

# Friedrich Naumann



*„That we strive  
to become as free  
as we are able.”  
(Friedrich Naumann, 1905)*

The Life and Works of Friedrich Naumann 1860–1919.

Chronicle of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom 1958–2009

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*„That we strive  
to become as free  
as we are able.“*

Friedrich Naumann. The Ideal of Freedom (1905).



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*Dr. Wolfgang Gerhardt,  
Chairman of the Friedrich  
Naumann Foundation for  
Freedom (since 2006)*

*It would appear to us that Friedrich Naumann is somebody from the past. His birth was around one and a half centuries back and he passed away 90 years ago. Many aspects of the social and political framework that defined his life and work have disappeared: the German Empire, Prussian Junkerdom, Europe's claim to world leadership, the German colonies, the structure of European world powers, etc.*

*There is no longer anybody left with personal memories of him: a different situation than when our foundation was founded 50 years ago. Is there any sense in relating the work of a political foundation to a protagonist of the 19th and 20th Centuries?*

*At first glance „no“ as some – if not even many – aspects of Naumann's political strategies are no longer up-to-date even obsolete: there are no longer different tiers in electoral rights like there used to be in Prussia, the German parliament is clearly defined in the constitution as the political decision-maker, the split among German liberals has been overcome with the founding of the Free Democratic Party 60 years ago and certainly since the merger with East Germany's liberals and finally: workers' participation has long been secured. Thus the justifiable question remains: what is still relevant in the political and social thoughts of the son of a Saxon vicar?*

*I uphold the opinion that Friedrich Naumann – in a different manner – is still very modern. I do not in the first place mean his optimistic view of the world,*

*his belief in the continual development of human society and his conviction in the creative power of freedom. This should be common ground for all liberal-minded individuals.*

*The modernity and actuality of Friedrich Naumann is for me – above all – the way he analysed the problems of his day and how he tackled them. Naumann, for example, realised very early in life that we – then as now – live in a globalised world, whose effects on a nation cannot be contained. And Naumann didn't wish to contain them anyway: „We only have the choice of remaining a small nation on the sidelines of world history or to introduce free trade.“*

*When Naumann wrote this back in 1906 it was clear to him which choice had to be taken as he recognised in free trade the „the greatest possible guarantor for social welfare“ and that is why he wrote, „Let the air be free. Let ports be free. Let us create a workshop of nations and a stockyard of produce from all regions.“ (Friedrich Naumann: ‚Neudeutsche Wirtschaftspolitik‘ – A New German Economic Policy). We should get our inspiration from Friedrich Naumann's optimism and consider the second wave of globalisation to be equally and above all a chance.*

*Yet, Friedrich Naumann did not fail to recognize the failings of Liberalism in his day. He searched for new strategies and means of action, partly tried by himself, such as in his fulminant electoral success in Heilbronn in 1907. But above all, he attempted to open up Liberalism of his day to new social groups which till then was limited to the academic and pro-property-owning classes.*

*Only a small segment of ruling Liberalism con-*

sisted of intellectuals and artists. Naumann was not simply content with repeatedly pointing this out, he wished to offer them a permanent forum in – among other places – his publications such as in ‚Hilfe‘ (Help) that he founded as a political and cultural magazine back in 1895. The ‚Deutscher Werkbund‘ which celebrated its centenary in 2007 throughout Germany, is part of this context. It is an organization set up to promote high standard design reform within industry.

From today's vantage point Naumann's aims in the ‚Werkbund‘ are less important. What is of interest, and sets an example, is rather the way that he and his compatriots, among them Theodor Heuss, succeeded in creating a network of intellectual pacemakers, creative artists and innovative industrialists that has survived many a contemporary storm till today. The original ‚Werkbund‘ is for sure still a model of how to carry liberal thinking into what appears to be non-political social circles.

Friedrich Naumann recognised a second and by far much larger group than those reached through the ‚Werkbund‘: women. They were more or less excluded from political life in those days. The first improvement in their position was achieved precisely 100 years ago with the passing of the ‚Reichsvereinsgesetz‘ (Imperial Law on Associations) a law strongly supported by Naumann.

Naumann was highly sympathetic to the women's movement in which he saw a kind of freedom movement that he wished to win over for Liberalism. This he achieved in part when one considers outstanding German liberals such as Helene Lange, Gertrud Bäumer and Marie-Elisabeth Lüders.

Friedrich Naumann was convinced that Liberalism was not a question of social background, but rather that people outside the classic middle classes would equally benefit from it. On the other hand, it is necessary for the liberals to approach them. Here a further quotation from the ‚Neudeutsche



*Wirtschaftspolitik: „For Liberalism to ensure its self-preservation it must support industrial structures, the freedom of coalitions, the defence of workers' rights and to support everything that furthers the value of the individual within the multitude of office and factory workers.“*

*This quotation underlines the fact that Naumann always strove to further develop the scope of freedom. This was for him the central aspect of modern society, no matter how much he distanced himself from or even criticised ‚Classic Liberalism‘ in specific fields. And freedom concerned each and everyone: „Freedom is a very personal affair and if this is not the case, then there can be no free nations and no free cultures.“*

*This sentence published in 1905 in ‚Ideal der Freiheit‘ (Ideals of Freedom) still stands – 100 years later – at the centre of our foundation's civic education programme. Thus, I consider it to be consistent that the term ‚freedom‘ was added to the time-honoured name of our foundation. I'm sure Friedrich Naumann would have approved as nothing has changed in his fundamental importance for our foundation's work.*

*Potsdam, August 2009*

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Wolfgang Gerhardt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

*Dr. Wolfgang Gerhardt*

Dr. Barthold C. Witte

*Friedrich Naumann:  
His Life,  
his Work,  
his Impact.*

*Revised version of a speech given on  
September 3, 1994 in Gummersbach,  
on the occasion of the 75th anniversary  
of the Friedrich Naumann's death.*



*Friedrich Naumann in 1911.*

Friedrich Naumann died on August 24, 1919 in Travemünde on the Baltic Sea. At the time of his death, he was the leader of the German Democratic Party (DDP), which had been established just barely a year prior to his death; he had also been a member of the constitutional National Assembly in Weimar, editor of the journal "Die Hilfe", and successful author of literature specialising in politics. At his death, he was only 59 years old. He is buried in Berlin, where he had been active in politics and in publicist work over the span of two decades.

What distinguishes Friedrich Naumann from the numerous, mostly long-forgotten politicians who were active during the German Empire? He had hardly any share in political power, even as a Member of Parliament in the

Reichstag. He is not well known for any great legislative work. He led the left-liberal party that he had co-founded for exactly one month. Moreover, its initial election success at the beginning of the Weimar Republic didn't last; rather, even before Hitler's rise to power, it had already turned into an agonising failure. For those who only think in categories of power, Friedrich Naumann is at best a brilliant speaker and a successful author from a long-forgotten time. So when we think of him today under the auspices of the foundation which bears his name, we must have other reasons for doing so. We would like to attend to those reasons, and to represent both the person and his life's work. Finally, we then want to ask what Friedrich Naumann has to say to us today about tomorrow.

## The Young Theologian.

Like the writer Lessing and the philosopher Nietzsche, Friedrich Naumann came from a Saxon parsonage. The house in which he was born on March 23, 1860 is still standing in Störmthal near Leipzig. At that time, the village was a wealthy one: in our time, it has been practically covered in brown coal. Both his father and grandfather were theologians – small wonder then, that their off-spring would also devote himself to theology, of course according to his own inner struggles and doubt. To be sure, the "Fürstenschule St. Afra zu Meißen" where the young Friedrich entered as a high school student contributed both to his doubt and to his resolve.



*Church in Störmthal,  
Friedrich Naumann's birthplace.*

He certainly did not have it easy there, and not just because of the severe order. Looking back on his experiences there, he would even praise its severity as a part of the "whole educational spirit" of St. Afra, which was free of pedagogical sentimentality and was "rough and tough, full of battles and all manner of romanticism". But he was a poor gymnast, a terrible singer, and fairly mediocre in languages. It also took some time for his fellow students to accept the latecomer. Nonetheless, he loved his school so much that he later thought that if he had a son who was healthy and strong, he too would have to go through the same school. Mathematics was the subject that he wanted to study above all, until the passion for questions of faith, which arose both at home and at school, eventually won out.

The future politician's preference for working with historical connections and statistical comparisons is evidence of the long-lasting fruits of St. Afra. In this respect, on the occasion of Naumann's death, his brother Johannes who was also graduate from St. Afra was justified in saying that St. Afra had lost one of its faithful sons, "who rewarded his people with what it had bestowed on him for his life." This life was colorful enough. After his studies in theology in Leipzig and Erlangen, he served for two years as chief assistant in the Hamburg Rauhes Haus, the famous establishment of the Protestant social ethicist and social practitioner Johann Hinrich Wichern.

## Public Work.

This introduction to the contemporary problems of the industrial age was followed by a four-year vicarship in the small Saxon working-class town of Langenberg, and by his first writings, beginning with a workers' catechism. Thereafter, he returned to the Home Mission, Wichern's establishment, as the spiritual counsellor for social services in Frankfurt am Main. It was at this time that Naumann began his political activity in the Christian social movement as well as his intensive publicist activity as one of their spokespeople. But soon, the young pastor dared to stand on his own two feet: in 1895, with very little money and a lot of courage, he founded his own weekly publication, "Die Hilfe". In the following year, Naumann undertook a second, even greater venture, namely, the founding of the National Social Association as a political party. Both of these ventures were followed by his retirement from



the ministry and by his relocation to the political centre of Berlin. From that time until the time of his death, Friedrich Naumann remained a publicist and a politician, both careers for him, but also callings. Admittedly, these endeavours met with both success and failure in equal measure. His journal was soon influential; however, the founding of a newspaper ran aground. His political books were all best-sellers, most of all the 1915 programmatic paper "Central Europe"; meanwhile, the National Social Association had remained completely unsuccessful in two Reichstag elections. After its dissolution and after Naumann went over to the left-leaning Liberal Association in 1903 with the majority of like-minded people, he won the 1907 election in the Reichstag – not incidentally, thanks to his young election campaign leader Theodor Heuss, in whose hometown of Heilbronn Naumann was candidate. But he remained an outsider in Parliament, and it was not until 1919, when he was elected to be the first leader of the German Democratic Party (DDP), that he accomplished the leap to the political summit. Then, weakened by war famine, a sudden and lonely death caught up with him.

*Friedrich Naumann's  
burial place in  
Berlin-Schöneberg.*

Really substantial political results were denied him. But nonetheless, as orator and as writer, he was one of the most influential men of the public life of his time. He had first gained attention as an orator at a congress for the Home Mission in Kassel in 1888, when he was just 28 years old. This was in the year of the three emperors: following the death of the very old first emperor Wilhelm, his fatally ill son Friedrich, who had been the hope of the Liberals, ruled for a mere hundred days; he was then followed by his ambitious, intelligent, and unstable son Wilhelm II. The most urgent problem of German domestic politics was the "labour question", and the young emperor decisively turned his attention toward it. At that time, anyone who tried to reconcile Christianity and socialism, workers and church with each other, and who thus attempted to overcome Marx's "secular social democracy", was really the man of the hour. As one of the matadors of the Christian social movement, young Naumann was just such a man. Or so it appeared anyway, if only for a few years, until Wilhelm II. embarked on a conservative counter-course and the Protestant church obediently followed him. Naumann must have realised that there was no place for the "Christian socialism" that he had fought for so tirelessly. One thing remained: the young rebel had brought himself and his message to the attention of the public. His

book "Jesus as a Man of the People", which appeared in 1894, reached many thousands of readers. It was not only as a consequence of these external factors that Naumann came to this Christian social experiment; he had more personal reasons as well. During the conferences of the Protestant-Social Congress (which he had also co-founded in these years), he met Rudolf Sohm and Max Weber, two of his heavyweight fellow fighters in the battle for social reforms, the one a theorist of public law, the other a national economist. Through Sohm, Naumann made the painful recognition that no political, economical, or social prescription of the day was to be won from Christianity, for example from the Sermon on the Mount. A specifically Christian politics was therefore not possible. On the other hand, Max Weber, who was at that time a young celebrity, taught Naumann to recognise power and to respect it. For him, this was the end of the politics of ideas.

Power is embodied in the State, and for Naumann and for his contemporaries that meant the German Empire. In his swiftly famous and then later notorious 1895 Freiburg speech, Max Weber described the founding of Bismarck's State as a costly and childish folly of the old German nation, "if it meant the end of and not the point of departure for a German world-power politics."

This is how the imperialism of the time sounded, and not just in Germany. Today of course, statements such as these are cause for alarm. In this respect, Naumann and many others followed this spirit of the times. Colonial and naval politics, competition with England, war against practically unarmed China, even against the Hottentots – to them, these were legitimate world politics. Achieving domestic support for these efforts took on the very meaning of social reform, and conversely, German world power was considered to be the prerequisite for social progress. One can read about this in detail in Naumann's programmatic paper for his National Social Association under the heading "Socialism for the Nation".

It is easy to wage heavy critique on all of this today. Some critics have even approximated Friedrich Naumann to Hitler, and have called him a precursor of the Nazis. In fact, there was a fairly extensive book on the subject in the former GDR. However, the Nazis themselves saw things completely differently: Theodor Heuss was allowed to publish his wonderful, still relevant 1937 biography of Friedrich Naumann only on the condition that his hero would not be associated with the National Socialism in any way.

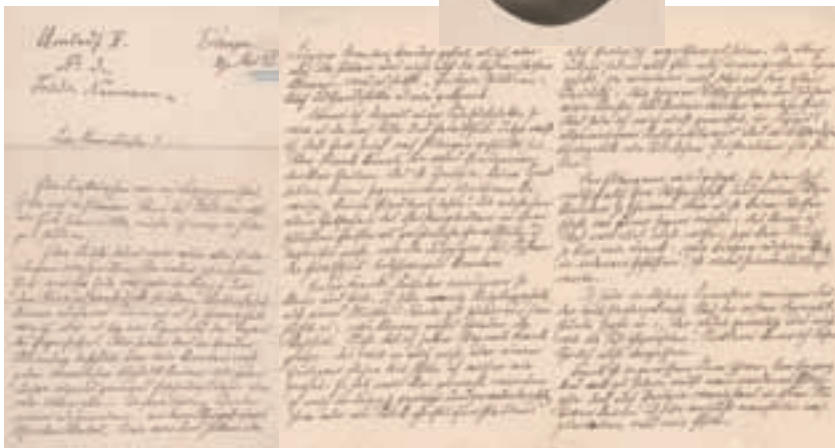
Naturally he gave this assurance happily but also credibly. It may be true that Hitler took over the imperialism of Wilhelm II. – but to entirely different purposes, namely for the implementation of his racial mania and to dominate the entire world through violence. In truth Naumann's system of thought is very far from all of this.

