

iii. Nazism before 1933

ADOLF HITLER

59 The Mission of the Nazi Movement

Having taken over leadership in July 1921 of the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei [originally the German Workers' Party (DAP)]—'National Socialist' was added in February 1920], Adolf Hitler drastically overestimated the strength of the ultra-nationalist cause it represented to the point of attempting a putsch in Munich on 8–9 November 1923. The result was a fiasco. However, the sympathy of the judiciary for his ultra-nationalist sentiments turned the three-month trial into an extended opportunity for uncensored publicity for him, for the NSDAP, and for the cause of a fascist revolution in Germany. He emerged from the trial with the minimum sentence for high treason and as a national figure. Moreover, his short prison sentence offered an ideal opportunity to rethink his tactics and dictate the first volume of his political autobiography Mein Kampf without losing his hold on the Nazi faithful. This passage is taken from a rambling speech which Hitler made to the court on the first day's proceedings at the People's Court in Munich, the first of many. It points to how firmly established in his thinking was the myth of national decadence and imminent rebirth which would dominate his later speeches and writings.

No movement has operated with such a thorough knowledge of the characteristics of the masses as the Marxist movement. It knows that the mass has respect for force and decisiveness, and has replaced the weakness of the bourgeoisie and its indecisiveness with brute force and brute will-power. It has ruthlessly subjugated the individual, and has placed the worker before the alternative: 'Either you will be my brother or I will smash your skull in.' In my youth I got to know this movement in both these aspects. The bourgeois parties do not know them or do not wish to know them. Armed with this insight I had to join this young movement,¹⁵ one which refuses to start out from the position: 'We want to see to it that we will have some share in the future, more or less.' Instead our movement has recognized that the future of Germany means 'the destruction of Marxism'. Either this racial poison, the mass tuberculosis, grows in our people, and Germany dies of an infected lung, or it is eliminated, and Germany can then thrive. Not before. Only a young movement can be inoculated with this principle, which is not perverted by any compromises or coalitions, but declares as a basic premiss: 'We can never make a pact with this world-view; for us Germany will be saved on the day on which the last Marxist has either been converted or has been broken.' There is no middle way.

Germany has not understood this, especially the bourgeois movement. That is what brought about the terrible catastrophe which has become known to us as the

¹⁵ i.e. the DAP.

German Revolution.¹⁶ The 'German Revolution' is held to be a revolution, and as such to represent a successful act of high treason. It is well known that high treason is only punished if it fails. Thereby it forms an exception among all human crimes. It is the only crime which is not punished if it is successful, that is if a new constitution gives the people the possibility of prospering. What happened on 9 November was not high treason. This act did not give the people a new constitution, but death.[...] If the two million who lie buried in Flanders and Belgium were to rise from the dead and be asked whether they would be prepared to recognize the state of affairs brought about by that act of high treason, but which was really just an act of base treason, they would all shout: Never! We did not fall in battle so that in five years more could be ripped away from Germany thanks to this new and so-called legalized constitutional state than had been gained in the previous 150 years with the blood of hundreds of thousands, indeed of millions. [...] For our new movement there could never be a reconciliation with the act of 9 November. The principle had to be established: for us this was not high treason, but a crime against the German people, a stab in the back against the heroically fighting army, against the German people, German freedom, and the German nation. Such a thing can never be legalized and recognized.

The National Socialist movement of what was then the Worker's Party adopted as its first principle the realization that the Marxist movement was to be fought to the end; second, the realization that the revolution, as the consequence of Marxism and of an unprecedented criminal act, was not a matter of the German bourgeoisie becoming national once more: the problem is that the German working people, the broad masses, must be made national again. That means not just a pure, I mean passive, relationship to nationalism, but an active fight against those who have ruined it till now. Besides it is ridiculous to want to nationalize a people at a time when hundreds of thousands are working on all sides to de-nationalize the people, and these hundreds of thousands, who also brought about the revolution, do not even belong to the race.¹⁷ Thus the Marxist problem has become a racial problem, the most serious and deepest problem of the day. The question is: will the German people be able or not to rid itself of the essence of Marxism which has entered the whole state, its organizations, and the legislative machinery? [...]

