democratic compromise and logrolling. If, today, we face bowdlerized versions of this on the right (Bolsonaro, Trump, Orbán, Erdoğan, Modi), we may still want to ask about this possibility on the left. Whether aspiring to rescue or throw in the towel on liberal democracy, left-political mobilizations have become increasingly engaged by the question of leadership for large-scale transformations that exceed parliamentary tinkering but are short of revolution. This is true of left populism, green democratic socialism, abolitionist and Indigenous politics. This makes Weber’s unblinking confrontation with the crisis of liberalism and democracy in his time, especially in “Politics as a Vocation,” potentially illuminating for one we face a century later.

A third reason for thinking with Weber now, and the main one animating these essays, pertains to his deep confrontation with the intellectual and political predicaments of our nihilistic epoch. The pervasive nihilism that disinhibits aggression and devalues values (compounding neoliberal depredations of democracy, social responsibility, and concern with future generations) was the problem with which I concluded *In the Ruins of Neoliberalism* without plotting a way through it. If Weber is
better known for his formalizations of methods and ideal types, folding hermeneutics into objective studies of social action, and his unique reformulation of materialist history to feature the centrality of values, this list occludes his effort to combat nihilistic effects in both knowledge and politics. This feature of his thought is overtly signaled by his frequent allusions to Tolstoy’s conclusion that in modernity, death and hence life are meaningless, and to Dostoyevsky’s portrait of the ethical irrationality of the world. It appears in his concerns with the effects of disenchantment, rationalization, boundary breakdowns, and the ubiquity of vanity or narcissism in intellectual, political, and cultural life. Hardly nihilism’s most complex theorist—Nietzsche, Heidegger, Adorno, Rorty, Rosen, and Pippin offer richer philosophical accounts—Weber may be among its most political. He formulates nihilism as contributing to the condition of contemporary politics and at the same time identifies politics as a vital platform for nihilism’s overcoming: politics is the quintessential domain for articulating and pursuing what he calls “ultimate values” or worldviews, not merely power or interest. His adamant fact-value distinction in social science research and classrooms is also set against nihilism’s door, where truth and deliberation, not only morality and ethics, are at risk of being abandoned.

There are many ways to account for the contemporary rise of antidemocratic popular forces and the opportunistic masters of power politics drawing succor from them in the West today. Only one of these would feature the political expression of nihilism, a plant Nietzsche predicted would take two hundred years to bloom from the grave of deities and ideals
toppled by science and the Enlightenment. Nihilism is manifest today as ubiquitous moral chaos or disingenuousness but also as assertions of power and desire shorn of concern for accountability to truth, justice, consequences, or futurity, not only ethics. Nihilism is revealed in the careless, even festive, breaking of a social compact with others and with succeeding generations that is manifest in quotidian speech and conduct today, especially but not only on the right. It appears in witting indifference to a fragile planet and fragile democracies. It manifests, too, as normalized deceit and criminality in both high and low places, and as mass withdrawal into the trivial, immediate, and personal. It is evident in the strategic drape of “traditional morality” over political aims to resecure historical supremacies of race, gender, and ownership or aims to capture electorates attracted to these supremacies. It is inscribed in the ubiquitous practices of “reputation repair” and the shifting-with-the-winds opportunism of even the most self-serious public figures. It is expressed in unprecedented popular indifference to consistency, accountability, and even veracity in religious and political leaders. It appears in the shrill epistemological standoff between Right and Left: the ferocious defense of religion and tradition on the one side, reason and progress on the other, with neither giving quarter or avowing the quicksand in which their flags are planted and on which their battle is played out. Far from exhaustive, this list is limited to nihilism’s public life.

The question for those who want to draw the planet, democracy, and care for justice back from the brink: What prospects are there for a politics that could overcome, dispel, or work through nihilism, or at the very least,
repel or end-run its most severe effects? And how might knowledge—generating it, curating it, and transmitting it—be protected from nihilistic forces, or better, employed for their overcoming? These are among the questions Weber confronted directly in the Vocation Lectures.

By nihilism, I am not suggesting, nor was Weber, that all value has disappeared from the world, or that life is widely held to be without any purpose or meaning. Understood as a condition rather than a contingent attitude, nihilism both emerges from modernity and generates distinct predicaments for meaning within it. On the one hand, it is difficult to find criteria, let alone foundations, for meaning and value without appealing to discredited sources for those foundations—religion, tradition, or logic—a discrediting that makes such appeals inevitably reactionary and shrill. On the other hand, faith in progress is revealed as a secularized version of the Christian millennium and as empirically confounded by modernity’s failure to deliver generalized peace, prosperity, happiness, or freedom. When appeals to origins and telos thus falter, programs for change themselves lose their compass, as if, in Nietzsche’s words, “we unchained the earth from its sun.” Now we are spinning without tether or illumination, without certain knowledge about what to affirm and negate, without temporality or directionality for a motion of history. Under these conditions, purpose and judgment alike are stripped naked, unbearably so.

