

## Chapter 4

# The Role of Universities: Views of a Scholar of the Last Century

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Julius Stone spent all his working life in universities, through the loneliness and achievement of his undergraduate years at Oxford, then decades as an academic, first in the New World across the Atlantic, then in the newer worlds of New Zealand and Australia. In retirement, he stayed at a university, in the weekly discipline of writing and teaching, last attending just days before his death, early in the spring of 1985.

I recall him showing me a note from an Oxford classmate who had gone to the bar, while my father had stayed to take a further degree. It was a short note, from one young man at the beginning of his career to another. The classmate had signed it 'from one who will influence men's actions, to a friend who will influence their thoughts'. My father had valued the note and, decades later, he smiled at his friend's prescience, content to have spent his life in universities, influencing the thoughts of others. What were his views on universities, and the roles they can and should play? Only a small part of his opus – published or unpublished – relates to the university as an institution. In this chapter I try to bring the pieces together.

### **Universities and the Oppression of Minorities**

My father's first two books, published when he was in his mid-20s, concerned the rights of minorities.<sup>1</sup> They are technical surveys of the history of guarantees of such rights, and how attempts to implement them had fared in the face of claims of sovereignty and internationalist movements. They were really books of international law, but they were triggered by a university issue: the capping of the access of minorities, particularly the Jewish minorities of

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<sup>1</sup> Stone J, *International Guarantees of Minority Rights: Procedure of the Council of the League of Nations in Theory and Practice* (Oxford University Press, London, 1932); Stone J, *Regional Guarantees of Minority Rights: A Study of Minorities Procedure in Upper Silesia* (Macmillan, New York, 1933).

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