

Is That Hitler In Your Garden? No, That's Al Gore

by Dean Andromidas

When Al Gore was Vice President, living at the mansion in the park of U.S. Naval Observatory, he embarked on a project to restore the grounds, especially the gardens and forest. An article describing this project at the time Gore was running for President, stated,

“Gore restored the rich diversity and lush beauty of his own backyard by yanking out *foreign exotica in favor of native plants*” (emphasis added; [www. homegardens.move.com](http://www.homegardens.move.com)). Treating plants as if they were unwanted foreigners from the “mixed races of the South” or other unwanted immigrants under orders from Gore, the gardeners “dug out all exotic plants,” including such “invasive” immigrants as English ivy and garlic mustard from Europe and Kudzu from Japan.

Gore’s interest in gardens comes from the same fascist roots as his lying CO₂ campaign that would have made Joseph Goebbels blush.

Blood and Soil

A series of articles written by two German professors of landscape and gardening, Drs. Gert Gröning and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn*, have exposed that the trend towards “ecological goodness” of so-called “nature gardens” or ecological gardens, free of “foreign exotica in favor of native plants,” has its roots deep in blood-and-soil Romanticism that became the ideological foundation of the Nazi movement.

The promoters of “nature gardens” at the turn of the century in Germany, later, under the Nazis, became directly involved in the drafting of the notorious “Generalplan Ost,” whose aim was to eliminate the unwanted Poles, Jews, and Slavs in the captured territories, and restore a so-called natural Germanic landscape for the German settlers. In addition to the removal of all non-Germans, all non-German plants were removed and replaced with what were at the time called “native plants.” Those who began this revival of nature and ecological gardens in the 1970s and 1980s, as part of development of the fascist Green movement, referred directly to these very same Nazi gardeners who were involved in Generalplan Ost.

*Joachim Wolschke Bulmahn: “The Search for ‘Ecological Goodness’ among Garden Historians;” Gert Gröning: “The Native Plant Enthusiasm: Ecological Panacea or Xenophobia;” Gert Gröning: “Ideological Aspects of Nature Garden Concepts in Late Twentieth Century Germany.”

The only problem was, as the above two German professors have documented, that not only did they fail to write about the Nazi and racist ideology that went into these ideas, but they failed to mention the fact that these gardeners were card-carrying members of the Nazi Party. The two authors have not been able to get any of their well-documented articles published in Germany. Those that have been published in the U.S. have created a firestorm in the field, not to mention a lot of hate mail.

The authors point out that the very term “ecology” was coined by the German naturalist Ernst Haeckel in 1866. Haeckel was the principal promoter of the bestial theories of Charles Darwin in Germany, and was deployed against the tradition of Alexander Humboldt. There have been entire books relating the theories of Haeckel to those of the Nazis (cf. *Ernst Haeckel and the German Monist League: The Volkish Origins of National Socialism*).

Putting aside the fact that to eliminate “foreign plants” from Germany would mean the elimination of the potato and grapevine, the Aryan struggle for the true nature garden was every bit as brutish as the Nazi racism, bigotry, and brutality toward non-Aryans.

The German landscape architect Albert Kraemer wrote in 1936, Germans “still lack gardens that are race-specific, that have their origins in nationality and landscape, in blood and soil. Only our knowledge of the laws of the blood, and the spiritually inherited property and our knowledge of the conditions of the home soil and its plant world (plant sociology) enable and oblige us to design blood-and-soil rooted gardens.”

Gröning and Wolschke-Bulmahn write that a team of Nazi-era Saxon botanists equated “their fight against foreign plants with the fight of Nazi Germany against other nationals especially ‘against the plague of Bolshevism.’ The team demanded ‘a war of extermination’ against *impatiens parviflora*, a little herb that grows in lightly shaded areas in forests.” They quote these botanists again: “As with the fight against Bolshevism, our entire Occidental culture is at stake, so with the fight against this Mongolian invader, an essential element of this culture, namely, the beauty of our home forest” is at stake.

Key Nazi gardeners who have been cited by modern “nature gardeners” searching for “ecological goodness,” as Wolschke Bulmahn has written, include Willy Lange (1864-1941), who adopted his idea of a nature garden from the so-called English Garden or nature park of the 19th Century. Writing on garden architecture theory, Lange wrote in 1927 of the difference between the “metal state” of the South Alpine “Mediterranean mixed races” and their geometrical architectonic gardens, in contrast to the “reawakened race feeling” of the “originally unified Northern-Alpine Nordic race,” as expressed in the “nature garden” which necessarily draws its inspiration from the “natural” German landscape and its “native plants.” Lange accused those Germans who preferred the Renaissance-style geometrical gardens as having “per-

ished in the racial swamps of the South.”

Another is H.F. Wiepkings-Jurgensmann who helped draft a proposed law on rules of Nazi landscape gardening for the Third Reich in 1944, “Only the existence of a race-specific environment . . . produces within us the best creative forces.” Under National Socialism he collaborated with war criminal Konrad Meyer, a professor of agronomy and a member of the SS, who headed the commission which drafted the Generalplan Ost. Meyer was put on trial at Nuremberg; although acquitted of crimes against humanity, he was found guilty of membership in a criminal organization. Nonetheless, both enjoyed successful post-war professional careers as the University of Hannover.

U.S. Collaborators

This form of race gardening had its collaborators in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s. One was Jens Jensen, who was among the originators of the so-called “prairie school.” In 1937, Jens wrote that the American garden of the prairie school shall “express the spirit of America and therefore shall be free of foreign character as far as possible. . . . The Latin and the Oriental crept and creeps more and more over our land, coming from the South, which is settled by Latin people, and also from other centers of mixed masses of immigrants. The Germanic character of our race, of our cities and settlement was overgrown by foreign character. Latin spirit has spoiled a lot and still spoils things every day.”

Since he was participating in the landscaping of state and national parks, Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Secretary of Interior Harold L. Ickes, denounced Jensen’s anti-Semitism and racial views. This has not stopped the fact that Jensen is still very popular among current ecological gardeners, although they always fail to report the racist and anti-Semitic foundation of his ideas.

In 1983, the 21st Congress of the International Federation of Landscape Architects wanted “nature to become the law,” and passed a resolution demanding that, “All humans need to be instructed that they are part of nature without mercy and without chance for escape, and above all are subject to her laws. . . .” You can be sure they were not discussing Leibnizian natural law.

By contrast, Gröning quotes Humboldt, who in *The Kosmos* counters this blood-and-soil approach to the study of nature: “Deceived, we believed to receive from the environment (*Aussenwelt*) what we have put into ourselves.” Later on in his remarks on “Stimuli for Nature Studies,” he wrote, “This is why it belongs to the most beautiful fruit of the European education of nations that man has enabled himself to create part of the pleasures of nature nearly everywhere he feels threatened by deprivation, by means of cultivating and grouping exotic plants, by the magic of landscape painting, and via the power of stimulating words, which otherwise is granted by real experience on faraway, often dangerous journeys through the inner parts of continents.”