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Nietzsche and the Nazis,
Antipodes or Ideological Kin?:
Articulating Chasms and Connections

by
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B.A. The University of Montana, 1996
presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
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The University of Montana
1999

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Date
1-5-00
Today, the works of late nineteenth-century philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche remain some of the world's best-known. Yet at one time, Nietzsche's fame came tragically close to infamy. After Nietzsche went insane in 1890, his ideas became closely associated with Europe's rising wave of militarism. That same militarism ended in the hitherto unparalleled carnage of World War I. At that time, Nietzsche's ideals were widely affiliated with the cause of the war.

After World War I, Europe's most militaristic veterans formed the rank-and-file of the new fascist parties. For many, the Great War had only intensified the "Nietzschean" idea that life was best embodied through violence. Fascists all over Europe espoused Nietzsche's warrior ethic. Through Nazism, the most intensified form of fascism, the separation of the races was advocated to create an atmosphere of eternal tribalistic struggle and militaristic glory. Nazis viewed racial dominance as the ultimate virtue. As the militarists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had done, the Nazis bore the torch of Nietzsche's legacy, and claimed him as their consummate ideological forebear.

As World War II ended, the Nazi association with Nietzsche had to be clarified. Either Nietzsche had to be dismissed with the other ideological foundations of Nazism, or Nietzsche had somehow to be rescued. Walter Kaufmann went to great lengths to ensure that Nietzsche would no longer be associated with his militaristic advocates, especially the Nazis. Kaufmann rescued Nietzsche, but the reception of Nietzsche's works has been skewed ever since. In order to make Nietzsche palatable in the post-totalitarian West, the militaristic, hierarchical, and quasi-racist ideas that Nietzsche presented in his works have been systematically ignored. For better or worse, the "true" Nietzsche had more in common with the twentieth century radical right than the post-war portrayal of him has shown. The potential politicized nature of a debate on the topic has virtually prevented a debate altogether. This thesis compares the textual works of Nietzsche with that of the Nazis in order to explore where they in fact do and do not share common ideological ground.
ABBREVIATIONS FOR NIETZSCHE'S WORKS

The Antichrist (ATC)\(^1\)
Beyond Good and Evil (BGE)
The Birth of Tragedy (BT)\(^2\)
The Case of Wagner (CW)\(^3\)
Ecce Homo (EH)\(^4\)
The Gay Science (GSC)
The Geneology of Morals (GM)\(^5\)
Nietzsche Contra Wagner (NCW)\(^6\)
Twilight of the Idols (TWI)\(^7\)
The Will to Power (WP)
Thus Spake Zarathustra (ZAR)\(^8\)

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\(^1\) Taken from *The Portable Nietzsche*
\(^2\) Taken from *The Birth of Tragedy and The Geneology of Morals*
\(^3\) Taken from *On the Genology of Morals and Ecce Homo* (and other works)
\(^4\) Taken from *On the Genology of Morals and Ecce Homo* (and other works)
\(^5\) Taken from *The Birth of Tragedy and The Geneology of Morals*
\(^6\) Taken from *The Portable Nietzsche*
\(^7\) Taken from *The Portable Nietzsche*
\(^8\) Taken from *The Portable Nietzsche*
Chapter I: 
Nietzsche, the Nazis, & the Nietzsche-Nazi Debate

One day, my name will be associated with the memory of something tremendous -- a crisis without equal on earth, the most profound collision of conscience, a decision that was conjured up against everything that had been believed, demanded, hallowed so far. I am no man, I am dynamite. -- Friedrich Nietzsche (EH 110).

Not until after Nietzsche went insane, in 1890, did the Western intellectual world take widespread notice of his tragic insights. No thinker has observed more fatal flaws in Western Culture than Nietzsche, and no thinker has been more detailed in his description of the perceived decline of the West. During the ten years of insanity preceding Nietzsche's death, a "Nietzsche cult" emerged among the intellectual élite of Europe. Nietzscheans used his works to spearhead a movement advocating an end to Western Culture as it had hitherto existed. Bourgeois morality, technological life, Christianity, and "progress" were attacked by those who would do Nietzsche's bidding during his time of decline.

As Nietzsche's popularity grew exponentially throughout the 1890's, the implications of his thought became a focal point in European intellectual life. Nietzsche had witnessed modern man slowly but undeniably drifting into a repugnantly contented existence, and this conviction led him to some radical conclusions. In place of the placated "herd animal man," Nietzsche advocated a renewed spirituality based on man's more primal predatory instincts. For Nietzsche, the predatory drives of a Napoleon or an Alexander were noble, and therefore superior to the placid herd impulses of a sheep or a slave. If a man does not own-up to his instinct for conquering others, Nietzsche thought, his existence could not be complete. The increased advocacy of Nietzsche's "warrior ethic" resulted in the escalation of militarism as a state of mind. Nietzsche had followers all over Europe, but in Germany, his cultural impact was remarkable even before his death in 1900.
Nietzsche's philosophy undoubtedly contributed to the build-up leading to World War I. To many Europeans who read his work, Nietzsche wished to end a century of pacifism and effeminacy with a dazzling display of courage, camaraderie, and conquest. As demonstrated in Fritz Stern's *Politics of Cultural Despair*, thinkers such as Georges Sorel, Paul de Lagarde, and Arthur Moeller van den Bruck converted Nietzsche's ideas into the literal advocacy of violence, blood-lust, and nationalistic militarism. As resistance to Europe's military build-up waned, Nietzsche's legacy conspicuously grew in kind.

As World War I began, German soldiers marched to the trenches with a copy of the Bible in one coat pocket, and a copy of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* in the other. As the war ended, those who continued to advocate militarism in Germany, notably the National Socialists, also proclaimed Nietzsche as their prime intellectual forebear. Before and during World War II, most people, intellectual or not, accepted Nietzsche as a natural fit with the rest of the Nazi ideological pantheon. As World War II ended, most people equated the Nazis' atrocities with the essence of their ideology. After the war, Nietzsche's works had to be salvaged from their association with a movement perceived to have no value. West of the Iron Curtain, those who wished to extinguish the ideological connection between Nietzsche and the Nazis found no opposition.

The results of Nietzsche's post-war banishment from the Nazi ideological pantheon have been mixed. We still read Nietzsche. Were his reputation as a proto-Nazi never systematically undermined, Nietzsche's reception around the world might have been damaged to the point of universal dismissal. On the other hand, explaining how the crass and clumsy Nazis were ever able to make use of the elegant and articulate Nietzsche is a task that remains conspicuously avoided. If Nietzsche were so brilliant and wise, and the Nazis so ignorant and transparent, what person of sound mind could have ever contemplated their intellectual union in the first

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place? In *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890-1990* (1992), Steven Aschheim addresses this very issue, and proposes to
deal with the most straightforward and yet strangely
underexamined empirical dimension of the relationship:
locating and analyzing the ways in which Nietzsche was
integrated into or banished from Nazi discourse, and the
various functions of Nietzscheanism fulfilled within the
Reich. . . . The internal strategies involved in this
transmutation and the extent of its diffusion have to date
still not been systematically analyzed.2

Textual comparisons between Nietzsche and the Nazis remain
unwritten as well. For Aschheim, Nietzsche served as a natural and
vital ideological source for Nazi philosophy. Ignorance of this fact
can be attributed to the political aberration of the post-war academic
world. Aschheim addresses the literal use of Nietzsche by the Nazis,
as well as the Nazis' willful ignorance of his not-so-useful ideas.
This essay will address the same issue, but from a different vantage
point. While Aschheim documents specific instances of the Nazis'
use and misuse of Nietzsche, this essay will base its comparison on
textual evidence to discern exactly where the ideologies do, and do
not share ground. Aschheim has documented the results of
Nietzsche's incorporation into the Nazi pantheon. This essay will
focus more on the spirits of the two philosophies as presented
through text. In the estimation of this author, only through such
textual comparisons can any honest debate be conducted regarding
whether or not Nietzsche was misappropriated by the National
Socialists. To set a context for how such a debate might be carried
out, it will first be useful to examine the historical intellectual
treatment of the supposed Nietzsche-Nazi link. In order to provide

2Steven E. Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890-1990* (Berkeley:
an initial context even for this discussion, a synopsis of Nietzsche's and the Nazis' ideologies is first in order.

A Brief Look at the Nietzschean Philosophy

It must be said that there is no "one" Nietzschean perspective. Yet if a summation of Nietzsche's ideology is possible, it might read something like this: "Mankind must make it his goal to become more than man, he must become Superman. But first, he must relearn what it means to be man." Without question, Nietzsche mainly concerned himself with the quality of the individual's existence. His insistence that the modern world had less to offer anyone's existence than did periods of antiquity channelled his mind into an anomalous, though somewhat Romantic direction. Like the Romantics, Nietzsche prescribed a harkening-back to past values. Yet Nietzsche's call for a future transcendence of all human conditions, and his demand for immediate authenticity, set him apart from the Romantic movement. Nietzsche understood the impossibility of replicating the culture of the ancient Greeks. Since the Greeks, though, no culture had succeeded in balancing what Nietzsche called the Apollonian and Dionysian impulses which define the natural instincts of man.

Without adherence to these natural instincts, all existence is incomplete, or worse, decadent. Cultures only progress in proportion to their ability to balance the Apollonian (instinct for order) and Dionysian (instinct for chaos) motives. As cultures favor the Dionysian, they become increasingly barbaric. As they favor the Apollonian, they become increasingly civilized and then overly civilized. In either case, as the existences of those within such cultures become increasingly imbalanced in one direction or the other, the cultures literally become increasingly decadent. Since Nietzsche believed that Western Culture had become ridiculously lop-sided toward the Apollonian instinct, he believed that the West had come to epitomize a culture in decline. Hence, all notions of progress in Western Culture are patent illusions.

For Nietzsche, Western regression began with the Socratic turn. Before Socrates, the Greeks did not question life. They were
civilized enough to live in ordered cities, but barbaric enough to
summarily make war upon each other, own other humans without
compunction, and accept life as a tragedy in which "improvement"
and ordering were foreign concepts. The Greeks' governments and
art set them apart from the barbaric hordes which surrounded them,
but as the compulsion for "improvement" set in, the ancient Greeks
became more like domesticated herd animals in which violence must
be justified, and less like beasts of prey in which violence is an
unquestioned and natural instinct of life. Through Socratic logic and
questioning, all that did not "make sense" in Greek culture began to
be rooted out. The Greeks lost their predatory instinct for hierarchy
and domination, and turned instead to democratic "inclusiveness."
Their acceptance of life as myth increasingly gave way to scientific
explanation. At the same time, they traded a healthy love of war and
honor for the bloodbath of the Peloponnesian War. With these
cultural capitulations, the Greeks became at once too civilized and
too barbaric. For Nietzsche, the individual existence can only be
realized in a vital culture. Civilization and barbarism to excess are
equally the enemies of culture. More than any other people, the
ancient Greeks have come closest to the perfect balance of
civilization and barbarism, finding Aristotle's golden mean in the
middle.

Nietzsche maintained that Socratic reason had combined with
Christianity to form the deadliest of cultural toxins. Germanic and
Celtic Europe had been excessively barbaric before Christianity, but
the philosophies of Socrates and Christ anesthetized the vital instincts
of Europe's peoples to a degree without equal in history.
Christianity, through its universalism and credo of "love thy
neighbor," robbed Europe of its distinctive cultural identity. Europe
went straight from the decadence of animal brutality to the
decadence of a satisfied, neutered herd. For Nietzsche, the Middle
Ages were characterized not by the Dionysian-Apollonian balance,
but rather by a sickening mix of extremes of the two. Christendom
existed as a distasteful combination of Pagan-Germanic barbarism,
and dogmatic adherence to a slavish ethic which Europeans only
vaguely understood. In contemporary times, the French Revolution
has served as a catalyst for the dominance of these herd values, though in a secular context. For Nietzsche, exempting a brief period during the Renaissance, Europe has come ever-further from finding true "Kultur."

Now, with every step taken closer to the perfection of the "herd politics" of democracy, the "herd morality" of Christianity, and the "herd ethic" of pacifism, Europe takes one step further from culture. Even in Nietzsche's day, this could be seen in the increasing aversion to hierarchical institutions in society, the increased primacy of mass culture, the decadence and lack of focus in art, the demonization of the great man, the proliferation of the nation-state, socialism, and a civilization grasping ever more tightly to its morality in light of the "death of its God." Any solution to the European problem must involve a drift more in the direction of barbarism, (not to be confused with a total reversion to barbarism), myth, chaos, war, aristocratic forms of government, tragedy, pitilessness, and predatory instinct. For Europe to progress, it must revert to a cultural direction which the modern world now recognizes as regression; it must become more Dionysian. The West must recover something it has lost.

A Brief Look at the Nazi Ideology

No definition of the "ideology" of National Socialism will satisfy everyone. For some, Nazism embodied a modernistic blend of national pride, socialistic economic structure, militarism, and a genuine attempt to revolt against a perceived decadence in Western Culture. For others, the Nazi movement epitomizes sheer charlatanism, fear, opportunism, thuggery, and sadism. They see Hitler's pathetic if eerily effective ranting and gesturing as emanating from a man motivated not by a vision but by an acute sense of insecurity and hunger for power. Others may write off the whole episode as nothing more or less than bona-fide evil. Without question, assessing the Nazi ideology, if such exists, can be done effectively only with great care. The Nazis undeniably hoped to accomplish much in a positive sense. Their ideology should never be dismissed as merely a facad to distract attention from their
murdering of Jews. Still, their positive points must constantly be weighed against their compulsion for lying, their lack of humanity, their collective lack of conscience, their blindness to perspective, and their respective psychological disorders. Any treatment of Nazism which fails to take it seriously as an ideology, or which fails to catalogue its manifold shortcomings, is doomed to incompleteness and inaccuracy.

While this section is devoted to the discussion of the Nazi ideology, a digression must briefly be made. Nietzsche's distinction between "good and evil" and "good and bad" shall be discussed more in detail later in the essay, but the whole concept has a direct bearing on Nazi ideology, whether an affinity exists between the Nazis and Nietzsche or not. For Nietzsche, "evil" is nothing more than a fiction born of fear. "One 'knows' today what is good and evil . . . that which here glorifies itself with its praising and blaming and calls itself good, is the instinct of the herd-animal man" (BGE 125). For Nietzsche, anything which could in modern times be conceived of as evil comes from culturally biased conceptions of "truth" emanating from Christianity or from Socratic logic. Both of these coddle the herd instincts, and both are bad. Nietzsche defines "bad" as that which is motivated by fear, the herd, and the "slave morality." Nietzsche defined the "good" in the ancient sense of the word, that which is brave, singular, and literally noble. The Nazis tried to live up to Nietzsche's definition of good, as opposed to bad. And like him, they dismissed the entire concept of evil. As the Nazis desired to eradicate Christian, Platonic, and humanistic notions of "good" in a Nietzschean sense, they also eradicated the possibility of evil, in their own minds, as a definitions for their actions.

Like Nietzsche, the Nazis recognized Western Culture as singularly decadent, and more than any political movement in history, they set out to do something about it. While the "philosophy" of the Nazis derived from a great number of sources, the well-spring of their ideology came from the rather meager source of Hitler himself. Without question, the ultimate source of Hitler's ideology stems from his hatred of the Jews. In fact, his hatred of the Jews as a race burned far hotter than his hatred of
Judaism as a religion. With Hitler, all ideology begins with anti-Semitism. Still, it must be noted that his ideology does not end there, nor does the ideology of the leading Nazi intellectuals. In *Mein Kampf* alone, Hitler relentlessly ascribed the ills of the world to the Jews.

Hitler's feelings about the Jews, though, did not prohibit him from battling what he perceived the ills of the world to be, regardless of their source. Internationalism, Marxism, and pacifism, while undoubtedly the work of the international Jewry, were well worthy of being hated all on their own. The Nazis believed that internationalism had progressively dulled the instinct of nations of people to rely upon each other as naturally created communities. Marxism threatened to overrun any hope for a natural hierarchy among people, and Marxists' false concept of dialectical progress promised disastrous consequences. Pacifism had increasingly robbed men of their naturally aggressive instincts, and their resulting failure as men was corroding the Germanic nuclear family. Though hampered by a delusional conspiracy theory about the international Jewry, the Nazi ideology stood firmly against internationalism, Marxism, and pacifism whether fostered by Jews or not. By espousing nationalism (for everyone, not just Germany), a natural hierarchy among peoples, and a "healthy" militarism, the Nazis believed they offered an alternative system of values for the renewal of Western Culture.

Nazism ostensibly fostered a close reciprocal relationship between individual and community. The individual existed to serve the national community which in turn had a duty to ensure a complete existence for the individual. For a man, this meant the assurance of work by a socialized government, and the promise of masculine warfare through the conquest of "lesser races." Through this system, a woman could be ensured that her husband was a reliable provider, and a fully masculine man whose instincts were sharp and true. A woman could then go about the business of being a nurturing wife and mother. With healthy individuals, and healthy, natural relationships within the Germanic nuclear household, society could benefit both economically and morally. The Nazis' wish to
strengthen gender roles did not stem from a need to control all components of German society. Rather, they believed that adherence to orders and hierarchy was a natural, and desirable alternative to the Enlightenment's insidious fiction of freedom.

The Nazis stood firmly against Christianity. They maintained that no religion could be of value that was born of a Jew, especially one that dulled the racial instincts in favor of universal brotherhood. The official Nazi position was simply to combat the influence of the Lutheran and Catholic churches with whom they competed for ideological influence. The Nazis hoped eventually to undermine loyalties to any Christian sect by emphasizing hardness, pitilessness, and the lust for conquest amongst all Germanic types. By reverting to ancient pagan-Germanic spirituality, the humanitarian, pacifistic, universal, and Christian view of the world could eventually be phased-out. The Nazis also wished to transcend any and all notions of natural, human, or civil rights as dangerous egalitarian fictions propagated by the victorious French Revolution, and which found their fullest form in the doctrines of Marxism. The Nazis ultimately sought to replace the myths of Christianity and the Enlightenment with myths pertaining specifically to Germanic metaphysics, which were more conducive to the "Germanic soul."

Historical Conceptions of Nietzsche as Nazi and anti-Nazi

Until very recently, the problem with any discussion of the Nietzsche-Nazi problem has been a distinct lack of nuanced argumentation. Two rigid positions have been adhered to almost without exception. The first, represented by George Lukács, has maintained that no thinker could have possibly been a more articulate spokesman for the positions taken by the Nazis. An unabashed Marxist during the period of the Nazis' growth in power, "Georg Lukács' definitive Marxist reading . . . portrays Nietzsche exclusively as the irrationalist spokesman of the post-1870 reactionary bourgeoisie and as an inherently proto-fascist thinker, father to Nazism." Lukács detested Nietzsche because the two failed

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3Steven Aschheim, The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890-1990, 4.
to agree about the nature of dialectical historical development. "The weakness and half-heartedness of such 'daring thinkers' as Nietzsche or Spengler is that their relativism only abolishes the absolute in appearance." For Lukács, Nietzsche's practice of examining cultures discretely and independently of linear historical progression, is untenable. Lukács epitomizes that camp among leftists who have viewed Nietzsche's ideas with suspicion since he first published *The Birth of Tragedy*. Traditionally, the left has viewed Nietzsche's perspective as a threat to dialectical thinking and the hope for world egalitarianism. Lukács also represents the traditional leftist reception of Nietzsche as an unwelcome advocate of myth, tradition, privilege, warfare, and suffering.

The pre-eminent translator of Nietzsche into English, Walter Kaufmann, represents the second and equally essentialist school of thought on the Nietzsche-Nazi connection. Aschheim points out that "as the war ended, Nietzsche's role within the politics and culture of Germany underwent thorough revision. He was typically metamorphosized into what was required for a democratic, anti-fascist, German identity." Similarly, Kaufmann set out after World War II to rescue Nietzsche in the English-speaking world from the reputation of "Nazi-Philosopher." He set out to deliver Nietzsche in a hyper-individualistic, anti-authoritarian, almost pro-democratic package. In his book *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Philologist, Antichrist*, Kaufmann makes his position clear: "Hitler and the Nazis' brazen adaptation of Nietzsche have confirmed their misapprehensions," and their "misappropriations." He says nothing more of the issue. Yet to fulfill his agenda, many of Nietzsche's harsh and politically inexpedient tracts were intentionally softened. This fact is now widely acknowledged. Nietzsche scholar Alan Megill insists that, "Kaufmann's depoliticization of Nietzsche was itself a politicization," and that he "offered an antiseptic, respectable

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The two antithetical conceptions of Nietzsche's link with the Nazis, espoused by Lukács and Kaufmann, are equally narrow in scope. Most scholars have echoed the sentiments of one or the other's position, but in the words of Aschheim, "it should come as no surprise that the Nazi-Nietzsche relationship is discussed entirely in these narrow terms, as one of out-and-out distortion and radical abuse of the master's essentially antipolitical project." This scintillating topic, patently debatable, has in fact been too politically charged to be properly handled. How "entirely narrow" has the treatment of this topic been? Seemingly every scholar of either Nietzsche or the Nazis has paid curt lip-service to the issue in one sense or the other. Few scholars have engaged in nuanced discussions. The majority, taking Kaufmann's position, have traditionally been no less dogmatic than he.

Georges Batailles, a French Marxist during the interwar and post-war era, took exactly the opposite position of his ideological compatriot Lukács. In his famous book *On Nietzsche*, Batailles stated his position succinctly: "Between the ideas of Fascist reactionaries and Nietzsche's notions there is more than simple difference, there is radical incompatibility." In *Nietzsche Contra Rousseau*, Keith Ansell-Pearson makes only one reference to the Nazis, and states that the Nazis' "unspeakable evil of the attempted mastery of the earth" bore no connection to Nietzsche's work. In his article "Nietzsche's attitude toward the Jews," Michael Duffy makes the questionable assertion that Nietzsche is "strongly and consistently anti-anti Semitic," In *Nietzsche, the Last Antipolitical German*, Peter Bergmann insists that the fictitious Nietzsche-Nazi

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8 Steven Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany, 1890-1990*, 4.
link is due only to "misconceptions about Nietzsche's political and racial views." In *The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche*, prominent Nietzsche scholars Bernd Magnus and R.J. Hollingdale state respectively that Nietzsche "was invoked by Fascists and Nazis to advance the very things he loathed," and that "the connection between *Untimely Meditations* and National Socialism is invisible to the sober reader." In *Nietzsche in Turin*, Leslie Chamberlain simply states that Nietzsche was once "absurdly taken for a Nazi." Among scholars of Nazism, George Mosse, in *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* simply stated that Nazi writers "confused Nazi violence with Nietzschean élan," and that Nietzsche's "Know Thyself" knew "no nationality or race." In *The Cultural Roots of National Socialism*, Hermann Glaser insists that the Nazis' use of Nietzsche was "a misinterpretation which bordered on deliberate distortion."

