

EIR Special Report

Philosophical roots of National Socialism

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

The voluminous literature on fascism and National Socialism is dominated by two opposing views: Are we dealing here with a "sociological phenomenon," or with a specific form of a historical tendency whose spiritual predecessors can be identified in past centuries?

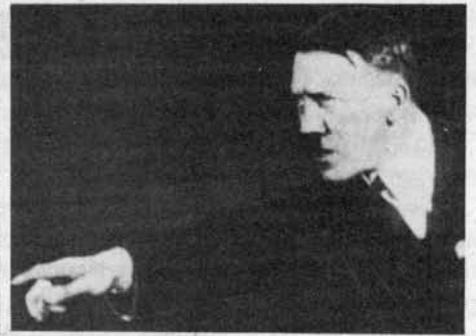
Proponents of the first version attempt to portray fascism and National Socialism as the more or less accidental emergence of an extraordinarily "charismatic" Führer figure, who seduced the masses with his demagogic and rhetorical skills. These masses' susceptibility to the "charismatic figure" is then usually explained psychologically, i.e., by referencing various aberrant forms of behavior within that population. This in turn leads to the assertion that Hitler was made possible by a specific "German national character."

Labeling Nazism a genuine German product is, of course, a mental trick which allows us to maintain a moral distance—we see a Nazism with no past and no future. We are relieved of the burdensome responsibility to measure our present political currents against those standards which, at least in principle, had already been established at the Nuremberg trials.

Until now we have lacked a historically verifiable explanation of the actual characteristics of Nazism and fascism. This lack has made it possible for political forces vaunting themselves as the anti-fascist resistance to flaunt their own, verifiably fascist, policies, while their opponents' contrary policies are often denounced as fascist.

In this case as well, we can arrive at truth; as Nicolaus of Cusa correctly observed long ago, mere opinion is what blocks us off from recognition of our opinions. The major problem is that many writers are unconscious of the basis upon which they arrive at their own knowledge; hence what they present as judgments are often nothing but opinions.

We place the major blame for this dilemma on the artificially introduced separation between the sciences and the so-called humanities, between *Naturwissenschaft* and *Geisteswissenschaft*. This separation, dating from the period following 1815, has blotted out the necessary criteria for arriving at adequate knowledge.



The dictatorship of the irrational, a combination of romantic wallowing in the boundlessness of emotion, and the hatred of the lawfulness of reason, is the common denominator of Nazism and today's "Aquarian Conspiracy." Shown is a demonstration against the Seabrook nuclear power plant in New Hampshire in 1979.

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Absurd theories such as Max Weber's "value-free science" or the pluralism of the Jesuits, found their way into scientific thought. It is therefore virtually impossible to provide modern readers with the conceptual geometry which would enable them to adequately explain Nazism and fascism.

Schiller's contribution to historiography

Perhaps the best point of departure for investigating recent historical developments is that portentous turning point in modern history, when the American Revolution coincided with the birth of German classicism and the inception of the industrial revolution. This is because, in the final analysis, every political precursor of Nazism happens to have been directed against the after-effects of these three events. But we must extend the scope of our investigation still further, and it is no accident that it is Friedrich Schiller, the finest representative of that era, who points us in the right direction.

Schiller's work as a historian set new absolute standards for historiography. In his essay "The Legislation of Lycurgus and Solon," Schiller described two contrasting models for a state, models which shaped the outlines of every state during the succeeding 3,000 years. The Athens of the wise Solon, formulator of the first written republican constitution, was taken as the exemplary model for all subsequent conceptions of the state, and celebrating its brilliant triumph in the American Revolution. The Sparta of the tyrant Lycurgus, on the other hand, bore all the characteristics of a fascist state, and through the centuries has remained the oft-cited point of reference for everything which might be considered a precursor of Nazism. It was no accident that Hitler's opponents

In this section

We publish as our Special Report this week the first chapter of *The Hitler Book*, a groundbreaking exposé soon to be published simultaneously in German and English by the Schiller Institute. The book, edited by Helga Zepp-LaRouche, tears away 50 years of mythology about the Hitler era to tell for the first time the real story of who put the Nazis into power and why. The study takes as its starting point the epistemological foundations of National Socialism since, as Mrs. Zepp-LaRouche points out in her Introduction to the volume, unless we comprehend these, how will we recognize fascism when it appears in a new guise, under new historical circumstances?

The chapter published here is entitled "The Philosophical Roots of National Socialism." Subsequent chapters of the book, written by a team of historical analysts from the *EIR*'s staff in Wiesbaden, West Germany, include: "The National Socialist World-View: Racial Darwinism, Gnosticism, and Mysticism," "Inside the Dulles Brothers' Network: Switzerland and the Third Reich," "The Grand Mufti and Hitler: National Socialist Networks in the Mideast," "Wilton Park and the Farce of German Re-Education," "Old Wine in New Casks: The German Secret Services," "The Nuremberg Trials," and "The Global Danger: Today's Nazi-Communists."

saw the “Third Reich” as the fulfillment of this essay of Schiller, and recognized that the Nazi regime was only a modern version of Lycurgus’ Sparta. These people had hoped that, following the long-awaited collapse of the “Third Reich,” Solon’s Athens would become the guiding model for the reconstruction of the German nation.

Using this conflict between forces representing Sparta and those in the tradition of Athens as our conceptual yardstick, we are now in a position to understand the history of the past 3,000 years—and probably the history of the previous millennia as well. This conflict epitomizes the bitter warfare between oligarchism and republicanism. The arrival of the Nazis on the political scene therefore in no respect represents a break with the past, as some historians of the first school would have us believe. For an explanation of Nazism, we can turn directly to history.

The oligarchical system

In the oligarchical system, the idea of the state is identical with that of the empire. This is true not only for Sparta, but for its closely related predecessors such as the Assyrian Empire, Babylon, and Persia, as well as Rome, Byzantium, the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires, and the British Empire. A small oligarchical elite rules over a mass of subjects who are deliberately kept in a state of backwardness. The elite claims for itself the right to plunder this population, whether it be through the arbitrary setting of ground rent, control of a usury-based credit system, the mechanism of state power itself, or through the ruthless extraction of the last ounce of labor from their subjects, be they slaves, serfs, or other inferior beings whose death through exhaustion is viewed as a normal event.

Combing the works of most so-called scholars of fascism, one searches in vain for this central economic aspect, which runs like a red thread through every oligarchical empire and system. This economic aspect is in fact the primary and most crucial distinguishing characteristic of Nazism. Such systems are always dominated by extreme forms of monetarism, utilized by an autocratic and scornful oligarchical elite to maintain at all costs their usury-based, economically bankrupt monetary system.

From this perspective we can discern clear parallels with the Egypt of the pharaohs, who had no scruples about wearing out their slaves on the pyramids; Sparta’s bloody exploitation of the helots; the practices of the British East India Company; and the Nazis’ economic exploitation of forced laborers and concentration camp inmates. For the leading financiers in Switzerland, London, and New York, it was Hjalmar Schacht’s argument which clinched the matter: Only a drum-beater like Hitler would be capable of imposing the necessary drastic austerity and making it palatable to the masses. This was the principal reason for the massive financial support flowing into Hitler’s movement from abroad.

Whenever the maintenance of a currency and credit system is put before the maintenance of human life, we have the

clearest evidence that we are looking at a fascist system. Whoever sanctions the policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which today is deliberately condemning millions of human beings to death with its infamous credit conditionalities, is morally no better than the Nazi war criminals who were condemned to hang at Nuremburg.

The oligarchical system views the world as a series of great, eternal cycles of birth and death, of construction and destruction. Death and destruction are considered highly desirable, since they have a purifying effect, killing off the weak and enabling the strong to survive. There is no place in this system for scientific and technological progress; indeed, such progress is viewed as the real enemy threatening the eternal cycle.

This corresponds to a conception of man as a creature incapable of change, whose “nature” is fundamentally inclined toward evil. Hence, the rule of men over men is derived not from an ontological natural law, but merely from the ability of this or that oligarchical elite to force its will upon its underlings. Law has no objective basis in this system; all that counts is the power to avoid responsibility for one’s own acts.