Now I would ask you, your Honours, to enter into our psyche. To what end was our movement formed? Not so that we could win seats in parliament and obtain mandates. If we had wanted that, we would have been able to achieve it more easily and cheaply. You will admit that, having once created a great movement, we would have at least managed to occupy some nook or cranny in an existing movement. We never set out to. If we founded the new movement, we did so in the hope that we would one day change the destiny of Germany, even if it was in the twelfth hour.

[26 Feb. 1924, People's Court, Munich, first day of proceedings, in Hitler. *Sämtliche Aufzeichnungen 1905–1924*, ed. Eberhard Jäckel (Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt: Stuttgart, 1980), 1061–8.]

¹⁶ The proclamation of the German (Weimar) Republic by Social Democrats in Nov. 1918.

¹⁷ i.e. are Jews. Note the equation of Jews with Marxists, as in Texts 61, 78, 85.

Franz Pfeffer von Salomon (who also called himself simply Franz von Pfeffer, since he considered the name 'Salomon' sounded too Jewish) shared with his brother Ernst von Salomon (Text 55) a background of aristocratic militarism which predisposed him to fascism under Weimar. As leader of the Westphalian Freikorps, Pfeffer helped suppress left-wing unrest in the Ruhr and took part in the abortive military rebellion, the Kapp Putsch of 1920. Joining the NSDAP in March 1925, he soon rose to the rank of Gauleiter of Westphalia and went on to become part of the triumvirate with Kaufmann and Goebbels which headed the Ruhr Gau, formed a year later. From May 1926 to August 1930 he was Supreme Commander of the SA, but resigned after disagreements with Hitler over its role, tensions which form part of the prehistory of the Röhm Purge of 1934. After his resignation he was marginalized by the regime: he was not only excluded from the NSDAP by Hitler in November 1941, but was arrested by the Gestapo during the wave of panic arrests following the assassination attempt on Hitler in July 1944, though he survived the war. Von Pfeffer's memorandum is a response to Strasser's attempt to redefine the Party's 25-point programme. It represents an elitist and biologically racist version of Nazi ideology in contrast to Strasser's more 'socialist' vision (see Texts 62, 63). It also anticipates both the Nazis' euthanasia programme (Text 85) and the Final Solution (Text 88). Note that 'Zucht' in German means both 'breeding' and 'discipline'.

First of all I share with Strasser and all revolutionaries the view that property in Germany is wrongly distributed: property, power, culture are in the wrong hands, misery and ruin are suffered by the wrong people, and this situation is growing and consolidating itself to such an extent that only the most drastic, ruthless intervention can force German life and culture [Volkstum] back into the right paths. Immediately after this common assumption, however, the thinking diverges.

There are those who take as their starting-point the equality of human beings, or rather the equality of Germans. This premiss leads naturally to the logical conclusion that there can be no reason why among equals a different distribution of property, state power, culture should prevail. If someone who is equal is forced to live in circumstances significantly lower than the mean, then this is naturally 'unjust', or a 'scandal' with respect to other equals. If someone who is equal is treated markedly better than the average then this is likewise 'unjust', for it can only happen 'at the expense' of the share the other equals enjoy of property, power, and culture.[. . .]

In the last analysis I accuse Strasser's programme of being rooted in this basic mentality (and I fear I must accuse him of coming out with far too many arguments which in our camp are called 'socialist'). It is the Jewish-liberal-democratic-Marxist-humanitarian mentality. As long as there is even a single minute tendril which connects our programme with this root then it is doomed to be poisoned and hence to wither away to a miserable death.[. . .]

All Germans are unequal. That is the starting-point.[. . .] The first logical conclusion to be drawn from inequality is the inequality of value. Some Germans are

more valuable than others ('value' is a relative concept, which I use here naturally to refer to value measured in terms of the German, Nordic world-view, and within this measured in terms of what serves the interests of collective German well-being).