The purpose of this cataloguing is not to point out, with a few short quotations, the wild misconceptions of these scholars. Indeed, many of the above comments, in and of themselves, are true, but they are far from the whole truth. In each of the above examples, none of the authors expands upon their opinions that Nietzsche was misappropriated by the Nazis. A quick dismissal of the Nietzsche-Nazi link, often to the point of platitude, is the only evident treatment of the topic. None of the above authors offer a nuanced or evidenced discussion of the issue. This would seem less bizarre were it not for the fact that many respected scholars share the exact opposite opinion of the above intellectuals, and this fact is well known. By taking a rigid stance on the issue of the Nietzsche-Nazi

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link, scholars take an inherently controversial position. Yet mystifyingly, most remain unwilling to actively engage in the controversy they are creating.

The same can be said of those who believe in the existence of the Nietzsche-Nazi link. In 1950, the same year that Kaufmann published *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Philologist, Antichrist*, Friedrich Meinecke published *The German Catastrophe* in which he asserted that "In Nietzsche's realm of ideas, which now began to exert a powerful influence over all yearning and restless spirits, there were gathered together almost all the noble and ignoble longings which filled this period."17 In his article "Heidegger's Nietzsche," Michael Gillespie persists with the notion that "Nietzsche's path was bound up in Heidegger's view with the ambiguous end of Western thought in Nazism."18 Zeev Sternhell, in *The Birth of Fascist Ideology*, makes clear his opinion that Nietzsche's characterization of the French Revolution as "the last great slave rebellion"19 made him a prime intellectual forebear to the Fascist ideology. Beyond this role, Sternhell has little to say about Nietzsche, and, like the rest, says nothing about Nietzsche which might bring his narrow conclusion into question.

Perhaps the most vocal intellectual who shares this perspective has been Ernst Nolte. In *Three Faces of Fascism*, Nolte points out that like the Nazis, "Nietzsche and the most subtle concepts of his philosophy stood in diametric opposition to Marx," and that "the concept of (Nietzsche's) 'blond beast' is not a freak--it is the logical result of Nietzsche's thought."20 Of all the aforementioned scholars from either the Lukács or Kaufmann perspective, only Nolte provides any real substance for his side of the debate. Nolte thinks that

Nietzsche is not in any obvious sense the spiritual father of fascism; but he was the first to give voice to that spiritual focal point toward which all fascism must gravitate: the assault on practical and theoretical transcendence, for the sake of a 'more beautiful' form of life . . . The ultimate aim (of both the Nazis and Nietzsche) was a 'supreme culture' of the future . . .

Many decades in advance, Nietzsche provided the politically radical anti-Marxism of fascism with its original spiritual image, an image of which even Hitler never quite showed himself the equal.  

Nolte portrays Nietzsche the same way in *Nietzsche and Nietzscheanism*, but in broader terms. However articulate he may be, engaging in this debate still took up only five pages of Nolte's book. And like the rest of the aforementioned authors, he never gives an ounce of credence to the perspective of the intellectuals on the other side of this particular issue.

Only in the 1990's has the conspicuously closed nature of this topic become more actively noticed. Alan Megill and Steven Aschheim provide excellent examples of this. Their work on Nietzsche, and their attitudes toward his relationship with National Socialism are neutral but nuanced, based largely on textual evidence, and evidently free of dogma or conventional wisdom. Megill sees the historic aversion to the Nietzsche-Nazi issue stemming from historians' "tendency to shy away from the more complex and demanding aspects of Nietzsche's work, indeed, to shy away from Nietzsche generally. Once he is safely insane, they find him more manageable."  

While Megill's Nietzsche focuses on creativity and renewal, Megill chooses not to ignore the Nietzsche who prescribes "evil" and "the destruction of civilization," and who is an overall "prophet of extremity." A close reading of the texts rendered Megill no other choice. "With increasing frequency people have been approaching Nietzsche independently of Kaufmann. They have

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21Ibid., 445.
become skeptical of Kaufmann's tendency to deny everything in Nietzsche that struck him as too extreme and questionable."23

For Aschheim, the labeling of Nietzsche as a proto-Nazi makes no sense because so many un-Nazi groups have seemingly found common cause in Nietzsche. "Socialism, anarchism, feminism, and generational revolt of the young -- these were all touched by the libertarian magic of Nietzsche."24 While Aschheim views Nietzsche's appropriation by these leftist movements as generally absurd, Aschheim's Nietzsche could never fit comfortably into any single ideology. Aschheim points out Nietzsche's famous quote that "I mistrust all systematizers and avoid them," and that "the will to a system is a lack of integrity."25 That said, Aschheim believes that if any ideology were able to incorporate Nietzsche with any consistency, the group hitherto best suited to that purpose must have been the Nazis. Aschheim asserts that "Nietzsche provided a fruitful source for the themes ... for a post-liberal, post-Marxist, national regeneration," and that "the ingredients of the socialist Nietzschean religion and its volkish counterpart were not always that different."26 Aschheim sums up the lack of integrity hitherto displayed in the Nietzsche-Nazi debate in the following way:

The dominant postwar images -- embodied in the opposed representations of George Lukács and Walter Kaufmann -- have either condemned Nietzsche as centrally complicit in the Nazi evil or lauded him for being unblemished and opposed to all Nazism's intentions and actions. Both these approaches were less interested in tracing actual historical paths than pursuing their own value-laden interpretations. This certainly did not constitute good cultural history.27

24Steven E. Aschheim, The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890-1990, 90.
26Friedrich Meinecke, The German Catastrophe, 148, 150.
Aschheim argues that the hyper-accentuation of "value-laden interpretations" at the end of World War II was an understandable, inevitable, perhaps even desirable reaction to the Nazis willful inhumanity and their near-victorious assault on time-honored Western values. Yet those same value-laden interpretations have prevented cultural historians from telling us what actually happened. By rescuing Nietzsche from the Nazis, Kaufmann, to a large extent, simply gave us a Nietzsche that did not exist.28 Those who opposed Kaufmann did so from an equally hyperbolic perspective. When emotional issues burn hot, as any issue dealing with the Nazis did at the end of World War II, judgment becomes clouded. Now, over a half-century since the Nazis have been defeated, Megill and Aschheim beckon us to drop our emotional baggage, value-laden interpretations, hyperbolic language, and political posturing, and to explore the ideological link between Nietzsche and the Nazis as the evidence permits. In other words, the task remains of exploring those parts of Nietzsche's thought that cut against the National Socialist ideology, and those which served as a boon for the Nazis' ideological coffers.

28Whenever possible, I have used Kaufmann's translations of Nietzsche. I hope that if an ideological link can be identified between Nietzsche and the Nazis, even through a repressed Kaufmann translation, that this will add credibility to the essay.
Chapter II:
Nietzsche as the Antithesis of National Socialism

Anyone who claims that Nietzsche's ideology provided the perfect fit for the Nazis is either lying or has not read much Nietzsche. Among Nietzsche's chief concerns was the individual as artist. Nietzsche believed that mass movements inevitably led to dogma, never creativity. His hatred of systems of thought, among many other reasons, would have led him to reject the Nazi party as surely as he would have rejected any other political party. In more specific terms, Nietzsche loathed anti-Semitism, race mania, and nation-state politics. He hated political organizations. In them he found the harbingers of mediocrity. He also found politics boring. Each of these topics shall be explored, but perhaps the best place to start is with Nietzsche's detestation of both nationalism and socialism.

Nationalism
The Nazis made German nationalism infamous, but German nationalism did not begin with the Beer Hall Putsch of 1923. Waves of fanatical nationalism have swept through Germany since the Napoleonic conquest of 1806. Under the French banner of "liberté, égalité, fraternité," freedom came to mean self-determination for the German nation. Eventually, the "progressive" origins of nationalism would become estranged from the more volkish connotations of "nation" in the German language. The Nazis, like Nietzsche, would come to view the Revolution's legacies of liberty, equality, and fraternity as the grave stupidities of the left. The natural result of the Revolution's "slave rebellion in morals," (BGE 118) must be to stifle heroism, genius, and excellence in all its forms.

While the Nazis clung to the Revolution's original ideal of nationalism as self-determination for peoples, Nietzsche condemned the whole Revolutionary experiment as a grave, though logical outcome of Christianity. The Nazis viewed nationalist exclusivism as the antidote to the Enlightenment's poisonous universalism, but Nietzsche saw each of these "isms" as various heads emanating from the same monster. The Nazis believed that nationalism would rescue
the German people from the Christian and Enlightenment experiments to convert humanity into a single race of pacified herd animals. Nietzsche insisted that nationalism professed to counteract universalism, but instead created a new and insidiously potent compulsion to conform, obey, and become a member of the herd.

These antithetical approaches to nationalism as a concept can be illustrated by comparing Nietzsche's and Hitler's attitudes to the popular German phrase, "Deutschland, Deutschland über alles." When Nietzsche proclaimed "Deutschland über alles, I think that was the end of German culture," (TWI 506) he referred to what he saw as the growing ubiquity of the German herd mentality. Once, when no strong German state existed, German culture took center stage in the world. During Nietzsche's time, when the mental, physical, and above all spiritual energies of Germany increasingly subordinated themselves to the state, he predicted that German culture would wither on the vine. As the state grew stronger, fewer and fewer Bachs, Mozarts, Kants, Beethovens, Hegels, Goethes, Schillers, and Nietzsche would emerge. At best, Germany would get more Bismarcks.

For Hitler, "So many times had I sung 'Deutschland über alles' and shouted with full voice 'Heil,' that I considered it almost a belated favor that I was now allowed to appear as a witness before the tribunal of the Eternal Judge in order to proclaim the truth and sincerity of my convictions."1 Hitler believed that if each German honored the blood and soil of the fatherland with his deepest loyalties, the resulting "convictions" would allow the German people to accomplish any goal they set for themselves, particularly the conquest of Lebensraum in the east. Hitler did not see the mass movement of nationalism in itself, necessarily, as an inhibitor of the individual's creativity. Hitler did not view the participant in massive Nazi rallies as a capitulator to the herd-mentality. Hitler viewed the capacity of the German people to expand German culture as an exercise in creativity on a scale so grand that all Germans could claim a share of it for themselves.

1Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 212.
Nietzsche would have responded to this idea with his classic assertion that "Culture and the state -- one should not deceive oneself about this -- are antagonists . . . All great ages of culture are ages of political decline: what is great culturally has always been unpolitical, even anti-political" (TWI 569). An analysis of German cultural history renders the same conclusion. From the early Middle Ages through Jena and Auerstadt, the existence of the Holy Roman Empire resulted in the perpetual political disunity of the Germans. Hundreds of sovereign principalities maintained a static and divisive network of political boundaries. Due to political stagnation, hundreds of Germanic cultures and dialects remained hermetically sealed off from their neighbors to a degree unique in Europe. Only the Italians could rival this German phenomenon. To Nietzsche, Germany's political disunity became her culture's saving grace. So long as the German princes had controlled Germany, nationalism could not flourish. Spanish identity politics produced the inquisition. English nationalism produced Parliament, the consummate achievement of the slave morality. The nationalism of the French resulted in the dogma, rapine, and unparalleled herd mentality of the Revolution. For Nietzsche, Germany remained conspicuously free of such malignancies so long as she remained free of nationalism. For Nietzsche, in the words of Alan Megill, "the present is in a state of absolute dereliction, it lacks any redeeming features, anything that might allow us to reconcile ourselves to things as they are."²

In other words, that which is most modern, in this case nationalism, can only represent an unheralded degree of decadence, decline, and nihilism, but certainly not culture. Hitler exempted his brand of nationalism from Nietzsche's equation. The Nazis offered national cohesion based on virtues forged long before Christianity, humanism, the Enlightenment, western decadence, and the modern victory of the slave morality. For Hitler, the Holy Roman Empire had resulted in "the slow extermination of Germanism,"³ and the consequent imposition of Mediterranean-Christian slave morals and

laws. Because he advocated a modern version of the Germans' ancient pagan-aristocracy, Hitler viewed his "Germanism" as satisfying both Nietzsche's admiration for the master morality, and his aversion to modern movements and value systems. By advocating ancient values, albeit under a nationalist rubric, Hitler ostensibly cut off one of the heads of the monster modernity.

Yet Nietzsche would have insisted that many new disfigured heads sprout up in nationalism's place. To the extent that "Germanism" ever existed, and came much closer to the master than to the slave morality, its "modern" version emanated from mere caricatures of history. Nietzsche would have deemed Hitler's attempt to "revaluate values" as a failure as well. Though based on heroism, instinct, and emotionalism, pagan-German barbarism failed to satisfy the rational side of man that made him whole. Souls quenched only by land, blood, and spectacle could never be truly satisfied. The consummation of such a wish would artificially tilt any human toward the Dionysian. The Nuremberg rallies eerily epitomized the shortcomings of an ethics based primarily on volkish euphoria.

For Nietzsche, the return to an imaginary, organic, pre-Christian past was not only unsatisfying and therefore undesirable, it was also impossible. The German soul had been crucified on the world-oak of Hegel's dialectic, and an entirely new path, not a replica of an old one, must be found. Germans could not will their "eternal return" through national hysteria, indoctrination, half-truths, or a return to a distant point on a path toward a failed future. By definition, Nietzsche's vision of the Germans' (or humanity's) renewal would not be attained through any ideology born of the modern world, nationalism included.

Contrary to what most other people would think, Nietzsche and Hitler would have agreed that nationalism has a civilizing effect on the individual. For Hitler, this represented the ultimate goal, for Nietzsche, the ultimate catastrophe. While conventional wisdom maintains that the Nazis epitomized barbarism, Nietzsche would have focused on their compulsion toward order, uniformity, obedience, consistency, and the antiseptic as qualities characterizing an extreme form of the Apollonian, or civilizing instinct. For Nietzsche, this
represented an unhealthy extreme at the polar opposite of Dionysian barbarism. It would not have surprised Nietzsche that for Goebbels, nationalism meant "the final fulfillment of peace and community . . . to form the nation as a community of need, bread, and fate, to end the corruption of democracy and international (money)." For Nietzsche, only decadent cultures attempt to civilize, as they cannot envision their own survival without curbing the creative chaos of which individuals are capable.

How does it happen that the state will do a host of things that the individual would never countenance?— Through division of responsibility, of command, and of execution. Through the interposition of the virtues of obedience, duty, patriotism, and loyalty. Through upholding pride, severity, strength, hatred, revenge -- in short, all typical characteristics that contradict the herd type (WP 383).

Nietzsche would have been dismayed at the Nazi will to create order in a society which already suffered from an over-abundance of Apollonian order. In this sense, the Nazis only represented a quickening of the decadence which they sought to overcome.

When Hitler claims that "state citizenship is the most valuable document for (a man's) entire earthly life," he asserts that a person's role, as stipulated by the state, is his most definitive characteristic. This emblemizes nationalism's destruction of the creative will as emphasized by Nietzsche. "This absurd condition of Europe cannot go on much longer! Is there any idea at all behind this bovine nationalism? What value can there be now, when everything points to wider and more common interests, in encouraging this boorish self-conceit" (WP 395)? Nationalism can result only in the decline of humanity's likeness to beasts of prey, and an increase in its likeness to the ultimate herd animals, cattle. The infamous caricature of a German town in Thus Spake

5Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 659.
Zarathustra, The Motley Cow, was full of such people. In Nietzsche's eyes, nationalism taxes all that is singular and contributes only to what is common. As it civilizes, it further contributes to the decline of Western Culture.

Socialism

Ernst Nolte pointed out that "Nietzsche and the most subtle concepts of his philosophy stood in diametric opposition to Marx."6 By this, Nolte meant that Marx's ultimate vision of a world of classless inclusivity has been countered by no one more potently than by Nietzsche, for whom: "socialism glorifies the qualities through which man is tame, peaceable, and useful to the herd as real human virtues: namely public spirit, benevolence, consideration, industriousness, moderation, modesty, forbearance, and pity" (BGE 171). As one might guess from this quotation, Nietzsche saw little to choose between the concepts of nationalism and socialism. They were supposedly separated by the right/left dichotomy (nationalism vs. internationalism) but both sought greater inclusivity, mass culture, an erosion of class hierarchy, minimization of individuality (for fear of more Napoleonic egos), the imposition of order (the ultimate hindrance to true culture in Europe), and the political legislation of values. Nietzsche differed from both Marx and Hitler in his consistent defense of the concept of hierarchical privilege for every sector of society.

Hitler knew that socialism did not mix perfectly with the other ingredients of a supposedly right-wing ideology. In fact, Hitler felt compelled to justify his socialism by distinguishing it from the socialism of the Marxist tradition. Chief Nazi philosopher Alfred Rosenberg concurred with Hitler that nationalism and socialism were not necessarily antithetical. Rosenberg possessed an expertise on such matters that far exceeded Hitler's. The Nazi intellectual had earned Ph.D.'s in both history and philosophy. Also, Rosenberg grew up and was educated in Lithuania. Living next to the Soviet giant mandated that all intellectual issues take Marxist theory into

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6Ernst Nolte, Three Faces of Fascism, 442.
account. Still, Rosenberg supported "Hitler, (who) had come to the conclusion that a just socialism had, per se, nothing to do with class war and internationalism. To perpetuate class war was wrong... As far as the workers were concerned it was, therefore, a question of renouncing this doctrine as well as their opposition both to the farmer and the property owner."7 As Hitler viewed Marx as "a master magician of the black arts,"8 it might seem odd that he would advocate any type of socialism at all. Hitler clearly felt that German socialism could be differentiated from the Marxist package of internationalism, class warfare, dictatorship by proletariat, and dialectical reasoning.

Again, Nietzsche could never justify socialism under any circumstance. He viewed it as a logical step in the continuous degradation of Western Culture, nothing more. Socialism obviously resulted from the ongoing march of a victorious slave morality. Western Culture had become too exhausted to support what Nietzsche called "higher types." The slavish multitudes had become too docile even to understand higher, instinctual, predatory human beings. As a result, everyone becomes increasingly entitled to the same rights and the same opportunities. Eventually, all people will come more to resemble than to differ from one another. For Nietzsche, this was the ultimate, universal goal of Christianity, the secular ideal of the French Revolution, and the dialectical promise of Marx. All of these represent stepping stones on a path to complete degeneracy.

The collective degeneration of man, down to that which the socialist dolts and blockheads today see as their 'man of the future' - as their ideal! - this degeneration and diminution of man to the perfect herd animal (or, as they say, to the man of the 'free society'), this animalization of man to the pygmy animal of equal rights and equal pretensions is possible, there is no doubt about that (BGE 127-128)!

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8 Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 579.
As the Nazis ignored Nietzsche's rejection of socialism, they implemented an array of programs which, even by today's standards would seem patently "progressive." Ronald Smelser outlines some prime examples.

1) A comprehensive welfare state system designed by state planners
2) A society geared to the upward mobility, indeed the embourgeoisement, of workers
3) A mass consumer society orientation with acceptance of materialism as a legitimate individual aspiration
4) The full acceptance of urban, industrial society along with its concomitants, advanced technology and the rationalization or productive processes
5) The acceptance and partial realization of "progressive" labor legislation, especially laws protecting youth and women on the job

Hitler committed himself to eradicating privilege and institutionalizing leveling programs within German society, but he consistently portrayed himself as the ideological antithesis to Karl Marx. "Though 'Socialist,' Hitler presented himself as the savior of Western Civilization against Bolshevism, the bulwark of Europe against Stalin." Hitler ultimately envisioned a goal of "a German democracy in contrast to the spineless international one that, in 1918, had taken the helm in Germany." In contrast, Nietzsche saw democracy and socialism as similar strains of the same disease, even if dressed up in a "Germanic" costume to pose as something other than Western democracy. For him, all modern political systems shared the same disfigured origin; all have merely secularized the slave morality of the Christians in one form or another. To the limited extent that Nietzsche maintained a political vision, he harkened back to the aristocratic-warrior culture of the Greek polis.

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11Alfred Rosenberg, The Diaries of Alfred Rosenberg, 130.
Only the Overman could reattain such a healthy form of
government, emerging as a "bolt of lightning" from the "dark cloud"
of modern political institutions.\(^\text{12}\)

Nietzsche's incorporation into the canon of socialist
intellectuals marks a grand absurdity. Georges Sorel and Benito
Mussolini began their careers as Marxist ideologues, but came to be
deeply influenced by Nietzsche. Many other Marxists of the late
nineteenth and early twentieth centuries counted Nietzsche among
their intellectual influences. Yet now, "leftist" Nietzscheans such as
Sorel and Mussolini are indisputably included in the canon of the
right. For more than a century, socialists have tried unsuccessfully
to wed their philosophy to that of Nietzsche. The more they
incorporate Nietzsche, as Sorel and Mussolini did, the less "socialist"
they become. Karl Kraus humorously labeled all attempted
"Nietzschean Socialists" as "superapes of the coffeehouses."\(^\text{13}\)

Throughout his writings, Nietzsche heaped scorn upon those
who wished to liberate the proletariat and turn them into
Übermensch. If Nietzsche viewed himself as dynamite, and the
Supermen as bolts of lightning, the masses of Germany were
indestructible bastions of uncreativity. Nietzsche believed that no
mass movement within millennia of the modern age could forge a
race of Supermen, least of all by the use of socialism. Nietzsche
regarded the notion of forging such a race among pacified, satisfied,
equalized proletarians as patently impossible. He envisioned a future
race of "beasts of prey and the like,"\(^\text{14}\) ruled by their primal
instincts, and their independent, cultivated intellects. By either
criteria, they would be free of any and all moral constraints.
Liberated from dogma, a race of such ravenous warrior-
philosophers could never be "socialized."

\(^{12}\)Keith Ansell-Pearson, "Who is the Übermensch? Time, Truth, and Woman in

\(^{13}\)Steven W. Aschheim, "Nietzschean Socialism -- Left and Right, 1890-1933,"
153.