Such a system is workable, of course, only if the popular masses accept this state of affairs and the ostensible superiority of the oligarchical elite, and conceive of themselves as objects, not as subjects, of events. It is for this reason that the oligarchical system requires more precise and more ingenious mechanisms of mass control in order to protect itself against unwelcome surprises. The preferred mechanism of control is a web of mythology for the masses to believe in. These myths are carefully cultivated and applied by the elite itself, or by a designated caste of priests. Such mythologies, in harmony with the cyclical world outlook, have been interwoven with every pre-Christian “regional” deity—Cybele, Isis, Shakti, Mother Siva, Mithra, Thor, Wotan, to name a few. The dominant figure in these prevailing myths was usually a goddess who symbolized “Mother Earth” and thus provided the basis for an ideology of “blood and soil.” In northern ideologies, for example, this role was played by the so-called world ash tree, Yggdrasil.

The republican system

Solon of Athens’ republican concept was quite another matter, and through Plato was passed on to the entire succeeding humanist tradition. In the republican state, all individuals are endowed with equal, inalienable rights founded upon natural law. The state is not an instrument of power, but rather serves the exclusive purpose of permitting the maximum unfolding of the potentials of each of its citizens, who, as citizens, are vitally concerned with development of the state as a whole. In the republic, leadership’s primary task is not to act as a parasite on the population, depriving it of its livelihood. Its task is to exert leadership on the basis of its acquired wisdom, on the basis of its fully developed understanding of law, and, above all, because of its readiness

to assume political responsibility and to act accordingly.

By its very nature, the republican system is the political expression of the physical universe as a negentropically developing continuum, as has been proven by modern science. Whereas scientific and technological progress represents a grave threat to any return to an eternally unchanging state of affairs—the characteristic feature of the oligarchical system's cyclical world view—this progress from a republican standpoint is the absolute precondition for the existence of the universe, as it is for human society.

The lawfulness of the universe, its negentropic evolution, is knowable and accessible to human reason and knowledge. Such knowledge, however, is not passive. Man, by virtue of his ability to think the higher hypothesis and make his knowledge increasingly correspond to universal law, is capable of altering this law itself, and in a lawful manner. Scientific progress is only another expression for this interaction between reason and the physical universe; the hypotheses formed by reason are efficient in the real world, and this allows us to conclude that there exists a correspondence between the macrocosm and the microcosm.

A republican state is therefore vitally concerned with the scientific progress of all its citizens, and with the improvement of their standard of living. This especially includes improvements in education and training, which raise the productivity of labor and thereby enrich the source of all social wealth.

For the oligarchical system, the sole source of wealth is the ownership of land and physical resources, the right to extract ground rent, and the ability to lend at usurious rates of interest. The system ultimately depends on maintaining the areas under its control in a state of permanent backwardness, in order to seize raw materials at the cheapest price. The scribblings of the "evil Parson Malthus" are but one of the numerous attempts to provide a rational justification for the oligarchical faction's policies, and to give them at least the veneer of legitimacy.

Anyone who thinks of the land as the only source of social wealth is apt to feel threatened by the arrival of every new individual into the world; such a person fears that the newcomer will want to share these resources with him, thereby decreasing what belongs to the ruling elite. This is the origin of the so-called overpopulation theory, which in turn supplies the oligarchical vision of a fixed system with a corresponding zero-growth ideology.

It is virtually impossible to distinguish any qualitative difference between Malthus's silly "law of population"—his rationalization for the practices of British colonialism—and the Nazis' classification of so-called "inferior races" as "useless eaters," and the Club of Rome's recommendation that the alleged population problem in the developing countries be solved by "natural means" such as denying them technology transfers or "raising the death rate" through hunger, epidemics, and deliberately incited regional warfare. Human life has no value in this system, and its proponents consider

it their own privilege if they wish to practice genocide, whether it be against Sparta's helots, the Jews, the Slavs, political opponents, 3 million people in Cambodia, or the 150 million people in Africa who have been "written off" by the IMF.

The republican system does not share this utter disregard for human life. The land and the soil, taken by themselves, have no significance. The sole source of wealth is the rise in the productivity of human labor effected through technological progress. Every newborn child, when viewed in this way, represents a potential enrichment of society, provided that that society develops all the potentials residing within that child. This in turn requires not only a high nutritional level, but a basic education which promotes character formation and a potentially never-ending higher education.

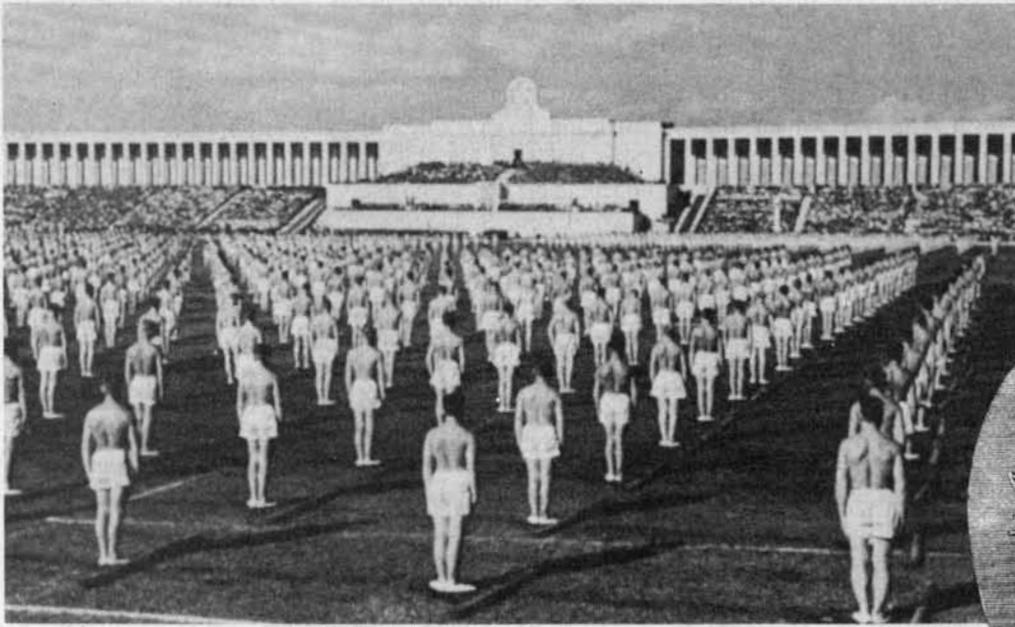
It has been entirely due to the work of republicans over the millennia that the earth's population potential has grown from approximately 5 million at the introduction of agriculture, to about 4½ billion today. The earth could easily have a population potential of several dozen billions, if currently existing technologies were vigorously applied.

This long chain of qualitative technical innovations has repeatedly enabled mankind to overcome limitations imposed by so-called natural resources. Human reason has conceived of new sciences and new technologies, defining and developing new raw materials, taking a little piece of dirt and turning it first into iron ore, and then into a transmitter of energy.

Republican society therefore puts the highest premium on that side of man which absolutely distinguishes him from the beasts; no beast has ever independently altered his "natural resources." Within this progress-oriented climate, geniuses have developed, men and women whose unique contributions have extended the limits of existing knowledge, and through whose individual accomplishments humanity as a whole has attained a bit of immortality.

This emphasis on the creative faculties of the individual, as was embedded in the legislation of Solon, has been a constant source of irritation to the leadership of the oligarchical faction, and they have always perceived it as a grave threat. It goes without saying that any efforts to instruct the so-called masses in reason calls into question the continued dominance of the oligarchical elite in the medium term. This was the reason for the murder of Socrates, whom his opponents hypocritically accused of seducing the youth of Athens, whereas his sole intention was to encourage them to use their own minds, as Plato reports to us in the *Apology* of Socrates.

Plato's dialogues contain everything which constitutes the essence of the republican system and European humanist culture: natural law, based on the ordering of existence and permanently guaranteeing the individual's God-given rights to life and personal development, and a cosmology which explains the development of the universe to the present day, along with a corresponding republican constitution which holds the rule of "philosopher kings" to be the prerequisite for social well-being.



The oligarchical system:
Spartan warrior and athletes in the Third Reich. Hitler's opponents saw the Nazi regime as the modern equivalent of the Sparta of the tyrant Lycurgus, described in Friedrich Schiller's famous essay, "The Legislation of Lycurgus and Solon."



But it was Augustine who stated in his famous letter to Marcellinus, that only with the appearance of the person of Jesus Christ was Platonic philosophy able to assume unsailable authority over all other teachings. Christ, by becoming the perfected embodiment of the divine within man, laid the unshakable foundation for the inviolability and dignity of human life. It might seem tautological to state that without the person of Christ, 2,000 years of European Christian civilization would not have been possible; this, however, is of crucial significance for any historical investigation.