A logical consequence of this inequality must be the principle of *unequal* treatment, that is, unequal share of state power, property, culture. All these must be distributed to people on the basis of how valuable they are.[. . .]

A further logical consequence of inequality in what people are worth, and the continuous changes brought about by the development of the nation [Volk], is the duty of the state to take charge of this development, which means influencing it in every way possible. Excellence must be increased and enhanced further. Inferiority must be reduced. In plain terms this is a question of breeding. Improving the stock of the race. Breeding human beings.[. . .] From the above considerations I can draw up the following programmatic demands of our future state, the 'Third Reich':

- a. To determine the degree of higher or lower value of all inhabitants of Germany. The value will be assessed as the function of four criteria:
 - (1) actual performance in their professions
 - (2) physical attributes, according to health and racial characteristics
 - (3) spiritual, moral and cultural traits
 - (4) hereditary traits evaluated by considering parents and grandparents.[. . .]
- f. No pity is to be shown to those who occupy the lower categories of the inferior groups: cripples, epileptics, the blind, the insane, deaf and dumb, children born in sanatoria for alcoholics or in care, orphans (= children born out of wedlock), criminals, whores, the sexually disturbed, etc. Everything done for them not only means taking resources away from more deserving causes, but counteracts the breeding selection process. Nor should we mourn the dumb, the weak, the spineless, the apathetic, those with hereditary diseases, the pathological, because they go under 'innocently'. [. . .]

This bottom category means destruction and death. Weighed and found wanting. Trees which do not bear fruit should be cut down and thrown into the fire.

['Zucht. Eine Forderung zum Programm' [Breeding: A demand in relation to the Party programme], internal Party memorandum, Christmas 1925, NSDAP Hauptarchiv (Hoover Institution Microfilm Collection), reel 44, folder 896, 1-11.]

A birth defect caused Joseph Goebbels (1897-1945) to 'miss' the First World War, and his early creative ambitions, fed by his success in obtaining a doctorate in Philosophy and Literature in 1921, came to naught. Joining the NSDAP in 1924 eventually enabled him to placate his frustrations on both counts. Having been active in helping Gregor Strasser build

up the Party organization in the North, the meeting of Party leaders at Bamberg in 1926 proved a turning point. Though his diary records deep dismay at the Führer's rhetorical style and aspects of his policies, his personal devotion to him grew to be boundless. Hitler reciprocated by eventually granting him extensive power over the cultural and intellectual life of the Third Reich (see Text 69). In his semi-autobiographical diary-novel Michael published in 1931, Goebbels' alter ego is a student obsessed with the need for the decadence of Germany's cultural and political life to be transcended in a new order. His life is transformed when he hears the speech of a nationalist leader, a thinly veiled portrait of Hitler's demagogic powers. Notable in this passage is the celebration of modernism and the dynamism of the Russian Revolution, both ideas which become taboo as Hitler imposed his vision as the basis for Nazi orthodoxy.

15 November.

I visit [...] an exhibition of modern painting.[...] We see much new nonsense.

One star: Vincent van Gogh.

In these surroundings he already seems tame, but yet he is the most modern of the moderns.

For modernity has nothing to do with heroic gestures. All that is just learned through practice.

The modern man is necessarily a god-seeker, perhaps a Christ-like person.

Van Gogh's life tells us even more than his work. He combines in his personality the most important elements: he is teacher, preacher, fanatic, prophet—mad.

In the last analysis we are all mad if we have an idea.

Fanatics of love: the capacity for self-sacrifice.

Life is an act of sacrifice for the sake of our neighbour.

And my neighbour is he who has the same blood.

Blood is still the best and most durable cement.

How unspeakably difficult is the torment of vision. What constitutes the modern German is not so much cleverness and intellect, as the new principle, the ability to give oneself to a cause unreservedly, to sacrifice oneself, to devote oneself to one's people.[...]

Now I have found the word: we modern Germans are something like Christ-socialists [Christussozialisten].