\(^{14}\)Ibid., 150.
Nietzsche Contra Artifice

In *The Will to Power*, Nietzsche referred to socialists as "superficial, envious, three-quarter actors" (WP 77). He certainly despised them for their exploitation of what he regarded as an inauthentic representation of culture. The state-run socialist utopia represents a complete vacuum of culture, not its final victory. But Nietzsche's condemnation of socialists only underscores his detestation of inauthenticity in general. Many of his most original and scornful cultural criticisms stem from his unique ability to recognize affectation and hypocrisy where no one else could. Many of the Nazis' most cherished "fasci" or symbols were German cultural icons previously excoriated by Nietzsche. The most obvious of these was the music of Richard Wagner.

Hitler stated in *Mein Kampf* that "as really great statesmen, but also great reformers . . . side by side with Frederick the Great stands a Martin Luther as well as a Richard Wagner."\(^{15}\) Hitler idolized in Wagner precisely what Nietzsche despised. Wagner mesmerized Germany into believing that by rejuvenating their ancient pagan instincts, the Germans could use their new-found organic spirituality to renew their own culture and possibly the entire West. Through opera, Wagner induced his German audience into a feeling of nostalgia through dream-like imagery of a heroic Germanic past that included foggy forests, echoing, misty mountains, pagan ritual, and celestial Nordic tragedy. He gave artistic expression to the Germans' near-ubiquitous late nineteenth-century belief in a "Germanic soul." Hitler saw Tristan and Isolde 33 times alone. He regarded the inducement of the effects of Wagner's opera on the population as bona-fide cultural reform, and the effect of a "great reformer."

Nietzsche too had once experienced Hitler's nostalgic exhilaration with Wagner. Through his early years as a professor at Basel, Nietzsche and Wagner shared a close friendship. Louise Elizabeth Bachofen, an acquaintance of Nietzsche's, observed in an 1872 letter: "I knew Nietzsche in this early period when he was still enthused by Wagner. And how enthused he was! Every Sunday he

\(^{15}\)Adolph Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 287.
traveled to Lucerne and returned from these each time filled with his God and told me of the splendors he had seen and heard; I believe most firmly that his break with Wagner was a deathblow for Nietzsche."16 Indeed, Nietzsche's break with Wagner taxed him emotionally, but to a degree, it marked a new era in his personal philosophy. According to Ansell-Pearson, "Nietzsche's break with Wagner is equally a break with the political idealism and cultural romanticism of his youth."17

Nietzsche remained enamored with the possibility of rebirth through myth, but he came to see Wagnerian myth as sheer charlatanism. While Wagner made no secret of his anti-Semitism, George Mosse points out that "Wagner's operas were not mired in bitterness laced with hatred of the Jewish race."18 Nietzsche came to see much more in Wagner's operas worthy of scorn. Wagner's operas professed cultural renewal when in fact, Wagner epitomized the seeming inability of German artists to create something new that did not depend on cheap imitation. Once Nietzsche realized this, he could not salvage his relationship with the Wagner family. How and why this change in Nietzsche came to pass remains somewhat of a mystery. Still, the mutation in Nietzsche's intellectual orientation is very detectable in his works. In The Case of Wagner, Nietzsche stated that "There is nothing on which Wagner has reflected so much as on redemption. Somebody or other always wants to be redeemed: now a little man, now a little woman -- that is his problem" (CW 460). Nietzsche detected a smallness in the thinking in Wagner, and resented that such a smallness could become a prescription of renewal for an entire culture. He said in Twilight of the Idols that in certain ages, "art has a right to pure foolishness -- as a kind of vacation for spirit, wit, and feeling. Wagner understood that. Pure foolishness restores" (TWI 532). Late nineteenth century Germany

was not an age capable of restoration by foolishness. The foolishness of modernity had been far too much to overcome already. Instead, Nietzsche hoped for an injection of authenticity into an age seemingly devoid of it.

Wagnerian artifice apparently found its way into every one of Hitler's policies and decisions. The very definition of "fascism" originates in "symbolism." Hitler's myths often resembled Wagner's portrayals of an arcane Germanic past that never was. Hitler incessantly repeated the unique "culture-founding power of Germanic blood," only to attempt the forced foundation of culture through state programs. In Wagner's *Niebelungenlied*, the noble tribe of Germanic Niebelungen are destroyed by the wily and treacherous Asiatic hordes of Ghengis Khan. Himmler was particularly fond of inculcating fear of and pitilessness against "these same inferior races, that at one time appeared under the names of Huns, Magyars, Tartars, and Mongols, and which today appear as Russians under the banner of Bolshevism." The most fundamental conviction of both Wagner and Hitler was that Germanic blood could not help but create superior culture, and enforce its dominance. Nietzsche had always dismissed this way of thinking as absurd, and dangerous. "Thus I attacked Wagner--more precisely, the falseness, the half-couth instincts" (EH 232) The conviction that Germanic culture could not help but reign supreme had resulted in an excuse for intellectual laziness that the Germans could ill-afford.

**Nietzsche's Disdain for the Germans**

Any discussion of Nietzsche's contempt for inauthenticity must include some discussion of his disdain for the Germans themselves. Nietzsche certainly believed that virtues and vices could distinguish one race or ethnic group from another. To him, the Germans' differentiating features should serve as an embarrassment to them. Nietzsche took for gospel many of the post-Darwinian racial theories of his own day, but not the myth of Germanic racial superiority. To

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the contrary, Nietzsche viewed the singular mark of the Germans to be their uniquely disoriented collective spirit. Playing on one of Goethe's most famous lines from Faust, Nietzsche insisted that "a German who would make bold to say 'two souls, alas, within my bosom dwell' would fall short of the truth by a large number of souls" (BGE 174). Nietzsche noted the effects of race mixing among the supposedly "pure" Germans, and regarded them among the least ethnically pure of all European peoples. The Germans also maintained a conspicuous genius for Romanticism. Nietzsche regarded these traits, and the German will to obey as the outcroppings of a people whose souls were in turmoil, and in a uniquely desperate search for a foundation.

The Germans are more incomprehensible, more incomprehensible, more full of contradictions, more unknown, more incalculable, more surprising, even to themselves, than other peoples are . . . It is characteristic of the Germans that the question 'what is German?' never dies out among them (BGE 174).

Because of their disorientation, the German attachment to the father figure in the form of Frederick the Great, Wilhelm I, or Bismarck should not be surprising. Nietzsche's criticisms of the Germans left no stone unturned. He even castigated their diet. "Add to this the virtually bestial drinking habits of the Germans, and you will understand the origin of the German spirit--from distressed intestines" (EH 238).

According to Bernd Magnus, during the Third Reich, "Nietzschean qualities were simply projected onto idealized depictions of the Nordic race,"21 but Nietzsche never believed in a romanticized racial archetype with blond hair and blue eyes, standing six foot plus, and with an unblemished, chiseled face. Though he may have approved of such components once the "Superman" had already emerged (Nietzsche possessed a very pronounced aesthetic

side), such aesthetic trivialities meant nothing until one started with a spiritually superior being. Secondly, Nietzsche never believed that the Germans were capable of producing such men, and a religion based on such characteristics could perhaps only happen in Germany where "the German is acquainted with the hidden path to chaos," and the German, above all, "loves his symbol" (BGE 175).

Why did Nietzsche feel compelled to address the issue of Germanic racial superiority at all? To a large extent, Wagner, Darwin, and H.S Chamberlain emblemize much more than the popularization of the myth of Teutonic racial superiority. They reflect a quintessentially European view of the world at the end of the nineteenth century. Even the "progressive" Marx maintained radically racist ideas, especially about his own people, as in "The Jewish Question?" At any rate, the subject of the Germans' place in the "racial hierarchy" constantly arose in the academic settings of Nietzsche's day, and he had occasion to give it much thought. He found the whole widespread acceptance of the idea that Germanic blood automatically equated to cultural supremacy positively mystifying. In a letter to a rabid Germanophile of his day, Theodor Fritsch, he stated, "I must confess that the 'German spirit' of our times is so alien to me that only with great impatience can I observe its mannerism, among which I especially include anti-Semitism."22

For Nietzsche, race in and of itself was the guarantor of nothing. This contrasts sharply with Hitler, whose fondest hope for the Germans lay in that portion of the peasant population whose blood had supposedly not yet mixed with the Slavs and other races. "This is the blessing of the failure of complete mixture: that even today we still have in our German national body great stocks of Nordic-Germanic people who remain unblended, in whom we may see the most valuable treasure for our future."23

In the words of Dominick La Capra, "Nietzsche was perhaps the first modern thinker to provide a radical critique of both

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23 Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 600.
metaphysical tradition and modern context as 'decadent.'

Nietzsche's mockery of the Germans extended well beyond the artifice of their identity as culturally superior. That represented only a portion of their mental handicap to creativity. Wagner epitomized the Germans' slavery to myth, and their failure to spiritually jettison themselves from Christianity. Western Culture could not be refounded while bound by such heavy chains. "Nietzsche was offended by Wagner's final composition of Parsifal: retelling the Grail story, it capitulated, in Nietzsche's view, to the Christian moral system." One of the primary concerns of both Nietzsche and Wagner was the prospect of cultural revolution and renewal. Yet for Nietzsche, any proposed renewal could not succeed if it were cut from the same, worn-out cultural cloth that needed to be replaced. Nietzsche believed that the German lack of creativity (of which he came to regard Wagner as the paragon) was endemic, bordered on innate, and reduced all of the Germans' attempts at cultural renewal to nostalgic imitation. Worst of all, they were not even imaginative enough to recognize their own lack of creativity.

If such characterizations of the Germans are correct, Hitler fit the mold in many ways. Nietzsche believed that "the historical process begins with the master’s bloody battle (against his eventual slave) and ends in some sense with the modern bourgeois inhabitants of contemporary liberal democracies, who pursue material gain rather than glory." As already noted, a stated position of the National Socialist platform was an acceptance of the pursuit of economic gain by the individual. Nietzsche believed that any current attempted solution to the problem of the decadence of Western Culture, particularly one that did not solve a problem as evident as materialism, was doomed to failure. Yet Hitler's posturing by way of solutions did not end with his economic theories. Hitler, of

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course, was one of the world's most unrelenting anti-Semites, yet in Mein Kampf, for example, he declared that "the language of the anti-Semitic Viennese press was unworthy of the cultural traditions of a great race. I was depressed by the memory of certain events in the Middle Ages which I did not wish to see repeated."\(^{27}\)

Of course, no one better imitated the shameful Jew-hunts of the Middle Ages better than Hitler did. When the Nazis assumed power in Germany and stated in an official proclamation that "The German Government and the German nation are united in the determination to carry on a policy of peace, conciliation, and understanding as a basis of all decisions and all actions,"\(^{28}\) and that too was sheer duplicity. Once,

Hitler invited all the senior generals to a demonstration at the Jüterborg artillery school, where exact replicas of the Czech fortifications had been constructed. An infantry attack on an artillery barrage was mounted as well. The actual damage was disappointing, but Hitler--after clambering through the concrete fortifications--proclaimed himself astonished by the devastation.\(^{29}\)

A complete documentary of the many ways that the Nazis engaged in lying and deception, even to themselves, would consume a multi-volume series. Suffice it to say that Nietzsche would likely have seen in the Nazis a classic German tactic, best demonstrated by Wagner, of substituting posture and mania for imaginative, creative, original cultural solutions.

Art and the Individual

In many ways, Hitler's conception of culture merely echoed Nietzsche's conception of traditional Western oppression as the great bane to individuals' creativity. The Nazis' artificial conception of culture reflected a distorted view of individual capability. In the

\(^{27}\)Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 68.

\(^{28}\)Robert Herzstein, Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich, 100.

words of Alan Bullock, "Hitler saw himself, in Nietzsche's term, 'as an artist-politician,' the inspired leader who molded the thoughts and feelings of the nation and uplifted them into a vision of unity and greatness."30 Hitler thought he possessed the right to suppress the creative expression of anyone in society based on the overall needs of the Volk. He felt that since "the results of art, science, and techniques are almost exclusively the creative product of the Aryan,"31 that every German maintained the capacity for great art, but that the need for agriculture and industry with the society mandated withholding of the creative capacity of most. While Hitler predictably attributed "ninety per cent of all literary and artistic rubbish and theatrical humbug"32 within the Reich to the Jews, he never even called for a reactionary, Aryan artistic revolution, as one might have expected from an "artist-politician," to demonstrate the ubiquity of Germanic artistic genius.

To Nietzsche, "art is that which liberates us from enslavement to a moral world-order and affords us the opportunity of creating the world anew."33 For Nietzsche, cultural renewal could not succeed unless the individuals within the culture were free of moral constraint. To be so free, artistic license was required. The Nazis substituted for such artistic freedom a state-sponsored campaign of "artistic awareness." "Goebbels persuaded Hitler to give him control not only over the press, radio, films, and theaters, but also over the arts as well, including books, music and the visual arts, all brought under the Reich Chamber of Culture."34 After conducting the most famous of the student book burnings in May of 1933, Goebbels declared that "from these ashes will arise the phoenix of a new spirit."35 The "new spirit" to which Goebbels referred was "to bring art to the people by pretending that high culture was the

31Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 397.
32Ibid., 77.
34Alan Bullock, Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives, 318.
35Ibid.
natural property of the people. Thus, the Nazis tried to attribute a popular meaning to the concept of culture and make it seem that in the future the Volk would determine the mainstream of cultural production. Art was to be the symbol of good and sane 'normality.'

Though in Hitler's words, "the German is the sole owner and propagator of a truly artistic mind," he planned to reduce the German people's opportunity to create art to the replication of state ideology and/or the spoon-feeding of government approved art. It says much about the Nazis that the duties of the Minister of Art and the Minister of Propaganda were given to the same person, Goebbels. Art and all of the creative powers of the individual were to be harnessed for the benefit of the Volk. Perhaps everything singular that could not be absorbed by the commonest dolt had to be brought down to the lowest level. Nietzsche found few things more abhorrent than the use of art for the literal negation of creativity. "What should win our gratitude.-- Only artists, and especially those of the theater, have given men eyes and ears to see and hear with some pleasure what each man is himself, experiences himself, desires himself; only they have taught us to esteem the hero that is concealed in everyday characters" (GSC 132-133). For Nietzsche, it was precisely the purposelessness of art that made it vital to existence. Art must be a reflection of the chaotic impulse of Dionysus, a respite from the everyday order of civilization. When art becomes subsumed in purpose, most particularly in the purposes of the state, it speaks to us only of its decadence. "Greek taste.-- 'What is beautiful in it? asked the surveyor after a performance of Iphigenia; 'nothing is proved in it" (GSC 136).

Perhaps the most remembered "artistic" performances of the Third Reich were the impassioned and mesmerizing speeches of Hitler. Without question, Hitler had some artistic talent, but his ability to convey messages found its ultimate outlet through his

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37 Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 90.
oratorical skills. Hitler admittedly repeated his messages ad nauseum for the effect of indoctrination, and with each repetition, the mania of the crowd increased. Again, this begs a comparison with Nietzsche's castigations of Wagner.

I know very well what sort of music and art I do not want—namely, the kind that tries to intoxicate the audience and to force it to the height of a moment of strong and elevated feelings. This kind is designed of those everyday souls who in the evening are not like victors on their triumphal chariots but rather like tired mules who have been whipped too much by life (GSC 141).

Only in such an imitative atmosphere could the Germans have abided the many other Nazi impositions upon their liberties. As previously shown, the Nazis wished to dictate to the German people exactly what did and did not constitute art. Hitler stated in Mein Kampf that "The movement has to promote the respect for the personality by all means; it must never forget that the value of all that is human is rooted in the personal value, and that every idea and every achievement are the results of the creative force of man, and that the admiration for the greatness is not only a tribute of thanks to the latter." True to his duplicitous nature, Hitler later declared that "the state has to appear as the guardian of a thousand years' future, in the face of which the wish and the egoism of the individual appears as nothing and has to submit." Heinrich Himmler's chief editorial writer for the SS periodical Das Schwarze Corps stated simply that "he who is different is unable to recognize the laws of nature." Nietzsche dreamt that the assault on Western Culture would result in a perfect new venue for creativity. The Nazis' will to impose near-total control failed even to make contact with this vision.

38 Ibid., 488.
39 Ibid., 608.
40 George L. Mosse, Toward the Final Solution, xx.
It only befits a movement that tended toward the mechanization of the human being to stoop to the worship of technology. "Technology was to be transferred from 'civilization' to 'culture'"\(^{41}\) for the better preservation of the members of the Reich. In addition, "technology was to be reconciled with Geist."\(^{42}\) But for Nietzsche, the capacity for self-preservation, either among individuals or for the group, should always play a secondary role. "The struggle for existence is only an exception, a temporary restriction of the will to life. The great and small struggle always revolves around superiority, around growth and expansion, around power--in accordance with the will to power which is the will of life" (GSC 292).

Nietzsche believed that the retention of energies for the purpose of survival underscored the weaknesses of both individuals and cultures. That survival is today not taken for granted means that not enough energy and attention are devoted to living an authentic existence. Perhaps the failure of the Nazis to deliver the promise of the greater "Dasein" finalized Heidegger's decision to leave the party. Nietzsche admired those cultures that provided for the cultivation of higher human beings. But the Nazis effectively willed to render an entire nation as uncreative as the rank-and-file of their party tended to be. According to Bullock, "The predominant tone of the party was lower middle class: vulgar, heavily male, and beer drinking, chauvinist, xenophobic, authoritarian, anti-Semitic, anti-intellectual, antiemancipatory, antimodernist."\(^{43}\) If this characterization is true, a nation of such men could do nothing to improve the overall composition of mankind, let alone become a race of Übermenschen themselves.

**Anti-Semitism**

Probably the most common way in which Nietzsche has been differentiated from the Nazis has been by documenting their

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\(^{41}\)Adelheid von Saldern, "Cultural Conflicts, Popular Mass Culture, and the Question of Nazi Success," 323.

\(^{42}\)Ibid.

respective attitudes toward anti-Semitism. Nietzsche had nothing but scorn for anti-Semites, and the Nazis made their living by exploiting anti-Semitism. No two positions could stand further apart. Unlike the Nazis, Nietzsche made clear distinctions between ancient and modern Jews and Judaism. Yet most of Nietzsche's stereotypes made reference to long-term cultural developments. In fact, his cultural generalizations would not have been possible if not for millennia of continuities within Jewish culture. Like the Nazis, but for far more profound historical reasons, Nietzsche generally regarded the Jews as morally, culturally, economically, and even intellectually distinct from the rest of Europe. Unlike the Nazis, Nietzsche portrayed the Jews' distinctiveness in very nuanced and detailed terms.

Nietzsche felt that as "a race still in need of having their heads washed first," (GSC 291) the Germans continued to lack the intelligence to get over their historic anti-Semitism. He proposed to "eject all anti-Semitic ranters from the country" (BGE 183). "Let in no more Jews! Thus commands the instinct of a people whose type is still weak and undetermined" (BGE 182). For Nietzsche, the Jews were a more creative race than the Germans in the sense that they had gained an instinctual resiliency in response to historic oppression. Nietzsche wrote of their "higher intelligence," their holding fast to the "banner of Enlightenment and intellectual independence," and their advocacy of a "rational explanation of the world." He describes them as a people with "the toughest vital energy," (ATC 593) whose accumulated wisdom had contributed irreplaceably to the intellectual supremacy of Europe. "May heaven have mercy on the European intellect if one wanted to subtract the Jewish intellect from it." Nietzsche said that his experiences with Jews had "aroused in me the highest expectations from young men of this origin." As the strongest people in Europe, Nietzsche felt that they added an element of "the most conserving power in our intensely threatened and insecure Europe" (WP 462). Consequently,

45Ibid., 312.
46Ibid., 303.
if they indeed did want to be the ruling caste of Europe (as many anti-Semites theorized) they easily could, that much was certain. But "that they are not planning and working towards that is equally certain" (BGE 182).

Nietzsche's thoughts on the Jews represent an important but subordinate aspect of his thought. The Nazi regard for the Jewish intellect needs little introduction, and serves as the ultimate source for all of their ideology. The thousands of comments made by Hitler about Jews in Mein Kampf did not contain a single complimentary observation. For him, nothing good could ever come from a Jew, and everything bad has resulted from Jews. This is the consummate anti-Semitism. Hitler went well beyond hating Jews. He convinced himself that they were what was wrong with the world. Hitler popularized the use of the word Untermenschen as an antithesis to Nietzsche's dream of Übermenschen. For Hitler, the consummate race of subhumans were the Jews, so he clearly either did not read his Nietzsche closely, or more likely, he simply ignored what he did not like.

Hitler's conception of Jews and Judaism encapsulate a great number of crude errors and ironies. He claims that in their "specifically Jewish way of thinking . . . intolerance and fanaticism incorporates the very Jewish nature."47 In Mein Kampf, Hitler repeatedly refers to them variously as "slick, wily, deceptive, guileful, shrewd, sly, and cunning." By portraying the Jews as a singularly adroit people, he makes his conspicuously spotty evidence against them seem more palatable. The Nazis' fear began with a deep suspicion of Jewish intellectual life. Hitler said that "their intellectual abilities were schooled in the course of centuries. Today the Jew is looked upon as 'clever,' and in a certain sense he has been so at all times."48 Ultimately, centuries of Jewish deception aimed to "break the people's volkish and national spine, in order to make it

47Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 67.
48Ibid., 412.
ripe for the yoke of slavery of international capital and its masters, the Jews." 49

The contradictory notions that the Jews could make use of their cunning through "superior genius," 50 and at the same time bottom-feed as Untermenschen is never made clear in Mein Kampf. We are merely supposed to have faith that as "the Jew forms the strongest contrast to the Aryan," 51 his instincts lean toward destruction rather than creation, and internationalism as opposed to nationalism. To accomplish his diabolical goals, the Jew mesmerizes the mass working populations of the world with the charlatanry of the Marxist religion. The "Jewish mind" could be used to explain any malevolent development, including the their own guileful plan to conquer the world, or the periodic cultural impotence of the German people. Says Nazi Foreign Minister Reitlinger, "The advance of Jewish influence and of the corrupting Jewish mentality in politics, economics, and culture paralyzed the German people's strength and will to rise again." 52 For some Nazis, such as Ernst Röhm, "Jew baiting was merely a highly effective form of drumming up prejudice against the hated Republic." 53 For most major Nazi officials, however, conspiracy theories about the Jews and their intellectual challenge were inherent and central to the Nazi view of the world.

