

ARCHIVE: Archiv der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, Berlin

FULL ARCHIVAL REFERENCE: Archiv der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft zu Berlin, Abteilung III, Repositor 103

PERSON: Helmut Coing

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF CONTENT: The papers of Coing beginning from 1963, when he was selected director of the MPIeR. Papers were handed over to the archive between 2010-2012. Contains his unpublished autobiography.

PERSON VISITING ARCHIVE: Kaius Tuori

DATE VISITED: 13-15 May 2013

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NOTES ON THE ARCHIVAL SOURCE:

All of the notes are to his autobiography.

Chapter 1

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 1, p. 2: Coing belonged to a Huguenot family.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 1, p. 4: father died in the war in 1917. The Coings were part of the state civil servant class and were proud of it. The mother had some money as inheritance, but it was eaten away by the inflation. Lessons from home were the appreciation and value of education (Bildung), literature, arts and history.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 1, p. 7: His teachers in school were solidly nationalistic, mostly officers in reserve.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 1, p. 9: A vital part of his school teaching was a love of the past, especially the classical antiquity. Had tremendous comfort in the Lucilius letters of Seneca during the last years of the war. "Die Kultur der Antike har immer im Zentum meines geistigen Lebens gestanden: in ihr erschien mir das Menschentum."

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 1, p. 11: his friends were mostly sons of officers, he speaks of the companionship (Kameradshaft) of the former soldiers and the great social influence of officers. According to him, individual freedoms and the Rechtsstaat meant nothing for the Germans.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 1, p. 13: During the years of peace 1918-1930 the Nazis were nowhere to be seen.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 1, p. 16: enrolled in 1930 to the faculty of law.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 1, p. 26: after his studies went to Göttingen, which was close.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 1, p. 28: wanted to do a doctorate in Staatslehre with prof Leibholz, but he escaped the dictatorship to Britain in 1933.

Chapter 2 1933-

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 2, p. 2: Saw after 1933 an SA parade in Göttingen and realized immediately that Germany will become a fascist state without a constitution or civil freedoms, or the rule of law. He had read Mein Kampf beforehand, was not convinced.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 2, p. 3: with the dictatorship there was also the sense of renewal.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 2, p. 4: the combination of excitement and terror reminded him of Revolutionary France.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 2, p. 5: enrolled in the army as a volunteer. After the military service Kunkel suggested a new topic and Erich Genzmer as a supervisor. Began to study the glossators.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 2, p. 7: in the university at Frankfurt the feeling was completely different than in Göttingen in 1936. Genzmer was anti-Nazi.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 2, p. 8: When working as Genzmers Assistent he was sent to exchange in Milan, Emilio Betti was the other exchangee.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 2, p. 9-13: Worked as an assessor.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 2, p. 13-17: explains actions during the Hitler era.

Chapter 3, 1939-

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 3, p. 18: in the war in 1939-1945, started in the West but in the front lines only in the Eastern Front.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 3, p. 30: read while in the front Genzmer's review of Engelmann's *Die Widergebung der Rechtskultur in Italien*.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 3, p. 35: was saved from Stalingrad by a transfer to another battallion.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 3, p. 40: prisoner of war, held lectures there.

Chapter 4, 1944-

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 4, p. 3: after the war moved to Wiesbaden because their house was destroyed in bombings.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 4, p. 7: a chance to travel after the war.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 4, p. 11: Chicago, Harvard (with Fuller).

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 4, p. 15: Georgetown Law school.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 4, p. 16: invited to Scotland by David Daube.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 4, p. 22-54: extensive travels from Australia to Mexico, Taiwan, Japan, China, Korea, South Africa.

Chapter 5, research and teaching, dated 1.11.1990

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 5, p. 1: research interests in the history of private law in Early Modern Europe, legal philosophy, civil law.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 5, p. 3: Roman law he considered *ratio scripta*, the rational basis of law in Antiquity.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 5, p. 6: his legal philosophy was begun by the experience of the perversion of law during dictatorship.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 5, p. 15: after the war taught in Frankfurt.

Chapter 6, administration on sciences

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 6, p. 8: the scientific world lost many teachers and scholars because of the racial laws. After the war an attempt to recruit them and to ask them to lecture. F. Schulz as one of them.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 6, p. 22: liked to go to conferences and to meet new friends.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 6, p. 39-40: in 1964 was invited to be a member of the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft. Given a possibility to open up a new institute in European Legal history. The idea was from Genzmer, whose whole career was in the research of the European legal tradition. Together with Doelle Genzmer proposed this, but after Doelle retired he asked Coing to step in. Coing agreed immediately. The new institute was decided upon in 1960 and Coing was selected as director in 1961.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 6, p. 41-2: after bureaucratic hassles only operational in early 1964. He wanted to found the institute in Munich. Kunkel resisted.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 6, p. 43: the founding council was Kunkel, Thieme, Conrad, as foreigners Feenstra, Gilissen, Stein, Barton, Gaudemet, Gouron, Maffei, Paradisi, Vismara, Gibert.

Archiv zur Geschichte der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, III/103/21 Nachlass Helmut Coing, Autobiographie c. 1990, chpt. 6, p. 46: the most important task the Handbuch Opening celebrations in 14.5.1967.