Through the idea of Man-become-God, from this time onward every human being participates in God (*capax dei*), on condition that he, as the Image of the Living God, strives to replicate on earth His most noble quality as God-the-creator. Creation is not understood as a single event—a "big bang"—but rather as a continuous process of creation, in which man's creative capacity can be considered the arm of God.

Man, so understood as the image of God, must by his nature be fundamentally disposed toward the Good. From this flows his obligation to perfect himself. A refusal to develop all the creative faculties residing within him is therefore defined as sin.

Christian philosophy is therefore in perfect harmony with the republican system, and it should therefore come as no surprise that it was bitterly opposed by the oligarchical camp. The most blatant example of this was the Roman Empire itself which, boasting all the characteristics of a fascist state, used the most brutal methods in its attempt to exterminate the Christians.

What followed historically, to oversimplify a bit, were merely variations on either model. It is nonetheless fascinating to observe how conscious the protagonists of each side were of their respective predecessors. To be sure, such infor-

mation cannot be found in the usual history textbooks; original sources must be drawn upon.

The Italian Renaissance was buoyed by Plato and Greece; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, godfather of the Greens, praised the customs of Sparta. And the dark minions of the British imperialism have always sung exalted paeans to the empire of the Romans.

The American Revolution

The American Revolution was a decisive historical ing point. The emergence of the Nazis and all other current political trends must be understood from the standpoint of this event. Our modern history books usually reduce this ground-breaking event to the trivialities surrounding the Boston Tea Party. In reality, it represented a decisive republican victory over the oligarchic system.

America's Founding Fathers were not the backwoodsmen Hollywood would have us believe. Benjamin Franklin's networks in America and in Europe represented a republican and scientific elite, and it was not without reason that Franklin was called the "Prometheus of the 18th Century." The European republicans set great hope on the New World, where individual freedom and prosperity for the industrious, without regard to status or birth, were written on every flagstone. The revolution was triggered by England's refusal to grant the American colonies the unlimited right to build its own manufacturing industry; this finally brought the American republicans to realize that their own economic development could be secured only by separating themselves from the mother country and fighting for independence.

A perusal of the writings of the America's Founding Fathers makes it quite evident that their aim was nothing less

than victory of the republican economic system over the oligarchs' system. Examples of this were Alexander Hamilton's "Report on Manufactures" and the later writings of Mathew and Henry Carey. To this day, the U.S. Constitution remains the best republican constitution ever written, because it was of one metal, containing within it the spirit of the entire European humanist tradition.

But not only in America did the oligarchical camp suffer a painful defeat; their system seemed to be under assault on many fronts. Not only was the initial phase of the French Revolution threatening to follow America's example, but simple citizens were becoming scientifically educated in such institutions as the *École Polytechnique*. The largely uneducated oligarchs saw this as a brazen challenge, especially since the simultaneous flowering of the industrial revolution was threatening to shatter their old structures.

From a cultural standpoint as well, humanity was soaring to its most exalted heights, reaching a new pinnacle of development. Through its composers and poets, German classicism produced a breathtaking wealth of works of art, whose impact on the public had the effect of ennobling the individual as never before. A better ability to distinguish subtle shadings of emotion, coupled with a Promethean boldness of spirit—these were by no means contradictory, but were expressions of a perfected human character. Large sections of the population were especially swept up by the influence of music and poetry, as evidenced by the rapid spread of "house music" and the mass enthusiasm for the dramas of Schiller and others. It was understandable if the best minds of the age were convinced that humanity had arrived at the threshold of the Age of Reason.

The oligarchy strikes back

The oligarchical camp, however, did not leave the field in defeat, but moved on all fronts to reverse these unpleasant developments. In America the British Tories stepped up their campaign of treason against the young republic, a campaign extending from the War of 1812 to the machinations of today's Eastern Establishment, which still spares no effort to unhinge the U.S. Constitution.

In France, agents of the British, Swiss, and French oligarchy took control of events in the French Revolution and crushed the republicans' initiatives during the Jacobin Terror. Robespierre's famous remark on the decapitation of France's humanist elite—"The Revolution does not need any scientists"—shows him to be an agent of the oligarchy. The fact that the employers of Danton and Marat sat in England, that Jacques Necker had ruined the French economy for the sake of Swiss financial interests, that the Duke of Orléans had organized the storming of the Bastille, and that Napoleon was manipulated into wanting to rule over a new world empire—all are testimony to the bitter counterattacks launched by the oligarchy, which under no circumstances was going to allow a repetition of the American Revolution on European soil.

The German republicans' resistance to Napoleon's imperialist ambitions managed to produce the best and most fruitful period in Germany's history. The actual impetus to this development, however, did not come from Napoleon's invasion. Even before Napoleon's troops had dealt the Prussian armies a humiliating defeat at Jena and Auerstädt—opening the way to the intervention of the Prussian reformers around vom Stein, Scharnhorst, and von Humboldt—humanist ideas had already become widespread. Friedrich Schiller, through his direct influence on vom Stein and von Humboldt, left a deep impression on this epoch. During the subsequent liberation struggles, above all others it was this beloved "poet of freedom" who lifted the spirit of the soldiers and the entire population.

Never had Germany been closer to becoming a sovereign, republican national entity. These Wars of Liberation, whose immediate goal was the defeat of Napoleon's tyranny, in fact represented a much deeper and broader constitutional movement within the population. The great ideal of republican freedom, in which a monarch would be "king among millions of kings," was their guiding star, as is attested to by the voluminous, impassioned personal correspondence of the period.

Schiller, in his letters on *Don Carlos*, had described the American Revolution as the "favorite subject of the decade." Conversations inevitably dwelled upon "the spread of a more pure, more gentle humanity, the greatest possible freedom for the individual within the greatest flowering of the state—in short, humanity in its highest state of perfection, as this is attainable within its nature and powers." A quarter century later, this ideal was given new life.

Without question, the course of German history would have been immeasurably more positive, and we would have never experienced the horrors of the 20th century, had the population's hopes for a victory over Napoleon and the creation of a German nation come to fruition. Herein lies the great tragedy. But it is also an historical point of reference to which we must return, if we are to raise the question of a positive German identity today.

The Vienna Congress marked the end of republican turmoil in Germany. The oligarchy of England, Russia, France, Switzerland, Venice, and Austria had regrouped their forces, and were determined to leave no openings for the German negotiator, vom Stein. Following 1815, and with a vengeance in the wake of the Carlsbad Decrees of 1819, there began a long phase of gloomy reaction, with devastating effects on the population. Most citizens were unable to reconstruct in their minds precisely why and how they had been robbed of the fruits of their struggle. As the bigoted narrowness of the Holy Alliance increasingly made itself felt, the clear mind of the world citizen and patriot shrank into the limited purview of the *Burschenschaften* (student dueling societies) and maudlin German chauvinism. Clear conceptions yielded to romantic *Schwärmerei*, and the disappointed hopes lapsed into latent cultural pessimism.

The Conservative Revolution

This paradigm shift from Classicism to Romanticism, however, was no more a “sociological phenomenon” than was West Germany’s turn from a belief in progress during the “economic miracle” of the 1960s, to the 1970s’ zero-growth ideology and hatred of technology. The subversion, sabotage, and final defeat of the hopeful republican freedom movement at the start of the 19th century was the result of the same shift; and all the weapons directed against the humanist conception of man can be summed up under one modern concept: the “Conservative Revolution.”

Under that title, Armin Mohler wrote the standard work on this theme—first published in 1949 (!) in defense of the Nazi regime. According to Mohler, the Conservative Revolution has been an ongoing process ever since the French Revolution. He explains that:

Every revolution brings along with it a counterforce which attempts to reverse the revolution. And with the French Revolution’s victory came a world which the Conservative Revolution regards as its mortal enemy. For the time being we would like to describe their world as one which revolves not around that which is unchangeable in man, but which believes it can alter man’s nature. It therefore proclaims the possibility of stepwise progress, considers all things, relations and events to be accessible to comprehension, and attempts to consider every object in isolation and understand it in and of itself alone.

Mohler’s book is only worthwhile reading for clinical purposes. He leaves no doubt about his constituency for the Conservative Revolution, frankly admitting—in 1949!—that this notion is synonymous with fascism. (His description “conservative” is actually ill-chosen, since with its implied notions of “preserve” and “maintain,” it is always associated with the idea of influencing the whole, whereas for the Conservative Revolution the whole always remains the same.) The implicit notion in all ideas of progress, that man is fundamentally good, that he can gradually perfect himself unless hindered by aversive circumstances, is entirely foreign to the thinking of the Conservative Revolution. The idea that man is equally disposed to good and to evil lends it a decidedly gnostic and Manichæan character, a feature which later made its way into Nazi ideology.