Among all the peoples of the earth, why did the Nazis single-out the Jews for their most venomous invectives, and as objects of their revenge? The Nazis understood the Jews to be historically predisposed toward an internationalism, and this, of course, conflicted with the interests of the German Volk. Since the Diaspora, the Jews had been forced to find homes everywhere but their original homeland. Their resultant rootlessness had dulled their national instinct. Through internationalism, they wished to rob each nation of the world of a connection to its native soil the way that they had

49 Ibid., 331.
50 Ibid., 446.
51 Ibid., 412.
52 Robert Herzstein, Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich, 87.
53 Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 414.
once been robbed. Zionism was used as a cover for more insidious international ambitions. Rosenberg formulated this sentiment in his Detmold Address on January 15, 1939, as follows: "The Jewry is striving today for a Jewish state in Palestine. Not in order to offer a home to Jews all over the world, however, but for other reasons: world Jewry has to have a little miniature state in order to send extraterritorial ministers and representatives to all countries of the world and through them to promote its lust for domination."54 Hitler felt that this was to "prepare the ground for its domination of the truly international finance and stock exchange capital."55

Whether under the guise of capitalism, or Marxism, the goal of the Jew was the same: he must use politics and ideology to, in the words of Goebbels, "devour all peoples."56 He is "tactically clever" and "intelligent" enough to pander to "merchant instincts" where he can capitalize on them, and to "Bolshevik rhetoric" where it is to his benefit.57 Having lost his instinct for nationhood, the "eternal wandering Jew" (an oft repeated phrase of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) had to attain his own progress always at the expense of other nations. Exploitation of the other nations of the earth could best be accomplished by first eliminating all national instincts. This is where the Marxist component of the international Jewish conspiracy comes into play. Hitler believed that despite their rootlessness, he could "expose the inner connectedness"58 of the Jewish people and their link with Bolshevism.

For Hitler, Marx was not singular among Jews in his dream of undermining nationhood around the world. Marx is the rule, a mere example of what all Jews are about. "In the service of his race... Karl Marx was really only one among millions who, in the swamp of a gradually decomposing world, recognized, with the keen eye of a

54 Robert Herzstein, Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich, 93.
55 Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 289.
57 Ibid., 128.
58 Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 424.
prophet, the most essential poison elements and rendered them into a concentrated solution for the quicker destruction of the independent existence of the free nations of this earth."59 Hitler acknowledged the need to fight Marxism independently of the Jews, insofar as it could be construed as a genuine ideology. Yet for Hitler, Marxism was nothing but a crafty tool of the conspiring international Jewry. As "the personification of the Devil, as the symbol of all evil, assumes the living appearance of the Jew,"60 it should come as no surprise that "his crown will become the funeral wreath of humanity, and once again this planet, empty of mankind, will move through the ether as it did thousands of years ago."61 All of this may constitute an ideology. Either way, it appears contradictory when compared with Hitler's assertion, also in Mein Kampf that "in my opinion, the language of the anti-Semitic Viennese press was unworthy of the cultural traditions of a great race."62

The malevolent root of this Nazi rhetoric could not contrast more sharply with the source of Nietzsche's opinions. Nietzsche felt that Jewish creativity stemmed from a cultural tradition of a uniquely spiritual people. "Esprit: quality of late races: Jews, Frenchmen, Chinese. (The anti-Semites do not forgive the Jews for possessing 'spirit'—and money. Anti-Semites—another name for the 'underprivileged')" (WP 460). The original evidence of the creative spirit of the Jews lay in the beauty of the literature of "The Old Testament, the book of divine justice, things and speeches of so grand a style that Greek and Indian literature have nothing to set beside it. One stands in reverence and trembling" (BGE 79). Within this testament lay also a testament to a people capable of cultural refinement through tradition and shared wisdom. By "their instinct for the chosen," (WP 116) their "ability to elevate their God," (ATC 616) and "endurance in fearful situations and psychological and

59Ibid., 579.
60Ibid., 447.
61Ibid., 84.
62Ibid., 68.
spiritual resources,"63 the Jews had developed a "great heroic tendency"64 which the other peoples of Europe had yet to comprehend.

Nietzsche's as a Detractor of the Jews

In an attempt to rescue Nietzsche from the label of "proto-Nazi," many historians and philosophers have made light of the many ways in which Nietzsche's piercing vision lent itself to helping the Nazis clarify their own often murky ideologies. As an example, scholars often circumvent Nietzsche's more unflattering portraits of the Jews. Because of his flattering comments regarding the Jews, and his detestation of anti-Semites, Nietzsche has often been shrouded in such hyperbole as the great "anti-anti Semite." Yet such labels willfully steer clear of the evidence. Nietzsche put no group on a pedestal above criticism, and the Jews were no exception. He wrote for himself, and spared no feelings in the stereotypes that he coined. Many of his biting observations offended the sensibilities of people during his day. Many continue to offend people who read them. And while his willingness to promote negative stereotypes should be noted, it must also be remembered that were Nietzsche's powers of observation less keen, many of the compliments that he bestowed on entire peoples would never had been made either. The Nazis' portrayals of the Jews were, by-and-large, distorted, biased, ignorant, and brimming with animus. Still, history has shown that they borrowed heavily from Nietzsche to provide articulation, potency, and sting when their own collective intellects often produced only platitudes. Though most scholars would agree with Michael Duffy's assertion that "Nietzsche's comments on the Jews present an important aspect of his thought,"65 the ways in which these comments have been influential remains an almost systematically avoided topic.

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63Michael F. Duffy & Willard Mittelman, "Nietzsche's Attitude Toward the Jews," 305.
64Ibid.
65Ibid., 310.
To Nietzsche, the Jews were "the strangest people in world history" (ATC 592). Their history made them strange. Despite their resilience, the Jews started on a path toward decadence due to the dogma of the Pharisees (ATC 596). After that, Christianity resulted from the Jewish historical experience and their feelings of ressentiment. For Nietzsche, Christians have embodied decadence and ressentiment, and these they inherited from the early Jews. Often spread by such Christians, the Jews' cultural anomalies have been developing for thousands of years. Unlike the Nazis, Nietzsche did not attribute the Jews' vices to innate racial flaws.

Like all great thinkers, Nietzsche went through a period of acute impressionability during which he took in the prevailing ideas and attitudes of his day. His relationship with Richard Wagner is a key example of this period. Many of his utterances or writings about Jews, particularly from this early period, reflect the prevailing, though intellectually questionable conventional wisdom of the day regarding Jews. Many comments, especially ones made during his twenties, can be described only as petty.

Yirmiyahu Yovel's book *Dark Riddle: Hegel, Nietzsche, and the Jews* is an excellent source for Nietzsche's seemingly racist remarks. It has often been noted that Nietzsche's sister Elizabeth, who became Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche when she married a prominent anti-Semite, is largely responsible for the unjust reputation Nietzsche has received as a proto-Nazi. It has been said that she did all she could to convince the public that Nietzsche's ideals were near to her own: she was a rabid nationalist, anti-Semite, and was obsessed with eugenics. If her reputation as the distoriter of Nietzsche is correct, it could not be based on many of the letters written by Nietzsche to Elizabeth, especially between age 22 and 28. In one such letter, Nietzsche states that "Gersdorff (a friend) and I discovered a pub where we can be alone and don't have to enjoy melted butter and watch Jewish faces." In a letter to Wagner, when he was 25, Nietzsche declared that "Jewish greed" was "one of the

66From Webster's II New College Dictionary, "General resentment and often hostility harbored by one person or group against another, esp. chronically and with no means of direct expression."
"causes of Germany's decline." Again to Wagner in 1870, he complained of "Jewishness in music," and "the Judaized press."

Yovel also cites an instance in which Nietzsche avoided speaking to an acquaintance, one Dr. Volkmann, "because he was dressed with an appalling lack of taste, like some theatrical Jew," and stated in a letter to his mother that a fellow member of a hiking expedition was "unfortunately a Jew."67

The above quotations appear in Yovel's chapter entitled "The Anti-Anti Semite," and Yovel dismisses his own citations as indicative only of the "immature" Nietzsche. He chooses instead to emphasize the break that Nietzsche made with his past when he passed into his "mature" stage in which no anti-Semitic or even anti-Jewish tracts could supposedly be found. Yovel's position is indicative of the puzzlingly skewed history of interpreting Nietzsche. Whether the Nazis willfully ignored material that lacked utility to their cause, or whether today's intellectuals willfully ignore material by Nietzsche that does not suit his reinvented image since World War II, distorted assertions have been made about the character of Nietzsche's writing that lack legitimacy in light of a close reading of his works. This includes Yovel's insistence that Nietzsche ceased his criticism of the Jews during his "mature" period. In The Antichrist alone (1888), Nietzsche not only made anti-Jewish comments, but notably un-intellectual ones. Whether referring to "superlative little Jews, ripe for every kind of madhouse," or the apostle Paul-- "the eternal wandering Jew par excellence," or simply asserting that Jews "smell bad," a clear pattern is shown to exist throughout Nietzsche's writings (ATC 625,622,649). Nietzsche clearly made a wide variety of comments about the Jews, both positive and negative and varying in quality, from the beginning of his intellectual career to the end.

Despite voluminous evidence to the contrary, Nietzsche scholars have been persistent in taking the position, emblemized here by Michael Duffy, that Nietzsche is "strongly and consistently anti-

67Yirmiyahu Yovel, Dark Riddle: Hegel, Nietzsche, and the Jews, 120-121. All of the quotations from this paragraph can be found on these pages in Yovel's book.
Mosse sanguinely points out that Nietzsche's 1879 article "A word about our Jews," placed his prestige at the disposal of the anti-Semitic movement. Yovel too paints the "Nietzsche as the great anti-anti-Semite" portrait with as broad a stroke as possible. It was the Old Testament Judaism, whose "grandeur Nietzsche adored; the 'priestly' Judaism of the Second Temple, which he profoundly despised and condemned as the parent of Christian culture; and the post-Christian Judaism of the Jews in the Diaspora and in modern times, whom he defended, admired, and saw as a healing ingredient in his 'new Europe.' This characterization too shall be shown as highly exaggerated.

A vital distinction needs to be made. While Nietzsche had nothing good to say about anti-Semites or anti-Semitism, his largely negative portrayal of Jews and Judaism should disqualify him from the title of "the father of all anti-anti-Semites." The willful ignorance about Nietzsche's unflattering remarks regarding the Jews is curious and suspicious. It marks a major component of the selective citation of his works since World War II, which has led to a skewed reception of his philosophy in modern times.

Yovel's characterization of Nietzsche's reception of the Jews as patently positive, excepting the period of the Second Temple, is easily disproven. While Nietzsche made distinctions between ancient and modern Jews and Judaism, he also draws attention to historic continuities. For instance, Nietzsche does assert that the characteristics of "impotence and envious hatred" distinguish "the Jews of the prophetic era" from Jews of other eras. Yet Nietzsche concurs with Tacitus that the Jews are "a people born for slavery" (BGE 118). Hence, he finds no irony in the fact that the Jews, "greedy, slavish," and "motivated by impotence, and envious hatred," were responsible for "inaugurating the slave rebellion in morals."

70 Yirmiyahu Yovel, Dark Riddle: Hegel, Nietzsche, and the Jews, 117.
71 Michael F. Duffy & Willard Mittelman, "Nietzsche's Attitude Toward the Jews," 312.
Nietzsche calls them "the best haters there have ever been." Because "in every Jew's possession" lies the "coldest self-possession," the Jews have set a new standard for the infliction of revenge upon their enemies. Due to their "ressentiment," it was the Jews' revenge to elevate Jesus extravagantly, and to sever him from themselves, and through his martyrdom to impose the slave morality on the entire world. By such methods have "superlative little Jews" perfected the art of revenge as "an extenuation of their usury." These opinions are not directed at one limited period in Jewish history. These are characterizations of the Jews as they have developed culturally from antiquity to the modern day. Duffy, who characterizes Nietzsche as "consistently anti-anti-Semitic," mystifyingly makes the following generalization about Nietzsche's writings on the Jews. "Nietzsche not only demonstrated a dislike of the German Jews of his day, he also expressed an antipathy toward Judaism in general." No such thinker can seriously be regarded as the consummate "anti-anti-Semite."

While castigating all (including the Jews) who have historically been driven by a thirst for revenge, Nietzsche does express his understanding for the Jews' vengefulness. In *The Antichrist*, Nietzsche explains his absolution of the Jews on the grounds that their vengefulness signposts a "non plus ultra of historic genius" (ATC 592). In *The Case of Wagner*, Nietzsche justifies the Jews' vengeance as necessary for "the preservation of their self-respect." In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche even refers to "vengefulness" as a "strong, high," and "passionate" drive perhaps worthy of "cultivation" (BGE 183). Numerous other instances could be cited. But more than anything, Nietzsche despised ressentiment, and he saw it more in the Jews than in any other people. It was the Jewish resentment against stronger races at the time of their ancient decay.

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72 Ibid., 305, 307, 309, 310.
73 Ibid., 305.
74 Ibid., 305.
75 Ibid., 302
76 Ibid., 305.
that resulted in their "slave revolt in morals," Christianity. This was a cultural blow from which the world may never recover.

"In the hands of the Jewish priests the great age in the history of Israel became an age of decay" (ATC 596). Herein began the chicanery of the Jews that led to the poisonous slave revolt in morals. According to Nietzsche, the Jewish priesthood falsified the concept of God, (ATC 595) culminating in the "history of Israel as the denaturing of all values" (ATC 594). By virtue of their emerging impotence among peoples, "their hatred grew to monstrous and uncanny proportions."77 To Nietzsche, this never would have happened had they not lost the vital instinct for hierarchy, caste, and race. Since they did, they predictably founded Christianity,

representing the counter-movement to any morality of breeding, of race, of privilege: it is the anti-Aryan religion par excellence. Christianity--the revaluation of all Aryan values, the victory of chandala values, the gospel preached to the poor and base, the general revolt of all the downtrodden, the wretched, the failures, the less favored, against "race": the undying chandala hatred as the religion of love (TWI 505).

In other words, the decadence of the ancient Jews has given way to the victory of a Judeo-Christian tradition which has assaulted the "master morality" and everything noble, and has ensured a perpetual victory parade for the morality of the slave. For this, Nietzsche would never forgive the ancient Jews, or their descendants. "It was the Jews who started the slave revolt in morals; a revolt with two millennia of history behind it, which we have lost sight of today simply because it has triumphed so completely" (GM 168). This strikingly presages a definitively Nazi conception of the Jews: Their corrosive effects on culture must be feared all the more because they are hidden from view.

Throughout his writings, Nietzsche consistently characterizes the Jews as a people with a time-honored tradition of cunning and

guile. "It is really high time to ask: What good actor today is not—a Jew" (WP 317)? Nietzsche comes back to this idea throughout The Will to Power, even in Kaufmann's translation.

People of the basest origin, in part rabble, outcasts not only from respectable society, raised away from even the smell of culture, without discipline, without knowledge, without the remotest suspicion that there is such a thing as conscience in spiritual matters; simply—Jews: with an instinctive ability to create an advantage, a means of seduction out of every superstitious supposition, out of ignorance itself (WP 117).

To a certain extent, Nietzsche associated the instinct for race and caste with the instinct for culture. The same could be said of his distinguished colleague and friend Jacob Burckhardt, but no one seems to be insisting that Burckhardt was a proto-Nazi. Nietzsche simply felt that the Jews had traded a degree of their culture for a degree of guile that opposed all nobility. As they lost their caste system, they lost their instinct for aristocracy as the "good." Consequently, that which had hitherto been slavish had been "bad," but now became the "good." We still live with this legacy.

The Jews tried to prevail after they had lost two of their castes, that of the warrior and that of the peasant; in this sense they are the 'castrated': they have the priests--and then immediately the chandala . . . the origin of Christianity . . . Because they knew the warrior only as their master, they brought into their religion enmity toward the noble, toward the exalted and proud, toward power, toward the ruling orders . . . That is why the French Revolution is the daughter and continuation of Christianity--its instincts are against caste, against the noble, against the last privileges (WP 111).

All of this discussion of Jewish cultural traits must not be confused with the Nazi desire to confer upon the Jews innate racial flaws. For Nietzsche, the Jews' cultural virtues accompany profound, historically nurtured cultural imperfections. A slavish guile,
developed in response to the demise of their caste instinct, has made
the Jews the epitome of incompleteness in human existence,
especially in the West. This has culminated in a "disbelief in 'higher
man'" (ATC 599). Again, this relates back to how poorly, as a
people, they compare with the ancient Greeks and the Greek outlook
on life.

The Greeks . . . in their desire to invent some dignity
for sacrilege and to incorporate nobility in it, they
invented tragedy—an art form and a pleasure that have
remained essentially and profoundly foreign to the Jew,
in spite of all his poetic gifts and his sense for the
sublime. . . . The Jews feel that they are the chosen
people among all the nations because they are the moral
genius among nations (because they had a more
profound contempt for the human being in themselves
than any other people) . . . . Nobility had surrendered
all of its power and had become contemptible (GSC
188).

The level of nuance present in Nietzsche's and the Nazis'
respective intellectual treatments of the Jews should be enough to
distinguish them. Regardless of his intentions, however, Nietzsche's
treatment of the Jews lent itself to the Nazis' ideology in two
fundamental ways. By painting such a detailed picture of the Jews,
Nietzsche created an articulate catalogue of detailed slogans about the
Jews. This became dangerous in the hands of anyone who wished to
edit creatively Nietzsche's overall portrait of them. Secondly, by
justifying what he viewed as historic Jewish vengefulness through the
ressentiment of the slave morality, Nietzsche made the idea of
vengeance upon the Jews seem more justifiable. Large tracts of
Nietzsche's work run directly counter to Nazi thought. Other tracts,
including some on the Jews, could easily be incorporated by the
Nazis with no need to misappropriate his words.
The issue of anti-Semitism, while important, represents only one possible category of comparison between the ideologies of Nietzsche and the Nazis. Certainly, racially motivated Nazi anti-Semitism differs sharply from Nietzsche's negative cultural observations about a people for whom he also had much admiration. Yet the problem with the traditional interpretation of the issue, for those who have dismissed the Nietzsche-Nazi link, has been to focus almost exclusively on their respective treatments of the Jews. Nietzsche's and the Nazi's respective treatments of the Jews are obviously distinguishable. Still, when a comparison of their ideologies is limited to this particular topic, a specious dismissal of their ideological connection seems inevitably to follow. Another relevant issue, almost completely ignored by scholars, is a comparison of Nietzsche's and the Nazis' respective visions for a future European society.

Nietzsche called for new cultures built on the foundation of creative individuals. The Nazis demanded that individuals conform and relinquish their creative powers for the betterment of the group. Nietzsche detested the increasing conformity and blandness of the individual in mass society. For him, socialism consummated this trend. Hitler demanded socialism so that the individual would be easier to mold. Nietzsche saw German society, conformist and susceptible to dogma, capitulating to simple-minded explanations of race-thinking that led to a shallow and unconstructive nationalism. Hitler exploited and quickened feelings of extreme national pride to acquire a maniacal following, and wished to reduce all thinking to issues of race. Nietzsche relentlessly criticized the Germans. Hitler insisted that they were the master race. Nietzsche had mixed feelings about the Jews, as he had about all peoples. Hitler saw everything wrong in the world emanating from the Jews. Nietzsche dreamed of a race cultured to be great, not indoctrinated to be so. The Nazis' truths were normally rigid and narrow, Nietzsche's truths were
nuanced. Clearly, the Nazis did not merely emulate Nietzsche. Clearly, many wide ideological chasms separate their ideologies.

Consequently, it may seem shocking to notice how very much common ground they shared ideologically, nonetheless. The meaning of Steven Aschheim's assertion that "Nietzsche provided a fruitful source for . . . visions of a post-liberal, post-Marxist, national regeneration"\(^1\) might seem mystifying given the material examined so far. Yet while Nietzsche detested his contemporary political organizations as harbingers of mediocrity, and while he found politics boring, he knew that many would try to incorporate his ideas into politics. In the words of Zeev Sternhell, "Even the most abstract ideas of Nietzsche and Heidegger had immediate political application, and they knew it."\(^2\) Nietzsche believed that the realization of his ideas would not be possible for many millennia, but he tempted the brave to fuse an heroic past with a supra-human future. Nietzsche stood for hierarchy, warrior aristocracy, the isolated community (in the spirit of the polis) and to a degree, for the sanctity of race. More strikingly, he advocated slavery, violence, pitilessness, and more "evil." While Nietzsche did not believe in the existence of evil, he believed that what Western Culture had hitherto perceived as evil was in short supply in modern Europe. To the extent that the Nazis shared these values with Nietzsche, a world of likenesses between them remains to be explored, despite their more obvious differences.

The Essence of the Vision

The 1980's, and especially the 1990's have been witness to an explosion in Nietzsche scholarship. Alan Megill and Steven Aschheim have emerged among the most potent breakers of the disfigured molds into which Nietzsche has been placed since World War II. While not technically a "Nietzsche scholar," Francis Fukuyama dealt heavily with Nietzsche in his famous 1992 book, *The End of History and the Last Man..* Perhaps better than anyone,

\(^1\)Steven E. Aschheim, "Nietzschean Socialism -- Left and Right," 148.
\(^2\)Peter Bergmann, *Nietzsche, The Last Antipolitical German*, 252.
Fukuyama has made clear the extent of Nietzsche's detestation for modernity in all its forms. "It was Nietzsche's greatest fear that 'the American way of life' should be victorious." Much of the extremity in Nietzsche's writing can be traced back to his belief that anything would be better than liberal-democratic societies, and their pacifism, presumption of universal equality, and feminism. Nietzsche had no doubt that only such societies could emerge in the wake of the absolute and irreversible victory of the slave morality. For Nietzsche, no greater catastrophe could befall mankind.