Christ is the genius of love, and as such the diametrical opposite of Judaism, which is the incarnation of hate. The Jew represents an anti-race among the races of the earth. He has the same function as a poisonous bacillus has in the human organism: to mobilize the resistance of healthy forces or ensure that a living being whose days are numbered dies more quickly and more peacefully.[...]

In Christ the idea of sacrifice first took visible form. Sacrifice is intrinsic to the very nature of socialism. Devote oneself to the cause of others. Naturally the Jew cannot begin to understand this. His socialism means: sacrifice others for one's own sake.

This is what Marxism produces in practice.[...]

The battle which we are fighting today till victory is secured, or to the bitter end, is in the deepest sense a battle between Christ and Marx.

Christ: the principle of love.

Marx: the principle of hate.

10 June

Before me a new Germany rises up.

This Germany is one which I will learn to love once more. And the more shameful its shame, the more ardent my ardour for her.

If I am looking for the appearance of the new man, it is first the new German that I am looking for.

I want to root myself in the soil of my Fatherland. It is the mother of my thoughts and longings.[...]

The new nationalism wants Germany's future, not the restoration of a past whose continuity is now shattered.

What does nationalism mean: we stand for Germany because we are Germans, because Germany is our Fatherland, the German soul is our soul, because we all are a particle of the soul of Germany.[...]

The German soul is Faustian! In it lies the drive to work and the possibilities work brings, as well as the eternal longing for redemption from the intellect.

There is a German idea just as there is a Russian one. Together these two will one day contest the future.

[Michael. Ein deutsches Schicksal in Tagebuchblättern [Michael: Diary of a German Destiny] (Franz Eher: Munich, 1931), 124-6, 172-3.]

Let there be Light

Gottfried Feder (1883-1941) was one of the earliest members of the DAP. He was also among the most articulate representatives of its pre-Hitlerian national socialism in his campaign to 'break the thralldom of interest', a call aimed only at the unproductive, 'parasitic' aspects of capitalism allegedly embodied in the Jews. Early on in the regime he worked in the Ministry for Economics, but his 'leftist' stand against big business and his political career had been effectively terminated with the murder of its main spokesman, Gregor Strasser, in June 1934. Nevertheless, his various expositions of the Nazi 25-point programme were important in establishing the party's image of social radicalism in the 1920s, and 'biblical' passages such as these suggesting draconian remedies to the alleged pathological degeneracy of Weimar were to have a particular resonance when the Depression hit Germany in 1929.

From out of chaos the world came forth, from the subordinate came order, from raw eddying energy the organic.

Today chaos reigns on earth, confusion, struggle, hate, envy, conflict, oppression, exploitation, brutality, egotism. Brother no longer understands brother. Fellow-countrymen fight each other, beating men to death just because they wear a swastika.[...] The victims of the chaos were simple, unassuming, good-natured

workers. People have lost their bearings. Marxists rally around the greatest exploiters of their own class and turn like frenzied animals on their saviours from their own ranks.

The Nationalists, the patriotic circles, the right-wing parties are simply bent on getting into government or sit there alongside the denigrators and destroyers of their ideal of the state, thus losing their honour and their character. The paramilitary groups¹⁸ want to 'enter the state'. [...] They believe they can rule together with pacifists, internationalists, and Jews.

People have lost their bearings! The so-called legal circles do not realize that there never can and never will be a friendship between the eagle and the snake, between cattle and the lion, between human beings and a cholera bacillus—thus they put all their weight and constitutional efforts into shoring up the disorder which has become an 'order', namely political chaos, political impotence. But they opposed the National Socialists, these 'fanatics', they rejected for their alleged *Realpolitik* those who could put an end to the political chaos. [...]

People have lost their bearings! The whole economy has become debased, depersonalized, has been turned into joint-stock companies. The producers have delivered themselves into the hands of their greatest enemy, finance capital. Deep in debt, the creators of value in the workshop, the factory, and the office have little to show for it in wages, for every profit made by their work flows into the pockets of the anonymous financial powers in the form of interest and dividends.