There is more. For Weber, scholarly knowledge (Wissenschaft, often translated as science but comprising all systematic and transmissible academic knowledge, including in the humanities) undercuts the basis of religion but not its continued existence. Rather, in a rational and rational-
ized world, Weber declares matter-of-factly, to be religious requires a necessary “sacrifice of the intellect,” by which he means that religion must reject science on the most fundamental question of how we know what we know. Rebuffing the Nietzschean suggestion that science, too, rests on a sandy bottom and can attract devotion in weak religious fashion, Weber goes a different way: as science topples religion from the throne of Truth, it does not and cannot replace religion’s meaning-making power. This limitation of science changes the nature, reach, and implications of Truth; it is what splits fact from value and makes the latter undecidable at a scholarly level. Science can unveil the mysteries of the world—the process Weber calls disenchantment—but cannot generate or rank values. Science can never create value, Nietzsche writes, making it “the best ally the ascetic ideal has at present” with its “object of dissuading man from his former respect for himself.” Weber quotes Tolstoy: “Science is meaningless because it has no answer to the only questions that matter to us: ‘What should we do? How shall we live?’” Utilitarian calculation may reveal what ends are lost as others are pursued but cannot decide the question of what matters or why. It cannot answer Tolstoy’s questions. When it pretends that it can, as happens with neoliberal norms of value, governing, and conduct, a new threshold of nihilism is reached, one Weber anticipated without knowing what its precise form might be.

As science unmoors meaning from its religious and moral foundations, for Weber, values are also eroded from another source in his time, namely the overtaking of what he calls “value rationality” with “instrumental rationality” in every quarter of life. This overtaking is enabled by the
freedom from ethical constraint of instrumental reason, and it gains ground by virtue of this form’s sheer power over modes of thought and action where means and ends remain bound together. Weber’s theory of the raw power released by separating means from ends undergirds his understanding of the machinery of capitalism (where workers are separated from the ends of production) and bureaucracy (where bureaucrats are separated from the overall function of an organization). It also structures his formulation of rationalization and secularization as systemic forces rather than the consequence of subjective intention or aim. But if sundering means from ends generates unprecedented quantities of power through efficiencies, it also diminishes and ultimately devours ends. Everything becomes an instrument, and power begets only more power, wealth only more wealth, calculation only more calculation. Instrumental reason itself is embodied in giant “human machineries” becoming our “iron cages” and converting what originated as a means for meeting needs into an order of domination. In this way too, more than merely independent of value, instrumental reason bears an innate tendency to destroy value, overtaking ends it was designed to serve or converting ends themselves into means, ultimately eviscerating values everywhere with instrumental rationality. Financialization and digitalization are the latest instances of what started as instruments morphing into apparatuses of domination beyond human control, now also so powerful that they could crash the world into catastrophe overnight.

In sum, for Weber, in modernity, on the one hand, all meaning is revealed as made, not discovered, and values are undecidable. On the other
INTRODUCTION

hand, established meanings are relentlessly unmade by forces of disenchantment and rationalization, respectively the usurpation of myth and mystery by science and the cannibalization of ends by means in an instrumentally rational world. This much is familiar. The problem of nihilism for Weber, however, exceeds the value-depleting powers of disenchantment and rationalization. Rather, it rests in the consequential intervals opened up between knowledge, politics, and religion in modernity, and especially the partitions—sometimes even oppositions—developed between science and religion, politics and religion, and knowledge and politics. In modernity, knowledge must feature the value-neutrality generative of objectivity; politics features value struggle combined with steely-eyed appreciation that this struggle comprises human rather than divine powers and purposes; and religion rebuffs both sets of assumptions to affirm knowledge and values originating in and delivered by otherworldly powers.

Notwithstanding its historical recency, this distinctly modern separation of spheres and of the principles legitimating each is what Weber seeks to fortify and police. This can be seen at once in the way that Weber shapes the vocations for science and politics in his two lectures. On the one hand, he distances these vocations from one another and from a vocation for religion. On the other, he infuses each with a secularized religious spirit, one that both animates and ethically constrains the practitioner. Drawing the notion of Beruf (calling or vocation) from its embeddedness in the Protestant imperative to serve God through earthly work, he iterates the post-secular calling for each sphere as bound not to God but to the
devotion, convictions, and sacrifices constituting remainders of religious practice and feeling after the divinity is gone. Only the claim of such a spiritual-ethical force, lingering after we have lost the Supreme Being, can prevent the descent of political and knowledge practices into raw self-gratification or raw will to power.