Francis Fukuyama focuses on the undemocratic, anti-liberal, militaristic, anti-feminist, anti-egalitarian Nietzsche. Fukuyama sees Nietzsche's agenda as a warning of an impending global uni-culture of liberal-democratic "men without chests, a society of bourgeois who aspired to nothing more than their own comfortable self-preservation." Whether one despises or admires liberal-democratic forms of government, one must acknowledge that their hegemony has progressed even since the time of Nietzsche. And Fukuyama draws attention to how close we have come to the realization of Nietzsche's nightmare. Now, "One has to learn a new set of democratic values: to be 'participant,' 'rational,' 'secular,' 'mobile,' 'empathetic,' and 'tolerant.'" These are all qualities of Fukuyama's "Last Men," and "virtues" that Nietzsche despised as the source of "good" in the herd, slave morality. These "democratic" values, for Nietzsche, and for that matter Hitler, can only be attained at the expense of noble, aristocratic, master values. Says Fukuyama, "The desire for glory (among people like Alexander, Caesar, or Napoleon), and that inordinate stirring to be better than others-- is no longer an acceptable way to describe one's goals. It is in fact a characteristic we attribute to people that we don't like . . . like Hitler." For Nietzsche, the desire for glory, and to be better than others, is the most indispensable ingredient for the preservation or

3Francis Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, 320.
4Ibid., 188.
5Ibid., 24.
6Ibid., 190.
creation of higher types, and the most natural instinct in our human nature.

There are certain strong and dangerous drives, such as enterprisingness, foolhardiness, revengefulness, craft, rapacity, ambition . . . mightily developed and cultivated . . . these drives are now felt to be doubly dangerous . . . step by step the herd instinct draws its conclusions . . . here again fear is the mother of morality (BGE 183).

To the "men without chests," Fukuyama points out that Nietzsche vastly prefers the ancient pagans, the "beasts with red cheeks."7 Such men took what they wanted instinctively, paid high prices for the preservation of their pride, and had no conception whatsoever of what "humanity" or "human rights" could possibly mean. Nietzsche observed that as history witnessed these "beasts with red cheeks" giving way to "men without chests," progressively fewer Caesars, Napoleons, Bachs and Mozarts were being produced. Nothing could be worse. Consequently, anything that stood in the way of such a world must be preferable to what is happening. Fukuyama observes that among modern political ideologies, only the Fascist-Nazi perspective has proclaimed a desire to reverse the perceived corrosive effects of "liberty, equality, and fraternity."

In *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Nietzsche taught that man is a "bridge" between the animals and "Übermenschen," translated as either "Overmen" or "Supermen." "Man is something that shall be overcome. What have you done to overcome him? . . . What is ape to man? A laughingstock or a painful embarrassment. And man shall be just that for the Overman" (ZAR 124). The emergence of this race of "Superbeings" represented Nietzsche's highest hope. As previously alluded to, such people would appear as a cross between a pride of lions, a cultured aristocracy, and a tribe of artistic geniuses. They would act on instinct, and most importantly, always without remorse or guilt. They would take slaves for the greater fulfillment of their own lives, and would recognize and maintain an instinct for

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7Ibid., 162.
race and breeding as required for their culture's preservation. Since going back is impossible, the unforeseeable aesthetic splendor of the Supermen would have no equivalent in history. Yet culturally, a Superman's regard for himself and those of his ethnic culture would resemble the ancient Greeks, only intensified. "I sought in history the beginnings of this construction of reverse ideals (the concepts 'pagan,' 'classical,' 'noble' newly discovered and expounded--)" (WP 537). Still, humanity's low point, modernity, must somehow be overcome.

Men not high or hard enough for the artistic refashioning of mankind . . . have hitherto ruled over the destiny of Europe, until at last a shrunken, almost ludicrous species, a herd animal, something full of good will, sickly and mediocre has been bred, the European of today (BGE 89).

Social Darwinism

Nazi ethics are easily traced to the late nineteenth-century application of science to sociology. Then, thinkers such as H.S. Chamberlain applied Darwin's idea of natural selection to the study of humans to explain the seeming chasms of cultural development between the races. As Darwin had created a hierarchy of plants and animals in the natural world, Herbert Spencer and other Social Darwinists popularized a ranking of the human races, based ostensibly on their respective capacity for culture and intelligence. Social Darwinism benefited the twentieth century reactionary right in a number of ways.

One, the budding nineteenth century impulse to harmonize the races, led by the abolitionists, was severely undermined. Racism was no longer hampered by its irrational motivations in an increasingly rationalizing world. Science had logicized and seemingly confirmed the elitist suspicions of white racists. Two, the universal idea of a single mankind, advanced in various ways by liberals, Christians, and socialists alike, now had to overcome a new enemy in the form of scientific racism. For Marxists in particular, scientific racism contradicted the eternal truth of dialectical progress. Achieving the
proletarian utopia depended on people's increased recognition of humanity's kinship. Increased recognition of racial difference worked against the crusade for world unity. Three, by demarcating races into species in the way that one would classify animals, scientific racism made competition between races, rather than cooperation between them, seem perfectly natural. Survival of the fittest came to mean survival of the fittest species, or race. This point of view helped fuel the militarism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as European national groups also came to view each other in a competition for survival. Taken to its logical conclusion, Social Darwinism can only end in widespread "interspecies" conflict, and war.

The implications of scientific racism severely antagonized all universal values, but particularly the ideals of the left. Pacifism, egalitarianism, human brotherhood, and the ideal of the sovereign individual all conflicted with the militarism, tribalism, idealization of hierarchy, and intensified nationalism that logically progressed from Spencer's model. By positing such a striking antipode to the ideals of the far left, scientific racism naturally contributed significantly to the twentieth century reactionary right.

The application of the ethic of "survival of the fittest" in Nazi Germany extended well beyond the infamous Nazi advocacy of racial warfare. Hitler even euthanized 70,000 Germans. In the words of George Mosse, this showed definitively that "the Nazis took the idea of 'unworthy' life seriously."8 Similarly for Nietzsche, "the struggle against the brutal instincts is different from the struggle against the sick instincts" (WP 138). For leftists, both sickness and brutality are curable diseases, at least in theory. For both Nietzsche and Hitler, sickness must be attacked as evidence of weakness. Brutality is almost the opposite of sickness as it represents a fundamental instinct, and the "fitness" and dominance of the brutalizer.

The Social Darwinists were Nietzsche's contemporaries. While his condemnation of anti-Semites remained relentless until his death, Nietzsche seldom if ever condemns Social Darwinism.

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8George Mosse, Toward the Final Solution, 219.
Nietzsche criticized all, including the scientific racists, who wished to rationalize everything in an already logocentric culture. Yet in the sense that "'natural' has come to mean the same as 'contemptible,' and 'bad'" (WP 141), Nietzsche and the scientific racists found common cause by reconsidering the role of instinct in human endeavors. Both wished to reintroduce the concept of universal warfare, and eradicate the ideal of universal welfare. Natural selection should once again define human relationships. Says Nietzsche

In all the countries of Europe and likewise in America there exists at present a very narrow, enclosed, chained up species of spirits who desire practically the opposite of that which informs our aims and instincts . . . levellers, these falsely named 'free spirits' - eloquent and tirelessly scribbling slaves for the democratic taste and its 'modern ideas. What with all their might they would like to strive after is the universal green pasture happiness of the herd, with security, safety, comfort and an easier life for all, and sympathy for all that suffers (BGE 71-72).

The return to instinct, and the turning away from "the universal green happiness of the herd" demonstrates Nietzsche's will to permanently infuse competition, violence, and hierarchy into human existence. During Nietzsche's day, these ideals were remarkably fresh. Without question, the search for a nature-based understanding of humanity, shared by Nietzsche and the Social Darwinists, began near a remarkably similar date.

**Race**

Ideological similarities between Hitler and Nietzsche are manifold, and many more shall be explored. But for an initial analysis of the common ground between their visions, the issue of race must first be addressed. Had Nietzsche not tasted of the race-thinking debauch of his day, no comparison of his ideas with those of the Nazis would be warranted. Since with the Nazis all thinking began with race-thinking, a vacuum of such material in Nietzsche's
writings would reduce any shared intellectual ground between the two to sheer accident. As shown, Nietzsche categorically dismissed anti-Semitism, and all maniacal nationalism. Still, he loathed these trends in German culture not because he felt them to be evil, but because dogmatic adherence to race-thinking inhibits creativity. In fact, Nietzsche indisputably believed in the concept of racial value. Virtually all Europeans during the late nineteenth century, including Nietzsche, took the value of race for granted. Nietzsche only objected to an obsession with race, and an all-encompassing, mind-numbing pride in it. Race can still have value as the creation of, or foundation for great men. "Napoleon made nationalism possible, that is its excuse" (WP 469).

Nietzsche did not view the Germans as his potential "Master Race." In fact, he believed that no race currently existing on this earth could turn itself into the Übermensch. Nietzsche also thought that the Master Race could under no circumstances materialize for thousands of years. "It is nothing to be wondered at that a couple of millennia are needed to re-establish contact--a couple of millennia mean little!" (WP 537) But the tenor of Nietzsche's language lends itself to a cornucopia of race-thinking like no other thinker in history. While Nietzsche did not center his thought around race, he extensively articulated the ideological enticements of race. Nietzsche's writings on race were not intended for proving the superiority of one extant race over another. Rather, Nietzsche extolled the role of race as an indispensable piece in the puzzle of great cultures.

All of the conjecture of his day about "race" lacked a most fundamental ingredient, the necessity of breeding. All of the pseudo-scientific postulates, and circular arguments about racial hierarchy meant nothing while Europeans paid no attention to breeding. Nietzsche viewed the will to breed stronger types as a pillar upon which all vital cultures have been built, and shall always be built. Inattention to breeding has contributed to the end of great cultures. This position is made clear in Twilight of the Idols. "The philosophers are the decedents of Greek culture, the counter-movement to the ancient, noble taste (to the agnostic instinct, to the
polis, to the value of race, to the authority of descent)" (TWI 559). The passing of the cleanliness of the Greek aristocracy's bloodlines marked the inevitable decline of their culture. "For spirit alone does not make noble; rather, there must be something to ennoble the spirit. -- What then is required? Blood" (WP 496). To Nietzsche, the noble instinct for breeding had been vanquished by the decadent spirit of democracy. The fragile "soul" of the ancient Greeks decayed as their inter-caste marriage taboos withered. Nietzsche maintained the common nineteenth century intellectual position that ethnic groups and races enjoyed discrete and fragile "souls." The anomalies of ancient Greek culture could be explained, in part, by the anomaly of their genetics.

Partly due to his relationship with Wagner, Nietzsche espoused a belief in the supremacy of the "Aryan soul" at the beginning of this academic career. He maintains this idea throughout The Birth of Tragedy. "The legend of Prometheus is indigenous to the entire community of Aryan races and attests to their prevailing talent for profound and tragic vision" (BT 63). As shown, many scholars have attributed such attitudes to the folly of the "immature" Nietzsche before he broke free of the influence of Wagner. Nietzsche's position certainly faded from that of the typical racist as his career progressed, but he never stopped portraying ethnic stereotypes, in the Wagnerian sense, as the supposed mirrors of mystical ethnic souls.

"Evil men have no songs. How is it then that the Russians have songs" (TWI 469). Here is an odd phrase coming from a self-proclaimed opponent of German nationalism. But it sheds light on Nietzsche's ideological relationship with the Nazis. For who except those on the far-right have unabashedly used ethnic stereotypes as a concrete feature of their thought? And Nietzsche crafts a stereotype for each of the nations of Europe.

The English genius coarsens and makes natural everything it takes up; The French makes thin, simplifies, logicizes, adorns; The German confuses, compromises, confounds and moralizes; The Italian has made by far the freest and subtlest use of what it has
borrowed, and introduced a hundred times more than it took out of it: as the richest genius which had the most to bestow (WP 438-439).

Lest one read these characterizations as mere cultural stereotypes, Nietzsche makes clear that he sees them as stemming from profound racial instincts. He views his own thought as a derivative, in part, from his blood. "My ancestors were Polish noblemen: I have many racial instincts from this source" (EH 7). The power of blood perseveres to maintain ethnic continuities for peoples over thousands of years. "The concept of power, whether of a god or of a man, always includes both the ability to help, and the ability to harm. Thus it is with the Arabs; thus with the Hebrews. Thus with all strong races" (WP 193).

Nietzsche shows no compunctions about tracing cultural phenomena to racial roots. For instance, in *The Birth of Tragedy*, he states that "The Platonic distinction between the idea and the eidolon is deeply rooted in the Greek temperament." This position is held firmly throughout his career, and carried right into his last work, *The Will to Power*. For Nietzsche, what defined the Greeks' collective soul, and their culture, was their overcoming of some Asiatic racial instincts that might have rendered their culture inferior. "The immoderate, disorderly Asiatic lies at his (the Greek's) roots: the bravery of the Greek consists in his struggle with his Asiaticism; beauty is not given to him, as little as is logic or the naturalness of customs—it is conquered, willed, won by struggle—it is his victory" (WP 540).

These same principles are also applied to the Germans. Nietzsche does not attribute German cultural weakness to the impact of the Reformation, the Thirty Years' War, or any other event. He goes right to the root, to an innate Germanic lack of esprit. For example, "It seems that their Catholicism is much more an intrinsic part of the Latin races than the whole of Christianity in general is of us northerners . . . We northerners are undoubtedly descended from barbarian races also in respect of our talent for religion: we have little talent for it" (BGE 77). If this were not a racial stereotype,
why not just say "an intrinsic part of Latin culture"? The idea is that talent, among peoples, either exists at a racial level or it does not. "There are also peoples that are failures" (WP 467): Hence, the accentuated importance of breeding as the only way to transcend biological shortcomings. While Nietzsche's insistence that the Germans are innately flawed at the biological level might seem to contradict the Nazi insistence on German racial superiority, this falls in line with Nietzsche's urge to end German nationalism as a craven stupidity, the issue is a double-edged sword. For at the same time, Nietzsche gives credence to a biological determinism and/or an enhanced value to the concept of breeding. He also expands the possibility that certain peoples might be innately flawed to an irredeemable degree, depending on one's criteria.

As one might expect, Nietzsche's meditations on race, even his stereotypes, were not intended for debates about racial hierarchies. Nietzsche's racial stereotypes contribute to his portrait of the importance of "racial instincts," and a belief that "the mixed race man . . . will, on average, be a rather weak man" (BGE 121). In the discrete breeding of Europe's aristocracy, he observed an indispensable ingredient for culture. The purpose over his attention to race was not to conjure up racial animus, but to draw attention to natural instincts, and the need to nurture them. Still, when reading his works, one must constantly bear in mind: what political ideology, if not the Nazis', maintained convictions about the "natural order" similar to these?

Skepticism arises . . . whenever races or classes long separated from one another are decisively and suddenly crossed. In the new generation, which has as it were inherited varying standards and values in its blood, all is unrest, disorder, doubt, experiment; the most vital forces have a retarding effect, the virtues themselves will not let one another grow and become strong, equilibrium, center of balance, upright certainty are lacking in body and soul. But that which becomes most profoundly sick and degenerates in such hybrids is the will: they no longer have any conception of independence of decision. . . Our Europe of today, the
scene of a senselessly sudden attempt at radical class - and consequentially race - mixture, is as a result skeptical from top to bottom . . . like a cloud overcharged with question marks (BGE 136-137).

Hence, the preservation of racial purity is valued by Nietzsche as a natural instinct, which, like all instincts, should be adhered to. The Europeans' failure to cultivate this instinct is another example of their decay. "It lies in the instinct of a community (family, race, herd, tribe) to feel that the conditions and desires to which it owes its survival are valuable in themselves" (WP 127).

Clearly, Nietzsche viewed all instincts as evolutionary tools for survival, and the racial instinct stood among these. To him, strong races such as the Jews have historically remained strong by spiritualizing the ethic of not marrying outside of race. Nietzsche repeatedly refers to the "strong, intelligent, and vigorous races" (WP 85) throughout his writings, partially with reference to their ostensible purity. Similarly, inattention to breeding results in a chaos of will, spirit, and mind, which leads to exhaustion and inevitable decadence. "The race is corrupted--not by its vices but by its ignorance; it is corrupted because it did not recognize exhaustion as exhaustion: mistakes about physiological states are the source of all ills" (WP 34). Interestingly, Nietzsche sees a reciprocal relationship between race-mixing and decadence. Races will not relinquish their instincts to purity before becoming sick, and sickness in turn makes races more susceptible to relinquishing their instincts. "One understands nothing of the psychology of Christianity if one takes it to be the expression of a newly arisen national youthfulness and racial invigoration. On the contrary: it is a typical form of decadence, the moral hypersensitivity and hysteria of a sick mishmash populace grown weary and aimless" (WP 109).

Nietzsche knew that the individual's capitulation to instinct is not always good. A large potential for barbarous license existed in primitive Dionysianism. Yet cultures that do not adhere to instinct, particularly the master instincts, in religion, myth, custom, law, and everyday society, either begin as slave cultures or end up as them.
Therein lies the necessity of the Apollonian; the compulsion to keep certain fundamental cultural foundations, such as race, relatively static. For a master culture to choose change inevitably means that it has chosen a slavish way of life. One either ascends or descends. And for Nietzsche, as shown, the capitulation of a master race to race-mixing inevitably results in spiritual chaos, and descension.

The Nazis pilfered these ideas; they did not need to "misuse" them. And while the Nazis did look past Nietzsche's diatribes against the Germans, they had little choice. Were the Nazis to heed the intellectual wisdom about the German people as conferred by Nietzsche, they would have been forced to accept passively the Germans' role as a culturally bankrupt people, virtually incapable or overcoming a crippling Versailles Treaty. Everything else that Nietzsche had said spurred them to act. The Nazis may have been evil, but they were motivated by the same goals and revulsions as Nietzsche. Their task was to awaken the Christian, democratic, European herd-animal and remind him that in his soul of souls, he was still a predator. The Nazis only had to reiterate to Germany's veterans what they had learned in *The Will to Power*, a German's second Bible in the trenches of World War I.

Overall view of the future European: the most intelligent slave animals, very industrious, . . . multifarious, pampered, weak of will--a cosmopolitan chaos of affects and intelligence. How could a stronger species raise itself out of him? A species with classical taste? This means strengthening, to visible happiness, to the terrible, the courage of psychological nakedness . . . To fight upward out of that chaos to this form--requires a compulsion: one must be faced with the choice of perishing or prevailing. A dominating race can grow up only out of terrible and violent beginnings. Problem: where are the barbarians of the twentieth century? Obviously they will come into view and consolidate themselves only after tremendous socialist crises--they will be the element capable of the greatest severity toward themselves and able to guarantee the most enduring will (WP 464-465).
Such words gave substance and form to the Nazi political anomaly. While the Great War had made most of Europe war-weary, the Nazis saw that a great war had not yet been fought for a higher purpose. No one could say why Europe had bludgeoned itself between 1914 and 1918. Europe had not been resurrected in a Nietzschean sense, she had only slipped further into her malaise. The Weimar Republic had not transcended the cultural decay of Western Civilization. Increased democracy and inclusiveness, and the greater will to pacifism had only redefined decadence in the Nietzschean sense.

The Nazis' desire to redefine Western values resulted in the Western redefinition of evil to encompass all things "Nazi." Yet for Nietzsche and the Nazis, that which is "evil" is not necessarily destructive, "The strongest and most evil spirits have so far done the most to advance humanity" (GSC 79). So-called "bad" emotions, such as "hatred, envy, covetousness, and lust for domination" are actually the "most fundamental and essential in the total economy of life" (BGE 53). "Everything good is the evil of former days made serviceable," (WP 530) and "history contains the gruesome fact that the exhausted have always been mistaken for the fullest--and the fullest for the most harmful" (WP 30). With Nietzsche, war, slavery, aristocracy, paganism, heartlessness, and hardness are preferable to peace, egalitarianism, democracy, Christianity, pity, and comfort. That which is perceived to be evil in the modern world is actually noble and good, that which is perceived to be good is actually ignoble and bad. The values of the modern world are exactly wrong. The Nazis' reputation as the antithesis of what is good in our world undeniably gives them common cause with Nietzsche, if only by default.

As might be expected, the Nazis conceived of each and every ethnic group as having a "soul" of its own. These ethnic souls expressed their unique features through their cultural anomalies. In the words of Nietzsche scholar Mark Warren, "Nietzsche's political, economic, and biological assumptions caused him to reduce all modern political and economic causes of nihilism to cultural and
biological ones."9 The Nazis were no different. Scholars often search for the roots of cultural practices, and find at these roots, other cultural practices. Every cultural, and ultimately political issue can be traced to a root stemming from race and racial instinct. Both Nietzsche and the Nazis found that if one searches long enough, cultural explanations cannot beget cultural explanations.

Rosenberg often quoted Paul de Lagarde, one of the subjects of Fritz Stern's *The Politics of Cultural Despair*. Both shared the idea that "peoples are the thoughts of God."10 For example, Rosenberg also believed that "African primitivism crept into central Europe from the south, promoted by 'niggerized Americanism' and French 'power politics." The second pincer against Europe was supposedly formed by "Mongolian waves of bolshevism," besieging Germany from the east, and threatening the "extermination of all German cultural values."11 Nietzsche hated the incessant ramblers of race, and he did not feel that the Germans shared values worthy of defending. Still, Nazis like Rosenberg shared a unique point of view with Nietzsche: Cultural issues ultimately stem from biological roots.

The same could be said of the following observation made by Nazi theorist R.W. Darré.

In Germany until well into the nineteenth century, not only the nobility, but also groups of craftsmen and Germanic peasants very consciously pursued a policy of selective breeding. It is surprising to discover in the old traditions the extent to which German marriage laws were filled with wisdom about the interdependence of blood and culture, especially in those cases where the Germans intentionally erected a blood barrier, as for example toward the Slavs. Today our people seem to have lost all this wisdom.12

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This quotation indicates the Nazi race mania. Also unlike the Nazis, Nietzsche said remarkably little, either positive or negative, about the Slavs. Still, he would have recognized Darré's "wisdom," and the historical significance of these ancient Germanic taboos. Similarities and dissimilarities could be listed ad nauseum. The point is that a vein of similarity in thought between Nietzsche and the Nazis is obvious. In spite of a half-century of downplaying the similarities between these ideologies, who besides Nietzsche and the radical right-wing ever accept race as anything but a hindrance to progress?