Mohler describes the paradigm shift in the following terms: “In a broad sense, the term ‘Conservative Revolution’ includes the common basis of all completed or incipient transformations in all areas of life, in theology as well as in physics and music, or the planning of a city, structuring a family, or the care of the body or the building of a machine.” It is therefore an “alternative movement,” with all the essential features of that movement today.

The reversals in Germany were only one part of a trend which swept through virtually every European country and permeated all areas of life—a trend represented by Dos-

toevsky and the Aksakovs in Russia, Sorel and Barris in France, and Pareto and Evola in Italy, to name a few examples.

In theology, the Bishop of Mainz, von Ketteler, developed the counterrevolutionary idea of solidarity as a bludgeon against the Augustinian tradition; in physics, Cauchy and Laplace sabotaged the work of Monge, Carnot, and Legendre at the *École Polytechnique*, breaking with the Leibnizean tradition in mathematics (especially the calculus) and re-establishing mathematics along Cartesian lines.

In music there was a break between those composers who had been educated in the pre-1815 tradition of Bach, and whose compositions were based on the necessary progressions of well-tempered counterpoint—the first generation of Mozart and Beethoven, the second generation of Schumann and Schubert, and Brahms in the third generation—and those trained after 1815, who dwelled on the instability of chaotic progressions, such as Wagner or Hugo Wolff, composers.

Romanticism was consciously promoted by the European oligarchy as a movement which advocated the total rejection of reason and humanism, upon which Weimar Classicism was based. One of the oligarchy’s most influential agents, who supported the young Romantics with body and soul, was Madame de Staël, daughter of the Swiss banker Jacques Necker, who as French finance minister had ruined France for the sake of the Swiss banks. Heinrich Heine has pointedly described how Madame de Staël and her circles were angered that the “republican” culture found in the Weimar classics, in musical soirées at home, or in the great theater houses had begun to spread through large portions of the population. In a blue rage, she attempted to regain her own control of culture by luring young artists into her own salon. These recruits threw themselves into action with the same abandon as today’s “beautiful people” or the nobility’s “jet set.” Not only did this romantic movement produce the organized terrorism of Giuseppe Mazzini’s “Young Europe,” but it also spawned the tendency stretching from the turn-of-the-century youth movement to today’s counterculture “alternative” movement, along with its ideologues Friedrich Nietzsche, Paul de Lagarde, Julius Langbehn, Alfred Rosenberg, and so forth. The Nazis too drank out of this “alternative” trough.

Three of the most serious attacks, however, came in the areas of philosophy, history, and law. Schiller’s grand conception—the study of universal history as a method of education to reason—had to be destroyed. The aim was therefore to deny the unity of the sciences and the humanities—of *Naturwissenschaften* and *Geisteswissenschaften*—and to reject the validity of natural law.

Barthold Niebuhr, who hated Schiller’s and Humboldt’s humanism, glorified Rome as the “perfect state” and established his so-called modern science of historiography (which is not really all that modern), incorporating within

it all the elements of the feudalistic interpretation of history.

Roland Savigny stormed against natural law as it was laid down by the philosophy of German Idealism, and campaigned for the historical relativity of law, claiming that law had “organically” developed in tandem with the the “changing *Volksgeist*”—a theory designed to justify the existence of every regime contrary to law and every form of rapacious and arbitrary rule. From there to the *völkisch* idea was but one short step.

The most devastating oligarchical attack on the republican spirit, however, was led by the philosopher G. W. F. Hegel in Berlin, who is proven by “check-stubs” to have been a paid agent of Austria’s Metternich against the Prussian state, and was therefore working directly for the sinister reaction of the Holy Alliance. It is a sad commentary on the level of our universities that the holy aura surrounding Hegel has remained intact down to the present day.

When one considers that Hegel finished his *Phenomenology of Mind* in the year 1806, in the midst of the intellectual climate of the Weimar classics, we can only conclude that his ostensibly dialectical method was nothing but a Jesuitical distortion of the Socratic method so gloriously evident in the dramas of Friedrich Schiller. Hegel’s idea of the world-historical individual was indeed drawn from the classics; his “philosopher kings” or “philosophical minds,” however, tended to degenerate into mere power-mongers (Napoleon, for Hegel, was the World Spirit on horseback!), and were much closer to the master-race concept of Nietzsche and Hitler. Worst of all, toward the end of his teaching career Hegel not only engaged in the corrupt practice of blocking or spoiling the studies of many young and hopeful students, but also—in his *Philosophy of Right*—he provided the perfect justification for the totalitarian state, which served as source material for Europe’s reactionary oligarchical circles, as it did later for the Third Reich.

We could name many more figures and fields which were involved in the Conservative Revolution’s attempt to reshape the population’s conscious values. In all these cases it can be proven, often in great detail, that these were not “sociological phenomena” or mysterious transformations in the *Zeitgeist*, but were developments initiated or financed by the oligarchy.

In spite of passing rivalries, the oligarchy’s efforts after 1815 were closely coordinated, and they often succeeded in setting into motion movements which crossed national borders, such as Young Europe and the Anthroposophist movement. The direct successors of these movements today are tied to the activities of such supranational institutions as the Trilateral Commission, the Club of Rome, and the Aspen Institute.

The republicans, who could look back upon the American Revolution as their proudest victory, were seriously weakened following 1815 and were later eliminated as a political force. At best, republicans worked on as dispersed, humanistically inclined individuals, who had lost conscious-

ness of the great historical weight of their task. Such individuals reacted to humanist culture solely on the basis of their own personal moral disposition.

The oligarchy’s Conservative Revolution did not succeed equally well in all fields and in all parts of the world. Lazare Carnot, who had to flee from France along with Alexander von Humboldt, organized in Berlin a spirited opposition against Hegel and Savigny; under Carnot’s and von Humboldt’s protection the spirit of Weimar lived on in the natural sciences and in classical philology. The center of scientific work was later moved to Göttingen, which produced such pioneering scientists as Bernhard Riemann and Georg Cantor. Through the work of Felix Klein, this tradition was kept alive into the beginning of the present century.

While Hegel was providing the totalitarian state with a frightening ideological justification, pointing the way to the Nazis’ “everything is permitted” rule, Romanticism was at the same time softening up the general population. The Holy Alliance slowly but surely stifled Germany’s soul, and encouraged the emergence of such romantic philosophers as Schopenhauer, who began to deny the power of reason. For Schopenhauer, egoism was the natural disposition of mankind, and life as such was not an adequate affirmation of life. Thus the republicans’ cultural optimism yielded to an irrational, immoral pessimism.

The case of Friedrich Nietzsche

The absolute height of Romanticism, or rather the nadir of general culture, where raving folly and emotional infantilism turned into aggressive mania, the welding point between the Romantic muddleheads and the Nazis—this was the world of Nietzsche, whose works can only be described as the mind running amok.

This self-hating, joyless psychotic could not tolerate the idea of reason; he hated Socrates, Schiller, Beethoven, and Humboldt. In his confused writings he attempted, if incoherently, to rewrite history, emphasizing not the classical and Renaissance periods as the Weimar classics had done, but the Dark Ages, the dionysian and bacchanalian orgies, the dances of St. Vitus and the flagellants. He regarded the scientific mode of questioning as man’s arch-enemy, just as the Greens do today. Everything the Nazis later made into reality was already lurking within Nietzsche’s tormented brain, darting about with increasing frenzy: the *völkisch* idea, a deep hatred of industrial progress, the “biological world outlook” of “blood and soil,” the idea of a master race, the mystically inspired hatred of Christianity, and its final and ultimate form, the *Ecce Homo*, where Nietzsche cries out: “Have I made myself clear?—Dionysus against the Crucified. . . .”

Nietzsche, celebrated along with Dostoevsky as the prophet of the Conservative Revolution, was the spiritual pathfinder for the nihilism of the National Socialists and the existentialist philosophers.

The most extreme form of nihilism is the recognition that every belief, every notion of truth is nec-

essarily false, since a true world does not exist. It is thus an illusion of perspective. . . . Let us think this thought in its most frightening form: Existence, such as it is, without purpose and without aim, but ineluctably returning, without end, into nothing—this is the only return. This is the extreme form of nihilism: nothingness (“purposelessness”), eternally!