Leagues, lobbies, associations for professionals, Civil Servants, employees, for savers, small property owners, creditors of the Reichsbank, paramilitary leagues, guilds, clubs, federations, trade unions, peasant and farmers organizations, clubs, or whatever other name such strange bodies may adopt—all pointless in the chaos of public life today, however reasonable in their basic idea—try to create order. They do so in vain, because they are not incorporated organically into society, into the higher totality of the people. [...]

The same terrible picture of chaos is presented by all the other manifestations of public life, whether we think of art, literature, theatre, cinema, radio, church, school: everywhere the 'ferment of decomposition' is at work, the great disintegrator and destroyer, the Jew and Freemason, is visibly at work in the key posts or behind the scenes pulling the puppet strings, as the Stresemanns and Scheidemanns dance on the public stage or quite openly with names like Jakob Goldschmidt, Warburg, Wassermann, or Levy use the press, or charge punitive interest to exploit the German people and turn them into zombies.

The will to give shape to the amorphous, the will to put a stop to chaos, to put in order a world out of joint, and to keep order as guardians (in the highest Platonic sense)—that is the enormous task which National Socialism has set itself. [...]

Our aim is: Germany's rebirth carried out in a German spirit to create German freedom. [...]

We National Socialists march behind our battle colours. Forever young, shining, and radiant, the sun-wheel, the swastika, rises before us, symbol of a life which is once more awakening.

[*Das Programm der NSDAP* (Franz Eher: Munich, 1933: 1st edn. 1928), 25–6, 35, 64.]

¹⁸ e.g. the Stahlhelm.

Gregor Strasser (1892–1934), an officer in World War One, fought in the anti-Bolshevik *Sturmabteilung* *Niederbayern* before joining the NSDAP and taking part in the 'Hitler Putsch' of November 1923. As deputy to the Bavarian regional parliament he avoided imprisonment, and built up the party organization under the cover name of 'National Socialist Freedom Movement' ('Freedom' is still used today in the names of some neo-fascist parties). On Hitler's release he became responsible for the Party organization in Northern Germany, in which role he continued to pursue his 'leftist', profoundly anti-capitalist, social-revolutionary vision (see Text 60). In 1926 he was appointed Reich Propaganda chief by Hitler and then to the key post of Reich Organization chief. By 1930 he was replaced as Reich Propaganda chief by Goebbels, and, although he dissociated himself from his brother's even more 'aberrant' views on the German Revolution (Text 58), policy differences with Hitler led to his resignation from all Party duties in 1932. Hitler nonetheless had him liquidated as a potential threat in the Röhm Purge two years later. Note his critique in this passage of biological racism in marked contrast to Text 64.

We are socialists. We are enemies, deadly enemies, of today's capitalist economic system with its exploitation of the economically weak, its unfair wage system, its immoral way of judging the worth of human beings in terms of their wealth and their money, instead of their responsibility and performance, and we are determined to destroy this system whatever happens! [...] And yet it is not enough just to change the system, to replace one economic system by another; what is needed above all is to change the spirit! The spirit to be overcome is the spirit of materialism! [...] We must learn that work means more than possessions! Performance is more than dividends! It is the most wretched legacy of this capitalist system that the criterion for everything's value is money, wealth, possessions! The decline of a people is the inevitable consequence of the use of this yardstick, because selection on the basis of property is the arch-enemy of race, blood, life! We have never left any doubts about the fact that our national socialism [*nationaler Sozialismus*] puts an end to the privileges of wealth, and that the emancipation of the worker involves participation in profits, property, and management. [...]

There has been much talk in the *völkisch* movement about the emergence of a new political leadership, and the call for such a leadership is compatible with what I have been saying. But the ways which it recommends for solving the problem, examining people's blood, re-nordification, etc., etc., seem to my practical nature somewhat dubious as far as their feasibility, their value, and even their effectiveness is concerned! There is another one, however, which is an archetypally German, Prussian way, which is more appropriate than any other: selection through the army! [...]

For a man, military service is the most profound and valuable form of participation in the State—for the woman it is motherhood! There are many African tribes where mothers who die in labour are buried with the same honours as warriors

who have fallen in battle!... You can call it utopian but for me it is a certainty! Given twenty to thirty years of this type of selection, Germany will have a leadership and executive class which will change the whole face of society and the State, and provide the backbone of the State and its economy!...