He remained as committed to the commandment of brotherly love as he did to the democratic goal of the rule of the people. His great book from 1900 on "Democracy and the Empire" attests to this, as does his 1902 "God's Help", a collection of his weekly articles from "Die Hilfe". As for the anti-Semitism that had been on the rise since the 1880s, it would certainly not have been entirely foreign to Naumann, given that he was influenced by the Christian socialist Adolf Stöcker. Yet later he would demonstratively leave the "Association of German Students", which he had cofounded, when it began to join forces with the anti-Jewish movement. No, in all honesty, we cannot and must not call Friedrich Naumann a precursor of the Nazis.



Students in Leipzig, 1880.

Study Report dated May 27,  
1882 from Erlangen to the  
brothers of Theological  
Association in Leipzig.  
In it Naumann criticises the  
professors in Leipzig and speaks  
of the Erlangen professor Frank  
with enthusiasm.







*Friedrich Naumann as young pastor in 1886.*

*Inaugural sermon in Langenberg on May 2, 1886.*



*The church and presumably the vicarage in Langenberg.*



The actual weakness of Naumann's political ideas lay elsewhere. On the one hand, what he had envisioned his National Social Association to be, namely a people's movement comprised of the middle and working classes, remained lamentably stuck in the German party system. He had grossly underestimated its steadfastness. Consequently, he entered into this system. In the desire for a Christian, then for a national socialism, both in clear opposition to Marxism, Naumann simply allowed the claim for a social Liberalism to follow. However, he always remained true to the principle of overcoming the class struggle through a partnership of equality between the middle class and the workers. In the first decade of his public activities he had already learned that the most important goal had to be the priority of the free individual and not the desired goal of socialism, which was to give priority to the community. Of course, the steadfastness of the social structure was contrary to his ideas once again: the left-Liberals of the Empire and the Democrats of the Weimar Republic, like the National Social Association, managed to reach only parts of the middle class and not the working class.

On the other hand, the emperor did not reconcile himself with democracy as Naumann expected he would. Wilhelm II. never summoned the author of "Democracy and the Empire" for a discussion. On the contrary: the Monarch blocked the way for long overdue constitutional reforms because he stubbornly adhered to his view that the ruler blessed by God was the highest instance of power. The much needed parliamentary rule didn't come about until the defeat of 1918. And with this, the emperor fell.

## Reform of Liberalism.

After his turn to Liberalism, Naumann directed all his hopes toward its renewal. "New German Economic Policies" is the title of his 1906 programmatic paper.

Using lively, colourful language and many statistics, it presents the technical-industrial development "from wood to steel" as the outcome of the formation of large business operations, cartels, associations. All of this was thoroughly optimistic, although certainly not without criticism of the danger that the individual would be stifled by these large organisations. This meant that the end of State socialism had come and it was time for democracy to move into the factories through the participatory rights of worker-committees. That sounds very much like the processes of organisational participation in decision-making that would be introduced in West Germany 5 decades later. No wonder that the then Social Democrats turned away from Naumann disappointed and Lujo Brentano himself, Theodor Heuss's doctoral supervisor and Naumann's intellectual guide for the "New German Economic Policies", did not know what to make of all this. In any case, Naumann's intention remained fully clear: to introduce a social element into the State-sponsored capitalism of the time, not only in the form of social security for the weak, but furthermore through a participation of those without property in industrial and political power.

To pose the question of power thus meant to challenge classical liberalism, to break out of its property-based, bourgeois narrowness, and to guide it into new, hopefully voter-rich territory.

Once again, Naumann hit a nerve of his time even though he ventured into an area that must have been quite foreign to the educated theologian and social practitioner. He certainly wasn't an expert in economic theory or in the politics of the economy, nor would he ever be. In particular, he was not a systematist nor was he a believer in the system. His strength was much more the overview, the fresh approach that could discern previously invisible connections. And as orator and as writer, he knew how to express what he discerned, so that the educated man as well as the man on the street would understand and would profit from his observations. The reports of those who heard him are unanimous, that in his time he was the most brilliant orator in the German Reichstag. Whoever reads Naumann today still gets a good sense of this impression. Moreover, he was extremely hard-working. As parliamentarian, he completely immersed himself in legislative detail work. The first of these tasks after his election concerned the law regarding the homebased cottage industry, one that for the times was highly progressive. In this work, his lively experiences from the pastoral office and from the dioceses certainly continued to serve him well.



*Atelier Heisig*

**D**RESDEN-STRIESEN



## Other Talents.

However, Naumann's most profound impact lay much more in his writings than in his parliamentary work. The more he dedicated himself to the political arena, the less he allowed himself to be taken for a narrow-minded specialist. As a pious Christian, albeit distanced from the ministry, he published his "Letters on Religion" only a year after his devotional book; in 1911, he published a collection of essays on "Spirit and Faith" and finally, in the middle of the World War, on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the Reformation, he brought out an impressive essay on freedom according to Luther. In it he wrote about the experience of faith of the young monk, about his translation of the Bible, about how a new church emerged out of his message and much more, but also this:

"Whether Luther was a writer? It was only in the second half of his life that he began writing out hymns, and these are almost all renderings of the confessions of his belief, religious and exalted words clothed so that they could be sung, like "A Solid Castle" and "From on High". But he couldn't have put his confessions into songs just so, if they did not already exist in the form of comprehensible pictures and good, contemporary notions. It is wonderful how easily he makes difficult spiritual problems so comprehensible without at the same time being superficial. It is as if everything that he writes is actually spoken face to face. He doesn't thrive merely with the paper that lies

before him; rather, he communicates directly with the people, to whom he sends out his books as if they were letters. The power of his language grows with his own greatness and in casting a glance on high, he finds expressions of joy and anger as if he were himself a great organ with innumerable registers."

He who so writes is himself a poet and is – in part at least – describing himself.

In any case, Naumann was certainly an artist. He dabbled extensively in drawing and watercolours; one of his many watercolours that he had given to friends is one of my prized possessions. He had a steady eye for form and colour and a fast hand that could capture what he saw in lines and in words. "Form and Colour" is the title of a collection of his reflections on art, which for the most part appeared in "Die Hilfe". Their subjects, ranging from Rembrandt up to Naumann's contemporaries Liebermann and Böcklin, concern mostly painting and a little sculpture; several deal with architecture, but also with the question of how one learns to draw and, at the very end, with the question of whether beautiful expression has the capacity for moral improvement. The answer is typical for Naumann, namely, a short story:

"In the train, there were two soldiers, one salesman, a postal conductor and one other person. The area was flooded in red evening light, the heath on the level mountains burned like Phoenician purple, the gravel pits were as luminous as a gold mine, old black trees stood like the remains of the era of the idols in a seraphic landscape. Nature was burning so strongly, that everyone in the train was quiet and whispered: That is beautiful! One had to feel that five artistic souls were at work here. The mere barbarian does not have such a vision."

And not the mere politician either. Friedrich Naumann was simply not a mere politician. Certainly, from 1897 he had earned his income as a political publicist, and from 1907 as a parliamentarian as well. But the so-called professional politicians of today, who are often condemned for being so narrowly focused, were foreign to Naumann. Furthermore, in the same way that he publicly spoke and wrote about questions of faith, art was also vital for him. Clarity of style was important to him, just as much in words as in artistic form. That is the reason why, from very early on, he reacted so strongly against the prevailing eclecticism of his impassioned contemporaries, especially in architecture.

He described the Berliner Dom – newly built at the time – in comparison to the "truly majestic building" of the Schlüter Palace directly across from it as "a decorative piece of furniture". His sympathies proved effective for the architects and designers whose growing opposition to the turn-of-the-century eclecticism led them to develop clear simple forms out of specific functions. In 1907, they founded the Deutsche Werkbund in Munich – Naumann, the tireless orator and organiser, was always prominent. Some years later Theodor Heuss who was, like Naumann, also a visually talented person, took over the leadership of the Werkbund for a longer period. The Bauhaus style is not the only one to have emerged from it. Industrial development of form and design is unthinkable today without the Werkbund. As Theodor Heuss had already noted in his biography, Naumann belongs to "the history of German art, if one understands this to involve not only the collection and the interpretation of artist personalities and their works, but rather also the spiritual backdrop that informs the creative work." Naumann brought a very wide audience to this background and with much success.

Advertising notice for the first edition of "Democracy and the Empire" from the year 1900.



Naumann's New Year's greeting from the year 1896.



Friedrich Naumann with "Die Hilfe" during the First World War.



„The Times. National Social Weekly Magazine“. Trial edition from September 1901.



Friedrich Naumann's artistic tendencies gave him the opportunity to work on the design of the publications of the Deutsche Werkbund, as well as on their statutes.

## „Central Europe“.

Friedrich Naumann celebrated his greatest and longest lasting book success not, finally, as a friend of the arts but as “homo politicus”: his writing on the war aims of Germany entitled “Central Europe”, that was published in 1915, was surpassed in success only by Bismarck’s “Thoughts and Memories”. The book remains controversial even up to the present day: when I undertook an attempt to critically and fairly evaluate the book some years ago for the journal “liberal”, a strong reply immediately followed in the “Journal of German and International Politics”, wherein the writer was of the opinion that Naumann, despite his Christian beliefs, had revealed himself to be not only a nationalist, but worse still, an imperialist.

Certainly, “Central Europe” is anything but a call for pacifism. Bertha von Suttner’s call, “Weapons down!” remained foreign to Naumann through his entire life, influenced as he was by Max Weber’s thinking in categories of power. First of all, the book is the product of Germany’s condition after one year of war, with surges of war-happy rhetoric here and there. Under these conditions, an intense discussion over Germany’s war goals had developed, with far-reaching demands by military rulers and their political aides for annexation: it was self-evident for them that Belgium and Poland were to be incorporated into the German Reich and that not only should the lost colonies be regained, but that

extensive areas of Africa should also be annexed to them. Against this, voices of reason were raised that strove for a peace agreement without further annexations – the 1917 political cooperation of the left-Liberals with the Centre Party and the Social Democrats resulted in the Reichstag’s later “Resolution for Peace”. With his book “Democracy and the Empire”, Naumann had given them a future-oriented vision.

Actually, the idea was that the German Reich should develop a “Central Europe” with the small states that surrounded it, especially with Austria-Hungary. Naumann’s idea was not that a purely military alliance should come into being in the heart of the continent, and also not just an association of states, but rather a stable supranational umbrella organisation that would establish a common economic policy and a common defence system. In this proposal, we can recognise the current structure and the goal-setting of West European integration in its germinal form, although, of course, in Naumann’s formulation it is restricted to questions of geographical space, in which leadership would have somehow naturally fallen to the German Reich. Thus, judgement of Naumann’s vision after two world wars, both of which centred on Germany, must remain controversial.

## In the DDP.

On the one hand, it is a sign of Naumann's visionary thinking that he saw both the coming of the end of the sovereign nation state and the necessity for supranational integration. Yet on the other hand, he never managed to free himself from the hegemonic claims of the German Reich – in this sense, he was very much involved with and dependent upon the spirit of his time.

The long course of the war and then the complete defeat in 1918 made waste of Naumann's reflections. The victor shattered the Habsburg monarchy, forced the German Reich to cede much of its territory, and ensured that its smaller neighbours would remain at a distrustful distance from German politics. They also prevented the accession of the heavily diminished Austria, something that Naumann, shortly before his death, had decisively supported, together with all the democratic politicians in Berlin and Vienna. We now know all too well just how short-sighted this political strategy of the victors was. Naumann passionately revolted against it. The outline of the Versailles Peace Treaty is the murder of the people, he cried, against which the passive resistance of an entire people must be mobilised: "We don't pay, we don't sign, until they are ready to treat us as humans," he wrote in "Die Hilfe". In the end, however, and under massive pressure from their victorious opponents, the majority in the Reichstag decided in favour of signing. Naumann and his

friends' "No" could then only be seen as a gesture of patriotism.

As all of this was happening, Friedrich Naumann was deeply exhausted, both physically and mentally. In the constitutional National Assembly which had a sitting after the destruction of the Hohenzollern in Weimar, he was a great bearer of hope. Under the pressure of a military defeat and in the middle of insurrections from both left and right, it was time to build a new republic. This task required his entire strength. Naumann also did not refuse when the newly founded German Democratic Party (DDP), the successor to the previous left-liberal party, of which he was already a member, asked him to take on the role of party leader. The party had won 18.5 percent of the votes during the election in the National Assembly and had moved into the post-war Parliament as the third-strongest Parliamentary party after the Social Democrats and the Catholic Centre. The objective was to maintain this status or even to improve on it if possible. Naumann, the advocate of the alliances between the middle class and the workers, the brilliant orator and writer, and the tireless organiser was clearly the best choice for this task. On July 21, 1919 at the Berlin DDP Party Congress, he was appointed party leader with a majority of votes. It was Naumann's first great political office. He died five weeks later.

*The Archive of German Liberalism in Gummersbach has numerous artistic works by Friedrich Naumann in its collection.*

*Friedrich Naumann's many pencil and ink drawings and watercolours created over many years, are evidence of his artistic talent.*



*Venice 1905. Ink drawing.*



*Cette, April 7, 1910. Watercolour.*



*Cette, April 7, 1910. Watercolour.*

## Bequests.

Naumann left behind three political initiatives as his direct legacy. The first continues to have an effect up to our own time, namely his great, perhaps decisive, share in the new regulation of the relation between State and Church in the Weimar Imperial Constitution. This had become necessary especially for the Protestant churches because of the destruction of the German monarchy and the resulting end of the episcopal status of the state-sovereigns. With that, the churches became independent from the State – but which form of rights should they then have?