Nietzsche’s sick cultural pessimism has had many variants, from Lagarde, Langbehn, and Oswald Spengler through to Jean Paul Sartre, but he has never been outdone. The Nazis, Pol Pot, and Khomeini have seen to the practical application of his world outlook. An equally devastating effect was inflicted on German intellectual life by the works of Wagner and Dostoevsky. The latter was translated by Moeller van den Bruck, who in a fit of inspiration coined the name for the “Third Reich.” By this expression he meant a third historical empire to follow the Holy Roman Empire of German Nations and Bismarck’s Empire, but his primary aim was a final empire, where “right” and “left” would be transcended in a single synthesis.

The republic is carried to its grave

In order to counter the widespread mythos surrounding the meaning of “right” and “left,” let us cite a representative of the “Black Front”:

The Black Front can be clearly situated if we dispense with the bourgeois-democratic schema of “left” and “right.” Let us imagine the German parties and political currents to be shaped like a horseshoe, whose bend represents the Center and at whose end-points are the KPD and NSDAP respectively; the space occupied by the Black Front lies in between those two poles of Communism and National Socialism. The opposites of “left” and “right” are dissolved by their entering into a kind of synthesis, while strictly excluding the “bourgeois.” This position between the two poles is the best characterization of the tensile nature of the Black Front. . . .

The idea here is no different from the West German Green-peace leader Petra Kelly’s “fundamental opposition”: the Conservative Revolution’s deeply rooted enmity against the ideas of European civilization.

If individual predicates might have changed in the meantime, the substance nevertheless remains the same, whether it be the Romantic movement, the *Burschenschaften*, the youth movement, or our modern Greens and “alternative movement” activists.

In Germany, one of the first phenomena to develop out of the European Conservative Revolution was the so-called German Movement. In contrast with their promising name, this movement strove not to realize a republican nation imbued with the spirit of Weimar Classicism, but rather embraced the ideas of Germanness preached by the likes of

Father Friedrich Jahn, picking up later on Friedrich Naumann’s idea of a “social Kaiserdom” or the Great Empire fantasies of the old German *Bund*.

Armin Mohler, in his above-cited book, distinguishes between two wings of the German Movement: the reformed wing, under which he classifies the various political tendencies, e.g., the Christian-Social and anti-Semitic movement of Adolf Stöcker, Friedrich Naumann’s National Social Movement, the old German League, the solidarist movement initiated by von Ketteler, and the German nationalists within the Austro-Hungarian monarchy; and a broader, more “theoretical” grouping which Mohler considers to have a much more lasting influence. This second group includes Nietzsche, Lagarde, Langbehn, Moeller van den Bruck, Ernst Niekisch, the two Jüngers, K. O. Paetel, and Otto Strasser.

Both groupings shared a fundamental hostility toward the industrialization of Germany. Even though the cultural life of the Wilhelmine era had already lapsed into decadence, it was the cultural pessimism of such writers as Lagarde and Langbehn, with their not inconsiderable effect upon the youth movement, which dealt the final death blow to morality.

But not until the terrible experiences of World War I was the population made ready for the events that followed. The still-barren soil at Verdun speaks volumes about these four and one-half years of bloody carnage, which uprooted large portions of the population, especially the youth, depriving them of any hope for a normal life. The “rain of steel,” the senselessness of the trench warfare, extinguished any nobler motivations dwelling within the common soldier, who in many cases had already been under the influence of the youth movement before the war. In this climate of meaninglessness, a dangerous anarchistic ferment began spreading throughout the population. Many who never found their way back into normal lives after spending their formative years in the trenches began to organize themselves into paramilitary groups, seeing these as their only prospect for survival. It was from these strata that the Freikorps, the “alliances” of the postwar youth movement, the Communist armed units and the National Socialists’ Sturmabteilungen (SA) recruited their cadre.

The young Weimar Republic was, from the very start, bitterly opposed by all those sides of the political spectrum grouped around the Communists, the numerous tendencies within the Conservative Revolution, and the oligarchical camp, as represented by the Thule Society, for example, and, later on, by National Socialism. During the five years immediately following the war, conditions in Germany bordered on a state of civil war, with over 20 attempted coups from both right and left. Various armed units—from the Rotfrontkämpferbund, the SA, and the Stahlhelm, to the “Vikings” of Capt. Hermann Erhard and the “Oberland Alliance,” the Wehrwolf, or the Reichsflagge—began to unleash violent political confrontations. The specific ideology of each of these organizations played only a subsidiary role in these conflicts. “Rightists” and “leftists” rubbed shoulders

as a matter of course, and members often migrated from one side to the other. It was not uncommon for people to switch from the Communist Party (KPD) to the NSDAP; the most famous example of this was Hitler's criminal judge Roland Friesler, who originally came from the KPD. Organized political murder as an instrument of policy—just as we know it with today's international terrorism—was a common practice in this period.

The bitter opposition between KPD and NSDAP in the Weimar Republic is well known; meeting-hall battles and terrorist attacks were a daily occurrence. But from the very beginning there existed within each camp a National Bolshevik tendency, whose influence fluctuated from year to year. Here we must also distinguish between the surges within the general population and the "theoreticians" of the Conservative Revolution, who considered themselves an intellectual elite. In spite of a certain following of their own, this elite remained aloof from events, disdainfully voicing the opinion that the National Socialists had watered down the pure theory of the Conservative Revolution, as had all the other 500 groupings and tendencies within the Weimar Republic.

The totally unrealistic reparations payments demanded by the Versailles Treaty contained the seeds of the Weimar Republic's destruction. Its fate was sealed by the same imperialistic circles within the victorious nations, which had been no less guilty of starting World War I than were the Germans. Just as the brutal credit conditionalities of the IMF today are choking off all development within the so-called Third World, the Versailles conditions rendered any German economic recovery an impossibility, and led directly to the Great Depression.

The victorious powers' financial and economic strangulation of Germany first made possible the "success" of the KPD and NSDAP, both of whom benefited from the ferment against the Versailles Treaty. From the outset, both parties sought to destroy the "system," the young Weimar Republic. The de facto collaboration between Nazis and Communists in this endeavor, repeatedly took on a very practical form, and was the ultimate cause of the Weimar Republic's collapse.

National Bolshevik dreams

Whenever the National Bolshevik tendency was on the rise within the Nazi movement, discussion quickly moved to the necessity for an alliance between Germany and Russia as the key to defeating the "West," perhaps even leading to eventual world domination by both states. Many German military people, still laboring under the shock of the outcome of the war, cherished hopes that with the aid of the Russians, their humiliating defeat might be reversed. This hope was nourished by the Russian Army's advances in connection with the 1920 Russo-Polish war. Even though the advance was soon halted at Warsaw, an even greater resurgence of National Bolshevik ideas came with the hammer-blows of

the Great Inflation of 1923 and the occupation of the Ruhr, both of which seemed to threaten the very existence of the Weimar Republic. This provided such National Bolshevik tendencies as Karl Radek, the most powerful functionary on the executive committee of the Communist International and a close confidante of Stalin, with the opportunity to push through the Nazi-Communist tactical alliance known as the so-called "Schlageter course" and the tactic of National Bolshevism itself.

Ruth Fisher, who since May 1923 had been a "leftist" on the Central Committee, told a meeting of *völkisch* students:

The German Reich . . . can only be saved if you, gentlemen of the German-*völkisch* side, realize that you must fight together with the Russians who are organized with the KPD. Whoever raises the cry against Jewish capital . . . is already a fighter in the class struggle, whether he knows it or not. . . . Stamp out the Jew capitalists, hang them from the lamp posts, trample them to death!

The broadest-based upsurge of National Bolshevism, however, took place in 1930. The world economic crisis was reaching a climax, the soup lines were growing in length, and, in the form of the Young and Dawes plans, the victorious powers were again attempting to unload a large part of the burden onto Germany. The National Bolshevik Strasser wing of the NSDAP, hoping to make the ideas of Moeller van den Bruck, Friedrich Naumann, and Mazaryk into reality, competed with Hitler for leadership of the party. Gregor Strasser coined the catchphrase, "anti-capitalist yearning" (*antikapitalistische Sehnsucht*), which captured the fancy of the entire German people.