[‘Gedanken über Aufgaben der Zukunft’ [Thoughts on the tasks of the future], in Michael Geismaier [pseud.], *Männer und Mächte: Gregor Strasser* (R. Kittler: Leipzig, 1933; 1st pub. in *Nationalsozialistische Briefe* in 1926), 81–90.]

HANS F. K. GÜNTHER

64 Nordic Thinking and the German Rebirth

Hans Friedrich Günther (1891–1968), nicknamed Rassen-Günther or ‘race-Günther’, was a young proselyte of the Aryan theories of Gobineau, H. S. Chamberlain, and others, and as early as 1922 produced his *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* [An Ethnography of the German People] which had sold 270,000 copies by 1943. It claimed that, as an essentially genetic quality, Aryanism, the sole basis of a healthy civilization, could be bred back into the Germans (who were now its least contaminated carriers) if eugenics were placed at the centre of policy-making in all spheres of social and political life. In 1930 the Nazi minister of the interior for Thuringia, Wilhelm Frick, appointed him Professor of Racial Hygiene at Jena University, and under the regime he went on to hold other prestigious academic posts as well as receiving numerous honours. His voluminous writings linking racial with cultural ‘health’ (some still in print) helped rationalize the regime’s systematic destruction of millions of human beings, principally, but by no means exclusively, Jews, by reducing them to ‘specimens’ of allegedly inferior human types.

The study of the historical fates of peoples as the working out of law-bound (biological) life processes, as the working out of changing conditions of natural selection, only became possible in a fruitful way once Darwin recognized the crucial importance of natural selection for all life-forms in general... With the rediscovery of Mendel’s research into heredity in the 1900s, the theories of Galton and Lapouge concerning the laws governing life acquired a more solid basis and a deeper significance... The work of the Germans Otto Ammon (1842–1915), Woltmann (1871–1907) and Wilser (1850–1923) lent weight to theories concerning the special importance of the Nordic race. After the turn of the century a particular way of thinking came into being and started to gain currency, that of a possible renewal of the West by maintaining the integrity of the race [*Rassenpflege*] or, to be more precise, by maintaining the integrity of the Nordic race within the racial mixture of Western people. Nordic Thinking was born...

The sapping of national energies by the world war, the outcome of this war, the post-war years, and the eradication throughout all these years of valuable genetic groups—which has finally left the German people physically and spiritually with a quite different composition—all these processes, their consequences, and the con-

cerns they have raised have been the essential reason for the spread among Germans of a certain awareness, in many even a deep consciousness, of heredity and selection, race, racial mixing, and the composition of races. Thus it is that since the war, especially now that a generation of youth has grown up which on the one hand does not feel responsible for the pre-war period, the war, and its consequences, and on the other is searching for possible ways of bringing about a total renewal of the German people, a Nordic Movement has arisen which, by increasing the Nordic racial component of all German lineages [*Stämme*], by re-nordifying [*Aufnordung*] of the German people, could lay the basis for an improvement in the genetic stock of this people...

It is clear that since the Nordic Movement sees human beings not so much as individuals but as carriers of heredity, the key idea which informs it is that of maintaining the health of the stock (eugenics, racial hygiene)... Not just de-nordification [*Entnordung*] alone, but a degeneration (increase in inferior hereditary properties) which has spread through all the races of the historically significant peoples of the Indo-Germanic language family has led to the decline of these peoples. Those who profess Nordic Thinking will always be the most zealous advocates of a doctrine of hereditary health [*Erbgesundheitslehre*], one which takes into account all races...

Only improvement of the stock and re-nordification will save Germanness [*Deutschheit*] from destruction... The tall, blond, blue-eyed German is still felt to be ‘genuinely German’; artists of healthy sensibility still portray in symbolic forms and heads the nobility and beauty embodied in the Nordic race... The appeal of the Nordic still determines the sentiments of the best Germans... Nordic Thinking demands a will which must endure down through millennia: ‘We are nothing; what we seek is everything’ (Hölderlin). But this act of overcoming ourselves is rewarded by the knowledge of participating in a spirit which alone can give real and durable shape to the life of peoples, a spirit which determines the course of natural selection.