Naumann convinced the social democracy, which had traditionally maintained a distance from the church, that it would be best for churches to become corporations under public law. And so it happened. This remains valid under constitutional law today and ever since the Unity Agreement and the accession of the GDR to the Constitution, it is valid in the eastern federal states as well.

The second legacy did not become a component of the Weimar constitution, but nevertheless it remains noteworthy: Friedrich Naumann's "An Essay on Fundamental Rights that are Comprehensible to the People". He presented this text as a motion to the constitutional committee in Weimar during a sitting of the National Assembly at the end of March 1919. It was undisputed that the Constitution should contain a

catalogue of the fundamental rights of citizens, as was already the case for the St. Paul's Church Constitution of 1849. But Naumann wanted it to be accessible to all citizens, both in content and in style. So he adopted some traditional formulae like the statement "All Germans are equal before the law." But he also formulated some of his own, for example: "Every German is valuable for the nation so long as he remains worthy of his people." Or: "The fatherland stands above the party." And also: "Order and freedom are siblings." Then, entirely relevant to our time: "To pay debts is both a public and a private duty." Equally relevant: "Questions of wages are questions of existence." Even this: "Those who do not want to work should also not eat!"

Of course, the educated constitutional lawyers did not really know where to begin with such statements. Naumann's motion did not become law. However, the essay remains thought-provoking in its intention: to articulate the rights of individuals in relation to that unassailable inheritance of classical liberalism, individual duty. According to Naumann's reasoning, the greater the rights of individual citizens, the greater the demands that the State can place on him. Ideas such as these should surely be food for thought for us today.

The most important legacy from the last years of Naumann's life lies in what he said to his contemporaries

and also what he says to us today regarding civic education. He always saw himself as much more of an educator of the people than as a mere power person. In both his oration and in his writing, he always tried to lead his fellow citizens, both young and old, into political maturity. In the final year of the war and in view of the impending defeat, he developed his plan for a "Free German Academy for Politics" in four "Letters to Young Friends", a plan for a citizens' academy that would serve to educate for democracy. To be sure, he knew that one could only learn politics up to a certain point; in politics, he wrote to his young friends, "all know-how is only a set of tools and teaching aids that must of course be present and whose application must be learned; no creative strength comes from them though and no clear decisiveness either. Politics is never without good education, but on its own it is not knowledge; rather, an ability and a will must be much more deeply imbedded in human nature than can be imparted by hours of instruction." Yes, politics is an art, innate and not acquired, though of course it is put to work through education. Education regarding politics is thus needed so that citizens can turn their abilities into a politics of engaged action.

These insights garnered from his own experience had very practical consequences: in the same year, a series of citizens' courses for young people was established in Berlin and was

supported by Naumann's friend and sponsor Robert Bosch. It was not to be a school of a political party; rather, it was to create forums for open dialogue for the use of the young democracy. In 1920, after Naumann's death, the German Academy for Politics developed out of it. Theodor Heuss taught there until 1933, at which time it was overtaken by Hitler's followers and robbed of all its significance. The failure of the Weimar Republic due to a lack of democracy clearly demonstrated that civic education is a long-term project. At any rate, following its reestablishment after the catastrophe of World War II, the Berlin Academy offered substantial numbers of young people the chance to take on political responsibility. Among them were many political refugees from the Soviet-occupied zone and the GDR; my friend Karl-Hermann Flach was among them. Finally, the Academy ended up at the Free University in Berlin as the Otto Suhr Institute, a development that was not to the benefit of its original goals. But that is another story.

What the passage of time had in store for Friedrich Naumann's Citizens' Academy could, in sense, stand as symbol for the consequences of his entire life's work. Already in his own lifetime, success and failure were always found in close proximity. In this sense, after their initial successes, the republic that he had co-founded and the party that he had led both came to a disgraceful end in the turbulence of the ensuing political disaster.



*Reichstag vote 1903, after the election defeat.*





*Members of the National Social Organisation 1896. Adolf Damaschke (lower right), Hellmuth von Gerlach (second from lower left), Friedrich Naumann (middle upper), Adolf Pohlmann, Wilhelm Ruprecht, Martin Wenck (second from left, upper).*



*Group photo of the members of the National Social Association on the steps of the café Lüderitz in Werder in 1900.*

## Naumann's Legacy.

Yet Naumann's life and works continued to have significance, especially for the many young people on whom he had a lasting influence. Theodor Heuss is the first among these people.

Throughout his life, Heuss cultivated the public memory of Friedrich Naumann, his honoured, even loved, political and personal mentor. This began immediately after Naumann's death, when Theodor Heuss edited "Shapes and Shaper", a collection of Naumann's "biographical portraits", his historical-biographical sketches. In the preface, Heuss evokes the oral power of expression in these texts and their special place in Naumann's oeuvre, particularly because they concentrated on people and not on things. Heuss: "That he looked people in the eye and really spoke to them shows what was truly noble about Naumann: the deep respect that he had for greatness and for historical performance both at home and abroad, the warm opinion that he had for bourgeois efficiency, the affable frame of mind that was gracefully and willingly thankful".

It was already clear that Theodor Heuss thought to remember the entirety of Naumann, not simply Naumann the politician. This intention set the tone for the extensive Naumann biography that Heuss published in 1937. In his introductory essay to the 1968 paperback edition of the Naumann biography, Werner Stephan, the first president of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, vividly portrayed the serious difficulties that this publication encountered. As Heuss writes in his memoirs, he saw the success of this work as a source of one of the greatest joys of his life: "The duty of my existence seemed to me to be fulfilled by this effort."

Heuss wanted to portray the entirety of the man in his time, as well as his entire oeuvre. Of course, his perspective of the politician Naumann was also coloured by the times, by the collapse of the Weimar Republic that Naumann had co-founded, and by Hitler's victory and its consequences. Therefore a portrayal of the politician was not placed in the foreground. Naumann's "historical puissance," Heuss summarizes in the conclusion, "is of a spiritual and moral kind." In this, even an attentive reader of that time would have understood it as a counter-portrait to the National-Socialist present in which it was written. Heuss goes on to say that Naumann "had fulfilled his task, in that he bequeathed the simple

example of dedication and truthfulness ... The final hierarchy appropriate to him is the moral one. In the face of this, even reverence fails to find the adequate words." A noteworthy conclusion to a biography published in Germany in 1937!

These ideas served to establish a continuity, even after the huge catastrophe of the war and the total defeat. In the first speech after his election on September 12, 1949 the Federal President of the newly-founded Federal Republic of Germany expressly remembered two men who had shaped his thinking and his work: his father, who embodied the democratic tradition of 1848, and Friedrich Naumann, "who gave form to my growth and without whom I would not be who I am." He thanked Naumann for "the knowledge that the nation can live only when it is supported by the love of the masses." He also cited one of Naumann's well-known core statements: "To declare oneself in favour of nationality and of the humanisation of the masses

are for us only two sides of one and the same thing."

It would be hard to imagine a politician uttering such a statement today. But one must remember the context in which he was speaking: destroyed factories and cities, uprooted people, mass poverty and unemployment, intense social unease and Germany's complete division. The fear of terrible unrest, even before the war, was greater for most people than the hope for peaceful development. Now, contrary to this position, Heuss said after his election: "We have the task of finding our way back into the political sphere, appropriately and adequately, and, once there, to build up the dignity that we, deep in our souls, never lost." Heuss was convinced that only at this meta-level, beyond the timid regrowth of wealth, would the Germans achieve renewed health. Friedrich Naumann – the realist influenced by Christian faith, the sympathetic pastor of the working class, the reformer working for a reconciliation of the classes, the people's teacher of a human readiness for improvement – must have been helpful in this regard.

Heuss was not alone in this hope, nor was he alone in his recourse to the reformer Naumann. The first Naumann renaissance took place in the Soviet-occupied zone in Germany very soon after the end of the war and the dictatorship. Much to the indignation of the German Communists and the occupying power, the extremely successful Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) made him into one of their forefathers. Had Naumann not introduced the social aspect into German liberalism once again? To cite him meant to declare one's allegiance to modern liberalism and at the same time to distance oneself from the capitalist degeneration of liberal views – and with that, to go a distance to meet the occupiers. What to the CDU of the east was "Christian Socialism", was to the LDP a commitment to social reform in the spirit of Naumann and to the basic reform of his fellow combatant Damaschke. The numerous streets in many GDR cities that were named after Naumann testify to this. However, under the sign of "fully developed socialism" and the completion of the block integration of the LDP, most of the streets were later renamed.

Naumann the social reformer was also a political force in the German West, as a witness for the "third way" between capitalism and socialism. In this regard, two leading Protestants declared their allegiance to his inheritance during the 50s and 60s: Eugen Gerstenmaier and Erhard Eppler. In a 1958 programmatic speech at the Kiel Federal Party Congress, Gerstenmaier attempted to legitimize the Christian-social position of his party through recourse to Naumann. In 1961, after he had entered the SPD, Eppler published an analysis of Naumann's heritage under the heading "Liberal and Social Democracy". Despite significant differences in their party-political orientation, social engagement lay close to both of their hearts. This was grounded in the Protestant-social tradition to which Naumann doubtlessly belonged, especially in the first phase of his public engagement. Regarding Naumann's later turn toward liberal politics, neither of them have much to say.



*Federal President  
Theodor Heuss in 1950.*



*Theodor Heuss in the  
Constitutional Council  
and with  
Federal Chancellor  
Konrad Adenauer.*



## The Foundation.

Through Theodor Heuss, Friedrich Naumann was raised to the status of one of the forefathers, so to speak, of the new Republic. This was primarily a consequence of the founding of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation in 1958. The history of this founding and of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation as a whole has yet to be written (a pressing need!). However, as a witness to the founding, I can contribute some preliminary observations.

The year before, on September 15, 1957, the election day of the third German Bundestag, the citizens of the German Federal Republic furnished Konrad Adenauer's Christian Democratic Party Alliance with an absolute majority of votes and seats in Parliament, whereas the opposition party, the FDP, was punished with a clear loss of votes. Early in 1956, the Liberal Party had been pushed out of the government (incidentally, against Heuss's will), had become divided because of this and, with only 7.7 percent of the votes, it braced itself for an existential crisis. How to overcome this? Above all, how to win the younger generation? Some of the thoughtful party members, among them FDP party leader Werner Stephan and his potential successor Karl-Hermann Flach, answered: through the work of civic education and through serious reflection on the political platform. Two things are to be understood here: firstly, political knowledge was to be imparted to the younger generation in order to make

them capable of political engagement. Secondly, they wanted to initiate an extensive debate over the intellectual foundations and the political goals of liberal politics. The one was supposed to stimulate the other. Up until then, there had been no systematic educational work and no setting of long-term goals in the arduously re-established post-war liberal environment. The 1957 "Berlin Platform" of the FDP, its first extensively developed political platform ever, was hardly more than a summary of already existing positions. The school seminars were only in their initial stages and were restricted mostly to preparations for election campaigns. As a consequence both educational and platform work had to be newly established. Both, though, had to be free from the constraints of the party line: they had to be much more open, and therein attractive also for people who did not yet belong to any political party.

For its founders, the best way to ensure this independence was to give both of these projects over to a foundation. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation was the model for this, although it had been organised as a registered organisation in the meantime.

On the grounds of their decades-long relationship, Werner Stephan appealed to Theodor Heuss, who reacted approvingly. He was not indifferent to what would become of politically organised liberalism, although his presidential

office made his public neutrality a duty. He used his many various contacts to spiritual, academic, and political life in order to gather a circle of like-minded people for the foundation's Board of Trustees, its Board of Directors, and its Advisory Council. They had to be liberals, with or without official party membership. The list of founders extends from professor Walter Erbe to the leading culture critic for the FDP Paul Luchtenberg, and from the historian Hermann Heimpel and bishop Hermann Kunst to Richard von Weizsäcker, who was at that time still without a party.

It was also Heuss who gave the foundation its name. He did not want his own name to stand as the foundation's honorary patron; it was only after he left the presidential office that he agreed that his name would be used after his death for the Educational Centre of the foundation, which was first opened in 1967. He hinted at Friedrich Naumann and especially at the Citizens' Academy that Naumann had founded shortly before his death, and that formed the basis for the later Berlin Academy for Politics. Heuss had worked on its development until the Nazis barred him from the teaching profession in 1933. As a refugee from the Soviet zone, Karl-Hermann Flach had received his ideas-based political formation at the re-established academy. At that time it was under the leadership of Hans Reif, one of the members of the founders' circle of the foundati-

on. In this way, the bestowal of the name also represented a conscious act of continuity.

Furthermore, the project goals of the foundation in the post-war period were not so very different from what Naumann had conferred upon his foundation, which had been financed by Robert Bosch. Both times, democracy had developed upon the Germans after a lost war. Whereas in other countries the embodiment of liberal democracy was brought about either by a long tradition or by a revolutionary break, Germany had to catch up through a real education of the people. "Education for Politics", the title of Naumann's last writing, resonates with this goal; it was a text in which he set the aspirations of the Citizens' Academy. In four speeches to his young friends, Naumann explained what politics after the war should look like.

Already earlier in 1914, he who was as successful as an orator as he was a publicist had expanded on not less than a hundred points on the art of oration, less on its theory and more on its practice. This is still worth reading today.