In the tradition of Radek, the KPD attempted to assume leadership of this anti-Western current, and decreed such initiatives as the "Programmatic Declaration of the KPD for the National and Social Liberation of the German People" on Aug. 24, 1930, and the "Farmers' Aid Program" in the spring of 1931. Within the KPD itself, the group around Heinz Naumann sought out active contact with National Bolshevik forces on the right. This tendency was later called the "Scheringer Course," referring to the infamous Lieutenant Scheringer, who in 1930 had been arrested for his National Bolshevik activities within the Reichswehr and who had gone over to the KPD while still in prison. The German information service DID reported in a special Jan. 30, 1983 issue that:

after his arrest, Scheringer joined up with the KPD and attempted to bring right- and left-wing radical opponents of the Weimar Republic together into a "rebels' circle." Following the outbreak of war in 1939, through the mediation of the later Field Marshal von Reichenau, Scheringer formally requested that Hitler recall him into military service as a volunteer with his old rank. As the "division's most courageous officer," Artillery Captain Scheringer now success-

fully turned his guns against his Communist comrades. After World War II, Scheringer's silence about his Nazi past enabled him to become a state secretary, and he dedicated himself to the task of gathering together former functionaries from the "Imperial Food Trades" in the Communist-influenced "Association for Forestry and Agriculture." Scheringer was also influential in the "Leadership Ring of Former Soldiers," whose primary task was to follow Moscow's plan to mobilize ex-Nazis and former German officers against the so-called "remilitarization of the Federal Republic." Since the "reconstitution" of the Communist Party of Germany (DKP) in September 1968, Scheringer has been an "agricultural expert" on the DKP's executive committee. The activities of this Nazi-Communist not only undermined the Weimar Republic, as they do now the Federal Republic, but the personnel of this network has remained intact down to the present day.

On Aug. 9, 1931, under Moscow's strict instructions, the KPD supported the *Stahlhelm's* plebiscite against the Prussian administration, and on election day, in accordance with this order, in front of every voting place there was posted a red flag with hammer and sickle, side by side with a red swastika flag. (They lost the plebiscite just the same.) One year later the NSDAP and KPD jointly supported the strike of the Berlin Transportation Union. Under the leadership of Walter Ulbricht, they followed the motto that anything which weakened the West would help them, putting faith in Stalin's slogan: "Through Hitler we will take power!"

This time the National Bolshevik tendency acquired more influence over the population than before. Strasser's wing in the NSDAP, however, still could not win out over Hitler's Munich clique, and formally subordinated itself on June 30, 1930, with Gregor Strasser knuckling under and his brother Otto leaving the NSDAP entirely. In 1932, it finally came to an open break between Gregor Strasser and Hitler, and on June 30, 1934, the "Night of the Long Knives," Hitler used his own methods to end the faction fighting within the NSDAP, shooting down Gregor Strasser along with all his followers in the SA.

Once again, as in the period before World War I, the so-called theoreticians of the Conservative Revolution had a much greater long-range influence than the pragmatic Gregor Strasser or those who thought they could accomplish something by forming a new "popular conservative" party. In the wake of the power struggle, the so-called authors of the Conservative Revolution—the National Revolutionaries and National Bolsheviks of the Weimar Republic—had been partially wiped out by the Nazis, partially put into concentration camps, and partially driven abroad, where they were able to surround themselves with an absurd aura of resistance.

Nevertheless, today they once again represent a serious threat.

Such current "leftist" publications as the right-leaning *taz* or the journal *Wir Selbst* are quite frank about their admiration for Libyan madman Qaddafi, and they are building up positive images for Otto Strasser, the Jünger brothers, Karl Radek, Walter Stennes, Claus Heim, August Winnig, Hanno Schultze-Boysen, Ruland Scheringer, Hans Zehrer with his *Tat* circle, Ernst and Bruno von Salomon, Eberhard Köbel, and so forth. Ernst Niekisch, the most famous National Bolshevik of all, is worshipped as a veritable cult figure.

In the book *Preussische Profile*, jointly published by Sebastian Haffner and the Conservative Revolutionary Wolfgang Venohr, Haffner presents a thesis which, despite its strangeness, contains a dangerous quantum of truth:

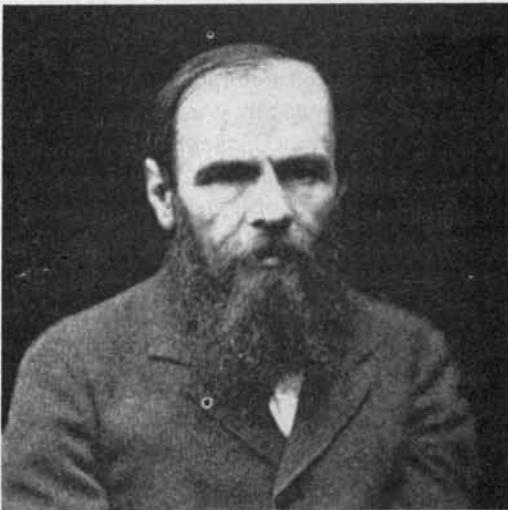
There are two questions to which 99 out of 100 Germans today would only respond to with an embarrassed wince or a shrug of the shoulders. The first one is: Who was actually the last great Prussian? The second: Who in Germany was actually Hitler's real opponent? One can search long and hard for an answer. One can try out various names, only to reject them later. In the end, the final answer to both questions has to be: Ernst Niekisch.

Armin Mohler was unfortunately right when in 1979 he spoke of a Niekisch renaissance among the youth, who had withdrawn in disappointment from the flood of neo-Marxist literature, and were passing around photocopies of Niekisch's writings. Large parts of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) were also not immune to this new-found admiration for Niekisch.

What is the essence of Niekisch's views? Only a revolutionary, socialist Germany, he says, in alliance with revolutionary Russia, would be able to defy the bourgeois (i.e. industrialized) West. So, a Germany allied with Russia against the decadent West! The prophets of the Conservative Revolution gave symbolic meaning to the four points of the compass: against the civilized capitalistic West, against the Roman-Catholic South, and for and with the rustic-Germanic North and the Bolshevik East.

But the Conservative Revolutionaries are by no means talking about a Communist Russia. Schumacher always spoke of "Bolshevik" Russia, and the writers in *Tat* have described Bolshevism as a "re-Asiatization" of Russia with a thin Western European veneer. For such people as Ernst von Salomon, it was clear that "vague expectations from the East" were the correct perspective for all those who could not reconcile themselves to the defeat of Germany. It also meant the establishment of a new empire without any ties to the West or reliance on its traditional values.

After the experiences of World War I, the 20th-century authors merely reformulated the vision already outlined by the two most important 19th-century theorists of the Conservative Revolution—one in the West, the other in the East. Nietzsche, in his posthumously published works, sketched



Fyodor Dostoevsky (left) and Friedrich Nietzsche (right) are celebrated as the prophets of the Conservative Revolution—the spiritual fathers of the National Socialists.



out a four-point program containing his call for a “greater German policy”:

We need an unconditional partnership with Russia, along with a new common program which will prevent Russia from coming under the influence of any English stereotypes. No American future! . . . A purely European policy is intolerable, and any confinement to Christian perspectives is a great malady.

On the other side, Nietzsche’s Russian counterpart Dostoevsky, who also promulgated the idea of a holy Russian race and a coming Russian world empire, wrote that “Germany does not need us for a temporary political alliance, but for an alliance lasting into eternity. . . . Two great peoples, we and they, are destined to change the face of the world!”

But what was to be changed? What was the synonym for the “West,” and what was Nietzsche’s “American future,” which had to be halted at all costs?

The battle against the ‘American future’

Because of today’s renewed, this time global, offensive of the Conservative Revolution, we must once again review the epistemological basis defining both sides. The aim of Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, Niekisch, and the other National Bolsheviks was to destroy the republican model we have described earlier, while they themselves were nothing but aggressive spokesmen for the oligarchical model. Their hatred was directed against the dictatorship of reason; they worshipped the power and unlimited domination of the irrational will.

The “West” against which their attack was directed—the “American future,” whose seeds had been planted during the American Revolution—embodied the noblest ideas produced by the humanism of Christian European culture over the past 2,500 years. This culture is founded upon a conception of man which emphasizes the mental capacities of man, who,

according to Nicolaus of Cusa, can make himself into a second God.

Such human beings are capable of thinking three successive levels, as defined by Socrates. On the lowest level, that of sensuous desire, man lives only for the satisfaction of his material needs. On the second level, that of the Understanding, he accepts a certain ordering of things, but is incapable of actual creativity. On the highest level, the stage of Reason, human thought is in agreement with the lawfulness of the physical universe, into whose development he intervenes freely but lawfully.

Such a person, guided by the humanist ideal, has the duty to pursue his own self-development, and to do his utmost to develop all his latent capacities for the benefit of all mankind. That also includes the development of his emotions away from infantile egocentricism and toward a true intercourse with human reason. Such a person must no longer, along with Kant, force himself to do what reason decrees, but his actions must come into harmony with his own sense of joy; indeed, he could not tolerate anything else. The individual who passionately accomplishes that which is necessary has, as Schiller says, a beautiful soul.