*Beruf*, as Weber crafts it in a post-nihilist dispositional mode, entails near superhuman commitments to selflessness, maturity, restraint, and responsibility combined with passionate dedication to a cause outside the self. *Beruf* casts the subject neither as mere vessel for a vocation nor as served and gratified by it, but rather as *realized* through it. This said, the separation of religion from *Wissenschaft* and politics in modernity strips religion itself of accountability to truth or power. Thus, when the religious-minded do not stay in their quarter but attempt to exercise epistemological or practical power in the political or knowledge domain, the effect is a special kind of corruption, one Weber anoints as nihilistic. To put the matter the other way around, paradoxically, the only responsible actor in a nihilistic age, and the only one able to carry us beyond the age, is one who fully confronts the predicaments of meaning making today and rises to the challenge of creating meaning in a world absent its given-ness. If modernity is structured by unbridgeable chasms between knowledge and purpose, and between knowledge and belief, only those who can face these chasms, and craft their passions and endeavors in both an ethical and courageous relationship to them, are capable of being responsible scholars or political actors. Only those who have confronted
Introduction

the lack of moral absolutes in public life and the inappropriateness of turning to science or religion for those absolutes will bring integrity and ethical accountability to any of the three spheres that have parted from each other—religion, scholarship, politics.

Furthermore, for Weber, the absence of foundations for values simultaneously reveals them as inherently imbricated with power, contestable and available to critical analysis even if they do not spring from reason or refer to it for legitimacy. These same features are what make values essentially political—both contingent and power-laden—and also make politics the domain for struggling over them and for them. (If Nietzsche tasks philosophy with generating post-nihilist value, Weber refuses this tasking precisely in order to protect knowledge from politics. For him, the academy is a place to coolly analyze the presumptions and implications of warring value systems, not the place to spawn or promulgate them.) More than only infected by nihilism in modernity, which it is, politics for Weber is the distinctive venue for countering nihilism’s dangerous potential inversion into indifference or worse—fatalism, cynicism, frivolity, narcissism, or non-accountable deployments of power and violence. In a secular, rationalized, and nihilistic age, when religious and cultural authority have disintegrated, politics acquires unprecedented importance for the articulation, justification, contestation, and pursuit of values. Put another way, when nihilism is full-blown, ultimate values are at once politicized in a trivial way and at the same time enlarged as the ultimate stakes of political struggle. On the one hand, ubiquitous politicization (today, for
example, of consumption, diet, pastimes, pleasures, style, family form, parenting practices, lifestyle, even body type) is itself a symptom of nihilism. On the other hand, formal political life is a theater of nihilism: the political sphere is where nihilism is played out in raw form and also a site for overcoming or pushing back against nihilism through pursuit of worldly causes. In our time, both potentials are there, and routinely collide.

The paradox of the political sphere as ravaged by nihilism and as a venue for overcoming nihilism arises because, for Weber, the domain of the political is quintessentially partisan. It is by nature a sphere of contestation (over meanings and not only aims) rather than of objectivity, though it is not therefore purely subjective or reducible to interest. The relentlessly partisan nature of political life binds politics to struggles over values, but the inherently non-foundational character of values in modernity binds value to politics. Thus, Sheldon Wolin comments, for Weber, “values came to be the symbolic equivalent of politics,” which is why he sequestered them from knowledge production and teaching. But the reverse is also true: values are irreducible in politics and cannot be extinguished without extinguishing political life as such. Weber saw this threat of extinction in the possibility that politics might be overwhelmed by bureaucracy or reduced to administration, technocracy, raw interest, or power play. Moreover, as values diversify consequent to the breakdown of moral authority in modernity, politics becomes ever more important in mediating or brokering value conflicts. Thus, while Weber
INTRODUCTION

understood politics in his time to be saturated with nihilistic effects, he also saw its unique potential as a domain for articulating, mobilizing, and struggling over the question of how we should live together after answers rooted in tradition or moral-religious foundations have been undone by the related yet distinct forces of disenchantment and rationalization. At the same time, since the currency of politics is power, its ultimate instrument is violence, and its essence is partisanship, there can be no political neutrality, objectivity, or peace ever. The value struggles unfolding in its domain are eternal—cold comfort for those still invested in narratives of progress, not to mention harmony or epistemic universality.