Nietzsche and the Nazis also shared a somewhat similar vision about who would constitute the future master race. One should not confuse the Nazi rhetoric about German superiority with the assumption that "the Germans" meant only greater Germany per se. The Nazis' racial vision incorporated all Germanic peoples, including the predominantly Frankish French, and the Anglo-Saxon British. The SS, despite its wildly idealistic picture of the ideal racial prototype, did not give special consideration in its recruitment to Germans over Norwegians, Swedes, Danes, Netherlands, or the rest. In fact, SS recruitment posters in Scandinavia purposefully likened the new steely-eyed SS man with the savage blond-beast of Viking times. However Romantic such a likening may have been, Nietzsche preferred such nostalgia to the Western alternative of perpetual effeminacy. "A hard heart has Wotan set in my breast,' it says in an old Scandinavian saga: a just expression coming from the soul of a proud Viking" (BGE 196). The SS was designed to be more than an elite corps of secret police, key to the preservation of the authoritarian regime. They were supposed to reflect the cream of the racial stock of Germanic Europe and the forefathers of Europe's future master race. As Germanic blood had scattered across Europe for millenia, Europe's new aristocracy was to have a pan-European origin.

Nietzsche appreciated such images. In fact, the SS officer came closer to Nietzsche's ideal type for the re-foundation of Europe than he might have dreamed possible so soon after his own time. In the foundation of his totally "New Order," "Himmler, through
Auslese (selection) and Zucht (breeding) wanted to cultivate a new human type - a loyal, duty-committed, tough, and self-sacrificing warrior-leader, scholar, and administrator all in one, who was capable of coping with the enormous task that lay ahead.\textsuperscript{13} It must also be noted that the racial fanaticism that accompanied the formation of the SS in theory did not materialize in fact. In spite of his rhetoric, Hitler was nowhere near as fanatical about the racial specifications of the SS as was Himmler,\textsuperscript{14} and the aesthetic specifications of the elite unit were softened as mandated by the necessities of the war.

In other words, in spite of the cruelty and stupidity displayed by the SS in its treatment of Slavs and Jews before and during the war, the SS served a higher function than traditional images of them would suggest. The SS did not materialize as a country-club for six-foot blue-eyed blondes. It represented the Nazis' core hope for a new kind of man, based in large part on the same extreme specifications articulated by Nietzsche himself. The modern conception of the SS is not that it was a stupid organization, but a dangerous one founded on the profoundest evil. Nietzsche imagined that his new European man would fight with bravery, rule with discipline, obey with loyalty, and above all, exploit with great evil.

The European Man

A comparison between Nietzsche's and the Nazis' use of race and hierarchy yields many similarities, but some important differences as well. Nietzsche clearly believed in the existence of racial instincts as sublime intuitions that characterized ethnic groups and helped to explain the anomalies of each respective culture. The mixing of these instincts in Europe, both between nations and between classes (which for millennia had bred relatively discretely), had led to a spiritual chaos and contributed to Europe's cultural decline.


\textsuperscript{14}Robert E. Herzstein, \textit{Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich}, 78.
The historical sense has come to us in the wake of the mad and fascinating semi-barbarism into which Europe has been plunged through the democratic mingling of classes and races. . . The past of every form and mode of life, of cultures that formerly lay close beside or on top of one another, streams into us 'modern souls' thanks to this mingling, our instincts now run back in all directions, we ourselves are a kind of chaos (BGE 152-153).

And yet, "the spirit perceives its advantage in all this" (BGE 153). Nietzsche saw in Europe's decline the very seeds of its rebirth. The very mingling of Europe's classes and races will contribute to its renewal, but patently not in a leftist, universalist sense in which racial mingling will contribute to a hybrid human prototype, and a united world free of racial or class struggle. For Nietzsche, racial mingling in Europe had gone too far already. The only way to correct the damage done would be to finish the job and create a new, homogenized European prototype. This man will not be content to take an equal place among the other nations of the world. This new European will be outfitted for the domination of the world.

The homogenizing of European man is the great process that cannot be obstructed: one should even hasten it. The necessity to create a gulf, distance, order of rank, is given. . . As soon as it is established, this homogenizing species requires a justification: it lies in serving a higher sovereign species that stands upon the former and can raise itself to its task only by doing this. Not merely a master race whose sole task is to rule, but a race with its own sphere of life, with an excess of strength for beauty, bravery, culture, manners to the highest peak of the spirit; an affirming race that may grant itself every great luxury . . . beyond good and evil (WP 478).

Unquestionably, Nietzsche's hope for a race of Übermenschen was not rooted in a vision of a collective selection of the best humanity had to offer, but restricted itself to a vision of the future European man.
The Nazis, of course, wanted to limit this homogenization to the Germanic type. For them, the Slavs were nothing but slaves. As a fanatical racial purist, Himmler, for example, wished specifically to avoid the amalgamation of all Europe's races. That very concept mandated the incorporation of Jews, Slavs, and Mediterranean types into the greater Germanic fold. All of the racial ideology of the Third Reich was designed specifically to avoid this. Himmler was too doctrinaire in his pursuit of the ideal Nordic prototype even to fill his own quotas for the SS before the war began.

I insist on a height of 1.70 meters. I personally select a hundred or two a year and insist on photographs which reveal if there are any Slav or Mongolian characteristics. I particularly want to avoid such types as the members of the 'Soldier' Councils' of 1918-1919, people who looked somewhat comic in our German eyes and often gave the impression of being foreigners.15

The Nazi Marriage Order of 1931 completed the Nazi eugenic agenda.16 All prospective brides of SS officers were required to pass the same test of Aryan ancestral purity as were their husbands. As the war approached, Himmler relaxed all of his ideological convictions (excepting his intensified hatred of the Jews). In spite of the Holocaust, the Nazi eugenic ideals for a pure Germanic population were given increasingly less priority as the war escalated. The practical necessities of war triumphed over the ethereal realm of ideas. Nietzsche concerned himself far less with real human behavior than with his own visions for the future of human existence. The ideal of homogenizing Europe's population epitomizes Nietzsche's often grandiose meditations. In contrast, the Nazis still adhered to the late nineteenth-century conventional wisdom of cultural healing through national purification.

In fact, the Nazi view that the West could be saved only by the toil of Germanic blood bears an imitative resemblance to the eugenic

15Ibid., 79.
16Herbert F. Ziegler, Nazi Germany's New Aristocracy, 58.
theories of late nineteenth century Europe. Houston Stewart Chamberlain, for example, advised "abandoning these formulae which have but served to give rise to endless errors, we are left with the simple and clear view that our whole civilization and culture of today is the work of one definite race of men--the Teutonic." Such hyperbole highlights the very source of Nietzsche's castigation of nationalism. Ideas of innate racial *superiority* paralyze the individual into believing that all of their actions or inactions are justified merely by the blood flowing through their veins.

These alternative conceptions of the future composite Europeans mark an important distinction between the thought of Nietzsche and that of the Nazis. The distinction is an obvious one. This part of the essay directs itself at the hidden connections between the ideologies of Nietzsche and the Nazis *in spite of* their obvious differences. The idea that race has a role to play, *any* role, is an avenue of thought down which very few in the modern world have been willing to travel very far. For all concerned, a regenerated Europe was in order, complete with a new aristocracy, a pitiless warrior class, the destruction of Christian and French Revolutionary values, and a redefinition of community. For all these, the breeding of a new European was literally required. One could easily focus on their differing conceptions of the "New European." The similarities in Nietzsche's and the Nazis' conceptions of Europe's "new man" are subtle, and could easily be overlooked. These similarities are also manifold, and are appreciated by few other philosophical or political thinkers.

In 1915, when many held Nietzsche's ideas to be a key catalyst for the war, Herbert Leslie Stewart said in *Nietzsche and the Ideals of Modern Germany*, "His view of heredity is of the very essence of his thought." The advent of National Socialism did not hasten this reading of Nietzsche. Nietzsche had earned a racist reputation long before Hitler became known. The element of pre-Socratic Greece most admired by Nietzsche, of course, was its aristocracy. He firmly

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believed that the aristocratic conception of heredity, sexuality, and beauty facilitated the ancient Greek production and reproduction of a higher type. Nietzsche believed in the timeless realities of the human condition, not in "progress." The instinctual drives represent the cardinal realities of the human condition. People's adherence to instinct cannot help but yield them more fulfilling cultures.

No substitute for this maxim should dictate the human condition. Thus, progress as an idea only hinders adherence to instinctual life by positing the misguided notion that human nature changes and improves over time. "Mankind does not represent a development toward something better or stronger or higher in the sense accepted today. 'Progress' is merely a modern idea, that is, a false idea" (ATC 571). This idea can only end in humanity's forgetting what it means to be human, that is: forgetting what it once meant to be human. We must therefore take our cues from the most vibrant cultures that have ever existed. Man does not "evolve" out of a condition of hierarchy, militarism, chauvinism, slave-ownership, and myth if such a condition maintained the greatest cultures the world has ever known. Changing such a condition only means aiming toward decadence. At such points in Nietzsche's writings, he evidently epitomizes the true antithesis of Marx. "The labor question. The stupidity--at bottom, the degeneration of instinct, which is today the cause of all stupidities--is that there is a labor question at all. Certain things one does not question: that is the first imperative of instinct" (TWI 545). Few would agree with Nietzsche's certainty that progress does not exist. Aside from the self-proclaimed extreme right and Nietzsche, hardly anyone in the past two centuries has argued against progress.

Hegel perfected the Christian-universal philosophy by showing that the dialectical procession inevitably leads to a union of man and God. Using the Hegelian dialectic in a secular form, Marx portrayed history as the unstoppable, progressive march of the worker toward a universal utopia. Liberalism has taken great stock in the technological innovations that we all witness, and in the spirit of optimism of the Enlightenment. Even modern conservatives have brandished the idea of progress as a weapon in their ideological
combat. They only espouse a more controlled, guided, organic form of progress than do liberals. Social Democrats and other moderate leftists have pointed to the proliferation of rights for all as evidence that we all have more, and are closer to being equal than ever, and that all is therefore getting better. Almost any politically-minded person of the past two centuries has placed his or her faith in human reason and in our collective ability to identify and solve historic "problems." As we move further from myth, superstition, and ignorance, we "progress."

Excepting Nietzsche and the radical right, few intellectual camps have failed to coin a new brand of progress during the last century. For Nietzsche, the pathos of progress stands as but another signpost of Western decadence. It underscores another instance where modern Western man has gotten things exactly wrong. "Faith in 'progress'--in the lower spheres of intelligence appears as ascending life; but this is self-deception; in the higher spheres of intelligence as descending life" (WP 70). Few stop to consider that the whole idea of progress necessitates a destination. One would not get on a highway and claim to be progressing unless he or she knew their destination and was headed toward it. For Nietzsche, in this sense, the source of the dilemma in the West is that mankind has no goal. Progress in the West has taken one of two forms. Often, dogmatic adherence to progress as an idea necessitates absolutely no thought about its meaning. Far more often, a vague notion of a post-hierarchical culture, in which no one has more than anyone else, either in a Christian, Marxist, or liberal sense, is blindly followed. Nietzsche not only finds such visions patently repulsive, he offers an alternative vision in which progress would at least mean the reverse of regression.

It is clear, what I combat is economic optimism: as if increasing expenditure of everybody must necessarily involve the increasing welfare of everybody. The opposite seems to me to be the case: expenditure on everybody amounts to a collective loss: man is diminished--so one no longer knows what aim this
tremendous process has served. An aim? a new aim?--that is what humanity needs (WP 464).

For Nietzsche, those facilitating the progressive ideas of the present spur man either to an undesirable end, or to no end at all. As Nietzsche scorns the values of modern man, he posits a goal antithetical to universal equality. Throughout his writings, he lends support to a slave-owning warrior-aristocracy which seeks not to avoid the exploitation of others, but to make such exploitation the foundation of a new culture. The "new aim" of the new man needs the opposition of the masses, of the "leveled," a feeling of distance from them! he stands on them, he lives off them. This higher form of aristocracy is that of the future.-- Morally speaking, this overall machinery, this solidarity of all gears, represents a maximum in the exploitation of man; but it presupposes those on whose account this exploitation has meaning (WP 464).

Why Nietzsche rejects the idea of progress should be clear. Yet it total opposition to modern standards, Nietzsche unabashedly asserted that a culture of slavery, no matter how decadent, must be superior to liberal-democratic capitalism. Like the Nazis, he made huge allowances for any kind of assault upon modern egalitarianism. "Abolition of slavery"--supposedly a tribute to 'human dignity,' is in fact a destruction of a fundamentally higher type" (WP 174).

Nietzsche's concern with the quality of human existence falls short of a concern for the quality of all humans' existences. Nietzsche accepted that the pitiless exploitation of some human minions for menial labor allows others freedom to live more noble lives. Saying that all can live nobly is tantamount to saying that all should live as slaves. For the fullest existences and the higher types to thrive, societal stratification is indispensable. "One should defend virtue against the preachers of virtue: they are its worst enemies. For they teach virtue as an ideal for everyone; they take from virtue the charm of rareness, inimitableness, exceptionality, and
unaverageness—its aristocratic magic" (WP 175). Nietzsche felt that any cultural development evolving in this direction could not be interpreted as positive. All non-exclusive cultural milieus produce a fictitious image of freedom. "The whole of the West no longer possesses the instincts out of which institutions grow, out of which a future grows: perhaps nothing antagonizes its 'modern spirit' so much. One lives for the day, one lives very fast, one lives very irresponsibly: precisely because this is called freedom" (ATC 543).

The most vital reason for Nietzsche's crusade against democracy was that he truly felt democracy to be a destructive, not a creative force. Not only does democracy make war against everything rare and noble, it also poisons the soil on which noble characters can grown. "Today when the herd animal alone obtains and bestows honors in Europe, when 'equality of rights' could all too easily change into equality in wrongdoing: I mean into a general war on everything rare, strange, privileged, the higher man, the higher soul, the higher duty, the higher responsibility, creative fullness of power and mastery . . . To ask it again: is greatness possible today?" (BGE 144) Therein, Nietzsche reveals the temptation to act against modernity. For all his predictions that millennia would be required before an emergence from the Western malaise might occur, Nietzsche presents the possibility that if something is not done soon, all hope for a rebirth of culture might disappear forever.

The Nazi experiment does not provide the perfect realization of Nietzsche's demand for a new aristocracy. After all, the Nazis promised at some future date to extinguish the remains of Germany's ancient noble privilege. The contradiction between Nietzschean aristocracy and the socialism of the Nazis has been shown. But again, in every perceived difference between the two, fundamental likenesses appear in more subtle forms. The exclusivist component of National Socialism certainly merits a comparison with Nietzsche's advocacy of hierarchy.

In spite of Hitler's socialism, his conception of hierarchy compares with Nietzsche's ideal of cultures composed of poleis. On a world scale instead of on a small scale like Greece, aristocratically
inclined nations (particularly the Germanic) would govern their own areas, and those immediately surrounding them. In the midst of the world's noble nations would be excluded classes of slaves who were forbidden to breed with, or make war like the dominant ethnic group around them. In this sense, though, Hitler's Weltanschauung did not necessarily limit him to the Germanic type. He accepted a similar form of dominance for the Japanese throughout Asia. Still, Hitler drew his inspiration from the white conquest of the western United States, and from the colonial projects of the British around the world. He viewed the British as a sort of Athens to outpost other parts of the world, across the horizon from his Sparta. "I am prepared to approach England once more with a large and comprehensive offer... I am a man of great decisions and in this case also I shall be capable of a great action. I accept the British Empire and I am ready to pledge myself personally to its continued existence and to commit the power of the German Reich to this."19

However Nietzsche's and Hitler's criteria may have differed for discerning precisely who should dominate, their principle of domination based at least partly on ethnic grounds remains a common theme. Hitler saw little to choose between the British domination of Africans in reality and the German domination of the Slavs in theory. The British had always justified their presence in Africa on the grounds that the "inferior" races could not govern themselves, and the British had colonized in such a way that the Africans had become virtual slave laborers on their own continent. The Nazi plans for the Slavs differed little. The British may not have recognized their own hypocrisy when reading Mein Kampf; they were largely horrified at Hitler's plans for Lebensraum. But ideologically, Hitler counted on the British as his allies. They had proven to him, through their own colonial policies, that they maintained the Germanic instinct for pitiless, aristocratic dominance. In fact, Britain's elitist colonial policies were not abandoned until after World War II. Hitler saw no reason why the British should deny him the status of ally. "For such a policy, there is only one

19Alan Bullock, Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives, 617.
single ally in Europe: England. With England alone, one's back being covered, could one begin the new Germanic invasion. Our right to do this would not have been less than that of our forefathers. None of our pacifists refuses to eat the bread of the East, although the first plow was once called 'sword'!"\(^{20}\)

In addition to the prospects for an aristocratic order along the lines of Athens and Sparta, the Nazi plan for settlement in the east depended on pseudo-feudal social strata based on ethnicity. The Nazi plan for enslaving the conquered Slavs, and repopulating their land with Germans is well-known, and shall be covered only briefly here. One interesting anecdote to denote the tenor of the Nazi ideology, however, is Himmler's plan to reinvent the SS along lines strikingly similar to the ancient Order of the Teutonic Knights. "Himmler never restricted himself to Russia, but (hoped to) cultivate every possible colonial area. Furthermore, the pet scheme of a new Ordensland for the SS, what east Prussia had been for the Teutonic Knights, impelled Himmler to seek settlement territory not contiguous to Germany. Here he could develop his SS strongpoints and his Wehrbauern (peasant militia)."\(^{21}\)

Following a Nazi victory, social stratification in Germany proper would increasingly decline due to the Nazi socialist program. Yet in the east, a system of feudal aristocracy would appear even more inegalitarian than anything from the Middle Ages. Himmler's SS would form the core of a Germanic ethnic community in a remote island of the former Slavic hinterlands. They would provide the leadership of a bureaucratic-warrior class, like a class of Janissaries, and would be the nucleus of a breeding stock to usher in the age of the Übermenschen. The SS would be supported by a second sphere of Germanic ethnicity in the form of former soldiers, promised land after the conquest of Lebensraum. They would form the rank-and-file of a peasant militia to guard the conquered lands against the surrounding Slavs.\(^{22}\) In the lowest caste, the Slavs would

\(^{20}\)Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 183.
\(^{21}\)Robert E. Herzstein, Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich, 254.
\(^{22}\)Ibid.
remain in the countryside for whatever menial purpose their Germanic masters set for them.

This picture begs an interesting question. When comparing the ideas of Nietzsche and the Nazis concerning the issue of aristocratic versus mass culture, should one focus on socialism in Germany, or the hope for feudal serfdom in the newly conquered eastern territories?

If one pictures Himmler's *Lebensraum* as the model of Germanic sociological ideology, comparisons with Nietzsche substantially suffer. The enslavement of the Slavs along strict ethnic lines, the insistence that the Germans play the role of the Master Race, and the attempt even to forge the Master Race from the shoddy ideological materials of the modern age would all have either given Nietzsche pause, or made him laugh out loud. Still, Nietzsche could not have objected to the seeming injustice of such a situation. The Nazi colonization of the east was a wildly anachronistic idea, and completely lacking in justification during an increasingly egalitarian age. The Nazi conception of *Lebensraum* fits the modern definition of evil. And as Nietzsche would say, "From a superior viewpoint... one desires the ever-increasing dominion of evil, the growing emancipation of man from the narrow and fear-ridden bonds of morality, the increase of force, in order to press the mightiest natural power—the affects—into service" (WP 208). And, "the evil god is needed no less than the good god: after all, we do not owe our own existence to tolerance and humanitarianism" (ATC 583). For Nietzsche, even the most crass experiments are at least as justified as the perseverance of universalism in all its forms.

**The Correlation of the Christian and Marxist Utopias**

Correlations are often made between Marxist-Leninism and Nazi-Fascism. Both espouse totalitarian forms of government to control the population. Both rely on mass-movements to attain and secure power. The extreme left and the extreme right have traditionally put a higher value on order and adherence to ideological convictions than on creativity. Both have taken part in the greatest genocides in history. These issues reflect similar tactics
for the maintenance of control. Yet neither the Marxists nor the Nazis believe in totalitarianism as a goal, a hope, and a dream. Total authority represents only the means to an end. The ends sought by each could not be much different than they are.

In the words of Steven Aschheim, "Nietzsche was harnessed to the struggle against Marxism and bolshevism, which Nietzsche regarded as his greatest future opponent, the very embodiment of nihilism." It is often forgotten that Communists have traditionally viewed their ideology as the ultimate consummation of democratic values. Communist East Germany, for example, was called the German Democratic Republic. Ideally in Communism (though never in practice), everyone in society is equal, and therefore has an equal voice in government. Nietzsche shared the view that Communism logically succeeded democracy. He disagreed with Hegel's dialectic and believed that history had no destination. Marx represented to Nietzsche an intensified absurdity of dialectical theory, having simply added the poisons of materialism and nihilism. Says Nolte, "What Nietzsche hated most in Marxism was not its proletarian but its bourgeois nature." Nietzsche followed dialectical theory to the extent that he recognized the transition from Christianity to the Enlightenment, and from democracy to communism as a logical progression. And while he seldom if ever mentions Marx directly, his systemic crusade against "socialist blockheads" leaves little doubt about his main target. Nietzsche saw no necessary end result to history, and he viewed all of the above value systems as stemming from originally misguided principles. Nietzsche recognized a causal, historical chain in history in the Marxist-Hegelian sense. He simply refused to view this chain as evidence of any pre-ordained outcome.

In opposition to the universal, dialectical, progressive visions of the leftist Marx and the Christian Hegel, Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* "shows us a noble past, a triumphant slave revolt in morality, and a confused, directionless present." With Hegel and Marx (as

23Steven E. Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 238.
examples), if history has a goal, then the dialectical points of synthesis along the path toward that goal are good and necessary. As soon as the goal is taken from the equation, as Nietzsche does, then the stopping points on the dialectic, like the transition from feudalism to capitalism to utopia, or from Christianity to Enlightenment to democracy to utopia, also lose their meaning. In this way, Nietzsche adds fire to his assault on many of the Western values forged from Socrates to Christ and beyond.