It is the specific merit of European humanism that, unlike any other culture or civilization, it emphasizes the significance of the individual human being. In no other cultural milieu, whatever other advantages it might have, does the formation of the individual’s character and personalality assume such a central role. “Free through Reason, strong through law,” is how Schiller’s poem “Die Künstler” (“The Artists”) describes this ideal of humanity, to which we owe human history’s most momentous qualitative advances. Perfected freedom and beauty in the perfection of form—this is the principle which applies as much to every individual as it does to science and works of art.

What, on the other hand, is the world of the Conservative Revolution, of National Bolshevism, of National Revolution, and of National Socialism? The individual here is cipher

in a mass, playing no role within the collective—including members of the elite and the master race. Identity is based not individually, but emanates from blood and soil, i.e., from the specific race and “homeland.” Human reason is not the crowning flower of creation; man is but a lowly creature in the eternal cycle of nature. The dead must form the humus from which the young can grow—such was Colorado Governor Richard Lamm’s brutal, rage-provoking characterization of this idea.

Eternal cycle versus Renaissance

The Conservative Revolution consciously counterposes the “rebirths” of the cyclical world-view to the “Renaissance.” According to Mohler, “sunken worlds” well up from below, revealing ancient regional mythologies—the principle of the Great Mother Earth, which transmits the collective’s identity with blood and soil. Accordingly, men can come in closest contact with their “souls” when they are in the throes of a dionysian frenzy.

Nietzsche elevated the “dionysian” into a program to defeat Socratic reason. The essence of the dionysian could be most easily captured while in a state of intoxication, e.g., while under the influence of narcotic beverages, or in the ecstatic abandon with which the dionysian masses dance through the streets—be they the dancers of St. Vitus in the Middle Ages, the marching columns of the SA or SS, or behind the prayer-wheels of the Islamic fundamentalists. “When millions fall trembling in the dust, we are close to the dionysian,” wrote Nietzsche. It is all too clear that the individual—this greatest treasure of European culture—played a role here as a mere part of a collective mass. Contempt for the individual in favor of the collectivity is one of the touchstones of the Nazi-Communist alliance.

In contrast with classical art, what passes for art in the camp of the Conservative Revolution was never intended to ennoble the public, “playfully and merrily” bringing them up to the poet’s level, as Schiller put it. Esthetic refinement of the emotions, joy in differentiated content within the perfected shape and form which art has as its aim, the ability to address the potentially finer side of popular impulses—no, the Conservative Revolution will have none of this. Their art is intended to allow the public to “go outside themselves,” to drain themselves, to participate in a collective frenzy. Whatever one’s inner beast might be, it should be let out in existentialist exhibitionism; the so-called lyrics of Gottfried Benn or the prose of Hermann Hesse invites us to do so. Dostoevsky’s “Russian soul” is only completely genuine when the hero, a drunkard and a brute, maniacally smashes everything to bits, including his tubercular wife.

The Conservative Revolution’s art is an assault against reason, as is perhaps best demonstrated by the music of Richard Wagner. The public is lulled into entering the cultist world of mythology. The opera is visited not in order to experience joy over human creativity as exemplified by music, but to observe and participate in a cult ritual.

An integral component of this tendency’s belief structure is the perverse pleasure it takes in collapse and destruction, in all its various shadings. With Nietzsche it takes the following form:

Is pessimism necessarily a sign of decline? . . . of collapse, of aborted efforts, of exhausted and weakened instincts? . . . is there such a thing as a pessimism of strength? An intellectual obeisance to what is hard, terrifying, evil, problematic, stemming from well-being, of ebullient health, of fullness of existence? Is there perhaps a suffering from surfeit itself—a sharp-eyed, tempting boldness which longs for the dreadful as it would for the enemy, the honorable enemy upon whom it can test its power?

But this is not merely someone’s sick fascination with pessimism, or a kind of ideological depression; this addiction to destruction is typical of the cyclical world outlook. Thus Nietzsche writes in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*:

Everything goes, everything returns again; the wheel of existence rolls on forever. Everything dies, everything blossoms again; the year of existence runs on forever. Everything breaks, everything is put together again; the same house of existence is built forever. Everything parts, everything is reunited; the ring of existence remains true forever. Existence begins at every Now; at every Here the sphere is rolling there. The middle is everywhere. Narrow is the path of eternity.

It follows that the adherents of the Conservative Revolution consider Charles Darwin’s theories to be the most important “scientific” idea of the 19th century. For if the eternal cycle is to be remain unbroken, then according to Darwin the strong must eliminate the weak and destroy those who “do not deserve to live,” just as the race theoreticians Jahn and Hans Grimm, and finally the Nazis themselves, imagined themselves to be members of a master race, possessing the right to exterminate inferior races.

For the Conservative Revolution, revolution itself (including war) is a kind of blood-letting, a “trimming off of excessive and damaging growth.” Its proponents are not amazed that birth must be paid for with destruction. Murder, especially political murder, finds its brutal justification here. It is therefore hardly accidental that all those regimes we group under the term “state terrorism,” e.g., Khomeini’s Iran or Qaddafi’s Libya, not only practice systematic political murder against their opponents, but also exhibit all the other characteristics of the Conservative Revolution.

Its proponents believe that Nietzsche’s arrival represents the great turning point, and that the following period has “only been an interregnum during which the world of progress must first be entirely destroyed before the new one can take shape. Whoever reads these works of a hundred years ago, cannot help recognizing that their authors knew they were

engaged in a conspiracy spanning generations.

In the Preface to his *Will to Power*, which is celebrated as the “most significant challenge of the interregnum,” Nietzsche writes:

What I am going to relate is the history of the next two centuries. I will describe what will occur, and what can occur in no other way: the rise of nihilism. This story can already be told now, for necessity is already at work here. This future is already speaking to us with a thousand signs; this fate is announced everywhere. All ears are straining to hear this music of the future. Our entire European culture has long been moving with agonizing tension, increasing from decade to decade, and is now tumbling loosely, restlessly, violently into catastrophe: like a river which wants to reach its end, which no longer thinks, which is afraid to think.

This “tension” has already been unleashed once in the catastrophe of the Third Reich and World War II—a direct consequence of the philosophy cited above. But just as the Conservative Revolution disdainfully claimed that the National Socialists had “watered down” their theory, so they regarded Hitler as merely an “episode on Germany’s political stage,” as a “drum beater” for national revolt, as the “catalyst sent by fate.” Löwith sees this as a development whose beginning is the death of God (Nietzsche’s God is dead), whose middle is the resulting nihilism, and whose end is nihilism’s conquest of itself and the eternal return.

The Age of Aquarius

This transition to a new age has cosmic dimensions—an idea which has weathered well. Under the pseudonym Kurt von Ensen, a certain Dr. Karl Strünkmann wrote in his 1932 book *Adolf Hitler und die Kommenden (Adolf Hitler and the Age to Come)*:

Today we are living through the catastrophic transition from the Age of Pisces to the Age of Aquarius. We are at a change of æons, as at the time of the birth of Christ, when humanity left the Age of Aries and entered the new Christian Æon of Pisces. An old world collapsed, a new one rose up: the Christian Occident. And now, 2,000 years later, a new, powerful “die and become again” is beginning: destruction of the Occident and rise of the new atlantic world. The Third Reich’s mission is to demolish the dying Occident. The shaping of the new Atlantic cultural empire in the Æon of Aquarius will be the task of the Fourth Reich.

In good National Bolshevik style, Herr von Ensen alias Strünkmann knew precisely what the hub of this Fourth Reich would be: the intimate alliance between Prussia and Russia.

The previous æon, the Age of Pisces, was under the joint leadership of Roman and Germanic intellec-

tual and cultural forces. *The new Æon of the Age of Aquarius will be directed not toward the South, but toward the East.* The Prussian-Austrian, Deutsch-Germanic will, on the one side, and Russian-Siberian elemental forces on the other side, shall shape a new type of man and a new humankind on earth.

Preparation of all these things was to be the task for a future intellectual general staff.

It is quite surprising and highly fruitful to read the writings of the Conservative Revolutionaries and National Bolsheviks of the 1920s and 1930s, and then to compare them with the modern trends toward a so-called neutralized, independent central Europe and a decoupling with the United States. One finds the same hatred against the “West” and against rationality and reason. The negotiating partner is never Communist Russia; it is always the Bolshevik East.

