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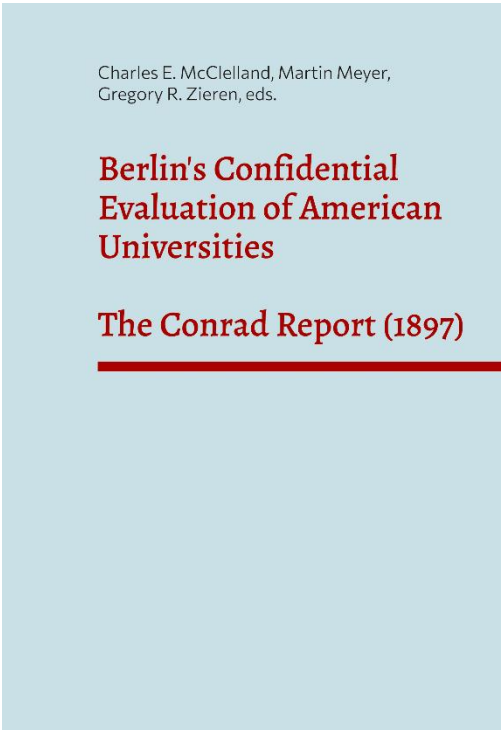

In 1896 the Prussian Ministry of Education requested a report to be written about the state of higher education in the United States in order to evaluate developments in academia in the USA. The Berlin minister's aide Friedrich Althoff commissioned the report from economist Prof. Dr. Johannes Conrad (*Vereinigte Friedrichs-Universität Halle*) who had published an empirically oriented history of universities in Germany a decade earlier. Conrad was particularly qualified to write such a report also because he had been the teacher of many American students in Germany, among them Simon Patten who upon his return to the US helped found the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

After being awarded an honorary Ph.D. at Princeton in October 1896, Conrad delivered his report to Althoff in March 1897 who then ordered copies in old German handwriting to be sent to Prussian universities to facilitate classifying American students' academic training before matriculation in Germany. A rare copy was discovered in the library of today's *Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg*. When it became clear that the report was virtually unknown to experts in the field, we decided to publish it in the original German language complemented by an English translation and essays by Charles E. McClelland and Gregory R. Zieren.

In his report Conrad presents a brief sketch of education in America at primary and secondary level and then analyzes the structure of higher education from the top level of organization to methods of teaching in the classroom. He pays special attention to women in higher education, the role of sports, and the efficiency of university libraries. But he also observes living expenses for students and discovers that American students spend more time in libraries than students at his university in Halle. He even warns that "the time is not far off when America will be a particularly promising address for us for certain specialized studies."

This edition presents Conrad's report in German and in English for the first time and has experts analyze it in its context.