[*Kleine Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* [A Primer in the Ethnography of the German People] (J. K. Lehmanns Verlag: Munich, 1933; 1st edn. 1929), 138–41, 144, 146–8.]

R. WALTHER DARRÉ

65 Breeding a New Nobility

Richard Walther Darré (1895–1953) used his specialist knowledge of animal breeding techniques to evolve his own scheme for national renewal. The key to this was a genetically healthy peasantry placed at the centre of national life, secured in its ownership of land, and protected from the corrosive effects of urbanization and industrial capitalism (both closely identified with the Jews). He had already set out the eugenic, political, and legal measures necessary to realize this vision in two major books (one of which is cited here), before joining the NSDAP in 1930. He was soon promoted to the highest positions within the movement as

part of Hitler's drive to recruit the peasant vote. Though given ministerial positions under the regime to realize his policies (which involved colonizing new 'living space' in the East) he was gradually marginalized from power. His schemes were not only utopian, but conflicted with the massive industrialization demanded by the Nazi war-machine. Nevertheless, his slogan 'Blood and Soil' had made a significant contribution to the rationale for the systematic inhumanity and destructiveness carried out by the Third Reich.

A reliable indication of genuine nobility is given when an individual does not allow everything he does to be determined by self-centred goals, but by goals which have a higher claim on his ego. In saying this we must consider that the first thing to which the individual self is subordinated is the people [Volk] as constituted by the community of Germans. Once we understand by 'people' not the purely quantitative total of all individuals whom chance has brought together within the present borders of the Reich, but only those within this mass who profess loyalty to their German blood and to a duty to their Germanness [Deutschtum], we thereby create a concept of people which by its nature relates to what is meant by Germanic. [...] To contemporary Germans who still find it difficult to understand this new stress on the value which blood shall have within the future German national community [Volksgemeinschaft], and to those still trapped in the anaemic concept of 'humanity', we can offer a well-known phrase from Immanuel Kant: 'This much can be judged as probable: that the mixture of ethnic groups, which gradually extinguishes their characters, leaving aside all supposed philanthropy, does not benefit the human race.'

In a word: a German national [Volksgenosse] in the above sense of a specific type of character determined by blood will doubtless have grown into a type of wood from which a new German nobility can be fashioned if, in everything he does, he acts according to the principle: 'As a German, always behave in such a way that your fellow countrymen [Volksgenossen] would want to model themselves on you.'

Today such Germans do not just occur in one class, but in every sphere of society in roughly the same proportions. The proof that this is really the case was given to us by experiences at the front of the world war in 1914, and this was probably the most decisive experience of the true front soldier: Ernst Jünger explored this insight brilliantly in his war books. [...]

What are the general rules governing the breeding of animals when it comes specifically to improving the stock? [...]

1. An ideal specimen is selected first of all to establish what the selection process is aiming at, and also to give individual breeders a sort of inner compass to point their efforts in the right direction. [...]
2. The best animals are paired with the best. [...]
3. Animals are selected according to their pedigree.
4. The qualities and yield of every animal considered for breeding are evaluated. [...]
5. The attributes of the offspring are carefully tested, because to some extent this provides a way of establishing whether the first four steps have been taken correctly. [...]

Now let us get back to human beings! At the outset we said that breeding is a technique which tries in a considered way to produce offspring whose quality is at least not inferior to that of its parents, and where possible offers the prospect of an improvement in its hereditary characteristics over time. The crucial point here is the phrase 'in a considered way'. It means that the breeder should be clear what the breeding is designed to achieve. Thus a 'breeding objective' must be set. For breeding without a goal would be a contradiction in terms, quite simply because in every case breeding involves attaching value to given hereditary traits in the light of a future objective. [...]