From these ideological grounds, Nietzsche launches his assault on Christianity, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and socialism or communism. Said Nietzsche, "I abhor Christianity with a deadly hatred, because it created sublime words and gestures to throw over a horrible reality the cloak of justice, virtue, and divinity" (WP 364). In other words, Christianity represents a grand systematization of ideological uncleanness and pretense. It might be called the first brand of political correctness, "the most fatal, seductive lie that has yet existed" (WP 117). Nietzsche pinpoints the early equation between the decadence of Socratic logo-centrism, and Christianity. Both represent an assault on life. "Christianity only takes up the fight that had already begun against the classical ideal and the noble religion" (WP 115). Into the vacuum of ancient Greek culture swept Christianity, masquerading as life where life once had reigned. "What astonishes one about the religiosity of the ancient Greeks is the tremendous amount of gratitude that emanates from it - the kind of man who stands thus before nature and before life is a very noble one! - Later, when the rabble came to predominate in Greece, fear also overran religion; and Christianity was preparing itself" (BGE 78). Marxism represents the latest and most insidious strain of the corrosive virus against the instinctive, hierarchical, pitiless impulses that had once defined ancient Greek culture.

For Nietzsche, nobility survived during the Middle Ages in spite of Christianity. Feudalism carried on the spirit of pre-Christian barbarism and lust for life more than it represented any component of Christian ideology. "The Christian faith is from the beginning sacrifice: sacrifice of all freedom, all pride, all self-confidence of the spirit, at the same time enslavement and self-
mockery, self-mutilation" (BGE 75). It represents spirituality as a revolt against the natural instinct to outdo one's neighbor. The tenor of Christianity seeks not to elevate the ferocious, competitive, hungry spirit of all, and to raise the standard of the greatest human existence. Rather, it brings everyone down to the same level of the lowest and least instinctive natures. "Christianity is a rebellion of everything that crawls on the ground against that which has height: the evangel of the 'lowly' makes low" (ATC 620). The renunciation of earthly existence leads to the culled existence of the Christian.

All Christian societies do not, per se, openly wage war against those who adhere to their instincts. The Middle Ages exemplify a time when the pre-Christian elements of culture played as evident a role in the culture as did Catholicism. But since with Nietzsche, all things are perpetually in ascendancy or decline, it follows that Christian ethics can only grow at the expense of the beliefs of the cultures into which they have crept. Christian impulses do not wish simply to co-exist with the norms of their host cultures. "Christianity should not be beautified and embellished: it has waged deadly war against this higher type of man; it has placed all the basic instincts of this type under the ban; and out of these instincts it has distilled evil and the Evil One: the strong man as the typically reprehensible man, the 'reprobate" (ATC 571). Paradoxically, Christianity extols peaceful ethics, but fights with a deadly venom against all cultural traits, or traits of higher men, which do not lend support to universal brotherhood. Only ideas which lend support to the herd mentality will survive the Christian wrath. "The Christian type: or the perfect bigot" (WP 188). In such ways, it slowly but surely filled the vacuum of ancient Greek culture, and it also destroyed the Romans.

Christianity was the vampire of the imperium Romanum . . . This stealthy vermin which sneaked up to every single one in the night, in fog and ambiguity, and sucked out of each single one the seriousness for true things . . . this cowardly, effeminate, and saccharine pack of alienated 'souls' . . . slowly fanned the fires of chandala revenge . . . the same kind of religion which, in its pre-
existent form, Epicurus already had waged war against: not paganism but 'Christianity,' by which I mean the corruption of souls by the concepts of guilt, punishment, and immortality (ATC 649).

The Nazi attack on Christianity mirrored this. While Christianity presented a potential rival to the societal primacy of the Nazis and had to be fought in the interests of perpetuating a totalitarian regime, the Nazis also maintained very substantial ideological convictions against Christianity. In the words of World War II scholar Robert Herzstein, "Hitler hated Christianity, viewing it as a reactionary, anti-racial force of Jewish origin."26 Hitler's concerns about Christianity did not mirror Nietzsche's same reservations about it. Yet the attack on the "higher man" motivated much of the Nazi attack on Christian ideology.

As shown in the official dossier of Reich Security Officer Reinhard Heydrich, the Gestapo wished to eradicate Christianity from Germany.27 Most of the Nazi invectives against Christianity are shrouded in racist rhetoric, such as in the 1920 Nazi Party Program which opposed the "Jewish materialist spirit."28 Yet attention should be given not just to the Nazis' opposition to things "Jewish," but also to their opposition to a perceived "materialist spirit." As pointed out by Bullock, "it is often forgotten that Point 19 of the original Nazi program of 1920 demanded that 'Roman Law, which serves a materialistic world order, be replaced by a German Common Law.'29 Like Nietzsche, the Nazis viewed Christianity as an antithetical ideological competitor, but also as the very embodiment of the decay of an organic spiritual order.

The Nazis' program generally focused on the future, and rejected things which they deemed "reactionary," including Christianity. Yet paradoxically, they too are often also labeled as reactionaries. A prime reason for this label is the antiquarian nature

26Robert E. Herzstein, Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich, 1.
27Ibid., 4.
28Ibid., 37.
of their spiritual alternatives to Christianity. The Nazis had no futuristic solution to the problem of post-Christian Germanic spirituality. Their best solution was to re-authenticate pre-Christian Germanic paganism. And "the SS more than any other formation in the Third Reich tried to replace traditional Christianity with a neo-paganism, which was but an improvised adjunct to the National Socialist ideology in the 'spiritual sphere.'"\textsuperscript{30} The idea was not that the Christian God provided too potent a competitor in the new Germany. Nor was the underlying desire of the Nazis an officially atheistic state. In fact, Himmler said that "any human being who does not believe in God should be considered arrogant, megalomaniacal, and stupid."\textsuperscript{31}

Like Nietzsche, the Nazis saw the advent of Christianity as the source of the inversion of values. The instinctual, mythical, and noble culture of the pagan Germans resulted from thousands of years of accumulated cultural knowledge whose ultimate source resided in their very blood. Unlike Nietzsche, the Nazis' obsession with blood shadowed over all of their ideology. Yet Nietzsche accepted the biological source of culture in principle, and took for granted the existence of a "Germanic soul" and its evident manifestations in pre-Christian culture.

The development of the Jewish priestly state is not original; they learned the pattern in Babylon: the pattern is Aryan. When later on, the same thing became dominant in a Europe with a preponderance of Germanic blood, this was in accordance with the spirit of the ruling race: a great atavism. The Germanic Middle Ages aimed at a revival of the Aryan order of Castes (WP 92).

Unfortunately, for Nietzsche, the Christian spirit of the Middle Ages prevailed over the Germanic instinct for hierarchy. The Nazis wished to correct this error, although a concrete plan for a mystical reversion to the "Germanic spirit" never materialized. Either way,
the invectives of both Nietzsche and the Nazis share a vital similarity. For all concerned, Christianity must be replaced as a it detracts from the maintenance, let alone the production, of higher types. As long as "evil" exists as a category of behavior, the more selfish, dominant, naturally-inclined master type must feel guilt for the position of superiority which he imposes on others. This guilt presents the consummate poison in any post-decadent Nietzschean society, and in the proposed New Order of the Nazis.

In opposition to the "medieval dogmas" of Christianity that continued to plague the Germanic spirit, Alfred Rosenberg in particular sought to demarcate which components of Christianity could be accepted in the Reich, and which were corrosive beyond redemption. Both the Lutheran and Catholic churches maintained too much ideological sway in Germany to permit a full-scale ideological assault by the Nazis. Such a move would likely have produced more political heat than the Nazis could have handled. Instead, Rosenberg distinguished between "positive" and "negative" Christianity as a way of assuaging the "most damaging" effects of the Christian spirit, while at the same time capitulating to the reality that Christianity could not at any time soon be eradicated from Germany.

"Positive" Christianity emanated from "the mystic doctrine of blood" and the distinguishing features of Germanic culture. The positive elements in Christianity might be characterized as those elements which the original Germanic converts likely found appealing and in accordance with their own cultures, such as the obedience of the son to the command of the father. "Negative" Christianity, as one might expect, interfered with the hierarchical organization of nations along natural lines. Through Christian universalism, racial considerations had been undermined in Europe, and such elements were actively propagandized against by the Nazis. Christian universalism had become especially dangerous in conjunction with the acceptance of Enlightenment ideals. Basically, the elements of Christianity found least desirable by the Nazis were

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32 Robert E. Herzstein, Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich, 45.
33 Ibid.
those which interfered with the supposed natural instincts of the Germans.

The Enlightenment, The French Revolution, and Democracy

Nietzsche believed that just like Christianity, "Democracy represents the disbelief in great human beings and an elite society: 'Everyone is equal to everyone else.' At bottom we are one and all self-seeking cattle and mob" (WP 397). The connection is no accident. Any society which renounces hierarchy does so under the banner of the Christian-slave victory. Enlightenment intellectuals peddled their intellectual wares as alternatives to superstition, dogma, and ignorance. In short, they challenged the perceived legacy of medieval Christianity. The philosophes were supposed to be the alternative to Christianity. But, ironically, "enlightened" democracy came closer to fulfilling the Christian promise of equality than the Catholic church ever had. "Democratization is a more natural form of (Christianity), one less mendacious" (WP 126). In addition to finding equality in heaven and before God, an idea characterized by Nietzsche as "the non plus ultra of nonsense on earth!," (WP 468) now all were "created equal" on earth as well. For Nietzsche, the herd has simply become more insidious; it hides its agenda with different names and "isms," but the compulsion to destroy caste and those worthy of great and evil deeds remains consistent. "To me, justice speaks thus: 'Men are not equal.' Nor shall they become equal! What would my love of the Overman be if I spoke otherwise" (ZAR 213).

No wonder, then, that Nietzsche holds Christianity responsible for the French Revolution. Many scholars have interpreted the French Revolution as a revolt against the remnants of medieval Catholic feudalism and historic dogmatic religiosity. But the Revolution represents for Nietzsche only the official Western break with God. Paradoxically, as God is no longer the guarantor of right and wrong, secular Western man clings ever more tightly to the demand that he has rights.
Another Christian concept, no less crazy, has passed evermore deeply into the tissue of modernity: the concept of 'the equality of souls before God.' This concept furnishes the proto-type of all theories of equal rights... no wonder that man ended by taking it seriously, taking it practically!—that is to say, politically, democratically, socialistically, in the spirit of pessimism of indignation (WP 401).

In many ways, the French Revolutionaries represented to Nietzsche the consummate original Christians. They fought with a passion describable only as the "herd passion." It was their "will to equality that was their will to power." (WP 80) It is the only power that slaves know. The Revolutionaries slaughtered the aristocracy because the former desired what the latter had, not because they believed in justice. Most of all, theirs was a passion of ressentiment, and they wanted others to suffer as they had suffered. Theirs was an ethic of revenge. The Revolutionaries were the result of centuries of victories for the slave revolt in morals. "This instinct of revenge has mastered mankind in the course of millennia... as far as man has thought, he has introduced the bacillus of revenge into things" (WP 401).

Interestingly, critiques of the French Revolution normally begin with some reminder of its licentious brutality, bordering on genocide. Nietzsche has no problem with the violence, only with the importance of another landmark victory for the herd, and the decline of another distinguished racial type in the form of the French aristocracy.

The social hodgepodge, consequence of the Revolution, the establishment of equal rights... the bearers of the instincts of decline including the slave instincts, the instincts of cowardice, cunning, and canaille in those orders that have long been kept down, mingle with the blood of all classes: two, three generations later the race is no longer recognizable—everything has become mob. From this there results a collective instinct against selection, against privilege of all kinds, that is so powerful and self-assured, hard, and cruel in its
operation, that the privileged themselves soon succumb to it: whoever still wants to retain power flatters the mob, works with the mob, must have the mob on its side (WP 461).

Clearly with Nietzsche, the Revolution stands as but another signpost of Western cultural exhaustion.

The Nazi ideology deals more clearly with the historical development of egalitarianism than with perhaps any other historical development. Predictably, the Nazis were obsessed with the way in which the forces of world equality worked against racial hierarchy. Nietzsche shared this concern, but devoted only a small portion of his thought to the issue. But both Nietzsche and the Nazis took the unusual position that all viable Western ideologies from Christianity to liberalism to Marxism were but variations of a single, insipid ideological impulse. Not many thinkers of the last 200 years would gladly discard all of these systems as irredeemably disfigured ideological baggage. Such an extreme position begs for extreme cultural solutions. If all forms of egalitarianism, pacifism, humanitarianism, and their ideological kin are renounced, little of the rock upon which Western Culture has been constructed remains to be recognized.

Many would portray the Nazi experiment as the very embodiment of Revolutionary animus and terror in the twentieth century. The idea of the genocide of an ostensibly privileged group draws a comparison between the Nazis and the Jacobins, and between Hitler and Robespierre. In the words of Ronald Smelser, the Nazis embody "the double edged sword posed by Rousseau's 'General Will.' The Nazi regime represented, as an experiment in totalitarian democracy, the other edge of that sword. It was a very 'modern' form of tyranny."34

Ideologically, though, the Nazis could not have been more opposed to the purported values of the French Revolution. For the Nazis, the Revolution generated the dangerous fictions which have

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34Ronald Smelser, "How 'Modern' were the Nazis? DAF Social Planning and the Modernization Question," 299.
augmented the corrosive effects of Christianity throughout modernity. For instance, Nietzsche and the Nazis would have agreed with Gobineau's naturalist summation that "there are no human rights, any more than there are . . . rights of the armadillo. The idea of justice is itself an illusion. Nothing exists but violence." This echoes the world-view of the first right-wing ideologists such as Lagarde, Van Den Bruck, and Julius Langbehn who were Nietzsche's contemporaries. For all of these, nature as a law trumps a perceived, pretentious proliferation of rights in an increasingly effeminate culture.

Germany's militaristic, aristocratic establishment had opposed the leftist values of the Revolution at least since Germany unified. Bismarck's militarism represents an early concurrence with the Nazi cultural opposition to liberal-democratic values. In the words of Alan Bullock, even von Hindenberg, in spite of his personal distaste for Hitler, "agreed with much of what Hitler said: his attacks on the 'system,' his denunciation of democratic politics and the Marxist parties, his call for national unity, the abolition of the peace settlement, and the restoration of German greatness, including military power." The German right had espoused these values for nearly a century, in large part as an antithesis of the values of the Revolution. But after fifty years of a leftward political drift in Germany, Hitler had to reinvent many of the same convictions that had been taken for granted during Bismarck's age. "There is only one most sacred human right, and this right is at the same time the most sacred obligation, namely: to see to it that the blood is preserved pure, so that by the preservation of the best human material a possibility is given for a more noble development of these human beings." Why did the Nazis oppose the ideologies of the French Revolution? Of course, Nazi militarism, advocacy of hierarchy, and chauvinism automatically opposed the raison d'être of the

35Ernst Nolte, *Three Faces of Fascism*, 280.
Enlightenment. Also, nationalism had, during the nineteenth century, ceased to be the tool of groups who wished to sabotage the remnants of aristocratic-European privilege. National pride had become an exclusive, right-wing impulse that stood in the way of Marxist internationalism and proletarian world-unity.

Yet a less obvious rift between the values of the right and those of the French Revolution is exemplified in an observance shared by Nietzsche and the Nazis. Nietzsche noted that the French Revolution had promoted an environment encouraging the weakness of all, as an alternative to a world where some are stronger than others. "It substituted slow suicide [for greatness]: gradually a petty, poor, but durable life; gradually a quite ordinary, bourgeois, mediocre life, etc." (WP 145). The Nazis recognized this, and demanded performance of the highest level, in a competitive atmosphere, in every segment of society. "The so-called Reichsberufsweltkampf (Reich skills competition) was inaugurated with great fanfare in 1936; by 1939 3.5 million apprentices were competing in local, regional, and national, 'Olympics' which allowed the Nazis to set ever higher standards of performance, while at the same time inculcating the concept of Volksgemeinschaft."38 Hitler wished to perpetrate many terrible deeds, but he also wished to halt the march of decadence as he defined it, and as Nietzsche similarly defined it. This required a complete reorientation of Germans away from the Enlightenment values that they had become accustomed to.

The word 'propaganda' is inadequate to convey the revolutionary character of Hitler's objective: nothing less than the transformation of people's consciousness, corresponding to his constantly repeated belief that it was politics, faith, and will, not economics and material circumstances, that were the deciding forces in history, corresponding also to his own unique ability to move the masses.39

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38 Ronald Smelser, "How 'Modern' were the Nazis?," 288.
The re-education of Germany was actively conducted along perceived Nietzschean lines. According to Aschheim, "Nietzschean illiberalism, anti-humanism, and a politicized Lebensphilosophie were placed at the center of the new educational philosophy."\(^{40}\) In addition to Nazi race theory, students were subject to a curriculum emphasizing history, German language and literature, and a marked increase in time devoted to sports and physical education.\(^{41}\) The Nazis provided countless venues for an individual man to demonstrate his superior skills, relative to others, in all walks of life. The 1936 Olympics in Berlin exemplify this, but provide only one example. The Eilenriede Motorcycle Races promoted the beauty of technology while providing new outlets for individual bravery and exceptionality.\(^{42}\) While the Nazis claimed that they would do much for the German people, they insisted that the individual must liberate himself from the modern world, and its softening of the heart and soul. The individual German must, in some capacity, show that he is an Übermensch. Said Goebbels, "The German worker will be free (not when the Nazi system frees him), ... but only if he frees himself, with his own strength, and he will do that when he can no longer bear the chains of slavery."\(^{43}\) Naturally, this is not a reference to Marx's interest capital slavery, but to Nietzsche's metaphysical and existential slavery.

The Warrior Philosophy

My "future"—a rigorous polytechnic education. Military service; so that, on average, every man of the higher classes would be an officer, whatever else he might be (WP 418).

Keith Ansell-Pearson, a prominent Nietzsche scholar, has written two books: *Nietzsche Contra Rousseau*, and *An Introduction*.

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\(^{40}\)Steven E. Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 241.


\(^{42}\)Adelheid von Saldern, "Cultural Conflicts, Popular Mass Culture, and the Question of Nazi Success," 323.

\(^{43}\)Robert E. Herzstein, *Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich*, 149.
to Nietzsche as Political Thinker, in an attempt to pinpoint a political agenda in "the last antipolitical German." Ansell-Pearson identified that agenda as the following: "The aim of the politics of the Overman is not to unite people, but to divide them into the strong and the weak."44 Nietzsche gives mixed signals regarding whether or not this can be accomplished along racial lines [and future Nazi principles]. But what is certain, as articulated by Fukuyama, is that "Nietzsche deliberately sought to undermine belief in human equality, arguing that this was simply a prejudice instilled by Christianity . . . and ended up celebrating what amounted to a doctrine of cruelty."45 This fusion of caste and cruelty leads him to advocate a form of primitive warrior culture, again in the spirit of the ancient Greeks. For Nietzsche, the existences of those in a warrior caste transcends all others, even the being of the artist. Due to his great enthusiasm in this area, admirers of Nietzsche could not help but be tempted by a modern militarism.

Contra Marx, "Nietzsche regards the social contract of civil society to be a fraud: not of the strong over the weak, but of the weak over the strong."46 Only through the discipline of a warrior class could the masses be kept in their proper, submissive place, and then could the caste system flourish. As stated, Nietzsche saw the Jews, as an example, lose their warrior class and spin into a cultural decline. Warriors maintain cultural integrity, and embody the possibility of the ultimate existence. "War is the father of all good things, war is also the father of good prose" (GSC 145). In an age where peace is held up as the ultimate value, and men with aggressive natures are rebuffed as adolescents, Nietzsche maintains that "the mature man has, above all, weapons: he attacks" (WP 385). Mature, that is, in adherence to his instincts. In fact, in the warrior, all of the best instincts, even those of the artist, are combined into one. "Art as the redemption of the man of action--of those who not only see the terrifying and questionable character of existence but

44Keith Ansell-Pearson, An Introduction to Nietzsche as a Political Thinker. 74.
45Francis Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man. 333.
46Keith Ansell-Pearson, Nietzsche Contra Rousseau, 112.
live it, want to live it, the tragic-warlike man, the hero" (WP 452). For Nietzsche, civilizations value peace as a relief from the horrors of war. Cultures value war as a respite from an emasculating peace. The warrior is aggressive, roving, lusting for conquest, domineering, and virile. In short, a warrior is a man who still has his instincts. A warrior is masculine. This wisdom has been lost to modernity. "Just because the 'male organ' has been amputated from virtue, a feminine one has been brought to the voice of virtue that it did not have before" (WP 120).

Like Hitler, Nietzsche praised the Spartans for their culture of military genius and caste domination. His admiration for those who dominated without pity or compunction extended especially to Cesare Borgia and Napoleon. Spengler noted the tenor of Germany's reception of Nietzsche's Machiavellian militarism. "Nietzsche baptized with the name of Cesare Borgia -- in such an age, unless we learn to act as real history wants us to act, we will cease to exist as a people." Spengler's interpretation, that Borgian lust for conquest represents the very necessity of Germany's survival, is not a misreading. In fact, Nietzsche's militaristic incantations sometimes blend into an out-of-character tolerance for nationalism.

The maintenance of the military state is the last means of all of acquiring or maintaining the great tradition with regard to the supreme type of man, the strong type. And all concepts that perpetuate enmity and difference in rank between states (e.g. nationalism, protective tariffs) may appear sanctioned in this light (WP 386).

Nietzsche points to the relations between Frederick the Great and his father to illustrate this point. Frederick Wilhelm I "knew that men were lacking in Germany, and he suspected, with the bitterest vexation, that his own son was not enough of a man." Had he been right, he would have been justified in his brutal treatment of

47 Keith Ansell-Pearson, An Introduction to Nietzsche as a Political Thinker, 75.
Frederick. But it turned out "that he was deceived . . . and his skepticism (once mistaken for the Enlightenment variety) was of audacious manliness, which is related most closely to genius for war and conquest and which first entered Germany in the person of Frederick the Great" (BGE 139). Nietzsche believed that the Germans as a nation benefited from the ethic of militarism introduced by Frederick. Few others thinkers have dared to make this argument.

Ansell-Pearson says that "Nietzsche understands politics as being neither individualistic nor collectivistic." Extreme nationalism reflects a culture's loss of creativity but in the modern world, a militarism with a complete lack of nationalism would be meaningless. And without some form of militarism, the greatest existences cannot be complete. "One has renounced the great life when one has renounced war" (TWI 489). It has often been said that Nietzsche gave up his mystical Wagnerian militarism after his grotesque experiences as a field-hospital orderly in the Franco-Prussian War, and that he became a pacifist. This is evidently absurd after reading any of his works. Nietzsche even discussed the possibility of a duel with his former friend Paul Reé in 1880. He was thirty-five. In one of his last writings, Nietzsche stated that "since I do not by any means share the unwarlike views of my friend Galiani, I am not afraid of predicting a few things and thus, of conjuring up the cause of wars" (WP 81).