*"We cannot live without general political ideas, even though we recognise the purely relative character of these ideas. Every epoch has its own general ideas, but at the same time, every epoch also bears the past, the present, and the future within it. So, at the same time, it has ideas that are at first yet illusions, ones that become truth, and then fade away again. A certain stage in the development of the first idea is called utopia."*

*From: Friedrich Naumann,  
Illusions in Politics (1904).*

*"And when we complain that the progress of freedom in the German people doesn't seem to be in a hurry, the observation of what we see when we look into the very bottom of our souls forces us to consider how many poor utilitarian souls are willing to bow to every kind of serfdom so long as they are only left in peace. No one wants to be compromised, to get knocked around, to be bothered, to be uncomfortable. However, this complacency damages freedom in every sense. The first thing to do in order to assist universal freedom is that we strive to become as free as we are able."*

*From: Friedrich Naumann,  
The Ideal of Freedom (1905).*



*"Just as there are small-minded aesthetes, there are also small-minded politicians. The one labours away at exhibitions and the other in ministries or in chambers. Both are hollow because they are not overwhelmed by the greatness of their task, but rather are only serving themselves with much fuss and bawling. This sort can ruin any politics or art, and part of the mistrust of politics in aesthetic circles is the low estimation of representatives of the political calling. But would it be right to judge the arts according to their helots? Is it right to take the measure of politics with such standards? Everyone who is near to it knows how much work is involved. Have respect for this work of maintaining the people and of constituting the State!"*

*From: Friedrich Naumann,  
The Aesthetic Person and Politics  
(1908).*

*"There are some people who believe that there is nothing more to nationality than playing the role of the oppressed and launching complaints in every direction regarding all the evil things that other people have done to us. The entire catalogue of eternal nationalistic complaints is at the same time a catalogue of feelings of powerlessness. But those who are secure and free in their being German, those who trust their State and believe in its greatness and future will have enough inner freedom and patience to allow for and to facilitate the freedom and development of not only the allophone nations beside us but also of those among us if it is necessary."*

*From: Friedrich Naumann,  
On the Way to a People's State  
(1917).*

## The Cultivation of Tradition.

When Theodor Heuss lent his weight to the proceedings of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation's first public conference that took place half a year after the ceremonial inauguration of the foundation in Heuss's official seat on May 19, 1958, the title of the speech could be none other than "The Legacy of Friedrich Naumann". In it, though, Heuss presented anything but an exercise in hero-worship. For his audience, among whom was Eugen Gerstenmaier, he portrayed a passionate contemporary of the era of Wilhelm II., a man who in the course of his public work had repeatedly changed and who had always lived within the irresolvable tension between the Christian commandment of love and the claims to power of every statehood. Heuss advised against "painting Naumann as a Liberal out of the German picture book" and equally against understanding his political ideas – for example those concerning Central Europe – as still literally useful. "His works," added Heuss, "are not to be used as a slogan booklet for current modes of conduct." His actual legacy lies much more in the fact "that this man, who was such a brilliant teacher, always remained a student of reality so that he would be confronted with a moral decision within the freedom offered by it."

This is still valid today even under the conditions of a world and of a country which have changed very much since then. But already in Heuss's time, Friedrich Naumann had receded into the shadows of history. Although this is even more the case now, it certainly did not prevent the Friedrich Naumann Foundation from seeing it as their duty to publish and edit the newly collected work of their honorary patron. Of course, this project only involved a selection of his writings but nonetheless it comprises six volumes. It appeared beginning in 1964 in the West German Press under the academic supervision of Heinz Ladendorf, Alfred Milatz, Theodor Schieder, and Walter Uhsadel. Theodor Heuss's introduction dates from November 1963, only a few weeks before his death. In order to complete this project, in 1968 the foundation arranged for a third edition of Heuss's biography of Naumann published together with introductory and explanatory texts by Alfred Milatz and Werner Stephan in the Siebenstern paperback series.

The later effects of great personalities sometimes travel along strange paths. In Naumann's case, he was often cited as a forerunner to the Social-Liberal Coalition in the public political debates of the late 60s and early 70s. Had he not fought for such a coalition even before World War I. with his watchword, "From Basserman to Bebel"? Had he not

been an early advocate of organisational consensus under the watchword, "Factory Democracy"? From this vantage point, the 1971 FDP Freiburg Platform must have appeared as a direct continuation of Naumann's organisational reform of German liberalism.

I admit to being not entirely innocent in this respect. One must admit that this portrayal does not reflect the whole Naumann – not the early supporter of Stöcker's Christian socialist conservatism, not the later co-author of the 1917 "great coalition" against military rule and in favour of the negotiated peace that led to all the parties that supported the State in the Weimar coalition. But this is what happens when great names get used for political purposes. In Naumann's case, this deployment meant that after the 1982 change in the coalition, many liberals did not even consider the great man to be worthy of citation. At certain times in the past even the foundation that bears his name gave the impression that it didn't really know what to do with its honorary patron. Since then, and much to its own benefit, the foundation has begun to think better of Naumann.

The task of the historian under such well-known conditions is, as Lichtenberg once said, to thrust the torch of truth right into the crowds even if one beard or another might get scorched by it. To be sure, the political exploitation of the past by the political motives of the present is not prevented by this, but the much-needed historical foundation of the second German democracy is better served when its predecessors, to whom Friedrich Naumann belongs, are understood in all their complexity.

Thus, Friedrich Naumann has certainly earned a place of honour in the varied history of German democracy. Indeed, in all of his many dimensions, Naumann is not easily forced into the narrowness of a particular party designation. In the same respect, his very personal piety, influenced by the cultural Protestantism of the time, is unsuitable for any one school of theology or another to adopt as their own. The truly special thing about him is precisely that he never belonged to any "school", that he simply never saw himself as a man who followed leaders, and that he always refused to remain true to ideas that he had tried out and had not found to be compelling. He had neither "students" nor followers; rather, he always maintained the freedom for renewed reflection and for the public rethinking of his position when the situation demanded it of him.

*"Education for liberalism is in no way merely the education of members of parliament; at a much higher level, it is about educating the people for liberal thinking and action.*

*Even if one could make all of the current Members of Parliament disappear through a trapdoor and put other men in their places, the end result would be the same, since the new men would only be copies of the national tradition that they are called upon to represent. One would do well, therefore, to stop criticising only individual men, as if everything was at hand to get a successful German liberalism on its feet tomorrow, if only they wanted to!*

*A people that is strong enough to develop a new form of leadership out of its own ranks already has the men that it needs, but what is still lacking today is a broad, general flow of liberal thought. That is the reason for the slow pace of progress.*

*This must be worked on, not in bitterness and discord, but rather in that reciprocal respect that simply cannot be realised without the difficult task of education."*

*From: Friedrich Naumann,  
German Liberalism (1909).*

## Liberal Visions.

What then constituted his greatness and his enduring significance? For his close contemporaries, it was above all the radiance of his personality that created admirers out of the intellectual elite of his time. At the same time, he was highly persuasive both in his spoken and written language. Not least of all, in all that he did he embodied the desire of both the best minds of his time and of broad classes of people, namely to overcome the class struggle from above as from below, and to reconcile the State with its citizens.

It might be the case that today, under so many transformed relationships, his significance is simply an historical one. Despite all the differences and the tensions between the wealthy and the poor that become especially visible in times of economic recession like those of recent years, our German and European communities are no longer influenced by the class struggle. As well, even before Naumann's death, the confrontation with the authoritarian Hohenzollern monarchy had ended when the last emperor fled to Holland to escape defeat. This really is just history now. The same goes for the debate about central Europe – it did flare up again in the 80s, fuelled by Hungarian, Polish, and Czech intellectuals in their struggle against eastern Soviet power and its rulers. However, with the collapse of Communism, this too has been overcome: our neighbours to the east no longer aspire to Central Europe

but rather to the NATO and to the European Union. Furthermore, the economic policies of today have completely different problems to solve than those at the beginning of the last century. And we liberals of the present day are certainly very distant from Naumann's enthusiasm for mass production and large organisations.

What then is left of what Friedrich Naumann began, what he stood for, and what he embodied? It is not only in Germany that liberalism is no longer considered relevant, just as was already the case at the beginning of the last century, when Naumann joined progressive liberalism. Naumann's response to this: "A general German liberalism is needed once again, a people's party in which democracy and nationalism reside next to each other, a broad and creative party full of new ideas for the majority." According to Naumann then, the doors had to be opened so that the spirit of free strength that wanted to move forward could do so; the desire for political power had to be instilled in the three million liberal voters.

To achieve that end, liberalism as a party had to be better organised in order to be a contender in democratic competition with other parties. As well, in their striving for this, it had to be only a question of the well-being of the individual and his freedom. "Liberalism," Naumann said, "develops on the basis that not only does the individual person want his

own independence, but rather that he also wants his neighbours to have their independence as well." Further: "Freedom is a completely personal matter. If this is not the case, then there are no free countries and no free cultures."

Naumann didn't shy away from a lofty and passionate style when he spoke of freedom or of his vision of a society of free men. He was a credible witness to this freedom because he so clearly vouched for it with his whole person. Politicians today lack this credibility all too often. We should – even must – demand this of them. It does not depend on whether politicians pursue politics alongside their career or whether their career is politics. Naumann himself became a career politician and turned sharply against the dignitary-tradition of the liberal parties, which he saw as no longer suitable for the present. Just as little does Naumann's credibility have to do with his persistent flexibility. Naumann changed his views often enough throughout the course of his life, either due to better insights or because of changed circumstances. Perhaps then his credibility has much more to do with his commitment to ethical standards. In Naumann this commitment developed out of his Christian faith, but of course it can have other foundations as well. Only one thing is sure: politics without ethical commitment ends in complete arbitrariness.

Another source of Naumann's credibility lay in his capacity to develop long-term visions without ever losing his grounding in reality. The establishment of a political programme always depended for him on how its principles measured up to reality – not to allow the given reality to fall into oblivion, but rather to be able to do practical politics. At the same time, liberal politics ought not to merely think ahead for every four-year term, or from month to month, or even to react from headline to headline, but rather to take the vision of a free, open society of independent citizens seriously and to develop from this a politics for the coming years as a politics of what is now possible. The basic programme of the German Liberals adopted in Wiesbaden in 1997, which moved the 1971 Freiburg theses and the 1985 Saarbrücken "Liberal Manifesto" into new territory, can open the way to this possibility.

Finally, the task that Naumann set for political liberalism remains as yet unfulfilled, namely, to become a true party for the people. I don't mean this in the customary sense of the term first used by the CDU and then by the SPD, wherein a party of the people is nothing more than a tug-of-war or the lowest common denominator between large social powers.

In Naumann's sense of the term, a party of the people means much more than this: it is one that can and does gather support for its key ideas from people of all classes, the primary of these ideas being the idea of freedom. German political liberalism is still quite far from this goal. It remains an open question whether or not it seriously intends to take this route. In any case, it is the most central task of the foundation that bears Friedrich Naumann's name – innovative thinking, namely along liberal lines. The other task is to equip as many people as possible with their political responsibility the best we can, in the spirit of Naumann's Citizens' Academy.

When Theodor Heuss called the Friedrich Naumann Foundation into life, he presented his teacher as a model, but he warned against making its honorary patron into a catechism that is valid on a literal level. In his every fibre, Friedrich Naumann was a man of his time. As such Heuss's warning applies equally to us today. However, what Max Weber wrote to Naumann's widow immediately after his death remains more valid than ever in times of growing political ennui. He wrote: "You know that we loved him deeply, beyond what he meant to us as a politician, as a cultured man, or as a German. The proud humbleness of his character

did not permit us to tell him what his gallantry, composure, warmth, and fullness offered to us personally, or how noble he was in the discussions and the battles of our public lives, or how much greater his existence was than his results, and his result still greater than his public success ... his greatness didn't lie in what he wanted but rather in how he wanted it and how he pursued his goals. The example that he gave did not have an immediate effect, at least not what its true worth deserved. But nevertheless, it has not been lost. What is not lost is above all the fact that a person so strongly stood his ground in a time that was not made for him. Either he came too early or he came too late. All the same: that he was once here is something that, for all of us, can never be lost."

Dr. Jürgen Frölich

*100 Years  
Later*

*or*

*Naumann's Relevance  
to the Present.*



*Friedrich Naumann was without doubt a "Wilhelminer". Historically, his political work largely coincides with the reign of the last German monarch (1888 – 1918), whose name has come to define the era. Many aspects of Naumann's political thought are also bound up with the era of Wilhelm II. Eighty years after Naumann's death, not only has the Empire long disappeared, but so too has the State that is associated with it, the "German Reich". Social, economic, and political circumstances have also been radically transformed since Naumann's time. What does his work, which began at the end of the 19th century and ended in the first quarter of the 20th century, still have to say to citizens at the beginning of the 21st century? Does it still have significance?*

*From a liberal perspective, Naumann has certainly bequeathed much to us, and there are many areas in which his thought continues to be highly relevant. I will introduce three examples that will allow us to draw connections between Naumann's time and our own, over a century later.*

## The Naumann Circle.



*Martin Wenck (1862–1927), editor in chief, Naumann biographer.*



*Friedrich Weinhausen (1867–1925), social political publicist, M. d. R. (1910–1920).*



*Hellmuth von Gerlach (1866–1935), Editor of the Berlin "Welt am Montag" (1919–1933).*



*Gottfried Traub (1869–1956), minister, Member of Parliament for the Liberal Party and then for the German National Party.*



*Paul Rohrbach (1869–1956), Protestant theologian and political publicist „The German idea“.*



*Eugen Katz (1881–1937), Editor of "Die Hilfe".*



*Paul Göhre (1864–1928), minister, Member of Parliament of the SPD (1903–1930).*



*Wilhelm Heile (1881–1969) editor of "Die Hilfe", M.d.R. of the DDP (1919–1924).*

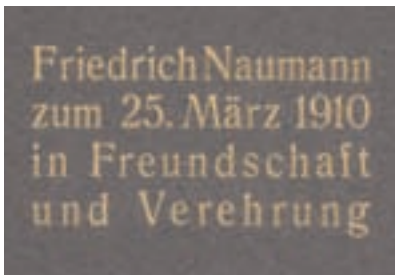


*Wilhelm Cohnstaedt (1880–1937), until 1933 political editor of the Frankfurter Zeitung.*



*The Brentano family, Friedrich Naumann, and Elly Knapp 1903.*

With that, I mean to invoke the network around Naumann, the full extent of which has only recently become apparent. Naumann was at the centre of a wide circle of like-minded people and friends that extended from the high bourgeoisie and the educated middle class right through to the working class. This network originally developed out of Naumann's circle of fellow students in St. Afra and the so-called "wild youths" in the Protestant-Social Congress, those who like Naumann did not want to get swept up in the conservative, even anti-Semitic, channels of Adolf Stöcker.