For us Germans [...] there can really only be one objective to pursue, which is: *Every available means should be used to achieve the goal that the creative blood in the body of our people [Volkskörper], the blood of human beings of the Nordic Race, should be preserved and increased, because on this depends the preservation and development of our Germanness [Deutschtum].*

[*Neuadel aus Blut und Boden* [A New Nobility from Blood and Soil] (J. F. Lehmanns Verlag: Munich, 1930), 59–60, 178–80, 190, 226.]

E. GÜNTHER GRÜNDEL

66 The New Human Synthesis

Written on the eve of the seizure of power, Gründel's book is an exhaustive analysis of why the Weimar Republic and the alien values it allegedly embodied was destined to collapse and give way to a new order based on a regenerated national community. Gründel himself remained an obscure figure under the regime, and is cited here mainly to illustrate one of the most recurrent themes, not just of Nazism, but of fascism in general, namely the New Man (see Texts 16, 56, 70, 107, 197). This is an archetypal myth, central to religious cultures, but also propagated by communist regimes in suitably secularized form. By envisaging the New Man as the incarnation of national palingenesis, it becomes readily fascistized.

As long as the blood that courses through the veins of the people [Volkskörper] is still fundamentally healthy, it spontaneously produces human beings in critical historical moments capable of rising to the challenges they pose. That is precisely the source of comfort in the apparently so hopelessly confused age of upheaval and turmoil we are living through, namely that we are today witnessing the emergence of a new man¹⁹ and a new youth who will act as a new force: in short a new generation who will bring about the reordering of society. [...]

Till now the new force was in a state of seething fermentation. It reached out to affect all areas of communal existence, but only in a tentative way. It strove to find a new way of being in a new lifestyle, to achieve new forms of self-expression in a

¹⁹ Literally 'new human being' (*neuer Mensch*): 'Mensch' applies to male and female in German.

new art, in new sport, in new technology. At first it imposed itself on the political arena hesitantly and ambiguously, but then ever more irresistibly, and launched attack after attack against the crumbling front of the old world which so stubbornly continued to defend itself, in waves that initially remained uncoordinated, like a mass army which was not yet fully united, but in which could be sensed the powerful new forces at work.[. . .]

Our age is once more acquiring creative momentum, it is gaining depth, direction, and future. The creative dynamic, the basic quality of the Germanic-Western cultural soul, is awakening in the dawn of its fourth day of creation in a new type of human being.[. . .]

As bearer of the new epoch, the new type of human being means the end of the age of the property-owning bourgeois,²⁰ and will once again forge links with the healthy roots of Western humanity by bringing about the great synthesis: from the knight he takes blood, from the pious medieval Christian the soul which rests in God, from the middle classes a free spirit. The aristocrat inherited blood—and decayed once he inherited only a name. The middle classes inherited the education of the spirit—and decayed when they inherited only money. The new man will be the comprehensive heir of his national culture [*Volkstum*].

The warrior lived according to the principle that might was right.²¹ The modern property-owning bourgeois lived on the basis of individualism in rights and collectivism in duties. The new human being lives in conscious service of the community, but with a deeply personal sense of responsibility. He is not a person 'in his own right', and not the embodiment of a class, but of his people. He does not live for himself, but as an integral part of a living whole. On this basis he restores the harmonious totality of Western humanity, the living harmony of body, mind, and soul.[. . .]

The new man is still evolving. Indeed, he is not yet visible to everyone, for he does not come from the noisy centre which constantly attracts the attention of the crowd, but from the quiet periphery. Every new force that is destined to topple an age which has run its course comes from the periphery of that age with all its dominant values and pseudo-values. It is in the moments of great crisis in the emergence of the new that the 'outsiders' take on their special function of forming the nucleus of a new centre around which the coming world will henceforth order itself.

[*Die Sendung der jungen Generation* [The Mission of the Young Generation] (C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung: Munich, 1933), 327–37.]

²⁰ *Bürger* in German denotes bourgeois, citizen, and (member of) the liberal or capitalist middle classes.

²¹ Literally 'according to the law of the fist', i.e. jungle law.