If we regard the transformations cited by Nietzsche, Jünger, or von Ense not merely as absurd astrological hokum, but rather as a program for the oligarchical faction, then we must unfortunately conclude that this paradigm shift, the destruction of Western values, has been largely successful.

With the arrogance of someone who has already won the battle, Marilyn Ferguson, a fellow at the futuristic Stanford Research Institute, has given us a popular account of current experimentation in this shift. Without even covering her mouth, in her book *The Age of Aquarius* she describes the process of mass brainwashing which has led an increasing number of people around the world, especially the youth, into joining up with this Age of Aquarius—this cosmic touching and feeling which unites everyone in a great dynamic family.

Even if it is perhaps not evident at first glance, the members of the alternative movement, with their dream of a post-industrial Age of Aquarius, share their epistemological groundwork with the so-called peace movement. When this latter group finds not the slightest problem in unilateral disarmament; when Horst Ehmke sees “America’s confrontation policies” as a greater problem than the threat becoming subjugated under “Soviet domination”—is this not identical to Kurt von Ensen’s earlier dictum: “the new Æon of Aquarius will be directed not toward the South, but toward the East”?

The dictatorship of the irrational, a combination of sentimental, romantic wallowing in the boundlessness of emotion, and the corresponding hatred of all lawfulness of reason, is the common denominator where Nazism and Bolshevism coincide. This is the basis of the convergences of the 1920s and 1930s, and it provides an epistemological explanation for the Hitler-Stalin pact.

The Hitler-Stalin Pact

In spite of its weakness, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) of the late Weimar Republic still was the gathering point for most of Germany’s republican elements. After the

Sixth World Congress of the Comintern, the Communist International declared its main enemy to be the SPD, and not, as one might otherwise expect, the NSDAP. The Communists' decision can only be understood with reference to the affinity between Nazism and Bolshevism described above. If this affinity did not exist, Stalin would never have thought of Hitler as his tool, just as the East would not be supporting the Greens today to suit its own purposes.

The Nazis were not important to Stalin because of their ideology, but because he saw them as the best lever for breaking Germany out of the Western camp. As is usually the case with such Hobbesian alliances, Stalin secretly planned to incorporate Germany into the Soviet sphere of influence at the earliest opportunity; in the meantime, however, he proceeded according to the old principle, "anything which hurts our enemy, helps us," the enemy in this case being the capitalist system in the West.

At the close of 1931 Stalin formulated his thinking as follows: "Don't you also believe, Neumann, that, if the National Socialists were to take power in Germany, they would be so exclusively occupied with the West that we could build socialism here in peace?"

Moreover, at the Dec. 15, 1931 meeting of the executive committee of the Communist International in Moscow, Comintern executive secretary Dmitri Manuilskii stated:

The main enemy is not Hitler; the main enemy is the system of Severing-Brüning-Hindenburg. We will make no treaties with Hitler or enter into secret negotiations with him. We will let Hitler go his own way, but will make use of everything his victory over the state machine will bring. With his aid we will first smash the Social Democratic police machine and the Brüning state machine. . . . In the present phase of development of the German revolution, Hitler is our most steadfast ally. . . . Our future tactics, and the tactics of the German Communist Party, depend upon a correct evaluation of this fact.

The content of these arguments are completely consistent with the peasant wisdom which later formed the basis for the Hitler-Stalin Pact of August 1939 to 1941. In Hitler, Stalin thought he had a useful instrument for realizing his dream of a world socialist empire. Hitler is known to have thought the same of Stalin, namely that Stalin was a stepping-stone to his future seizure of world power. If we consider that Neville Chamberlain, French Premier Edouard Daladier, and powerful Wall Street financiers were also supporting Hitler in hopes that Hitler would go to war against the Soviet Union, then the Second World War begins to look like a classic case of miscalculation on the part of all involved.

The Nazi regime's economic policy had, in the meantime, done precisely what oligarchical forms of extreme

domestic austerity always do. As soon as the domestic economy's industrial capacity and labor force is exhausted—and the Nazis took this to the extreme with their labor and concentration camps—there remains only one way out for such an economy: wars of conquest, so as to bring new resources within reach. Hitler, speaking to his generals on Aug. 22, 1939, argued for the invasion of Poland in the following terms: "This is an easy decision. We have nothing to lose. Our economic situation is such that we can go on for a couple of years at best. Göring can back this up. We have no choice. We must act."

On Aug. 23 the world was taken by surprise with the announcement of a non-aggression pact between the Third Reich and the Soviet Union, signed in the Kremlin by Stalin, Molotov, and Nazi Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop. Poland was to be the booty, divided up between the two empires. At the conclusion of the Polish campaign, on the evening of Sept. 27, von Ribbentrop traveled to Moscow in order to conclude a German-Soviet border and friendship treaty. This was the only friendship treaty Hitler ever made with any state outside the Axis.

If we call to mind the Soviet reaction to France's and Great Britain's declaration of war against Hitler, we are struck with the parallels to Soviet argumentation following their recent shooting down of a Korean commercial jet liner. After Hitler had decided to set into motion a "peace offensive" in October 1939, Stalin ran the following statement in the Nov. 29 issue of *Pravda*:

It was not Germany which attacked France and England, but France and England have attacked Germany, and thus they bear responsibility for the present war. . . . The ruling class of France and England has presumptuously rejected the German peace proposals and the Soviet Union's efforts for a rapid conclusion to the war. These are the facts.

As hard as the Soviets might have subsequently tried to give themselves the aura of anti-fascist struggle, no one can ever erase these lines in the Oct. 9, 1939 *Izvestia*: "To start a war to destroy Hitler, is a criminally stupid policy." And on Oct. 31, Molotov stressed in a public statement:

There is no possible justification for a war of this kind. One can accept the ideology of Hitlerism, or one can reject it . . . that is a question of political attitude . . . but it is not only senseless but also criminal to wage a war to wipe out Hitlerism and disguise this as a fight for democracy.

The Hitler-Stalin Pact, particularly the concomitant expansion in East-West trade, kept the Hitler regime alive for the duration. In accordance with the German-Soviet trade agreement signed just before the pact, the Nazis received from the Soviets one-third of their oil, two-thirds of their phosphate, one-third of their cobalt, tungsten, molybdenum

and tin, many other raw materials, and 10 percent of their animal fodder. During the period between August 1939 and August 1940, trade between the two states rose by 3,000 percent. If it had not been for Russia, the British naval blockade would have done serious damage to the Nazis; instead, the Russian bought goods from the Far East, and even from the British, in order to sell it more cheaply to the Nazis.

The myth of the Soviet anti-fascist struggle becomes even less credible when we take into account the fact that when the U.S.S.R. had the best opportunity to stop the Nazis, Moscow let it go by. In 1940 the Nazis deployed 139 divisions on the Western front, and a mere 4 divisions and 6 territorial regiments remained on the Eastern front to face Stalin's more than 100 divisions. If Stalin had really intended to move against the Nazis, this would have been the ideal moment.

Only when the Third Reich and the Soviet Union started getting in each other's way, for instance, around raw materials supplies in Romania or Finland, did the tide begin to turn. It is certainly true that, in the course of the bloody warfare which followed, the Soviets lost 20 million of their citizens at the hands of the Nazis. But it helps neither themselves nor the West when they hold up anti-fascist resistance as a holy cow.

It is also undeniably true that the Soviet Union bitterly resisted the Nazis after they opened up the Eastern front. But the fact remains that the rise of the Nazis in Germany had fit perfectly into their concept; this gives them a large degree of co-responsibility for the course of events. The greatest tragedy, however, lies in the fact that no one today—in East or West—is willing to learn the lesson of this story. Immediately after the end of the war, the Soviet Union did not hesitate to make use of the old Nazi intelligence networks. Today the Soviet Union continues to provide us with daily proof of its unabashed support for Nazi organizations in the West, be these old formations or newcomers such as the alternative movements of the so-called Age of Aquarius. Has the Soviet Union still failed to learn that it never pays to support Nazi movements in the West?

The oligarchy in the West is equally determined to repeat the same mistakes. The political friends of Lord Carrington, the Kissingers, Genschers, and Andreottis, evidently believe that by isolating America and concluding a new Yalta Agreement with the Soviet Union, they can re-divide and plunder the world. An "independent Central Europe accord," no matter how it were formulated, would surely have an even shorter life-span than the Hitler-Stalin Pact. Today there are certain European oligarchs who would like to control their own arsenal of nuclear weapons—a proposal currently being negotiated under the shameful trademark of the "two-pillar theory of NATO." If their dreams ever become reality, the result is pre-programmed: Whoever refuses to learn from history is condemned to repeat it.

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