*Friedrich Naumann on the 25th of March 1910 in Friendship and Admiration.*

The "Naumann circle" achieved its organisational form from the "National Social Association", but it lived on informally after this association came to an end. Famous contemporaries Max Weber and Lujo Brentano and rising thinkers Theodor Heuss and Elly Knapp belonged to this Naumann circle both at that time and later. Others were also there, who would later go in entirely different political directions, like Gustav Stresemann for instance.

The circle had far-reaching consequences right up until the time of the German Republic; some people out of his circle were even among those who founded the Friedrich Naumann Foundation in 1958. In total, this group must have comprised up to 1,700 people, all of whom stood in greater or lesser proximity to Naumann. However, given that this was an era that knew no electronic means of communication, such an informal association was extraordinary, especially since Naumann's undis-



*Gustav Stresemann  
(1878-1929).*



*Elly Heuss-Knapp  
(1881-1952),  
Teacher, economist,  
first "First Lady."*



*Martin Rade  
(1857-1940),  
Protestant minister  
and publicist.*



*Walter Goetz  
(1867-1958),  
Professor of History.*

puted charisma was effective almost exclusively in his personal addresses, be it in speeches and lectures or in small circles. The Naumann circle of friends extended over the entirety of Germany and into Austria, and formed the source from which the

political personnel and the publicists of left-liberalism were recruited between 1903 and 1933. This gives us much to think about in terms of how one can provide liberalism with a firm social foundation, one which is independent of all utilitarian political

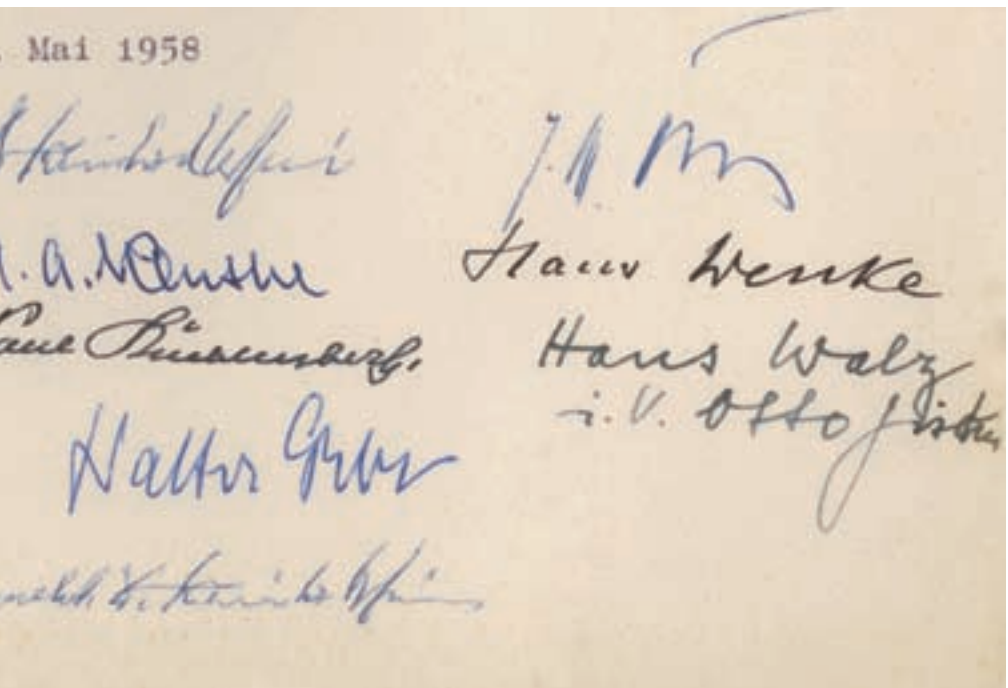


*The signatures of the founders on  
the memorandum of incorporation  
of the Friedrich Naumann  
Foundation from May 19, 1958.*

thinking, and how one can create the conditions for a liberal elite.

In different ways, organised liberalism tries to maintain connections with this great tradition today, in order to give liberal-minded citizens even outside of a formal party membership a political-organisational home base. Especially for the modern individualistic people of our time, these informal and loosely organised ties are far more important than the classical system of party membership. In many ways, the "Naumann circle" is the model for this kind of politics, something like the "liberal network" of the FDP, the alumni organisation of the Friedrich Naumann

Foundation, the "Association of Liberal Academics", and the "Society of Friends and Patrons of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation". All of these organisations of liberal citizens contribute to the development of liberal ideas and beyond that, they provide ongoing support for them. For instance, the "Friends and Patrons" financially support the work of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation and that of organised liberalism. In modified form, the Naumann circle lives on in initiatives like these.



# *Renewal of Liberalism.*



*DDP group in the German National Assembly, June 1919.*

At the turn of the 20th century from the 19th, Friedrich Naumann began rallying for the renewal of German liberalism both at the level of content and of organisation. In 1906 he published a series of articles under the title "The Renewal of Liberalism", which was soon found in the form of a best-selling brochure entitled "A Political Waking Call". What is of lesser importance today is the kind of party-platform and tactical goals that Naumann had set for the Liberals.

Yet the important social priorities that he ascribed to the liberal project continue to be relevant: he wanted to loosen liberalism from the stiffness of the property-owning, educated



*Election in Heilbronn 1907.*

middle class and to make it become sensitive to the needs, the worries, and the desires of the majority of German people. That might strike many an economic Liberal today as quite foreign. But one should consider Naumann's sense for reality, which made it apparent to him that liberal goals can only be realised where they find sufficient social support. His conviction – that fidelity to principles must be combined with an understanding of political possibilities and that also the most convinced liberal citizen must not shy away from providing organisational support – could not be more true today, one hundred years later.



*Pamphlet regarding the right of women to vote, 1913.*



Election speech, 1907.



Friedrich Naumann in front of the Reichstag in 1919.







*August Bebel, Werner Sombart, and Friedrich Naumann on the way to the SPD Party Congress in Breslau, 1895.*

In addition, Naumann's conviction that political platforms alone are not enough for political success is still relevant today. It is almost as important to have strategic ideas as to how one can bring as many people to the political programme as possible. In this sense, he was superior to all of his Liberal contemporaries. For the political constellation of his time, the motto "From Bassermann to Bebel" – the watchword for the formation of a great reform alliance of the Liberal Party, the National Liberals and the "reformist" Social Democrats – provided Naumann with both a handy formulation as well as a multidimensional vision of how the politics of the era of Wilhelm II. could be transformed according to his ideas.



*Handwritten notes from the Reichstag.*

From this perspective it is no wonder that whenever the liberals in the Federal Republic try to improve their position, they directly or indirectly take up Naumann's ideas. This was entirely clear during the discussions that ultimately led to the Freiburg Platform of the FDP in 1971.



The FDP's internal debates and resolutions in the more recent past also stand in the tradition of Naumann's methods. For with its "Wiesbaden Principles" of 1997, the FDP did exactly what Friedrich Naumann had set as a task for forward-thinking Liberals in 1906: "The idea of liberalism must first, and always, be worked out anew".

Photo: dpa, Martin Athenstädt.



*1990 Federal Party Congress of the FDP in Hannover: the Liberals were the first to integrate to form a German-wide party.*

Similarly, this is also the case for the lively discussions around "Project 18", the FDP goal for the election results in the Bundestag election of 2002, setting it well beyond the 10 percent mark. Certainly, this has no resonance at the level of content but is rather an echo of Naumann's strategic methodical procedure. To be sure, it is just as disputed both inside and outside the liberal camp as was Naumann's project of a "Coalition from Bassermann to Bebel". To many, this too sounded utopian in its time, but it represented an important

milestone in German domestic politics for the medium term. Just as then, it remains decisive to set goals and to begin the process of political change so that perspectives can be opened up for the many urgent and necessary political reforms in Germany.

## *Civic Education.*



*German Academy for Politics, Berlin, Schinkelplatz 6, located in the "Alte Bauakademie" (built by Karl Friedrich Schinkel) between the university and the palace at the Werderscher Markt. The first Citizens' Academy as defined by Friedrich Naumann.*

For the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, it is only natural that Naumann's reflections on and his engagement with civic education would ultimately stand at the centre of their work and of their cultivation of tradition. For his entire life, Naumann understood himself – as Ralf Dahrendorf once expressed it – as “an educator of the people”.

Of course, this is not surprising for a pastor, even if Naumann stands as an exception among his contemporaries in his engagement with and for the “little people”. In his later work as publicist and politician, he always maintained this emphasis on pedagogy. His writings are generally held to be almost always comprehensible, without at the same time losing their level of intelligent guidance and without a simplification of their formulae: Naumann wanted to be popular but not a populist.



*Book cover of „Patria. Yearbook of Die Hilfe“. Year 1, 1901.*

Already comparatively early he had begun to reflect on how more people could be encouraged to take part in political discussions and in decision-making processes between elections: "The nation, which one so often praises for its thoroughness, is not yet ready to deeply examine its own fate." For Naumann, one way to bring the citizen to a greater engagement was through "educating for politics" or, expressed in modern terms, through civic education. The

extent to which this occupied him is clear from the fact that during the difficult time of the First World War, Naumann pressed forward with his reflections on this theme, not only conceptually but also entirely practically: the financial support of Robert Bosch made it possible to open the "Citizens' Academy" in the summer of 1918.



First curriculum of the "Citizens' Academy".

Naumann had already stipulated its programme in his four "Speeches to Young Friends". In these, he defined politics as "life experience in relation to the State". On the one hand, according to Naumann, politics was amenable to pedagogy but on the other hand, he also conceived it as an art to which one had to be born and which was "made functional only through education". It was fully clear to Naumann that one had to distinguish between those who participate in politics in the future. In this sense it was an elite institution; in Naumann's writings, however, the second aspect of effectiveness for the masses also played an important role. The "Citizens' Academy" was renamed the "German Academy for Politics" after Naumann's death and, after the phase of political rewiring following 1945, it moved to the Free University where it continues to exist under the name of Otto Suhr Institute. At the very least, it maintains an intellectual-conceptual connection to the Friedrich Naumann Foundation of today. In its civic education, broad political development is linked to the support of the rising liberal generation: the scholarship programme for liberal-minded and academically talented young people that was created in 1973 can be understood as the development of a political elite; today, the Academy supports about

800 German and foreign students as well as doctoral candidates.

From the very beginning, "civic education for all" counted among the central projects of the foundation; in the last 50 years, this programme has become more and more extensive and the methods more and more refined, right up to a virtual programme on the Internet that is currently being developed. And in the Berlin "Citizens' Academy" or, between the wars, the "German Academy for Politics" has continued in the form of the Gummersbach "Theodor Heuss Academy" since 1967, not just at the level of its infrastructure but also at the level of its spirit and of its climate.

*The „Deutsche Hochschule für Politik“ (Germany Academy for Politics) became part of the Otto Suhr Institute of the Free University of Berlin after World War II.*



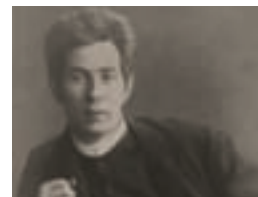


*2001: the Theodor Heuss Academy in Gummersbach. Since 1967, the Theodor Heuss Academy is the centre of civic education for the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom.*





Title page of "Die Hilfe",  
Number 15 from April 10, 1919.



*In the tradition of "Die Hilfe",  
the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for  
Freedom brings out "liberal",  
a quarterly journal for politics  
and culture.*

*The makers of "Die Hilfe"  
before and during the  
First World War:  
Friedrich Naumann,  
Theodor Heuss and  
Gertrud Bäumer.*

The publicist mandate of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation is also tied to Naumann's tradition of civic education: the quarterly magazine on politics and culture "liberal" now in its 50th year of publication, corresponds in many ways with "Die Hilfe", the journal that Naumann had brought to life and that was later edited by Theodor Heuss and Gertrud Bäumer. Indeed, in many ways, "liberal" conceives of itself as the successor to "Die Hilfe".

It is clear that the engagement of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation and, beyond that, the German Republic's Liberals isn't simply a romantic reminiscence to the world of Friedrich Naumann's thought. It is, rather, an indication of the extent to which Naumann's reflections and views remain fully present, not only in papers on principles but also in the daily work of politics.

In summary, one could say that Friedrich Naumann was very much bound to his time, that he was in many ways a typical representative of the era of Wilhelm II. But his thought and his works point to numerous areas – some of which have not been touched on here – that extend far beyond his own, long-past historical time. What was and still is fascinating about him is that Naumann was always open for innovation, that he was always prepared to learn from it, and to re-examine and even alter his previous principles.

In this sense, he embodied the ideal of worldly citizen without flaunting it. It is precisely this combination of deeply held conviction with political and pragmatic flexibility that made Naumann a great figure. All in all, engagement with him and with his politics, with his work as publicist, and with his entire oeuvre continues to be extremely worthwhile.

# Biography of Friedrich Naumann.

**March 3, 1860**

Born in Störmthal near Leipzig.

**1876–1879**

Early school years at the Fürstenschule St. Afra in Meißen.

**1879–1883**

Studied Protestant theology in Leipzig and Erlangen.

**1883–1885**

Chief Assistant in Wichern's "Rauhes Haus" in Hamburg.

**1886–1890**

Pastor in Langenberg, Saxony.

**1888**

First speech at a crucial conference: at the congress of the Home Mission in Kassel.

**1890–1897**

Spiritual counsellor of the Home Mission in Frankfurt am Main.

**1895**

Founded the weekly newspaper "Die Hilfe".

**1896**

Founded the National Social Association.

**1897**

Relocated to Berlin; retired from the ministry.

**1903**

Honorary doctorate in theology from the University of Heidelberg; dissolution of the National Social Association after defeats at the polls; conversion of the Naumann circle into the Liberal Association.

**1907**

Elected into the Reichstag as Member of Parliament.

**1919**

Elected to be member of the National Assembly for Berlin; elected as the leader of the newly founded German Democratic Party (DDP).

**August 20, 1919**

Died suddenly in Travemünde.