This is the capsule version of my interpretation of Weber, and of why I think Weber’s wrestle with nihilism in politics and knowledge is useful to our predicaments in both realms today, even as we may—and I will—disagree with the prescriptions and prohibitions Weber offered in response to the condition he charted so perspicaciously. Even as we may challenge his stipulations of the very nature of knowledge (objective) and politics (state centered). And even as we may want to mobilize his insights for phenomena he abjured, such as left-political mobilizations or deep democratization.29

In the ensuing chapters, I consider each lecture in turn: first politics, then science/knowledge. This reverses the order in which Weber composed and delivered his lectures—Science in November 1917, then Politics in January 1919—but reflecting on them in this order surfaces the broader
post-nihilist project that Weber tacitly, perhaps even unconsciously, builds across these two realms. One additional note: the reader will not find a Weber scholar behind these reflections. I am indebted to the scholarship, of course, but my purpose is not to contribute to it. Rather, my aim is to think with Weber for our times, for our disturbed and disturbing world.
INDEX

action, 50
animate vs. inanimate, 4
anthropocentrism, 4
anti-democratic forces, 2–3, 10, 94, 97–100
anti-Semitism, 5
apocalypticism, 8
asceticism, 38, 72, 79, 81
authenticity, 36, 65
authoritarianism, 54
authority: challenges to, 21–22; de-throning of, 65; religious, 65, 85; in Weber, 30, 36–37

\textit{Beruf} (calling/vocation), 15–16, 50, 83–84
Brown, Wendy: \textit{In the Ruins of Neoliberalism}, 9
bureaucratic nihilism, 32
bureaucratization, 49
Bush, G. W., 114n12

centrism, liberal, 53–54
charisma: and education, 69–70, 97; and politics, 90, 91; potentiality of, 29, 53; and the soul/passions, 59; in Weber, 35, 36, 116n37, 121n14
charismatic leadership, 37, 53, 59, 91–92, 119n62
Christianity, 12, 15
civilized vs. barbaric, 4
classrooms: values in, 102; Weber on, 66, 69–71, 96. \textit{See also} universities
conjunctural analysis, 93
critical theory. \textit{See} Frankfurt School
culture and culture wars, 31, 73–74
demagoguery, 33, 36–37, 51, 71
democracy, 34, 100
desire (political), 55–56, 119n63
digitalization, 14
disenchantment, 78, 80
Dostoyevsky, Fyodor, 10

education, 69–70, 100, 107
enchantment. \textit{See} disenchantment
Enlightenment values, 1–2, 21
epistemological politics, 47–49
eschatology, in politics, 45
INDEX

ethic: absolute (Weber), 44; of conviction, 44, 45, 48; ground of, 87–88; pedagogy, 61; of responsibility, 39–41, 45, 47, 48, 117n48; of ultimate ends, 44, 48

facts: facticity, 95, 98; inconvenient, 95; vs. value, 4
false consciousness, 55
fascism, 54
fatalism, 8
financialization, 3, 14, 84, 94, 108
foreign policy, 114n13
Foucault, Michel, 7
Frankfurt School, 7
freedom, in Weber, 50
freedom and nihilism, 50
Freud, Sigmund, 26

Genealogy of Morals (Nietzsche), 25
Germany: academic life in, 64; nationalism, 7, 66; Weber on, 8
God: death of, 28, 52; in Weber vs. Nietzsche, 112n21
Google, 124n5
Gramsci, Antonio, 56, 93
Greek mythology, 30

Hall, Stuart, 56, 93, 99
heroism, 49
hierarchy in leadership, 53
higher education. See universities
Hobbes, Thomas, 27
human life, value of, 21
“human machineries” (Weber), 8, 14
humans: vs. animals, 4; and rationalization, 48; and values, 1
Humboldtian model of education, 63, 89
hyper-politicization, 31, 48, 74, 98, 115n24

In the Ruins of Neoliberalism
(Brown), 9
instrumental reason, 14
interpretation, 23
Kant, Immanuel, 38–39, 87–88, 109
knowledge: instrumentalization for power, 32; modernity’s effect on, 90; nihilism, protection from, 12; pedagogical aspects, 75; politics, contrasted with, 90; and religion, 12–13, 84–89; scientific, 75–76; subject, relation to, 72; and truth, 63; and values, 1
language, politics of, 76
leaders, as rulers, 9
leadership: charismatic, 37, 53, 59; as hierarchical, 53; Weber on, 56–57