Nietzsche prescribed no necessary ends for his militarism. Here, Nietzsche's bias for instinct over reason stands plain. Militarism as a way of life, as a good in itself, should not be distinguished by a logocentric conception of war as a necessary evil only in the service of progress, and the end of all wars. War is only another mode of Western decadence when it is waged to "good" ends. "You say it is the good cause that hallow even war? I say unto you: it is the good war that hallow any cause. War and courage have accomplished more great things than love of the neighbor. Not

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49Keith Ansell-Pearson, An Introduction to Nietzsche as a Political Thinker, 150.
50Ibid., 26.
your pity but your courage has so far saved the unfortunate" (ZAR 159). Militarism flourishes in Nietzsche's writing as an alternative to universalism in all its forms, but particularly Christianity. "All of the deities on Olympus would have had occasion for immortal laughter: Cesare Borgia for Pope. Am I understood? Well then, that would have been the victory which alone I crave today: with that, Christianity would have been abolished" (ATC 654). Without question, no "post-modern," or postmodern Nietzschean world would be complete without warfare, literally.

Nietzsche's love of warfare also underscores his general suspicion of the intelligensia. "My brothers, drive the dogs away from him (the hero), the lazy creepers, and all the ravenous vermin—all the raving vermin of the 'educated,' who feast on every hero's sweat" (ZAR 320). Modernity has fostered an environment in which war cannot be waged except as a tool for an ultimately pacifistic end. The innately irrational nature of war, as with all extra-rational natural events, become questioned in hyper-logical settings, especially academia. Nietzsche's militarism, then, exists in direct contrast to rationalism, as well as any form of pacifism. The Nazis adopted all of these Nietzschean struggles. The spirit of Nietzsche's admiration for the dazzlingly-clad Greek warrior was captured in the symbolism of "fascist" grandeur. "The Marxist critic Walter Benjamin denounced the aestheticization of violence in fascist glorifications of World War I, an aestheticization he would later see as emblematic of the fascist approach to politics."51

Nietzsche's conception of life is cyclical. "Progress" is a fiction; nothing can grow without taxing something else. All is a zero sum game. If something declines, its antithesis invariably fills its vacuum. Heroism and pacifism are opposites, and cannot flourish concomitantly. The fruits of rationalism and irrationalism cannot be harvested in the same season. The master cannot thrive except at the expense of slaves. In all eternal struggles, one side is always gaining ground. Lack of action hastens the victory of one's antipode as life is always moving. Hitler recognized and used the eternal-diametrical

model to which Nietzsche contributed immensely. "Hitler was able to attract neoconservative intellectuals who rejected the rationalism and flabby liberalism of the modern world in favor of a Nietzschean irrationalism, heroic man in place of economic man." The reclamation of the warrior ethic took on a plethora of forms in the Third Reich. Germans students, especially boys, participated in one of the most physically demanding compulsory fitness movements in history. Says Aschheim, "For the Nazis, the decadent and feminized nineteenth century was to give way to a new masculine warrior-age, one that regarded Nietzsche as a pioneer of the German rediscovery of the body."53

Nietzsche's admiration for the Greeks and Greek attention to physical beauty was interpreted by the Nazis, with much legitimacy, as another calling to the creation of a higher racial type. The Germans should harden their bodies in order to prepare themselves for domination, to show themselves worthy of domination, and to recapture the discipline of physical pain that masters must endure for victory. Said Hitler, "Not a day should pass during which the young man is not trained physically for at least one hour in the morning and again in the evening, in every kind of sport and gymnastics, sport . . . promotes the spirit of aggression in the same measure, and demands determination quick as lightning, and educates the body for steel-like versatility."54 In a speech to the officers of three Waffen SS divisions, Himmler spurred his best men to imbue the army with the Nazi Weltanschauung. "I beg you as commanding officers, as chiefs and leaders, to instruct your men again and again in our ideological beliefs . . . I ask you to look after them, and guide them, and not let them go before they are really saturated with our spirit and are fighting like the old guard fought . . . We have only one task--to stand firm and carry on the racial struggle without mercy."55

52Alan Bullock, Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives, 225.
53Steven E. Aschheim, The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany, 238.
54Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 616.
55Robert E. Herzstein, Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich, 246.
In a Nietzschean sense, the Nazis recognized the ascendancy of the warrior ethic as the only alternative to the increasing ascendancy of a feminized-pacifism. As if carrying a banner for the masculine-warrior instinct, the Nazis viciously attacked the leftist ideal of a peaceable humanity. To Hitler, the Weimar Republic suffered from "a lack of determination and courage that tries to conceal itself under the cloak of a humanitarian attitude." Similarly, Nietzsche's assault on humanitarianism, and its ideological kin, inevitably followed his advocacy of cultures based on courage and the pitiless warrior existence.

56Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 198.
Chapter IV: Conclusion

A practical instruction and _demonstratio ad absurdium_ would not strike me as undesirable even if it were gained and paid for with a tremendous expenditure of human lives. In any case, even as a restless mole under the soil of a society that wallows in stupidity, socialism will be able to be something useful and therapeutic: it delays 'peace on earth' and the total mollification of the democratic herd animal; it forces the Europeans to retain spirit, namely cunning and cautious care, not to abjure manly and warlike virtues altogether, and to retain some remnant of spirit, of clarity, sobriety, and coldness of the spirit--it protects Europe for the time being from the _marasmus feminismus_ that threatens it (WP 78).

It could be argued that the Nazi experiment was the "demonstration of absurdity" desired by Nietzsche, but at no point did he literally call for a Holocaust. Without question, the idea that Nietzsche provided the perfect philosophical avenue for the Nazi train of thought is indefensible. Nationalism, socialism, Wagnerian symbolism, anti-Semitism, mass culture, and the Germans themselves were disapproved of by Nietzsche. The boorish hyperbole of any political party could not incorporate his elegant, subtle, and eclectic wisdom on most points. In comparison with the Nazis' artifice, transcendent artistic creativity played a small role in their "will to power." "Estimated merely for his value for Germany and German culture, Richard Wagner remains a great question mark, perhaps a German misfortune, in any case a destiny" (WP 67). Also, Hitler aimed at greater civilization, in spite of his barbarism, while Nietzsche had other plans.

The great moments of culture were always, morally speaking, times of corruption; and conversely, the periods when the taming of the human animal ("civilization") was desired and enforced were times of intolerance against the boldest and most spiritual natures. Civilization has aims different from those of culture--perhaps they are even opposite (WP 75).
Still, whether Hitler advocated the renewal of "civilization" or not, he regarded himself as the type of predatory human that Nietzsche repeatedly advocated. If "the great moments of culture were always, morally speaking, times of corruption," then how might Nietzsche have interpreted the Nazi experiment as anything but a high moment in the rebirth of culture? Compared with the Nazis, no experiment ever attempted has so violently rejected the morality of its civilization. By these particular Nietzschean criteria, the Nazis conducted a desirable experiment.

A literal reading of Nietzsche eliminates him as the intellectual father of National Socialism, because he rejected nationalism, socialism, and so much else of what the Nazis stood for. Yet such a reading demands that any ideological comparison between Nietzsche and any political party requires an issue by issue agreement between the two. Marx and Lenin disagreed on the required historical stages before world revolution, the role of a ruling elite party, and the status of farmers in communist society. Yet dismissing the obvious connections between Marx and Lenin based on these and other differences would seem academically dishonest. Comparisons between Marx and Lenin generally benefit from a likening of their similarities rather than a fixation on their differences. Scholars do not need to be shown an issue by issue agreement between Marx and Lenin to recognize that they reside in the same ideological constellation. Yet in an attempt to distance all ideas of value from National Socialism, the scholarly establishment has chosen to treat comparisons between Nietzsche and the Nazis much more literally, and with far less nuance than equivalent comparisons between Marx and Lenin.

The fact remains that very few people today claim to have anything in common with the Nazis, ideologically or otherwise. This makes any ideological common ground between them and Nietzsche particularly conspicuous. Since the late nineteenth century, very few thinkers have seriously questioned the values of the French Revolution, let alone mocked and castigated them. None besides Nietzsche and the extreme right have posited militarism as a value in
itself. Only Nietzsche and the right have extolled the necessity of spiritual aristocracy, attention to breeding, and the role of race in any healthy culture. Only they have questioned the legitimacy of Christian (Hegelian), Marxist, and liberal notions of progress. Hardness, heartlessness, the possibility of rebirth through destruction, the purity of violence, the necessity of exclusion: these are the uncommon ethical values upon which both Nietzsche's and the Nazis' new European orders were to be built. Nietzsche and the Nazis are distinguished much more by method than by spirit. While they differ in the tools they would use to mold their post-decadent worlds, they obviously hale from the same rare ideological stratosphere.

Oddly, Nietzsche and the Nazis shared much ideologically, but also differed much in form. This begs the question: In spite of so many similarities in their visions for a future European culture, how could the Nazis have so grotesquely mistreated the Jews both ideologically and physically, while Nietzsche generally gives them fair treatment? This results directly from the Nazis' mind-numbing nationalist debauch, repeatedly warned against by Nietzsche. The Nazis' maniacal obsession with (as opposed to Nietzsche's cultured interest in) physical types prohibited them from being even the slightest bit inclusive. The chasm that separates them on this issue stems from the different realms of being in which they interested themselves. Differences in method must inevitably distinguish those such as Nietzsche who only exist in the sphere of ideas, and those like the Nazis who try to turn radical ideals into reality. Action always requires concessions from one's most ethereal dreams. Practicality softens the rigid dogma which often accompanies an ideology in its purest form. When Nietzsche says that "nationalism and protective tariffs may appear sanctioned in the light" [of perpetuating stronger types] (WP.386) he makes a rare appearance in the cold waters of practicality. At such times, his ideas tend to mirror the Nazis even more. The project of creating a higher human type is a grandiose one. The necessities of operating politically in the modern world to achieve grandiose ends confine one to a very narrow range of political possibilities. Revolutionizing even one people's
consciousness could not be accomplished in the free, artistically liberal climate that Nietzsche advocated. In his rarer moments, he acknowledged the necessary evil of conducting any experiment for a higher type of man within the more controlled environment of a nationalistic or socialistic society.

In fact, Nietzsche's dreams, stripped of the luxury of their idealism, bore many striking similarities to the visions of the Nazis. The perfect human being, heroism, valor, glory, the warrior ethic, the end of modernity, and cultural regeneration all look much prettier between two covers in a book than they do when encumbered by the imperfections of human action. Nietzsche seldom stooped to incorporate banal human necessities into his visions of human regeneration. Nietzsche barely skimmed the surface of necessity and harsh reality in his writings, and for this very reason, many of his tracts seem foreign to the grisly realities of the Third Reich.

In Nietzsche's dreams, warriors do not need latrines. His grand aesthetic spectacles do not include factories for the production of rubber-soled boots. Nietzsche's Supermen fill their stomachs with ambrosia, not with lean potato soup. His wars are fought with swords forged in magma, not with tanks drowned in mud. In reality, warriors kill people, masters enslave people, and rapacity requires wailing, pathetic victims. Unbridled instincts result in unimaginable crimes. Had Nietzsche tempered his dreams with the world as it existed around him and still chosen to embrace his own values, his visions would have looked much more like Hitler's realities.

This essay has addressed itself to the following question: If forced to steep his dreams in the realities of modern, mechanized conquest, just how different would Nietzsche's visions have been from those of the Nazis? If shrouded in a gray tunic instead of a coat of dazzling mail, are Nietzsche's idealizations of "conquest, vendetta, revenge, ambition," and "the will to power" really so different from those of the Nazis? Such components of Nietzsche's master morality could not, under any circumstances, be realized cleanly. Caught in a sea of barbed-wire, land-mines, and refugees,
might necessity have moved Nietzsche to excuse the Nazis for their socialism, nationalism, and their reliance on the state? To the degree that Nietzsche and his ilk were right in their criticisms of modernity, Hitler's profound immoralism and willingness to act were bound to appear.

**Evil**

This leaves Nietzsche's famous advocacy of things "evil" as a "final solution" to the modern malaise. What else could Nietzsche have intended by statements such as "the great epochs of our life are the occasions when we gain the courage to rebaptize our evil qualities as our best qualities" (BGE 97)? When Nietzsche challenges us all to get "beyond good and evil," he means that all of our impulses deserve a place in the natural order, even those drives now deemed "evil." Only when we overcome all of our moral taboos can life again become full.

The states in which we infuse a transfiguration and fullness into things and poeticize about them until they reflect back our fullness and joy in life: sexuality; intoxication; feasting; spring; victory over an enemy, mockery; bravado; cruelty; the ecstasy of religious feeling. *Three elements principally:* *sexuality, intoxication, cruelty*—all belonging to the oldest *festal joys* of mankind (WP 421).

Nietzsche's image could easily be used to buttress any argument in favor of paganism. Sensual indulgence is not just encouraged, it anchors his ideal new world. Nietzsche clearly views the lust for conquest as one of these natural human impulses. While indulging the instincts may not seem a radical concept, the application of such an idea would be revolutionary. Nietzsche is right to recognize that the consequences for those unprepared for such people would indeed be "evil." Nietzsche reminds his readers that the truths contained in evil are hidden from those claiming to represent the "good" in the modern world. "Everything that the good call evil must come together so that one truth may be born. O my brothers, are you evil
enough for this truth? The audacious daring, the long mistrust, the cruel No, the disgust, the cutting into the living--how rarely does all this come together. But from such seed is truth begotten" (ZAR 312).

Ultimately, Nietzsche views the fear of evil as the very fear of the fullness of life. Those feeble souls who say yes to perpetually less of what they see will find evil under every stone and around every corner. "The good man sees himself as if surrounded by evil, and under the continual onslaught of evil his eye grows keener, he discovers evil in all his dreams and desires; and so he ends, quite reasonably, by considering nature evil, mankind corrupt, goodness an act of grace. In summa, he denies life" (WP 193). Strong men, on the contrary, see no evil. They see their opponents only in terms of their relative strength. The strong view life as an eternal competition. This is how Nietzsche ends The Will to Power: "This world is the will to power--and nothing besides! And you yourselves are also this will to power--and nothing besides" (WP 550)! To say that "I love Zarathustra for the sake of my evil spirit" (ZAR 409) is to acknowledge Zarathustra's allure as an unexplored world of ignored wisdom, the wisdom of Zoroaster, the wisdom of ancient pagan instinct, the wisdom of bloodlust, and the wisdom of evil.

"We resist the idea that all great human beings have been criminals (only in the grand and not in the miserable style), that crime belongs to greatness" (WP 320). Armed with pure instinct, Nietzsche's advocacy of evil, and the idea that crimes committed on a grand scale may well constitute greatness, Hitler likely found justification for his actions through Nietzsche. And not just for the Holocaust. The revaluation of values is deemed a futuristic event at times, but one of the utmost urgency at others. "The time has come for man to set himself a goal... Alas, the time is coming when man will no longer shoot the arrow of his longing beyond man, and the string of his bow will have forgotten how to whir" (ZAR 129)!

Clearly, Nietzsche fears that the pacifistic herd animal of the modern world has no goal, only a "progressive" illusion, that will soon render sterile the soil out of which higher goals can grow. Through
such prophesies, Hitler received the blessing of a great mind to act not just with great "evil," but to act quickly as well.

The new will to power shall not be a search for an equal place in the family of nations. "It is quite in order that we possess no religion of oppressed Aryan races, for that is a contradiction: a master race is either on top or it is destroyed" (WP 93). The will to power should not be interpreted simply as the maniacal quest of one individual over others. "All great men want to imbed themselves in great communities; they want to give a single form to the multifarious and disordered; chaos stimulates them . . . To gain that tremendous energy of greatness in order to shape the man of the future through breeding and, on the other hand, the annihilation of millions of failures, and not to perish of the suffering one creates, though nothing like it has ever existed" (WP 506)! The great community shall be constituted of the superior in every way, the dominant, the born master. "Among men too a hot sun hatches a beautiful breed. And there are many wonderful things in those who are evil" (ZAR 255). No one who reads Nietzsche should believe that all this "evil" is perpetuated to no end. Nietzsche's desired ends are demonstrated from his first work of The Birth of Tragedy right through The Will to Power. "The profound poet tells us that a man who is truly noble is incapable of sin; though every law, every natural order, indeed the entire canon of ethics, perish by his actions, those very actions will create a circle of higher consequences able to found a new world on the ruins of the old" (BT 60).

Hitler also wished to found a new world on the ruins of the old. The hidden value to destruction is the necessity of renewal. To give purpose to his destruction and rebirth, Hitler necessarily followed Nietzsche's example of "advocated taking exceedingly tough steps against the agents of degeneration." Eradicating the herd animal, its shepherds, and the slavish ethics of Christianity mandated taking many of the "tough steps" for which Hitler is now famous. And no one could envision himself more qualified for the "artistic refashioning of mankind" than Hitler. The frustrated artist finally

1Steven E. Aschheim, "Nordau, Nietzsche, and Regeneration," 652.
found his niche on a grand, pre-ordained scale. Hitler would be the artist of Europe's post-decadent society. The SS would be Nietzsche's cruel, pitiless, dazzling warriors. Through totalitarianism, Hitler sought to create Nietzsche's single will by means of a new caste dominating all Europe, with a "protracted, terrible will of its own which could set its objectives thousands of years ahead" (BGE 138). Therein lay Hitler's Thousand Year Reich.

To replace Nietzsche's "mixed race man, on the whole a small-souled man," (BGE 121) Hitler wished to repopulate the east with blond-haired, blue-eyed couples who were spiritually outfitted for mastery and conquest. To replace the tamed, Christian herd animals of Nietzsche's chagrin, Hitler planned a homogenized officer corps, but one capable of unbridled will, savagery, and predatory acts of cruelty. The officer of the Reich was supposed to embody the discipline, single-mindedness, rapaciousness, and keen intellect of the Overman. The Third Reich came prematurely and far less beautifully than Nietzsche would have liked to imagine. Still, Nietzsche clearly provided the vivid images resulting in Hitler's all-too concrete spectacles.

In Mein Kampf, Hitler never mentioned Nietzsche. This conspicuous omission, along with the infamously poor writing of Mein Kampf, suggest that Hitler seldom if ever consciously imitated Nietzsche. Yet many of Hitler's dreams for the regeneration of the German people echoed Nietzsche's dreams for the regeneration of Western Culture. Despite his assertion that the Germans constitute the heartland of the master race, Hitler criticized the Germans in many of the same ways that Nietzsche did. He also spurred them to move forward in Nietzschean terms. Hitler condemned the Germans for their "inner decay," which "had remained hidden and invisible to the eyes of most people, or which like ostriches people did not want to see." On these grounds, they deserved to lose World War I. Controlled by the "bourgeois voting cattle" of the parliamentary system, the Germans had allowed their "spiritual backbone" to

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2Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf, 229-230.
soften.\textsuperscript{3} Nietzsche agreed with all of these observations about the state of German culture.

To "conserve" the nation for the coming conflict, at once a grand Nietzschean revenge for the Germans and a revaluation of their values, Hitler wished to enliven the Volk in the mean time. Hitler, like Nietzsche, would have been impressed with any nation whose virtues came close to the ancient Greeks. "What makes the Greek ideal of beauty a model is the wonderful combination of the most magnificent physical beauty, with a brilliant mind and the noblest soul."\textsuperscript{4} These were Hitler's words, not Nietzsche's. In \textit{Mein Kampf}, Hitler makes clear his passion for the eventual, grand cultivation of the German intellect. Unlike Nietzsche, Hitler's goals did not permit him to await the perfect combination of circumstances. As he lived much more in the world of action than did Nietzsche, Hitler could not wait millenia for the cultivation of a Nietzschean race of supra-intellectual aristocratic-warriors.

Unlike Nietzsche, Hitler had to wage war first, and appropriate resources for the cultivation of perfect human beings, if at all, later. "First struggle and then we shall see what can be done. Otherwise mankind has passed the high point of its development and the end is not the domination of any ethical idea but barbarism and consequently chaos."\textsuperscript{5} Hitler, like Nietzsche, imagined utopias free of unbridled barbarism and graced by perfectly aesthetic and cultivated human beings. But the modern world provided a hostile reception for the "revaluation of values" in a Nietzschean, or Hitlerian fashion. Struggle against the modern world, the most powerful force created in human history, had to come immediately and with full force or it would never come. Consequently, Hitler's legions and workers went into the field of battle against the modern world with only a whiff of the cultivation required for a super-race.

With a hint of pitiless barbarism, Hitler's Germany rose to the challenge of destroying Western ethical conceptions as Nietzsche

\textsuperscript{3}Ibid., 341.
\textsuperscript{4}Adolph Hitler, \textit{Mein Kampf}, 408.
\textsuperscript{5}Ibid., 288.
portrayed them. But munitions factories, shipyards, potato fields, coal mines, steel mills, and even the autobahn would not have suited Nietzsche's dreams for the aesthetic achievements of the Superman. Nationalism, socialism, anti-Semitism, and the ruinous tactics of the Nazis lacked all of the beauty of Nietzsche's prose. The nascent state of the German revolt against the modern world could not conform to Nietzsche's high aesthetic, intellectual, or spiritual expectations. Like a Wagnerian opera, the Germans' battle against the modern world never hinted of Nietzsche's more subtle and eternal truths. Yet uncoordinated though their performance may have been, the Nazis' nascent experiment took its inspiration from Nietzsche. In a plethora of ways, they learned what to oppose in the modern world through him. And, common to the relationship between master and pupil, Nietzsche and the Nazis were separated more by skill, development, and genius than by their goals for the future of the world.

Two vital distinctions emerge from this research. One, some context and substance has been added to the debate that never was, but perhaps still can be. Two, it should now be clear that the similarities and dissimilarities between Nietzsche and the Nazis are not bland and accidental, but quite striking. Where they differ ideologically, huge chasms seem to emerge. Where they share ground, they occupy a hidden valley of thought into which few others have even peeked. Given this odd juxtaposition of facts, one can easily see how scholars could focus on one very evident side of the issue or the other and form very rigid opinions. To avoid this, a very nuanced, balanced, and sober approach to the topic of Nietzsche and the Nazis is required.
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