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**The Archive of Liberalism**

Theodor-Heuss-Straße 26  
D-51645 Gummersbach

Telephone +49 (0) 22 61. 30 02-421

Telefax +49 (0) 22 61. 30 02-407

E-Mail: [archiv@freiheit.org](mailto:archiv@freiheit.org)

# A Short Chronicle of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom.

**May 19, 1958**

Founding of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom in the official seat of Federal President Theodor Heuss.

**November 14, 1958**

First meeting of the Board of Trustees: election of the Advisory Council (chairperson: Walter Erbe).

**November 14, 1958**

First large event in Bad Godesberg, speech by Theodor Heuss: "Naumann's Legacy for our Time".

**April 9, 1959**

The Board of Trustees elects its chairperson: Paul Meyle.

**April 1959**

The central office begins its work in Bonn (office manager: Werner Stephan). The journal "liberal" appears.

**April 9–11, 1959**

First symposium in Bad Kreuznach: "Intellectual and Political Freedom in a Mass Democracy".

**March 25, 1960**

Constitution of the Advisory Council (chairperson: Walter Bauer).

Appearance of the foundation's first publication series: "Series on Politics and History".

**January 1961**

Founding of the association "Friends of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation".

**January 1962**

Central office moves to Bad Godesberg.

**May 24, 1963**

Board of Directors decision for the establishment of a conference centre in Gummersbach.

**July 1963**

Development of a Foreign Department: supervision of the "School for Freedom", an educational centre in Tunisia – continuing education programme for mid- and top-level leaders in business, unions, and journalism – publications include "The Human Society", an edition of Naumann's works.



**1964**

Founding of a commission for consultation regarding the symposia, the "Programme Committee".  
 Founding of a "Work Group for Economic and Social Research in Developing Countries".  
 Construction of the Ali Bach-Hamba Institute in Tunis.

**July 8, 1965**

Laying of the first stone of the Theodor Heuss Academy (THA).

**December 3, 1966**

Board of Trustees approves the appointment of a budgetary committee. Focus of work abroad: further education programme for executives. First bestowal of the Wolf-Erich Kellner Memorial Prize.

**May 26, 1967**

Opening of the THA (under the leadership of Horst Dahlhaus).

**January 1, 1968**

Purchase of the Federal FDP archives.

**April 1969**

Establishment of federal state and regional offices.

**November 1973**

Beginning of the scholarship programme in the winter semester 1973/74 (with 17 scholarship students).

**1974**

The office in Berlin becomes a „European Meeting Centre". Opening of the „Liberal Club" in Oldenburg.

**August 1975**

Foundation of the umbrella organisation of Liberal educational establishments, „Association of Liberal Educational Establishments". Southern Europe added to the projects abroad.

**October 1977**

Consolidation of the projects of the Programme Committee and of the Advisory Council.  
 Establishment of an European Division (from 1978, „Group Europe").

**February 1978**

Publication of the first „Documentation" on current political questions.

**October 17, 1979**

On the occasion of Karl-Hermann Flach's 50th birthday, the journalism prize that is named after him is bestowed on Rolf Zundel.

**1980**

The creation in the federal states of foundations which take over the work of the state and regional offices.

**January 31, 1984**

Opening of the newly established Archive of German Liberalism in Gummersbach.

**May 5, 1984**

Opening of the Margarethenhof, of the gallery and of the political club in Königswinter.

**October 5, 1984**

Board decision regarding a change in organisational structure for the Friedrich Naumann Foundation.

**March 5, 1985**

With a speech from Ralf Dahrendorf and with Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker present, the foundation celebrates the 125th birthday of Friedrich Naumann.

**January 1, 1987**

Founding of the Research Institute.  
 Establishment of the European Meeting Centre Saar in the Saarland.

**1988**

Founding of the International Academy for Development in Freedom, Sintra (Portugal).  
First „Rastatt Day“ on the history of German liberalism.

**August 31, 1989**

Board of Trustees calls a committee for the structural reform of the foundation. November: first volume of the „Yearbook of Research on Liberalism“.

**November 21, 1989**

Waldhaus Jakob Educational Centre begins its work.

**July 1, 1990**

Establishment of the Berlin office for the development of educational work in East Germany. Beginning of the foundation's work in Central, South-East, and East Europe.

**January 15, 1991**

The Board of Trustees receives new members from East Germany.

**February 25, 1991**

The Board of Trustees adopts new statutes.

**March 15, 1991**

First election of the Board of Directors according to the new statutes.

**May 9, 1991**

The foundation receives a new decentralised structure; the work abroad is coordinated by regional offices.

**September 2, 1991**

The Board of Trustees establishes a programme and a finance committee.

**September 29, 1991**

On the occasion of the 70th birthday of the foundation's chairperson Wolfgang Mischnick, Chancellor Helmut Kohl visits the foundation at the Margarethenhof in Königswinter.

**September 12, 1992**

Official opening of the Zündholzfabrik Educational Centre in Lauenburg on the Elbe.

**February 1993**

Beginning of the campaign "Tolerance Shows Itself in Action".

**January 1, 1995**

The International Academy for Leadership (IAF) begins its work in the Theodor Heuss Academy in Gummersbach.

**April 26, 1995**

New Board of Directors: Otto Graf Lambsdorff (Chairman), Rolf Berndt (Board member in charge of operations).

**June 1995**

Founding of the Liberal Institute of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation.

**February 9, 1996**

Jürgen Morlok is elected Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

**May 24, 1996**

The new foundation campaign: "Reorientation: Incitement to Freedom" is introduced by Otto Graf Lambsdorff to the public.

**December 7, 1996**

Opening of the Wolfgang Natonek Academy in the "Haus am Ahorn" in Kottenheide.

**May 6, 1998**

Celebratory event, "150 Years of Liberal Revolution in Europe" in St. Paul's Church, Frankfurt am Main.

**July 1, 1998**

40 years of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation: celebration at the Margarethenhof, the central office of the foundation in Königswinter, in the presence of Federal President Roman Herzog.

**October 1998**

Board of Directors resolution for a new residence of the central office in the Truman House in Potsdam-Babelsberg.

#### January 1999

The CD-ROM "In the Name of Freedom", produced by the foundation wins the Comenius Prize for Quality.

#### December 1999

Closure of the former central office at the Margarethenhof in Königswinter.

#### January 1, 2000

Temporary move of the central office to Weber Park, Alt Nowawes 67, in Potsdam-Babelsberg.

#### September 16, 2000

Adoption of the statement "The Rights of Minorities" at the second of the foundation's conferences on minorities in Berlin.

#### October 11–

#### November 26, 2000

Exhibition "Friedrich Naumann – from Saxony to a Liberal World Politics" in the Lichtenstein Museum, Saxony.

#### December 31, 2000

Closure of the educational centres in Lauenburg and Kottenheide.

#### 2001

New orientation of civic educational work in Germany: establishment of regional offices in Halle, Hannover, Lübeck and Wiesbaden. Launching of a virtual educational resource on the Internet.

#### April 1, 2001

Relocation of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation's central office to the Truman House in Potsdam-Babelsberg.

#### September 1, 2001

Start of the campaign "Neustart. An Initiative for Liberal Social Politics".

#### 14.09.2001

The foundation's new head office opens in Potsdam.

#### January 2002

The Online Academy is launched and the Stuttgart Regional Office opens.

#### 16.03.2002

Congress on „Unified Germany Under Way to a United Europe“ with Hans-Dietrich Genscher and further former foreign ministers.

#### 18.07.2003

Graf Lambsdorff honours Taiwan's First Lady, Wu Shu-chen for her lifetime achievement.

#### 18.10.2003

The Dalai Lama delivers an address on „Living Freedom – Securing Peace“ in Berlin. Followed by the 4th International Conference of Tibet Support Groups in Prague.

#### 10.11.2003

Colloquium on „Future Liberal Goals“ with Werner Maihofer.

#### 01.03.2004

Hans D. Barbier is the new editor-in-chief of the magazine „liberal“.

#### April 2004

„European Women's Conference“ in Frankfurt/Main.

#### 01.05.2004

Munich Regional Office opens.

#### November 2004

Hamburg Regional Office opens.

#### 14.02.2005

The Online Academy is awarded the European E-Learning Award „eureleA“.

#### 16.06.2005

The „Light of Truth Award“ is presented to Graf Lambsdorff and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom by the Dalai Lama.

**16.06.2005**

„60 Years of a Liberal Restart“: Hans Dietrich Genscher and Guido Westerwelle prize the first post-war liberals for championing a free and democratic Germany.

**07.04.2006**

Wolfgang Gerhardt is elected Chairman of the Board of Directors.

**15.06.2006**

The foundation starts its initiative „pro capita – a better education through freedom and competition“.

**25.11.2006**

Hans-Dietrich Genscher is awarded the Freedom Prize at St. Paul's Church in Frankfurt/Main.

**25.04.2007**

The foundation adopts the new title Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom. The 1st Berlin Freedom Speech given by Udo Di Fabio, German Constitutional Judge.

**02.06.2007**

Festive event on the 40th anniversary of the opening of the Theodor Heuss Academy.

**13.10.2007**

1st Freedom Congress on „The Future of Freedom in Germany“ in Berlin.

**23.11.2007**

„Freedom Speech“ by Freya Klier in Jena.

**09.03.2008**

The e-Academy for Leadership receives the „eureleA“ award at the CeBIT Fare in Hannover.

**23.04.2008**

2nd Berlin Freedom Speech given by historian Heinrich August Winkler.

**19.05.2008**

50th anniversary of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation: Festive ceremony with Federal President Horst Köhler in Bonn.

**08.09.2008**

„Freedom Speech“ by German Constitutional Court President Hans-Jürgen Papier in Nuremberg.

**08.11.2008**

The awarding of the Freedom Prize to Mario Vargas Llosa at St. Paul's Church in Frankfurt/Main.

**21.01.2009**

2nd Freedom Congress on „Freedom – A Civic Luxury?“ at the Admiralspalast in Berlin.

**21.04.2009**

3rd Berlin Freedom Speech by Joachim Gauck, former director of the Federal German Stasi Records Office.

## Chairmen of the Board of Directors of Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom



*Dr. Walter Erbe*  
(1958–1961)



*Prof. Dr. Paul Luchtenberg*  
(1961–1970)



*Wolfgang Rubin*  
(1970–1982)



*Prof. Dr. Lord Ralf Dahrendorf*  
(1982–1987)



*Wolfgang Mischnick*  
(1987–1995)



*Dr. Otto Graf Lambsdorff*  
(1995–2006)



*Dr. Wolfgang Gerhardt*  
(since 2006)

## Chairpersons of the Board of Trustees of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom

- |    |                          |           |
|----|--------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Paul Meyle               | 1959–1965 |
| 2. | Hans Lenz                | 1965–1969 |
| 3. | Dr. Clara von Simson     | 1969–1977 |
| 4. | Dr. Otto Graf Lambsdorff | 1977–1979 |
| 5. | Walter Scheel            | 1979–1990 |
| 6. | Dr. Martin Bangemann     | 1990–1996 |



*Prof. Dr. Jürgen Morlok*  
(since 1996)

# Political Principles of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom.

*"The idea of liberalism has to be recreated. In the course of time it has lost so much of its clarity and attraction that it first has to rise like a new dawn before the people."*

Friedrich Naumann (1906)

## Political Principles

The political principles were agreed by the Board of Directors and approved by the Board of Trustees on September 24, 1993.

## Preamble

The political principles describe what the Friedrich Naumann Foundation understands by the constitutional clause "The foundation acts on the basis of liberalism", § 2, clause 11. These political principles shall serve to guide persons working on behalf of the foundation, either in an honorary capacity or as salaried staff, both in the selection of candidates for its various activities, and in the definition of objectives in civic education, political consulting, support of the highly gifted, and the editing of publications.

### The political principles of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for its activities in Germany and abroad.

The Friedrich Naumann Foundation is the foundation for ideas on liberty and training in freedom. Its aim is to contribute to the furtherance of the principle of freedom in human dignity in all sectors of society – in the united Germany as well as together with partners abroad.

It is the goal of liberal politics that all citizens should be able to live together in an open society: the civic society. Without freedom other human values cannot be realised. Each human being needs freedom in order to develop his or her talents and realise his or her potential. Without freedom the human spirit languishes, culture and science decay, and the economy stagnates. The spirit needs freedom like the body needs air to breathe.

Each human being is an individual with his own ideas and desires. But he is also a social being, dependent on other human beings and under an obligation to them. Freedom and responsibility are inseparable. They determine the relationship between the individual and the community. Liberals base human relationships on free will, not coercion – on the exchange of ideas and goods, free trade, reason, compassion, and responsibility. Voluntary associations promote mutual trust. They lead to the recognition of the values and goals of others and they deserve respect.

### Liberal politics and the individual:

Liberal politics promote respect for the rights of the individual, for civil rights. The individual needs these rights, if he wants to shape his own life in freedom. Therefore, freedom of opinion is not only a compelling moral command of tolerance and of the rule of law. It is also the path toward progress of the human spirit, a path which can be realised only through the competition of free ideas and knowledge. The right to private property is a civil right, too. Without respect for private property, many other rights cannot be realised.

Liberal politics are in favour of equal opportunities from the start, in favour of competition and pluralism. They seek, therefore, free access of everyone to all markets, education, information, labour, goods, and capital markets.

Liberal politics seek to free the individual from coercion by the state and by anonymous institutions so that he can fulfill his responsibility in freedom. Freedom requires the individual to assume responsibility for the community.

### Liberal politics and civic society:

Liberal politics strive to enlarge the freedom of citizens in all spheres of life and to restrict the role of the state to the essentials. This includes recognising the capacity of citizens to organize themselves.

Citizens can undertake many tasks at local authority level, as well as in associations, pressure groups, other private institutions and initiatives, and indeed they wish to do so.

### Liberal politics and state:

Liberals see the tasks of the state as the protection of individual freedom and the protection of citizens against violence from within and abroad, as well as the safeguarding of the constitution. Liberal politics aim to ensure that rules apply to everyone, while leaving space for the free decision of the individual. Liberal politics do not aim to predetermine a certain outcome; They seek just rules instead of just results, because such results do not exist.



Liberal politics seek democracy. Democracy permits choice and chance, but it does not guarantee freedom. That is why Liberals are for the strict division, control, and limitation of power, public as well as private.

Liberal politics want a state that is bound by rules and respects freedom. The state has the duty to guarantee legal security to everybody. In liberal state, the rule of law respects group interests. That is why it provides them with freedom in responsibility but not with political power. Liberal politics do not want the state to be active economically. They do not want the state to compete, through its own institutions, with private enterprises.

Liberal politics seek to maintain the citizen's freedom to make decisions in all areas of politics, both now and in the future. Therefore, they reject solving today's problems at the expense of tomorrow's generation, at the expense of sound public finances, and particularly at the expense of the environment.

### Liberal politics and international cooperation:

Liberal politics seek to establish an open world culture and free world market. For Liberals, the common features of mankind are more important than the division into categories like natives and foreigners. The liberal vision is of a world society, in which there is a free exchange, cooperation, and competition between different peoples, states, regional groups, and cultures.

Liberal politics seek to help developing countries through cooperation on the basis of free international trade, thereby helping them to establish free and responsible civic societies.

Liberal politics work towards the world-wide liberalism of all markets – information, technology, goods and services – as well as currency and capital markets.

Liberal politics seek the establishment of a united Europe and other regional associations, but not at the expense of internal diversity and openness towards others.

Liberal politics seek the world-wide victory of human and civil rights.

# *Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom today.*

The Friedrich Naumann Foundation is the foundation for Liberal politics in the Federal Republic of Germany. As such, it aims to promote the goal of making the principle of freedom valid for the dignity of all people and in all areas of society, both in Germany and abroad. With the safeguarding and the development of its statutory projects (civic education and dialogue, sponsorship of the talented, research and political consultation, archive-work), the Friedrich Naumann Foundation wants to contribute to the shaping of the future. Because the public has a clear interest in the realisation of the foundation's projects, they are supported by public funds.

Thanks to this support of the foundation's activities (with the current sum of 38.5 million Euro from state and federal budgets), it is active in more than 60 countries, as well as in Germany.

Domestically, the foundation offers diverse forums, mostly for young and talented people, for the exchange of information and experience in present-day contexts. Its main focus is to promote a greater understanding of politics and to inspire citizens to take part in political processes. This takes place at the Theodor Heuss Academy in Gummersbach, which is an important centre for dialogue. Guests from all over the world also take part in the seminars at the

International Academy for Executives. The programmes of the domestic regional offices of the foundation – Berlin-Brandenburg, Gummersbach, Hamburg, Lübeck, Hannover, Halle, Munich, Stuttgart and Wiesbaden – make it possible to engage in self-directed learning regarding individual possibilities for shaping politics. In this, the foundation works together in cooperation with many partners. The virtual form of its civic education completes, deepens and modernises the until now classical educational programme.

In clearly defined cycles, the foundation sets thematic focal points. For the period of 2008-2011, the themes are the following:

- Freedom and Property
- Freedom and Civic Society/  
Civil Society
- Freedom and the Rule of Law

With these thematic focal points, the foundation has also positioned itself abroad. The support of human rights, constitutionality, and democracy form the core of the work of regional offices in Europe, Africa, Asia, and Central America; this support is realised through programmes of international and transatlantic dialogue. The foundation supports local, regional, and national initiatives for the realisation of rights of minorities, for the democratic control of security forces, and for the strengthening of international human rights coalitions. Further, we sponsor the development of democratic and constitutional structures by supporting liberal parties and groups. In East Europe, the foundation successfully supports the transformational process of the former Communist countries and in the Balkans, it is engaged within the framework of the European Accord for Stabilisation and Reconstruction. A strong network of associations of democratic parties, of human rights organisations and of academic establishments forms the basis of the foundation's activity abroad. The foundation's central idea, both at home and abroad, is the realisation of freedom and responsibility.

Politics is about realising ability and will through direct experience. The foundation keeps the optimism of its founders alive insofar as it will continue to succeed in making an effective contribution to a politics that strives for the freedom of all humans to live in dignity, one that can remain socially and ecologically responsible in the dynamic age of globalisation. In order to succeed in this, the foundation relies on the cooperative work of many people. The foundation offers experience and knowledge in many political fields. Out of the grievous experience of the rise and fall of democracy in Germany, the return of war to South-East Europe, and out of the still appalling gap of wealth in many developing and transitional countries, the duty arises to continue the work initiated by Friedrich Naumann.

With its 152 workers in Germany, its 29 workers and ca. 175 freelancers abroad, its 800 scholarship students, and its wide circle of alumni, friends, and supporters, the foundation makes knowledge and experience available for the challenges of the present and the future. The deployment of Theodor Heuss's ideas – an understanding of the different people of Europe, for example – requires ideas that are well thought out, and whose

transposition into today's context requires institutional stability. An important foundation for this stability comes from the institutional support of the federal budget.

The Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees of the foundation stipulate the frameworks of the general activity of the foundation, which are then steered, coordinated, evaluated and managed by the central office in Potsdam-Babelsberg.

It is part of the mandate Friedrich Naumann Foundation to deploy its resources to the maximum benefit possible.

To be publicly accountable, and to inform the public about its activities and about the use to which public monies are put is of course a duty and responsibility. This strengthens public trust in the seriousness of its work and leads to the recognition which the foundation and especially its partners abroad experience again and again, namely that "to try is to triumph".

Max Weber wrote the following to Naumann's widow in those days: „I was utterly shocked to learn from the newspapers that your husband has passed away. I hope – in the not too distant future – to speak about the immeasurable importance of his political standing. Yet the loss is not alone a political one. His presence, the fact that somebody like him existed, who had neither been humanely congealed nor behaved in a mechanical way, and who was neither brutal nor cunning, drew oneself up to one's full height. And – as you well know – we loved him from the bottom of our hearts not to mention what he gave us as a politician, a man of culture and as a fellow German.

The profound humbleness of his character forbade us to convey to him what his gallantry and sobriety, human warmth and richness of life gave us personally; and how he ennobled the debates and struggles of our public lives. How much greater the influence of his presence was compared to his deeds and how his deeds outshone their extrinsic success. Many years of one's life and hopes melt away with his passing: years that one would not wish to have missed even when all appears lost at this very moment.

The greatness of his personality can neither be measured in what he wished to achieve nor how he conducted

his affairs. The example that he set did not immediately achieve what its intrinsic value really was, yet it was never a case of a lost cause. And that which shall remain never forgotten, is the fact that a human being maintained his inner ground in times that had not been designed for him: he was either born too early or born too late. Nonetheless, the fact that he was among us is something that will always be an undetachable part of us."

*From ,Friedrich Naumann:  
The Man, His Achievements,  
His Times' written by  
Theodor Heuss*

„Social Justice in Freedom“

Speech given by German Federal President, Horst Köhler at the festive ceremony on the 50th anniversary of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom on May 19th, 2008 in Bonn

*„Democracy is not  
a guarantor of happiness,  
but the result  
of civic education  
and democratic beliefs.“*



Prof. Dr. Horst Köhler

*„Democracy is not a guarantor of happiness but the result of civic education and democratic beliefs,” said Theodor Heuss. And so he assembled a circle of fellow liberals to form a foundation at the Villa Hammerschmidt on exactly this day 50 years back. Its principal aim till today is civic education: its name: the Friedrich Naumann Foundation.*

*Heuss chose his political mentor as the foundation's name-giver: Friedrich Naumann, a man who was never a member of government, yet a man who was already a keen and enthralling MP before a parliamentary democracy in Germany even got a chance to prove itself. Saxon vicar, social reformer: a man who influenced a number of leading intellectuals and politicians who later built the Federal Republic of Germany: a man of ideas, a man of words, a stirring speaker.*

*But he was also a man of action. Naumann recognised that democracy requires „active citizens” to flourish. His conclusion: „We will assist the good elements of German youth so that they outgrow us.” To this end he developed the concept of a ‚Citizens’ Academy’ that was created with the Otto Suhr Institute of Berlin’s Free University many decades later.*

*Alfred Döblin once wrote that the first German democracy failed because it was a, „republic without an instruction sheet.” One of the driving forces that led to the forming of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation 50 years ago was the provision of civic education as a useful instruction sheet for young people in their later lives. Like the other political foundations it has been contributing in many ways to our political culture over the last half-century. It is a day by day practical and sturdy contribution both serving and furthering our democracy. I would like to warmly thank the entire staff for this achievement.*

*The Friedrich Naumann Foundation quickly recognised the great importance of international cooperation and development in our one world. That Walter Scheel, the first German Minister for Overseas Development, belonged to a political party closely aligned to the Naumann Foundation was not detrimental to the foundation's work abroad. The same applies to his becoming Foreign Minister followed later in office by further liberals. „Help for self-help“ was Walter Scheel's appropriate formula for cooperation in development programmes. It is still the guiding line and nowadays should even more be taken to heart.*

*The political foundations are a flagship of our country and have greatly contributed to Germany's good reputation abroad as well as endorsing the work of our embassies. On the other hand, the foundations' staff abroad carries their experiences back to Germany. The political foundations' work abroad is a learning process of reciprocal benefit. It is also a wealth of experience that must be deployed time and again in political life in Germany and abroad.*

*A foundation that carries the supplement „for freedom“ in its name is especially called upon when dealing with the question of how our society can be designed considering the tense relationship between freedom, social justice, and equality. This is absolutely in the spirit of Friedrich Naumann who considered that freedom should not to be considered a licence for indifference but, rather more, developed from free-will and personal insight linked with responsibility.*

*Who could deny that these are topics that we deal with every day, that we are right in the middle of a sea of change where we have to redefine the balance between freedom, equality and social justice? Perhaps, in this context, it's worth while looking at the experiences that Naumann had as a social reformer a hundred years ago?*

*At the heart of liberal thought an image of humanity stands which has confidence in the individual and is thus equally demanding. We are trapped in our shortcomings, says the image, yet we are gifted with the ability to*

*achieve freedom. Everyone has his or her ideas and talents and the uniqueness of each of us wishes to be taken into consideration. That is why freedom inevitably also means inequality. Inequality can be the source of endeavour, creativity and dynamism. Only where inequality is insurmountable does it have a paralysing effect and damages society's dispensable structure.*

*It is an essential requirement of*



*Dr. Wolfgang Gerhardt MP*



*social justice to give everyone a chance to develop their talents and climb up the social ladder through their achievements. This is also one of the most important driving forces of economic performance throughout our country. Who ever convincingly wishes to canvass for freedom in an open society must also ensure social mobility from the ground floor upwards. This is also how the individual will experience the value of freedom: I believe that we have a possibility to backlog here.*

*So my recommendation to all those who feel dedicated to the ideal of freedom is to struggle for social equity in freedom. Make sure that freedom cannot be abused for the defence of privileges. Let us work together so that precisely those who today feel void of chance are put in a position to design and master their lives through their own achievements and self-determination.*

*Education remains the essential aspect – not reduced to a set of job qualifications and ‚abilities‘ but understood as a fortunate link of knowledge, ability and the will to accept responsibility. Equal opportunities in education – that is the most essential aspect of social justice.*

*The Friedrich Naumann Foundation has achieved many good things over the last 50 years. It continues to make a valuable contribution to understanding, honouring and upholding democracy both at home and abroad.*

*Who ever wishes to reconcile freedom, equality and social justice has quite a task to deal with. I sincerely wish that the Friedrich Naumann Foundation continues to be clearly heard advising and when necessary warning us too. I would jointly wish with us all that the foundation continues to leave its mark on people and prepares them for carrying responsibility for democracy both in Germany and throughout the world and that the foundation continues to enthral citizens with the values of freedom, social justice and responsibility. And I would finally wish our democracy a great wealth of democrats of the making of Friedrich Naumann.*

In Dubio Pro Libertate

Speech given by Lord Ralf Dahrendorf at the festive ceremony on the 50th anniversary of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom on May 19th, 2008.

*„Whoever puts freedom both in first place and without any ‘ands’, or attaching another allegedly equal value, must explain what kind of liveable world, he believes in.“*



*Lord Ralf Dahrendorf*

*The good wishes that I feel encouraged to render on the 50th birthday of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation are the result of your invitation to a liberal of special making*

*As a child and teenager I grew up in a family that was on friendly terms with the ‚Lebers‘, the family of Julius Leber, an outstanding member of the resistance against the National Socialists. And while the war was on, my father also took me to a Berlin art gallery to meet a former colleague of the other, i.e. the Liberal group in the Reichstag: Theodor Heuss.*

*Leber, sentenced along with my father at the same Volksgerichtshof trial after the failed assassination attempt of July 20th, 1944, was subsequently executed. My father, released from Brandenburg Prison, returned to a destroyed Berlin. In those days we lived in Zehlendorf, not far from Annedore Leber.*

*Leber’s ‚foster-son‘ of Lübeck days, Willy Brandt, still clothed in a Norwegian uniform, was repeatedly a guest in both homes. My father, a working man’s son and Social Democrat, soon found himself once again in a battle for freedom. He was a board member of the Eastern German Social Democratic Party and in the decisive ballot cast his vote against the forced amalgamation of Social Democrats and Communists to form the German Socialist Unity Party, SED.*

*It is somewhat embarrassing to interpret – many years later – the political stance of a long deceased father; yet I do not believe that I am misleading anyone present when I state that Gustav Dahrendorf was a liberal-minded Social Democrat.*

*At any rate he was a difficult partner. He had his own point of view and*

*stood to it whether supporting a first-past-the-post electoral system or supporting the first steps towards unifying Europe – something treated with scepticism, if not outright rejection, by the SPD-leadership of the day. He repeatedly spoke of human beings as the measure of all things, but more than anything else he spoke of freedom which he had twice defended – in 1933 and 1946 – above all other interests and values and under personal sacrifice. That he gave his son the freedom to choose his own political path thus was almost a matter of course.*

*And so I found myself, one and a half decades after the dramatic ballot in Berlin, in somewhat idyllic Tübingen when the Federal Republic went through its first serious crisis: the Spiegel affair. As a young professor I did not only hand out leaflets on the bridge over the River Neckar but also decided to remain involved in politics.*

*At the 1963 local elections a number of colleagues including myself were persuaded by the political parties to stand for election. My colleague Jürgen Baumann from the law faculty stood for the CDU, scientist Georg Melchers for the SPD and I campaigned for the FDP. We were all well placed on the electoral lists, apart from the fact that the term ‚university professor‘ was put behind our names.*

*This instigated the tradition-minded, long standing Tübingen citizens of the day to make use of the possibility to strike names off the lists so that Baumann and I were so often crossed out that we didn't make it into the local council. Melchers was slightly more fortunate: he dropped from 1st to 10th place on his list but still just scraped through.*



*Dr. Otto Graf Lambsdorff*

*When that happened the Naumann Foundation was already in existence. Walter Erbe, a faculty colleague of mine, was one of the founding members. His political bearing had not been helpful to his academic career in Berlin. After the war, the former university lecturer gained a professorship in Tübingen. And even more: he was soon elected university chancellor. After a successful term of office, he stood for the Baden Württemberg state parliament where he played a major role for 15 years. His much too early death in 1967 – if you would permit me to add one more autobiographic*



*Prof. Dr.  
Horst Köhler*

*note – resulted in the FDP/DVP offering me his vacant Stuttgart constituency and I was thus voted into the state parliament in the spring of 1968. Walter Erbe – like Theodor Heuss – was a „culture-liberal“. His outer appearance as some kind of man of literature was not misleading; my father would probably have termed him a ‚bohemian‘, mixing slight envy with a touch of doubt. Not only was Erbe’s main interest cultural politics but everything that he said in public gave away his roots in the class of cultured Germans.*

*One could have termed him an Humboldtian liberal. There were quite some personalities of that kind in the Naumann Foundation. I remember Rolf Schroers but also Barthold Witte. These culture-minded liberals belonged to the circle of the magazine liberal and were also to be found at the Theodor Heuss Academy in Gumpersbach, thus leaving their imprint on a segment of post-war German history.*

*But then the Naumann Foundation – at the same time as the other political foundations – took to different paths. Not least because of a young Minister for Overseas Development in Adenauer’s last cabinet, Walter Scheel. He had the quite liberal idea that supporting the development of other countries was not the job of the state – at least as far as the material side was concerned.*

*And so he looked out for ways to conduct development aid at arm’s length, i.e. with the help of NGOs that would use the available budget for projects in the field that they supported. What appears at first sight to be just a formal decision had far-reaching material consequences and greatly strengthened – apart from achieving its major aim – the work of the foundations.*

*I have no intention of going into detail on the history of the foundation that celebrates its anniversary today. Apart from development work abroad, civic education at home was added, then international cooperation – closely linked above all with Otto Graf Lambsdorff – and the creation of a kind of think-tank with novel contributions to the debate on liberal policy. Although slightly from a distance – and in the meantime sitting on the cross benches of the House of Lords – I have not failed to notice that the name Friedrich Naumann is printed in slightly smaller characters on the foundation's letter heading. On the other hand the intention of the present Chairman of the Board of Directors, Wolfgang Gerhardt is clear cut: Foundation for Freedom. This is without doubt a signal. It is a welcome signal, yet also an anti-cyclical one.*

*Only few speak nowadays of freedom  
without qualification.*

*In some way, freedom has become the ideal of only a minority. The majority prefer to speak of justice. The opinion polls state that two-thirds of all Germans consider life conditions in Germany to be unjust and thus many wish for both freedom and social equity and very often social equity above all.*

*Whoever puts freedom both in first place and without any 'ands', or attaching another allegedly equal value, must explain what kind of liveable world he believes in.*



*The former assembly hall of the German Federal Parliament in Bonn*



*Dr. Hildegard Hamm-Brücher, Dr. Hermann Otto Solms MP (from rtl)*

*This is no easy task. It is an historic fact that in times where new methods of production force their way, some become very rich while many are made poor. This was, for example, the case in the heyday of railways – as with the Rockefellers and the Carnegies – and it is surely the case in these times of the IT revolution since the end of the cold war. The gap between the rich and the poor has widened a lot. Within a decade the number of dollar billionaires has increased from a handful to many hundreds if not thousands. These super rich have led to no small number – perhaps even 10% or more – whose income has multiplied in the last one and half decades.*

*At the same time, the bottom 10% have not found themselves with stagnating but rather with declining incomes in the new world of globalisation. One does not require, for instance, the feignedly statistic figure of 60% of average income to establish that new poverty is a fact: children's poverty, old age poverty, general common poverty in the large cities and not only there.*

*One has to resist the temptation to talk about poverty amidst wealth, as this new wealth is only partly apparent. It would be of interest to analyse what the super rich do with their wealth. The ill-reputed recipients of high management salaries do not place the money in 500 Euro notes in their safes. Rather more, they employ a lot of people: security guards and household helps, yacht crews in Mediterranean ports and pilots for the 6000 private Gulfstream jets that populate the skies, and not forgetting the construction workers needed for the walls around the gated communities where they have created their luxury ghettos.*

## *The super rich as employers –*

*that is an unexhausted social topic.*

*At the same time something soon becomes apparent that leads to the heart of these reflections on freedom and equity: in globalised societies certain groups have in some way lost contact to the companies which are the source of their wealth. A separate world has arisen where such recipients of top salaries no longer receive decisive signals from those who they are responsible for but from other super rich.*

*„It makes a bad impression if our CEO receives so much less than those of the competitors do,“ says the chairman of the supervisory board and the members of the responsible sub-committee nod. In this case it is pointless to state that the CEO earns 20 times – or even 200 times – the average income of his employees.*

*They are no longer relevant as far as top salaries are concerned – or even utterly superfluous. Then we are not far from the so-called Nokia-phenomenon: massive layoffs while achieving high profits, a phenomenon, by the way, where even more drastic examples than Nokia can be presented.*

*Is this just? Are these not developments which rightly disturb the feeling of social equity among the majority? Can one not understand that facing such developments many want social equity first and freedom only second?*

*Staunch supporters of John Rawls' ‚Theory of Justice‘ who wish for a society in which the lowest wage recipients still achieve an income that would not be higher in any other kind of society, could come to this conclusion. But then Rawls is the stylite of social democratic thought that is widely found among all political parties, yet he's not the only one who can be looked to in the present situation.*

*In this context one thinks of two authors, rarely quoted nowadays, who considered justice a useless phrase and who therefore considered the call for it an ideological aberration. At least one of the names may come as a surprise: they are Karl Marx and Friedrich von Hayek. My doctorate-thesis (which insofar is still valid even after 56 years) was on „The Term ‚Justice‘ in Karl Marx's Thinking“ and began with the observation „that the term justice does not – so to say – appear in Marx's thought.*

*He sometimes uses the term in inverted commas so as to castigate it as a bourgeois fig-leaf of self-praise. He does not describe the ultimate communist society as just but rather as a „realm of freedom“ in which, „we shall have an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.“*

*The path leading to it will not be defined by moral principles. The working class, „has no ideals to achieve; it only has to set the elements of the new society of freedom, that have already developed within the collapsing bourgeois society.“ This strangely enough sounds similar to Friedrich von Hayek,*



*who did not only reject social justice as an ideal but also mocked the repeated use of the term.*

*Justice for him is pointless. It means that certain general rules are considered binding for everyone. „This is not applicable to the way and means by which the impersonal process of the market allocates control over goods and services to specific persons. This can be neither just nor unjust as the results are neither intended nor foreseeable and depend on numerous factors that nobody can know in their totality.“*

*Both Marx and Hayek see impersonal forces in action – the first a Weltgeist placed from head to foot, the other the almighty market. Both forces make it pointless to invoke moral principles or even political programmes. Neither requires social equity and can therefore concentrate on their own concepts of freedom.*

*Yet neither of them are the kind of supporters of freedom that I would like to put the case for here. Either one's dogmatism contradicts the first essential of liberal thinking: to be open to new approaches. The trial-and-error method means that we must never cease attempting a new approach and, by the way, that the necessary courage for reform cannot just be taken for granted. It has to be kept alive and demands an understanding of rules that do not let the market pass unscathed by laws and moral standards.*

*There is an intellectual and political point of view that equally avoids the fundamentalism – be it Marx's or Hayek's – as well as the naïve moralisation of apostles of social equity like Rawls.*

*Sir Samuel Brittan, the long-standing columnist of the Financial Times, uses the term RML that stands for Redistributive Market Liberals, a group he identifies himself with. Aaer Turner, author of a book with the distinctive title „Just Capital“ accepted the term for himself. I have always regretted the use of the term redistribution as this mechanistic approach whereby one takes from the rich to give to the poor is neither feasible nor helpful. Instead of speaking of Redistributive Market Liberalism I prefer to call it Basic Standards Market Liberalism.*

*The free society that I'm searching for  
has a ground floor on which all stand,  
a legal and socio-economic basic position  
which excludes no one and which was indeed cut out for all.*

*One could classify this principle with the term citizenship as defined by T.H. Marshall in his important book „Citizenship and Social Class“. That equality before the law and the chance of political participation apply to all is generally accepted (even though not generally implemented).*

*And in a broader sense equal opportunity is also part of the basic standards. That education is a civil right applies just as much nowadays as it did 40 years ago when Hildegard Hamm-Brücher and other liberals fought for the cause and I wrote a booklet with that title. At the same time, there are other controversial topics which belong to the concept of all citizens' basic standards.*

*For instance accessible and affordable public services: what they include and how they become „accessible and affordable“ is a key issue of liberal politics. A further postulate is even more controversial: a guaranteed basic income for all.*

*We are not talking about a minimum wage but rather about a non-market-defined subsistence minimum, to which all are eligible and which guarantees a basic chance to live (and survive). Nowadays this has become a much debated topic – a topic where many an argument and experience to the contrary can be invoked, but one that must remain on the agenda of the politics of freedom.*



*Prof. Dr. Horst Köhler, Walter Scheel (from Itr)*

*Now some may state that a basic standard is fair enough, but how about the owners of Gulfstream jets in their social ghettos? What does a basic standards market liberal have to say about the super rich? And what about inequality in general? The answer that I bring forward is controversial: it also causes a division between the freedom friends and the searchers for justice.*

*If a basic standard is guaranteed, if therefore subsistence is secured and equal opportunities achieved, then there can be no reason to level out differences. On the contrary differences in income and circumstances can be a stimulus for a free and open-to-change society. In this case freedom and equality are not complementary but contradictory aims. Can we really allow this to be the final word on this topic? Surely not. One aspect at least requires special attention.*

*If the social standing of a person puts him or her in the position to curtail the civil rights of others then this is unacceptable in a free society.*

*This was, once upon a time, the topic of medieval society where the lord of the manor, 'ensured' that those entrusted to him voted the right way. (Modern-day lords of the manor are more likely to be state and party officials). It can also occur that unusually high incomes are misused to purchase political support.*

*This may be less of a problem among the multi-millionaire football stars and opera singers. It is a much bigger problem with media moguls, and it is very serious with the winners of hidden auctions privatising state-owned companies. So there, where social status can translate into power, not only the utmost attentiveness but also regulatory steps are called for: not specifically directed at the level of income but to its quality, i.e. to what use a top position is used for.*

*The House of Lords have twice in recent weeks debated the question of 'financial inequality'. Both debates were suggested by bishops. Lord Harries, former Bishop of Oxford, used Rawls' arguments against inequality. Where great inequality exists, poverty exists, he said, and social cohesion is impaired.*

*The Anglican Primate and Bishop of Canterbury found social inequality less objectionable and argued on rather a liberal line. The problem, as he put it, is alienation, i.e. the separation of the super rich from the rest of society and not their status per se: „The task is therefore to regain a measure of trust in the structures of society and its economic activities. A good friend, Meghnad Desai, Indian-born Labour Lord and economist,*

*added that there is nothing to be said against people who take enormous risks and achieve high earnings in the doing. Yet, should they make great losses then we must be consistent and say: „You are playing on the free market, therefore no compensations will be paid.“*

*He who wishes to speak about justice should do so: there can be no censorship. Most of those who do very quickly slip from speaking on justice to speaking on equality. The result is that freedom, also meaning the freedom in market activities, can easily slip out of view. This is not only an error in reasoning but it can also lead to acting the wrong way.*

*Amartya Sen, Economic Nobel Prize-Winner, has warned us not to treat hunger catastrophes as a simple problem of distribution. Where the freedom of opinion and association exist, such catastrophes can sometimes be averted and always mastered. Another distinguished economist and adviser to the World Bank, Paul Collier, argues that financial aid programmes to governments are the wrong path to take: governance is more important, the support of freedom-orientated state administrations.*

*Big problems quite often only appear to be problems of distribution. Upon a closer look, they prove to be legal problems and problems of opportunity: more freedom is more helpful in solving them than greater equality. There are other threats to freedom nowadays, above all the dilemma of freedom and security, of individual freedom and public security. There are other tasks waiting for the friends of freedom.*

*I belong to those who, in the spirit of Immanuel Kant, consider freedom to be a cosmopolitan task. The EU's Copenhagen criteria are an assignment that rightly calls for profound changes in the applicant countries. So the illiberal ‚Westphalia‘ principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries does not apply.*

*I do not wish, at this point, to add to these remarks further controversies on the topic of Afghanistan and Iraq. What I wanted to deal with here is the difficult relationship between freedom and equality. Those who above all want freedom must take equal opportunities seriously. This includes basic standards for all citizens and the limitation of the ability to restrict these standards through the use of illegitimate power. What remains is, indeed, a society of diversity and differences including those that lead to inequality. What remains is an open and adaptable society – in other words: a society of free citizens.*





**Editor:**

Friedrich-Naumann-Foundation  
for Freedom  
Truman-Haus  
Karl-Marx-Straße 2  
14482 Potsdam-Babelsberg  
Germany

**Responsible Editor:**

Press & Media Department  
Reinhardtstraße 12  
10117 Berlin  
Germany  
Phone +49 (0) 30.28 87 78-51  
Fax +49 (0) 30.28 87 78-49  
info@freiheit.org

**Photos:**

Archive of Liberalism  
Theodor-Heuss-Straße 26  
51645 Gummersbach  
Germany  
Phone +49 (0) 22 61.30 02-421  
Fax +49 (0) 22 61.30 02-407  
archiv@freiheit.org

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